

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:04,460

2
00:00:04,460 --> 00:00:07,290
This is the United States
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3
00:00:07,290 --> 00:00:09,950
interview with Peter
Philipps, conducted

4
00:00:09,950 --> 00:00:16,640
by Gail Schwartz on June 16,
1997 in Bethesda, Maryland.

5
00:00:16,640 --> 00:00:22,110
This is tape number
two, side A. You

6
00:00:22,110 --> 00:00:24,110
had said you had a
little story about Quito

7
00:00:24,110 --> 00:00:26,040
that you wanted to talk about.

8
00:00:26,040 --> 00:00:28,700
About six years ago,
we redid our kitchen,

9
00:00:28,700 --> 00:00:31,030
and that included buying
a new refrigerator.

10
00:00:31,030 --> 00:00:33,545
It was a more expensive thing.

11
00:00:33,545 --> 00:00:35,450
It cost about \$1,800.

12
00:00:35,450 --> 00:00:37,780

And a few weeks later, it broke.

13
00:00:37,780 --> 00:00:39,980
It was a GE.

14
00:00:39,980 --> 00:00:43,880
We called for a
service man to come.

15
00:00:43,880 --> 00:00:47,440
And he had a Spanish
accent, Latin accent.

16
00:00:47,440 --> 00:00:48,690
I asked him where he was from.

17
00:00:48,690 --> 00:00:49,280
He said South.

18
00:00:49,280 --> 00:00:50,300
America I, said I can hear.

19
00:00:50,300 --> 00:00:51,500
That where in South America?

20
00:00:51,500 --> 00:00:52,712
He said Ecuador.

21
00:00:52,712 --> 00:00:53,420
Where in Ecuador?

22
00:00:53,420 --> 00:00:53,920
Quito.

23
00:00:53,920 --> 00:00:59,000
Oh, said I. I lived in Quito for
years and went to school there.

24
00:00:59,000 --> 00:01:03,050
He asked me, did you go to
the [? Empresa ?] School?

25

00:01:03,050 --> 00:01:04,205

I said I don't know.

26

00:01:04,205 --> 00:01:05,330

I don't recognize the name.

27

00:01:05,330 --> 00:01:10,790

But let me go look for my
report card, which I still have.

28

00:01:10,790 --> 00:01:11,750

Brought him upstairs.

29

00:01:11,750 --> 00:01:12,790

He looked.

30

00:01:12,790 --> 00:01:14,150

Indeed, it was at that school.

31

00:01:14,150 --> 00:01:16,918

And he was about two
years younger than I am.

32

00:01:16,918 --> 00:01:18,210

He had gone to the same school.

33

00:01:18,210 --> 00:01:21,710

We had the same teacher,
the same principal.

34

00:01:21,710 --> 00:01:26,540

And it was just such
a funny coincidence.

35

00:01:26,540 --> 00:01:28,220

Here we had gone
to the same school.

36

00:01:28,220 --> 00:01:31,820

He was a repairman
for GE now, and I

37

00:01:31,820 --> 00:01:35,450

was a semi retired
as a freelance writer

38

00:01:35,450 --> 00:01:37,610

and was just a nice coincidence.

39

00:01:37,610 --> 00:01:40,060

We had a nice chat about that.

40

00:01:40,060 --> 00:01:41,810

I didn't remember as
much about the school

41

00:01:41,810 --> 00:01:44,780

as he did, other than
that it was very strict

42

00:01:44,780 --> 00:01:47,400

and the standards
were very high.

43

00:01:47,400 --> 00:01:49,670

And the demands on the
kids were a lot greater

44

00:01:49,670 --> 00:01:51,920

than they are in
this country, even

45

00:01:51,920 --> 00:01:53,555

in that primitive
country at that time.

46

00:01:53,555 --> 00:01:56,560

47

00:01:56,560 --> 00:02:00,470

Before we leave Quito,
you had previously

48

00:02:00,470 --> 00:02:03,350

talked about some
unpleasant experiences,

49
00:02:03,350 --> 00:02:07,900
anti-Semitic or fearful
times on the other tape.

50
00:02:07,900 --> 00:02:10,880
Are there anything else you
want to talk about how you

51
00:02:10,880 --> 00:02:15,170
dealt with that as a young boy?

52
00:02:15,170 --> 00:02:20,450
How did you handle this
fearful experience?

53
00:02:20,450 --> 00:02:22,010
I became a good runner.

54
00:02:22,010 --> 00:02:27,290
I am not now, nor was I
then, confrontational.

55
00:02:27,290 --> 00:02:30,740
And when there was
a confrontation

56
00:02:30,740 --> 00:02:37,160
or a potential fist fight,
I didn't escape them all,

57
00:02:37,160 --> 00:02:39,710
but I would turn and run.

58
00:02:39,710 --> 00:02:43,050
And I became quite fast.

59
00:02:43,050 --> 00:02:44,470
And I did that.

60

00:02:44,470 --> 00:02:48,153
Unfortunately, I had
to do that many times.

61
00:02:48,153 --> 00:02:49,820
What were some of
these situations like?

62
00:02:49,820 --> 00:02:52,730
What did the kid say to you?

63
00:02:52,730 --> 00:02:55,610
There were taunts.

64
00:02:55,610 --> 00:02:58,570
I don't remember the
Spanish word for Jew.

65
00:02:58,570 --> 00:03:02,000
But we were certainly
called that and gringo,

66
00:03:02,000 --> 00:03:06,330
which is [INAUDIBLE], German.

67
00:03:06,330 --> 00:03:09,360
So we had three
strikes against us.

68
00:03:09,360 --> 00:03:10,310
We were immigrants.

69
00:03:10,310 --> 00:03:10,940
We were Jewish.

70
00:03:10,940 --> 00:03:12,310
And we were German.

71
00:03:12,310 --> 00:03:21,640
And so they were always taunting
us and not leaving us in peace.

72

00:03:21,640 --> 00:03:24,470

And they also referred
to my brothers and me.

73

00:03:24,470 --> 00:03:30,020

My brothers, luckily for
them, have much better

74

00:03:30,020 --> 00:03:32,720

coping skills than I do.

75

00:03:32,720 --> 00:03:36,410

They did then, and they do now.

76

00:03:36,410 --> 00:03:40,550

And actually they
protected me a few times.

77

00:03:40,550 --> 00:03:42,370

They're tough guys.

78

00:03:42,370 --> 00:03:44,660

I'm not.

79

00:03:44,660 --> 00:03:47,530

Also, there were
two of them, too.

80

00:03:47,530 --> 00:03:50,360

There are two of them,
and they're twins.

81

00:03:50,360 --> 00:03:53,450

And they are fraternal
twins, incidentally.

82

00:03:53,450 --> 00:03:57,690

But they're very close
They'd always stick together.

83

00:03:57,690 --> 00:04:03,260

And they were totally
fearless as well.

84
00:04:03,260 --> 00:04:06,200
They would never run away
from a fight the way I did.

85
00:04:06,200 --> 00:04:07,880
What kind of advice
did your parents

86
00:04:07,880 --> 00:04:12,730
give you in how to cope with
these frightening situations?

87
00:04:12,730 --> 00:04:17,100
To try to avoid in
any way possible.

88
00:04:17,100 --> 00:04:20,300
If it meant running away,
that was the way to do it,

89
00:04:20,300 --> 00:04:23,090
just stay out of trouble.

90
00:04:23,090 --> 00:04:28,440
And I don't think my parents
were fully aware of everything.

91
00:04:28,440 --> 00:04:30,280
We didn't tell them everything.

92
00:04:30,280 --> 00:04:31,590
Well, we felt sorry for them.

93
00:04:31,590 --> 00:04:34,610
We didn't-- we sensed,
or at least I sensed,

94
00:04:34,610 --> 00:04:36,860
that they had other
things on their minds.

95

00:04:36,860 --> 00:04:40,910
I shielded them from some
of this unpleasantness

96
00:04:40,910 --> 00:04:43,460
that we had to endure.

97
00:04:43,460 --> 00:04:47,990
That's a very mature
reaction for a child.

98
00:04:47,990 --> 00:04:50,380
Well, I guess it comes from--

99
00:04:50,380 --> 00:04:51,410
with the mother's milk.

100
00:04:51,410 --> 00:04:54,050

101
00:04:54,050 --> 00:04:57,370
You sort of drink in
the anxiety that you

102
00:04:57,370 --> 00:05:00,700
sense your parents have.

103
00:05:00,700 --> 00:05:03,805
You either overreact,
which I think I did--

104
00:05:03,805 --> 00:05:05,640
I'm, today, a terrible worrier.

105
00:05:05,640 --> 00:05:08,560

106
00:05:08,560 --> 00:05:11,110
And I'm sure it comes
from those years.

107
00:05:11,110 --> 00:05:13,340

My brothers are totally
opposite, which is good.

108
00:05:13,340 --> 00:05:14,800
Good for them.

109
00:05:14,800 --> 00:05:16,157
People should be different.

110
00:05:16,157 --> 00:05:20,730

111
00:05:20,730 --> 00:05:25,220
Did your parents express concern
about friends and relatives

112
00:05:25,220 --> 00:05:26,610
that they had left behind?

113
00:05:26,610 --> 00:05:29,010
Did they talk to you about that?

114
00:05:29,010 --> 00:05:32,100
I don't think so.

115
00:05:32,100 --> 00:05:35,490
It wasn't until we got
to New York many years

116
00:05:35,490 --> 00:05:40,530
later that my father found out
his mother had been killed.

117
00:05:40,530 --> 00:05:43,590
There was correspondence
between my father

118
00:05:43,590 --> 00:05:46,260
and his brother
Hugo in Amsterdam.

119
00:05:46,260 --> 00:05:49,230

120
00:05:49,230 --> 00:05:51,750
And there were years
when he sent him money

121
00:05:51,750 --> 00:05:54,000
because, as you
probably know, there

122
00:05:54,000 --> 00:05:58,920
were years of hunger in
Holland, even after the war.

123
00:05:58,920 --> 00:06:01,200
My parents-- I say my parents.

124
00:06:01,200 --> 00:06:03,970
My mother did not
like this uncle.

125
00:06:03,970 --> 00:06:08,100
And she did not
want to help him.

126
00:06:08,100 --> 00:06:10,650
But my father, I think, did
some of that and perhaps

127
00:06:10,650 --> 00:06:12,070
behind her back.

128
00:06:12,070 --> 00:06:16,500
Now, this is your
Uncle Hugo from Essen?

129
00:06:16,500 --> 00:06:17,430
Was he born in Essen?

130
00:06:17,430 --> 00:06:18,790
I think so.

131

00:06:18,790 --> 00:06:20,967
But he lived in
Amsterdam at the time.

132
00:06:20,967 --> 00:06:22,800
What brought him to
Amsterdam, I don't know.

133
00:06:22,800 --> 00:06:26,170
I think it was job related.

134
00:06:26,170 --> 00:06:28,750
And he married Christina?

135
00:06:28,750 --> 00:06:32,400
Yes, he married a
non-Jewish woman.

136
00:06:32,400 --> 00:06:36,840
And they had one son
by the name of Herbert.

137
00:06:36,840 --> 00:06:40,800
I think I met him once
maybe 60 years ago

138
00:06:40,800 --> 00:06:42,550
and have no contact with him.

139
00:06:42,550 --> 00:06:46,710
I don't even know
whether he's alive.

140
00:06:46,710 --> 00:06:49,020
He is, of course--

141
00:06:49,020 --> 00:06:53,580
if he is alive, he is one
of the few Philipps who

142
00:06:53,580 --> 00:06:57,410
are Jewish who's got a name,
as we do, with one L and two Ps

143
00:06:57,410 --> 00:06:58,380
at the end.

144
00:06:58,380 --> 00:07:03,230

145
00:07:03,230 --> 00:07:08,000
Any other stories about Ecuador
that you wanted to talk about?

146
00:07:08,000 --> 00:07:11,490

147
00:07:11,490 --> 00:07:14,780
As an overall description,
it was a very difficult time

148
00:07:14,780 --> 00:07:16,950
of life for you.

149
00:07:16,950 --> 00:07:20,000
It was a meager existence.

150
00:07:20,000 --> 00:07:22,490
We had enough to eat.

151
00:07:22,490 --> 00:07:28,730
But there was never any
indulgence of any kind.

152
00:07:28,730 --> 00:07:32,150
Dessert did not exist.

153
00:07:32,150 --> 00:07:35,630
Movies did not exist for us.

154
00:07:35,630 --> 00:07:40,340
There was no real
entertainment or leisure.

155

00:07:40,340 --> 00:07:43,310

It was you made do
with what you had.

156

00:07:43,310 --> 00:07:45,940

And you made up your games.

157

00:07:45,940 --> 00:07:52,170

And I guess the equivalent of
cowboys and Indians we played.

158

00:07:52,170 --> 00:07:59,780

But nothing pleasant
to look back on.

159

00:07:59,780 --> 00:08:03,110

Did you make any close
non-Jewish friends?

160

00:08:03,110 --> 00:08:04,200

No.

161

00:08:04,200 --> 00:08:07,250

No, I think the Jewish
community stuck together.

162

00:08:07,250 --> 00:08:15,140

It was-- they heavily depended
on one another if for nothing

163

00:08:15,140 --> 00:08:17,120

else, then moral support.

164

00:08:17,120 --> 00:08:19,800

And I think the Gentiles,
who, then, of course,

165

00:08:19,800 --> 00:08:22,820

would have been
Ecuadorians, just

166

00:08:22,820 --> 00:08:27,170

didn't fit in anyway

if for no other reason

167
00:08:27,170 --> 00:08:29,270
then the language barrier.

168
00:08:29,270 --> 00:08:33,260
Did the Jewish community get
together on special occasions?

169
00:08:33,260 --> 00:08:35,929
Or was it just by chance?

170
00:08:35,929 --> 00:08:37,039
I think just by chance.

171
00:08:37,039 --> 00:08:40,370
I don't remember attending any
religious services in Ecuador

172
00:08:40,370 --> 00:08:40,970
at all.

173
00:08:40,970 --> 00:08:43,909

174
00:08:43,909 --> 00:08:45,920
I'd like to think we
had Seder at home.

175
00:08:45,920 --> 00:08:47,600
But I don't know.

176
00:08:47,600 --> 00:08:52,610
I cannot say with any
certainty that we did,

177
00:08:52,610 --> 00:08:55,990
in part because my mother did
not put a lot of stock in that.

178
00:08:55,990 --> 00:08:59,290

179

00:08:59,290 --> 00:09:05,440
And so there was no religiously,
no Jewishly oriented education

180

00:09:05,440 --> 00:09:06,970
in Ecuador?

181

00:09:06,970 --> 00:09:09,940
None whatever, no.

182

00:09:09,940 --> 00:09:14,860
I think my father tried
his best to instill

183

00:09:14,860 --> 00:09:19,600
Jewish sense of belonging.

184

00:09:19,600 --> 00:09:29,560
But I think he may have done his
own davening or praying himself

185

00:09:29,560 --> 00:09:36,310
at home, but nothing formal.

186

00:09:36,310 --> 00:09:37,870
And now they come
to you and tell you

187

00:09:37,870 --> 00:09:40,840
you're going to be moving again.

188

00:09:40,840 --> 00:09:43,990
Yes, so I guess that was
the dream that they all had,

189

00:09:43,990 --> 00:09:48,670
and that sounded very exciting,
something to look forward to.

190

00:09:48,670 --> 00:09:51,650

191
00:09:51,650 --> 00:09:56,290
And I think I was able to
finish my second year of school

192
00:09:56,290 --> 00:10:01,640
before leaving for
the United States.

193
00:10:01,640 --> 00:10:02,630
And what time--

194
00:10:02,630 --> 00:10:04,700
1941 we're talking about.

195
00:10:04,700 --> 00:10:06,050
And is it summertime?

196
00:10:06,050 --> 00:10:06,680
It was May.

197
00:10:06,680 --> 00:10:10,670
We arrived here in May
1941, a scant six months

198
00:10:10,670 --> 00:10:13,940
before Pearl Harbor.

199
00:10:13,940 --> 00:10:15,380
We were met--

200
00:10:15,380 --> 00:10:16,880
Your boat ride?

201
00:10:16,880 --> 00:10:21,590
Yes, oh, it was a Chilean
steamer by the name of Copiapó³

202
00:10:21,590 --> 00:10:24,310
back through the Panama Canal
in the other direction--

203

00:10:24,310 --> 00:10:27,080

a lot of seasickness
on my part again.

204

00:10:27,080 --> 00:10:30,530

205

00:10:30,530 --> 00:10:35,840

If memory serves, when we
pulled into New York Harbor,

206

00:10:35,840 --> 00:10:41,120

I was in the men's room
throwing up into a big urinal,

207

00:10:41,120 --> 00:10:44,420

as I recall it.

208

00:10:44,420 --> 00:10:47,060

My parents, I think, and
brother stayed on deck

209

00:10:47,060 --> 00:10:48,440

to watch the sights.

210

00:10:48,440 --> 00:10:52,750

They abandoned me to
be sick by myself.

211

00:10:52,750 --> 00:10:56,900

And we were met at the pier
by a colleague of my father's

212

00:10:56,900 --> 00:11:00,870

from days in Germany.

213

00:11:00,870 --> 00:11:03,770

And he had preceded
us to New York

214

00:11:03,770 --> 00:11:08,160

and worked for the same

company, the Kaufman firm.

215

00:11:08,160 --> 00:11:11,860

He was a bookkeeper or something of that type.

216

00:11:11,860 --> 00:11:15,950

His name was Paul Jonas, and he saw us through the immigration

217

00:11:15,950 --> 00:11:18,260

process, and whatever.

218

00:11:18,260 --> 00:11:20,930

What was your first sights, your first impression

219

00:11:20,930 --> 00:11:25,970

when the boat docked, when you came out of the men's room?

220

00:11:25,970 --> 00:11:28,160

I don't remember that so much, but I

221

00:11:28,160 --> 00:11:30,200

do remember my first impression when we were

222

00:11:30,200 --> 00:11:33,500

in a taxi riding in Manhattan.

223

00:11:33,500 --> 00:11:39,310

I saw the fire escape on the apartment buildings.

224

00:11:39,310 --> 00:11:41,240

And never having seen fire escapes,

225

00:11:41,240 --> 00:11:43,250

I thought they were the stairways.

226
00:11:43,250 --> 00:11:45,110
And I was immediately
alarmed that one

227
00:11:45,110 --> 00:11:46,908
would have to walk
up and down stairs

228
00:11:46,908 --> 00:11:48,200
on the outside of the building.

229
00:11:48,200 --> 00:11:51,950
And this Mr Jonas
laughed, I remember,

230
00:11:51,950 --> 00:11:54,440
and explained to me that
they were fire escapes

231
00:11:54,440 --> 00:11:57,340
and explained to me
what they were for.

232
00:11:57,340 --> 00:12:02,840
And we went to the HIAS, the
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society,

233
00:12:02,840 --> 00:12:05,190
down on the Lower East Side.

234
00:12:05,190 --> 00:12:08,990
And we stayed there
for two weeks.

235
00:12:08,990 --> 00:12:13,820
Had a lot of black bread
and herring and sort

236
00:12:13,820 --> 00:12:18,370
of primitive
entertainment, including

237

00:12:18,370 --> 00:12:20,020
one motion picture,
which was sponsored

238

00:12:20,020 --> 00:12:23,710
by Chesterfield cigarettes--

239

00:12:23,710 --> 00:12:27,520
very entertaining at the
time, very insidious,

240

00:12:27,520 --> 00:12:30,490
now that I look back on it.

241

00:12:30,490 --> 00:12:34,900
Did you understand what it
meant to come to America then?

242

00:12:34,900 --> 00:12:42,650
Did you feel more free,
more open, more relaxed?

243

00:12:42,650 --> 00:12:47,670
Did it make a difference
to you as a youngster?

244

00:12:47,670 --> 00:12:48,500
I think it did.

245

00:12:48,500 --> 00:12:52,960
I think my parents were
less anxious in terms

246

00:12:52,960 --> 00:12:57,100
of being persecuted.

247

00:12:57,100 --> 00:12:59,560
But the anxiety
was then replaced

248

00:12:59,560 --> 00:13:04,300
by the anxiety of finding

work, finding a place to live,

249

00:13:04,300 --> 00:13:05,380
finding money.

250

00:13:05,380 --> 00:13:09,640
I believe that immigrants were
entitled to stay at the HIAS

251

00:13:09,640 --> 00:13:12,730
only one week, other
things being equal.

252

00:13:12,730 --> 00:13:15,580
And we, because we
had no place to live,

253

00:13:15,580 --> 00:13:20,500
were allowed to stay an extra
week until my parents found

254

00:13:20,500 --> 00:13:21,880
a place to live.

255

00:13:21,880 --> 00:13:24,730
Did you have any knowledge
of English at that point?

256

00:13:24,730 --> 00:13:25,300
Not a word.

257

00:13:25,300 --> 00:13:29,740
But I immediately
began teaching myself,

258

00:13:29,740 --> 00:13:34,960
not with books, but by reading
signs and making connections

259

00:13:34,960 --> 00:13:39,940
between, oh, say, a sign
Local, on the L. That

260

00:13:39,940 --> 00:13:41,650
was the Third Avenue
L, I think, which

261

00:13:41,650 --> 00:13:42,850
still existed in those days.

262

00:13:42,850 --> 00:13:46,090
And that had made
frequent stops,

263

00:13:46,090 --> 00:13:49,690
as opposed to the express,
which skipped many stations.

264

00:13:49,690 --> 00:13:51,370
Signs in stores--

265

00:13:51,370 --> 00:13:54,510
I made the connection with
what the sign said outside

266

00:13:54,510 --> 00:13:57,430
and the merchandise
that was sold inside.

267

00:13:57,430 --> 00:14:00,390
So I started teaching
myself, actually,

268

00:14:00,390 --> 00:14:02,840
a little bit of
English like that.

269

00:14:02,840 --> 00:14:06,490
Again, my parents were
gone, looking for work

270

00:14:06,490 --> 00:14:07,120
during the day.

271

00:14:07,120 --> 00:14:10,950

And I was in charge
of my brothers.

272
00:14:10,950 --> 00:14:15,720
And then where did you go
after you left the hotel?

273
00:14:15,720 --> 00:14:25,990
My parents rented a one-room
apartment in a brownstone

274
00:14:25,990 --> 00:14:27,812
somewhere in the
70s, in the West 70s,

275
00:14:27,812 --> 00:14:29,020
right by the railroad tracks.

276
00:14:29,020 --> 00:14:32,650

277
00:14:32,650 --> 00:14:34,780
Again, they were
looking for work.

278
00:14:34,780 --> 00:14:37,150
My father actually started
working for the Kaufman firm

279
00:14:37,150 --> 00:14:40,420
then, I think, at \$10 a
week, as a bookkeeper.

280
00:14:40,420 --> 00:14:43,860

281
00:14:43,860 --> 00:14:45,610
I don't know what my
mother did, actually.

282
00:14:45,610 --> 00:14:50,390
But again, I remember we
were alone during the day.

283
00:14:50,390 --> 00:14:52,200
And one of my first
memories was--

284
00:14:52,200 --> 00:14:54,040
and it must have been
a detective living

285
00:14:54,040 --> 00:14:58,720
in that building, who came
out of the building one day,

286
00:14:58,720 --> 00:15:02,380
while I was sitting
on the stoop.

287
00:15:02,380 --> 00:15:06,280
And he showed me his gun,
thinking that all kids must

288
00:15:06,280 --> 00:15:07,420
be fascinated by guns.

289
00:15:07,420 --> 00:15:09,003
Of course, I didn't
speak any English,

290
00:15:09,003 --> 00:15:10,900
so I couldn't
communicate with him.

291
00:15:10,900 --> 00:15:12,100
So it was kind of a--

292
00:15:12,100 --> 00:15:14,080
I wasn't frightened,
or anything like that.

293
00:15:14,080 --> 00:15:15,550
There was no reason to be.

294

00:15:15,550 --> 00:15:19,730
He just wanted to engage
me in a conversation.

295
00:15:19,730 --> 00:15:22,330
But I couldn't respond
to him, because I

296
00:15:22,330 --> 00:15:23,500
didn't know any English.

297
00:15:23,500 --> 00:15:26,110

298
00:15:26,110 --> 00:15:31,090
From there, we moved to
34th and Hillside Avenue,

299
00:15:31,090 --> 00:15:33,820
in the Washington
Heights section of--

300
00:15:33,820 --> 00:15:35,470
excuse me, I am ahead of myself.

301
00:15:35,470 --> 00:15:39,970
No, we moved to 188th
Street, again, a brownstone.

302
00:15:39,970 --> 00:15:42,970
We were on the second floor
of a three-story brown house,

303
00:15:42,970 --> 00:15:45,012
brownstone house.

304
00:15:45,012 --> 00:15:47,470
I believe, in those days, they
were not called brownstones,

305
00:15:47,470 --> 00:15:48,400
but railroad flats.

306

00:15:48,400 --> 00:15:50,920

307

00:15:50,920 --> 00:16:00,798

I went to school there, PS 189.

308

00:16:00,798 --> 00:16:03,150

I was sent to the third grade.

309

00:16:03,150 --> 00:16:06,340

310

00:16:06,340 --> 00:16:07,550

Can I back up here?

311

00:16:07,550 --> 00:16:09,150

And I just remembered something.

312

00:16:09,150 --> 00:16:11,160

While we were in the HIAS--

313

00:16:11,160 --> 00:16:13,170

I think we were there
longer than two weeks.

314

00:16:13,170 --> 00:16:15,210

I must be wrong
about that, because I

315

00:16:15,210 --> 00:16:17,370

was sent to a daycare.

316

00:16:17,370 --> 00:16:20,160

I was sent to a daycare.

317

00:16:20,160 --> 00:16:24,750

And by then, I was 9 and
1/2 years old and much older

318

00:16:24,750 --> 00:16:28,650

than the other kids, of

course, spoke no English.

319

00:16:28,650 --> 00:16:30,780

But the teacher
understood the situation.

320

00:16:30,780 --> 00:16:34,920

And I was allowed to
keep my head up and read,

321

00:16:34,920 --> 00:16:37,140

when the other kids had
their rest period, when

322

00:16:37,140 --> 00:16:39,120

they had to put
an arm on the desk

323

00:16:39,120 --> 00:16:41,113

and cradle their
head in their arm.

324

00:16:41,113 --> 00:16:42,030

I was allowed to read.

325

00:16:42,030 --> 00:16:43,890

But of course, I
couldn't read, because I

326

00:16:43,890 --> 00:16:46,370

didn't know any English.

327

00:16:46,370 --> 00:16:52,190

So literally, I was the old man
in this playschool, a daycare

328

00:16:52,190 --> 00:16:55,500

center, what it would
be called today.

329

00:16:55,500 --> 00:17:00,450

What thoughts went through
your head, hearing these sounds

330
00:17:00,450 --> 00:17:02,370
and not knowing what they meant?

331
00:17:02,370 --> 00:17:06,720
What is it like for a child
to be surrounded by sounds

332
00:17:06,720 --> 00:17:09,930
that have no meaning to them?

333
00:17:09,930 --> 00:17:13,200
Well, kids pick up language.

334
00:17:13,200 --> 00:17:16,140
Young kids, particularly,
pick it up rather quickly.

335
00:17:16,140 --> 00:17:20,099
But you never felt
comfortable, of course.

336
00:17:20,099 --> 00:17:22,230
You never knew
what was going on.

337
00:17:22,230 --> 00:17:25,589
And even years later,
there were words

338
00:17:25,589 --> 00:17:30,610
that I had read and
pronounced in my mind,

339
00:17:30,610 --> 00:17:31,870
but totally incorrectly.

340
00:17:31,870 --> 00:17:36,450
I always put the accent
on the wrong syllable.

341
00:17:36,450 --> 00:17:40,830

I remember, for example, once
screwing up my courage enough

342
00:17:40,830 --> 00:17:45,380
to ask a classmate,
what does emergency me?

343
00:17:45,380 --> 00:17:47,380
And he didn't know what
I was talking about.

344
00:17:47,380 --> 00:17:51,180
So I told him it's
on the red truck.

345
00:17:51,180 --> 00:17:54,390
Oh, emergency, you
mean, he said--

346
00:17:54,390 --> 00:17:56,890
things like that.

347
00:17:56,890 --> 00:18:01,110
It wasn't until I was
an adult that I learned

348
00:18:01,110 --> 00:18:05,520
that the word that I thought was
pronounced anemone was anemone,

349
00:18:05,520 --> 00:18:06,480
things like that.

350
00:18:06,480 --> 00:18:08,983
Until I heard the
word, I had read it.

351
00:18:08,983 --> 00:18:10,400
I knew what it
meant, but I didn't

352
00:18:10,400 --> 00:18:11,442
know how to pronounce it.

353
00:18:11,442 --> 00:18:14,940

354
00:18:14,940 --> 00:18:17,280
Learning stickball,
learning curve ball,

355
00:18:17,280 --> 00:18:19,490
learning marble games--

356
00:18:19,490 --> 00:18:24,860
we'd play with marbles on the
street, baseball, of course.

357
00:18:24,860 --> 00:18:29,850
That all took a long time to
assimilate and grasp and learn

358
00:18:29,850 --> 00:18:33,637
the rules and learn the physical
part of it, which I never

359
00:18:33,637 --> 00:18:34,470
became very good at.

360
00:18:34,470 --> 00:18:38,960

361
00:18:38,960 --> 00:18:40,550
And your parents
now are following,

362
00:18:40,550 --> 00:18:46,550
of course, what's going
on around them, in Europe.

363
00:18:46,550 --> 00:18:48,650
And you're a little
bit older now.

364
00:18:48,650 --> 00:18:51,320

Did they talk that over
with you at this point?

365
00:18:51,320 --> 00:18:55,080
Yes, now the conversations
are constantly about the war.

366
00:18:55,080 --> 00:18:59,990
We did have a radio,
a little Emerson.

367
00:18:59,990 --> 00:19:03,920
And I do remember once
being in our living

368
00:19:03,920 --> 00:19:07,203
room at 188th Street,
having the radio on.

369
00:19:07,203 --> 00:19:08,870
And there was an
announcement that there

370
00:19:08,870 --> 00:19:10,340
would be an air raid.

371
00:19:10,340 --> 00:19:13,460
It was in the middle
of my favorite serial,

372
00:19:13,460 --> 00:19:15,560
[? Hal Paragon ?].

373
00:19:15,560 --> 00:19:21,660
And our windows were taped up
in those days with masking tape,

374
00:19:21,660 --> 00:19:26,150
to prevent shattering.

375
00:19:26,150 --> 00:19:28,370
Because we thought
that there would be--

376
00:19:28,370 --> 00:19:29,540
I mean, it wasn't we.

377
00:19:29,540 --> 00:19:33,740
It was America thought that
we would be directly affected

378
00:19:33,740 --> 00:19:35,060
by the war.

379
00:19:35,060 --> 00:19:38,030
And the radio announcer said,
you should lie on the floor.

380
00:19:38,030 --> 00:19:38,850
I was home alone.

381
00:19:38,850 --> 00:19:39,980
I don't know why.

382
00:19:39,980 --> 00:19:41,450
And I remember
lying on the floor,

383
00:19:41,450 --> 00:19:44,300
and my program was interrupted.

384
00:19:44,300 --> 00:19:52,980
And that was sort of my
first real sense of the war,

385
00:19:52,980 --> 00:19:54,210
until the all clear sounded.

386
00:19:54,210 --> 00:19:57,240

387
00:19:57,240 --> 00:20:02,750
And of course, there
were many visits

388

00:20:02,750 --> 00:20:05,320

among my parents
and their friends.

389

00:20:05,320 --> 00:20:10,050

And that was always the
prime topic of conversation.

390

00:20:10,050 --> 00:20:11,930

These are refugee friends?

391

00:20:11,930 --> 00:20:12,850

Yes, indeed.

392

00:20:12,850 --> 00:20:14,630

Yes, indeed.

393

00:20:14,630 --> 00:20:17,300

Some of these friends--

394

00:20:17,300 --> 00:20:19,250

well, I shouldn't say some.

395

00:20:19,250 --> 00:20:26,480

One lady, who is now 92, still
survives from those days.

396

00:20:26,480 --> 00:20:27,320

She's now a widow.

397

00:20:27,320 --> 00:20:28,775

They have no children.

398

00:20:28,775 --> 00:20:29,900

She lives in Santa Barbara.

399

00:20:29,900 --> 00:20:33,110

And my wife and I just
came back from there to--

400

00:20:33,110 --> 00:20:35,870

we went actually to visit her.

401

00:20:35,870 --> 00:20:40,270

Because I've known her
since I was nine years old.

402

00:20:40,270 --> 00:20:49,110

What was December 7,
1941 like for you?

403

00:20:49,110 --> 00:20:51,240

There are times when
you don't remember

404

00:20:51,240 --> 00:20:56,360

whether an event of
such significance,

405

00:20:56,360 --> 00:20:58,880

whether you are actually
remembering the event,

406

00:20:58,880 --> 00:21:02,420

or you remember talking
about the event.

407

00:21:02,420 --> 00:21:04,910

And that is one of
those instances.

408

00:21:04,910 --> 00:21:08,200

409

00:21:08,200 --> 00:21:09,300

It was a Sunday.

410

00:21:09,300 --> 00:21:13,450

I do believe we had the radio
on when the first reports came

411

00:21:13,450 --> 00:21:13,950

through.

412
00:21:13,950 --> 00:21:17,232

413
00:21:17,232 --> 00:21:18,690
Inevitably, you
are going to wonder

414
00:21:18,690 --> 00:21:21,840
how we reacted, how my parents
reacted, what they said.

415
00:21:21,840 --> 00:21:24,210
I don't remember.

416
00:21:24,210 --> 00:21:28,312
I'm sure it was scary, but I
don't remember specifically.

417
00:21:28,312 --> 00:21:31,150
Did you ever have the
feeling of it being hopeless,

418
00:21:31,150 --> 00:21:32,940
that you could never
escape the war here?

419
00:21:32,940 --> 00:21:36,405
You left one city after another
and country after another.

420
00:21:36,405 --> 00:21:39,810
Did that feeling of
hopelessness ever get to you?

421
00:21:39,810 --> 00:21:41,070
It sure seemed that way.

422
00:21:41,070 --> 00:21:49,260
And when the war broke
out in December of 1941,

423
00:21:49,260 --> 00:21:53,550

one had no idea that America
would actually escape the war,

424
00:21:53,550 --> 00:21:55,490
in the sense of, I mean,
we were in the war.

425
00:21:55,490 --> 00:21:58,140
But the war didn't
come to America--

426
00:21:58,140 --> 00:21:59,776
quite the opposite.

427
00:21:59,776 --> 00:22:01,890
And you didn't have to
be a refugee from Germany

428
00:22:01,890 --> 00:22:07,270
to be scared.

429
00:22:07,270 --> 00:22:09,210
And a kid, in
particular, would be

430
00:22:09,210 --> 00:22:12,210
scared of the bombing
attacks and invasion,

431
00:22:12,210 --> 00:22:13,692
and that sort of thing.

432
00:22:13,692 --> 00:22:15,150
And of course, you
heard the adults

433
00:22:15,150 --> 00:22:17,970
talking about that, which
only fed into that fear.

434
00:22:17,970 --> 00:22:21,480

435

00:22:21,480 --> 00:22:24,186

And of course, you brothers
still were too young for you

436

00:22:24,186 --> 00:22:25,440

to--

437

00:22:25,440 --> 00:22:25,940

Yes.

438

00:22:25,940 --> 00:22:30,290

Was there anybody that you
could talk over your fears with?

439

00:22:30,290 --> 00:22:31,840

I had one friend.

440

00:22:31,840 --> 00:22:33,260

I have him to this day.

441

00:22:33,260 --> 00:22:35,060

His name is also Peter.

442

00:22:35,060 --> 00:22:38,190

He's 11 years old-- excuse
me, 11 months older than I am.

443

00:22:38,190 --> 00:22:40,220

We met in Hebrew school.

444

00:22:40,220 --> 00:22:42,690

We've been friends ever since.

445

00:22:42,690 --> 00:22:46,140

And we were inseparable.

446

00:22:46,140 --> 00:22:49,730

He is more of a brother to
me than my actual brother is.

447

00:22:49,730 --> 00:22:55,835

And yes, we talked about
the war and what we would do

448
00:22:55,835 --> 00:22:56,710
and what we could do.

449
00:22:56,710 --> 00:22:59,780
And like all kids
in those days, we

450
00:22:59,780 --> 00:23:02,800
saved tin foil and
aluminum foil, whatever,

451
00:23:02,800 --> 00:23:08,120
and the newspapers,
and things like that.

452
00:23:08,120 --> 00:23:13,440
Peter and I went briefly
to the same school, PS 189.

453
00:23:13,440 --> 00:23:17,780
He then went on to high
school of music and art.

454
00:23:17,780 --> 00:23:19,875
But we would meet.

455
00:23:19,875 --> 00:23:21,500
He was in a higher
grade than I. But we

456
00:23:21,500 --> 00:23:24,320
would meet at intermission--
excuse me, lunch hour,

457
00:23:24,320 --> 00:23:29,120
and stand in front of this
pushcart, which was just loaded

458
00:23:29,120 --> 00:23:30,810
with candies of all kinds.

459

00:23:30,810 --> 00:23:32,960

And we would have
one penny to spend.

460

00:23:32,960 --> 00:23:34,460

And the amount of
candy you could

461

00:23:34,460 --> 00:23:37,670

buy for one penny,
the choices, you

462

00:23:37,670 --> 00:23:40,130

could not describe that to
a kid growing up nowadays.

463

00:23:40,130 --> 00:23:42,110

It was an incredibly
hard decision

464

00:23:42,110 --> 00:23:45,190

to decide what to
spend our penny on.

465

00:23:45,190 --> 00:23:47,150

Was he a refugee child?

466

00:23:47,150 --> 00:23:49,940

Yes, Peter was a refugee child.

467

00:23:49,940 --> 00:23:50,990

His mother was a widow.

468

00:23:50,990 --> 00:23:52,448

He came here with
an older brother.

469

00:23:52,448 --> 00:23:54,860

His father died
of a heart attack.

470

00:23:54,860 --> 00:23:57,140
They had come via London.

471
00:23:57,140 --> 00:24:04,910
And as I said, we are very
good friends to this day.

472
00:24:04,910 --> 00:24:08,070
Did you experience any
anti-Semitism during the war?

473
00:24:08,070 --> 00:24:11,330
Did people mistake
you for being German?

474
00:24:11,330 --> 00:24:12,170
Constantly.

475
00:24:12,170 --> 00:24:19,760
It was a never-ending
struggle, first of all,

476
00:24:19,760 --> 00:24:21,920
because we were
German, I think--

477
00:24:21,920 --> 00:24:25,730
so that was exacerbated
after Pearl Harbor--

478
00:24:25,730 --> 00:24:27,050
then because we were Jewish.

479
00:24:27,050 --> 00:24:28,830
So we got it constantly.

480
00:24:28,830 --> 00:24:30,320
The kids on our street--

481
00:24:30,320 --> 00:24:33,350
in those days, of course,
kids didn't carry guns.

482

00:24:33,350 --> 00:24:36,260

But there were fistfights
with rocks thrown.

483

00:24:36,260 --> 00:24:38,840

There were chunks
of ice thrown at us

484

00:24:38,840 --> 00:24:42,230

from the roof of the building.

485

00:24:42,230 --> 00:24:46,070

I managed to save up, still
in 188th Street, enough money

486

00:24:46,070 --> 00:24:48,710

to buy a pair of roller skates--

487

00:24:48,710 --> 00:24:51,560

not in-line skates, but
roller skates that you

488

00:24:51,560 --> 00:24:53,120

strapped onto your shoes.

489

00:24:53,120 --> 00:24:55,400

And the first day
was a Saturday.

490

00:24:55,400 --> 00:24:57,680

And I tried them out
in front of the street.

491

00:24:57,680 --> 00:25:01,790

These two toughs came over
and asked to borrow the key.

492

00:25:01,790 --> 00:25:03,440

And they fled with it.

493

00:25:03,440 --> 00:25:05,540

I can still remember the

face of one of those.

494
00:25:05,540 --> 00:25:08,390
I could still kill him.

495
00:25:08,390 --> 00:25:11,600
My skates were useless
without that key.

496
00:25:11,600 --> 00:25:14,630
But that's the kind of
thing that we had to endure.

497
00:25:14,630 --> 00:25:17,900
If we had a toy, it
was usually given to us

498
00:25:17,900 --> 00:25:25,470
from a Jewish agency
or some charity.

499
00:25:25,470 --> 00:25:27,785
If we showed up on
the street with a toy,

500
00:25:27,785 --> 00:25:30,360
it was taken away from us.

501
00:25:30,360 --> 00:25:31,790
We were never safe.

502
00:25:31,790 --> 00:25:34,790
Peter Adler, my friend
that I mentioned,

503
00:25:34,790 --> 00:25:38,000
he lived about three
blocks from us,

504
00:25:38,000 --> 00:25:41,180
had to go through a little
forest, believe it or not.

505

00:25:41,180 --> 00:25:42,180

This is upper Manhattan.

506

00:25:42,180 --> 00:25:43,263

There was a little forest.

507

00:25:43,263 --> 00:25:45,650

Now, of course, there are
30-story apartment buildings

508

00:25:45,650 --> 00:25:46,700

there.

509

00:25:46,700 --> 00:25:51,510

And there were always these
guys waiting in wait for me.

510

00:25:51,510 --> 00:25:56,630

And it made the friendship with
Peter very difficult for us

511

00:25:56,630 --> 00:25:58,520

to visit one another,
because we always

512

00:25:58,520 --> 00:26:03,700

had to go through this
gauntlet of tough guys

513

00:26:03,700 --> 00:26:04,770

who were waiting for us.

514

00:26:04,770 --> 00:26:07,840

515

00:26:07,840 --> 00:26:11,520

Any religious training
at this point?

516

00:26:11,520 --> 00:26:12,020

Yes.

517

00:26:12,020 --> 00:26:13,430

I went to Hebrew school.

518

00:26:13,430 --> 00:26:17,600

Peter and I met, actually,
in the rabbi's apartment.

519

00:26:17,600 --> 00:26:24,740

That was our first religious
school in this country.

520

00:26:24,740 --> 00:26:26,870

His name was Dr.
[PERSONAL NAME]..

521

00:26:26,870 --> 00:26:31,190

He was a former rabbi of
the congregation in Munich.

522

00:26:31,190 --> 00:26:34,080

I've recently learned that
the Munich synagogue--

523

00:26:34,080 --> 00:26:37,070

and this is hearsay; I do not
know whether it is historically

524

00:26:37,070 --> 00:26:38,280

accurate--

525

00:26:38,280 --> 00:26:40,340

the Munich synagogue
was the first one

526

00:26:40,340 --> 00:26:41,570

that the Nazis destroyed.

527

00:26:41,570 --> 00:26:44,000

And when no one
rose up in protest,

528

00:26:44,000 --> 00:26:45,950

the Nazis had a
signal that they could

529
00:26:45,950 --> 00:26:48,210
go on and keep doing this.

530
00:26:48,210 --> 00:26:53,060
So we had lessons in Dr.
[PERSONAL NAME] apartment.

531
00:26:53,060 --> 00:26:54,725
That's how I met Peter.

532
00:26:54,725 --> 00:26:56,600
There were maybe three
or four other students

533
00:26:56,600 --> 00:26:59,300
in the class sitting around
his dining room table.

534
00:26:59,300 --> 00:27:01,880
Subsequently, my parents
joined the congregation

535
00:27:01,880 --> 00:27:04,010
by the name Beth Hallel.

536
00:27:04,010 --> 00:27:07,190
They used a basement
in a dance hall

537
00:27:07,190 --> 00:27:11,450
on 183rd Street and
Wadsworth Avenue--

538
00:27:11,450 --> 00:27:12,650
very, very primitive.

539
00:27:12,650 --> 00:27:16,940
The Ark was an old
clothes closet.

540

00:27:16,940 --> 00:27:22,220

And on high holy days, they
rented the actual two dance

541

00:27:22,220 --> 00:27:27,660

halls on a couple of floors
above, the same building.

542

00:27:27,660 --> 00:27:31,010

It was a German Jewish--

543

00:27:31,010 --> 00:27:33,290

excuse me-- it was a
German congregated refugee

544

00:27:33,290 --> 00:27:35,870

congregation, I meant to say.

545

00:27:35,870 --> 00:27:38,840

And the sermons were in German.

546

00:27:38,840 --> 00:27:42,440

The rest of the
service was in Hebrew.

547

00:27:42,440 --> 00:27:45,920

It was not easy for
a kid to follow.

548

00:27:45,920 --> 00:27:49,050

Were you speaking German
to your parents still?

549

00:27:49,050 --> 00:27:49,550

Yes.

550

00:27:49,550 --> 00:27:52,010

We spoke German at home.

551

00:27:52,010 --> 00:27:55,400

My parents worked assiduously
at learning English.

552
00:27:55,400 --> 00:27:58,070
They went to night school at
George Washington High School.

553
00:27:58,070 --> 00:28:00,890

554
00:28:00,890 --> 00:28:04,550
And they never lost the
accents, but they became

555
00:28:04,550 --> 00:28:05,960
quite proficient in English.

556
00:28:05,960 --> 00:28:09,270

557
00:28:09,270 --> 00:28:12,060
Did you study and
become a bar mitzvah?

558
00:28:12,060 --> 00:28:13,516
Yes, I did.

559
00:28:13,516 --> 00:28:17,210
The bar mitzvah was
in this basement room.

560
00:28:17,210 --> 00:28:20,100
And the party, if
you can call it that,

561
00:28:20,100 --> 00:28:23,220
was in our
one-bedroom apartment.

562
00:28:23,220 --> 00:28:26,340
And I then was living
on Hillside Avenue.

563
00:28:26,340 --> 00:28:29,010

564
00:28:29,010 --> 00:28:31,770
My mother made some
canapes and a punch,

565
00:28:31,770 --> 00:28:36,258
and there were a
few adult friends.

566
00:28:36,258 --> 00:28:39,135
It was very, very
homey and simple.

567
00:28:39,135 --> 00:28:41,850

568
00:28:41,850 --> 00:28:47,100
If I got any presents,
I don't remember them.

569
00:28:47,100 --> 00:28:51,540
Did you think a lot about Europe
during those years of the war?

570
00:28:51,540 --> 00:28:53,420
No, I don't think so.

571
00:28:53,420 --> 00:28:56,370
That quickly became a
very blurred memory.

572
00:28:56,370 --> 00:28:59,830
And I just wanted desperately
to become an American

573
00:28:59,830 --> 00:29:04,340
and to lose my accent and
to look like the other kids

574
00:29:04,340 --> 00:29:06,780
and to wear penny
loafers, which I couldn't

575
00:29:06,780 --> 00:29:08,500
afford for years and years.

576
00:29:08,500 --> 00:29:11,130
In fact, the first pair of shoes
I wore in the United States

577
00:29:11,130 --> 00:29:15,300
were girls shoes, because my
father's company, the Kaufman

578
00:29:15,300 --> 00:29:18,030
firm, got a shipment of shoes.

579
00:29:18,030 --> 00:29:20,570

580
00:29:20,570 --> 00:29:22,210
There was something
wrong with them.

581
00:29:22,210 --> 00:29:25,330
They landed on the doorstep
of the company, which

582
00:29:25,330 --> 00:29:28,250
was supposed to be something
entirely different.

583
00:29:28,250 --> 00:29:29,870
So he brought home
these girls shoes,

584
00:29:29,870 --> 00:29:31,700
and my parents couldn't
understand why I

585
00:29:31,700 --> 00:29:33,820
hated wearing these girl shoes.

586
00:29:33,820 --> 00:29:37,550

They looked like loafers,
but they had higher heels.

587
00:29:37,550 --> 00:29:40,250
And it made me very
self-conscious.

588
00:29:40,250 --> 00:29:44,350
So the first pair of actual
penny loafers that I had

589
00:29:44,350 --> 00:29:45,953
was a great day in my life.

590
00:29:45,953 --> 00:29:52,950
[CHUCKLING] All right, so you
tried to become an American.

591
00:29:52,950 --> 00:29:55,470
And then the war continues.

592
00:29:55,470 --> 00:29:57,790
And I guess, anything
else during the war

593
00:29:57,790 --> 00:30:01,950
that you can remember
that stays in your mind?

594
00:30:01,950 --> 00:30:07,393
The rationing, being sent to the
store with the ration coupons;

595
00:30:07,393 --> 00:30:09,060
gasoline, we didn't
have to worry about,

596
00:30:09,060 --> 00:30:10,602
because my parents
didn't have a car.

597
00:30:10,602 --> 00:30:13,750

598
00:30:13,750 --> 00:30:18,440
And I hated to go shopping.

599
00:30:18,440 --> 00:30:20,970
My mother always
made me go shopping.

600
00:30:20,970 --> 00:30:23,640
It's hard for anyone
growing up nowadays

601
00:30:23,640 --> 00:30:26,550
to remember that the
first supermarkets, which

602
00:30:26,550 --> 00:30:31,860
were relatively tiny things,
self-service places, men

603
00:30:31,860 --> 00:30:34,020
did not like to
be seen shopping,

604
00:30:34,020 --> 00:30:37,200
let alone pushing
a shopping cart.

605
00:30:37,200 --> 00:30:38,725
My mother made me do it.

606
00:30:38,725 --> 00:30:41,730
It also added to
the many complexes

607
00:30:41,730 --> 00:30:46,320
that I've acquired
over a lifetime.

608
00:30:46,320 --> 00:30:52,920
But I do remember the
shortages and going

609

00:30:52,920 --> 00:30:55,590

from one store to another
to get the things that we

610

00:30:55,590 --> 00:30:59,430

needed for our daily living.

611

00:30:59,430 --> 00:31:02,260

And now it's the end of the war.

612

00:31:02,260 --> 00:31:05,614

What were your
feelings about that?

613

00:31:05,614 --> 00:31:09,570

End of the war in 1945
coincided, I guess,

614

00:31:09,570 --> 00:31:13,170

going to junior high school.

615

00:31:13,170 --> 00:31:15,870

My English was
pretty good by then.

616

00:31:15,870 --> 00:31:20,220

I hadn't lost my
accent, but I certainly

617

00:31:20,220 --> 00:31:23,430

could keep up with the
work in the classrooms.

618

00:31:23,430 --> 00:31:28,620

And that was a good feeling.

619

00:31:28,620 --> 00:31:33,900

And it wasn't long after the
war that my father's firm

620

00:31:33,900 --> 00:31:35,145

started sending him abroad.

621
00:31:35,145 --> 00:31:39,480

622
00:31:39,480 --> 00:31:41,070
I didn't mention to you--

623
00:31:41,070 --> 00:31:43,980
I said earlier, my father
started working at \$10

624
00:31:43,980 --> 00:31:45,560
a week as a bookkeeper.

625
00:31:45,560 --> 00:31:50,100
But he had started with
the firm at the age of 13.

626
00:31:50,100 --> 00:31:52,950
By the age of 18, he
was already traveling

627
00:31:52,950 --> 00:31:54,640
in Europe for the company.

628
00:31:54,640 --> 00:31:57,710
He was a junior
executive, actually.

629
00:31:57,710 --> 00:32:01,270
So working as a bookkeeper was
an awful come-down for him.

630
00:32:01,270 --> 00:32:03,090
So after the war, he
had an opportunity

631
00:32:03,090 --> 00:32:05,910
to go back to where
he was, in the sense

632
00:32:05,910 --> 00:32:08,970

of the company's hierarchy.

633
00:32:08,970 --> 00:32:16,770
And he traveled a lot, first
to Mexico and Cuba, And.

634
00:32:16,770 --> 00:32:22,940
then starting in about
1949, to Europe again.

635
00:32:22,940 --> 00:32:27,520
When the war was over, did
you feel a sense of relief

636
00:32:27,520 --> 00:32:29,460
and a sense of more security?

637
00:32:29,460 --> 00:32:33,440
Did it make a tremendous
difference to?

638
00:32:33,440 --> 00:32:39,350
On V J Day, the day the
war ended with Japan,

639
00:32:39,350 --> 00:32:42,680
there was great
jubilation, of course.

640
00:32:42,680 --> 00:32:53,030
And the kids on the street,
as part of this celebration,

641
00:32:53,030 --> 00:32:58,390
threw stones at the streetlights
and broke the bulbs.

642
00:32:58,390 --> 00:33:02,070
Well, [PERSONAL NAME] mother
went out in the street

643
00:33:02,070 --> 00:33:03,390
and scolded them.

644
00:33:03,390 --> 00:33:07,230
And they yelled back at her,
go back where you came from,

645
00:33:07,230 --> 00:33:08,730
you dirty ref--

646
00:33:08,730 --> 00:33:12,440
which was, of course,
a phrase that we

647
00:33:12,440 --> 00:33:15,450
heard countless, countless
times in all those years.

648
00:33:15,450 --> 00:33:18,480

649
00:33:18,480 --> 00:33:23,050
Tough for a kid to see his
mother treated that way.

650
00:33:23,050 --> 00:33:26,820
Another experience, my mother
had a tomato thrown at her;

651
00:33:26,820 --> 00:33:31,800
you dirty ref, go back
where you came from;

652
00:33:31,800 --> 00:33:33,570
very hard to see that--

653
00:33:33,570 --> 00:33:35,070
not to be compared
with other kids

654
00:33:35,070 --> 00:33:37,485
my age saw in
concentration camp, who

655

00:33:37,485 --> 00:33:39,120
weren't nearly so lucky.

656
00:33:39,120 --> 00:33:43,410
But nonetheless, these
things leave a mark.

657
00:33:43,410 --> 00:33:46,110
What else did people call you?

658
00:33:46,110 --> 00:33:46,920
Dirty ref.

659
00:33:46,920 --> 00:33:49,630
Dirty ref was interspersed
with dirty Jew.

660
00:33:49,630 --> 00:33:52,652
I mean, that was synonymous.

661
00:33:52,652 --> 00:33:55,110
I'm not sure that the kids even
knew what they were saying.

662
00:33:55,110 --> 00:33:57,770
But that didn't
make it any better.

663
00:33:57,770 --> 00:34:01,450

664
00:34:01,450 --> 00:34:03,530
So now it's the end
of the war, and you're

665
00:34:03,530 --> 00:34:04,540
in junior high school?

666
00:34:04,540 --> 00:34:05,040
Yes.

667
00:34:05,040 --> 00:34:05,998

And then what happened?

668
00:34:05,998 --> 00:34:08,940

669
00:34:08,940 --> 00:34:12,210
My father started, as I
said, making these trips.

670
00:34:12,210 --> 00:34:13,170
They were frequent.

671
00:34:13,170 --> 00:34:14,170
They were long.

672
00:34:14,170 --> 00:34:17,380
It added to my--

673
00:34:17,380 --> 00:34:20,610
or revived, if you
will, my anxiety.

674
00:34:20,610 --> 00:34:24,659
His leaving was always
difficult for me.

675
00:34:24,659 --> 00:34:30,330
Plane travel wasn't as
commonplace and natural as it

676
00:34:30,330 --> 00:34:31,980
is today.

677
00:34:31,980 --> 00:34:34,500
Nowadays, it's like
getting on a Greyhound bus.

678
00:34:34,500 --> 00:34:37,380
It was a big deal.

679
00:34:37,380 --> 00:34:40,389
And I cried a lot.

680
00:34:40,389 --> 00:34:42,239
I felt very insecure
without him.

681
00:34:42,239 --> 00:34:45,090
I was very attached
to my father.

682
00:34:45,090 --> 00:34:46,199
So--

683
00:34:46,199 --> 00:34:48,480
Were you closer to your
father than to your mother?

684
00:34:48,480 --> 00:34:49,949
Yes, I was.

685
00:34:49,949 --> 00:34:54,739
My mother was incapable
of showing love.

686
00:34:54,739 --> 00:34:59,210
I'm sure she loved us, but she
wasn't capable of showing it.

687
00:34:59,210 --> 00:35:03,830
And so that was tough.

688
00:35:03,830 --> 00:35:09,330
By the time I went to
high school in 1950--

689
00:35:09,330 --> 00:35:10,590
no, wait a minute, excuse me.

690
00:35:10,590 --> 00:35:14,550
I graduated in 1950
from high school.

691
00:35:14,550 --> 00:35:17,550

But anyway, by then, my parents
had moved back to Europe.

692
00:35:17,550 --> 00:35:22,560
My father's firm in
Rotterdam had invited him

693
00:35:22,560 --> 00:35:26,220
to a post as a
director of the firm.

694
00:35:26,220 --> 00:35:29,173
And my mother got sick
and tired of all the

695
00:35:29,173 --> 00:35:30,090
traveling that he did.

696
00:35:30,090 --> 00:35:36,135
So she went back to Holland
with him in either 1949 or 1950.

697
00:35:36,135 --> 00:35:37,440
So they lived in Rotterdam.

698
00:35:37,440 --> 00:35:40,950
And my brothers moved
to Holland as well

699
00:35:40,950 --> 00:35:45,510
and went to a school, a
boarding school, in Holland.

700
00:35:45,510 --> 00:35:50,010
And I lived by myself during the
high school and college years.

701
00:35:50,010 --> 00:35:52,650
Where did you live
in high school?

702
00:35:52,650 --> 00:35:56,070
In high school, I lived

in Hillside Avenue.

703

00:35:56,070 --> 00:35:57,000

I said I lived alone.

704

00:35:57,000 --> 00:35:58,380

That wasn't quite accurate.

705

00:35:58,380 --> 00:36:04,020

A cousin of my father's,
an Auschwitz survivor,

706

00:36:04,020 --> 00:36:07,740

who married a German woman,
came to the United States,

707

00:36:07,740 --> 00:36:08,683

had no place to live.

708

00:36:08,683 --> 00:36:10,350

And by coincidence,
my parents were just

709

00:36:10,350 --> 00:36:11,350

leaving for Europe then.

710

00:36:11,350 --> 00:36:14,400

So they struck up a deal where
they would have the living

711

00:36:14,400 --> 00:36:17,970

room as their bedroom, and I
had the bedroom as my bedroom

712

00:36:17,970 --> 00:36:19,590

and living room.

713

00:36:19,590 --> 00:36:24,690

And the woman, Mrs. Hirsch,
did the cooking for me.

714

00:36:24,690 --> 00:36:33,530

And so they took care of
me, took care of my material

715
00:36:33,530 --> 00:36:35,662
needs, but certainly
not my emotional needs.

716
00:36:35,662 --> 00:36:37,370
They didn't speak
English, for one thing.

717
00:36:37,370 --> 00:36:45,770
They had, God knows, a
lot of scars from the war.

718
00:36:45,770 --> 00:36:50,150
My parents did not come back
for my high school graduation.

719
00:36:50,150 --> 00:36:52,370
I went to Brooklyn
Technical High School,

720
00:36:52,370 --> 00:36:54,080
hoping I would become
an engineer, which

721
00:36:54,080 --> 00:36:58,220
was a terrible mistake.

722
00:36:58,220 --> 00:37:06,350
And in 1950, my parents
bought an attached house

723
00:37:06,350 --> 00:37:10,700
in the Rego Park
section of Queens.

724
00:37:10,700 --> 00:37:13,730
And immediately, after
moving into this house,

725
00:37:13,730 --> 00:37:15,440

they moved to Rotterdam.

726

00:37:15,440 --> 00:37:22,415

So I lived in that house
by myself for five years.

727

00:37:22,415 --> 00:37:24,290

It took me five years
to get through college,

728

00:37:24,290 --> 00:37:26,130

because I dropped out
of engineering school.

729

00:37:26,130 --> 00:37:29,270

And so I had to
start over again--

730

00:37:29,270 --> 00:37:33,320

a lot of loneliness
during those years.

731

00:37:33,320 --> 00:37:37,040

I had to take care of the house
and myself and go to college.

732

00:37:37,040 --> 00:37:40,380

733

00:37:40,380 --> 00:37:43,140

Luckily, my good friend
Peter also moved to Queens

734

00:37:43,140 --> 00:37:44,790

with his mother.

735

00:37:44,790 --> 00:37:47,950

And we lived within walking
distance of one another.

736

00:37:47,950 --> 00:37:50,370

So we spent a lot of
time together listening

737
00:37:50,370 --> 00:37:53,528
to classical music
and going to dances

738
00:37:53,528 --> 00:37:55,570
and going on blind dates,
and that sort of thing.

739
00:37:55,570 --> 00:38:06,500

740
00:38:06,500 --> 00:38:11,787
This is tape two, side B, in
an interview of Peter Phillips.

741
00:38:11,787 --> 00:38:13,870
And you had wanted to say
something about the work

742
00:38:13,870 --> 00:38:16,180
that your mother had done.

743
00:38:16,180 --> 00:38:18,790
Between the time we came
to the United States

744
00:38:18,790 --> 00:38:26,950
in 1941 and middle of 1950, when
my parents moved to Rotterdam,

745
00:38:26,950 --> 00:38:30,430
my mother worked all the time
to help support my father,

746
00:38:30,430 --> 00:38:40,270
because he wasn't making enough
money to sustain the family.

747
00:38:40,270 --> 00:38:42,610
She did alterations.

748

00:38:42,610 --> 00:38:44,800
She knitted neckties.

749
00:38:44,800 --> 00:38:49,390
She made or assembled cigarette
lighters for the army.

750
00:38:49,390 --> 00:38:51,790
These were flameless
cigarette lighters.

751
00:38:51,790 --> 00:38:53,950
The whole family
pitched in, by the way.

752
00:38:53,950 --> 00:38:56,230
She made cloth-covered
buttons, at which

753
00:38:56,230 --> 00:38:58,505
she was very, very fast.

754
00:38:58,505 --> 00:38:59,770
And it was piecework.

755
00:38:59,770 --> 00:39:01,360
It paid pennies a button.

756
00:39:01,360 --> 00:39:04,120

757
00:39:04,120 --> 00:39:07,210
She made powder puffs.

758
00:39:07,210 --> 00:39:10,000
I don't know if that
even exists anymore.

759
00:39:10,000 --> 00:39:14,500
She made gloves that
contained soaps, so that when

760

00:39:14,500 --> 00:39:16,340
a woman-- a mitten, actually.

761
00:39:16,340 --> 00:39:18,210
It went into the shower.

762
00:39:18,210 --> 00:39:20,110
The glove gotten wet.

763
00:39:20,110 --> 00:39:22,450
She could soap herself.

764
00:39:22,450 --> 00:39:25,450
Eventually, she
actually did so well,

765
00:39:25,450 --> 00:39:29,990
that she opened a little
factory about 162nd Street

766
00:39:29,990 --> 00:39:33,880
in an abandoned store,
bought some sewing machines--

767
00:39:33,880 --> 00:39:35,650
on credit, of course--

768
00:39:35,650 --> 00:39:41,347
employed maybe a dozen women,
so sold these powder plants

769
00:39:41,347 --> 00:39:42,055
and these gloves.

770
00:39:42,055 --> 00:39:44,810

771
00:39:44,810 --> 00:39:47,860
For a brief time, my father
gave up his job and joined her.

772
00:39:47,860 --> 00:39:50,920

773

00:39:50,920 --> 00:39:54,100

But it didn't last.

774

00:39:54,100 --> 00:39:57,460

They were cheated by
a man who had promised

775

00:39:57,460 --> 00:40:00,550

to be a silent partner.

776

00:40:00,550 --> 00:40:05,710

He did them out of their
share of the proceeds.

777

00:40:05,710 --> 00:40:07,797

And my mother tried to patent--

778

00:40:07,797 --> 00:40:08,380

no, excuse me.

779

00:40:08,380 --> 00:40:11,680

She tried to interest--

780

00:40:11,680 --> 00:40:14,680

I won't mention
any names-- a chain

781

00:40:14,680 --> 00:40:17,440

of stores, which is, to
this day, a household

782

00:40:17,440 --> 00:40:21,250

word, household
name, in this glove,

783

00:40:21,250 --> 00:40:25,210

this mitten, the soap mitten,
hoping she could sell it

784

00:40:25,210 --> 00:40:27,430

to those chain of stores.

785
00:40:27,430 --> 00:40:30,340
They turned her down,
but they copied the idea

786
00:40:30,340 --> 00:40:33,550
and immediately sold it.

787
00:40:33,550 --> 00:40:36,460
So my mother went back
to working at home.

788
00:40:36,460 --> 00:40:39,160
Her desk, or
workstation, was the lid

789
00:40:39,160 --> 00:40:42,100
of the stove in the kitchen.

790
00:40:42,100 --> 00:40:44,020
Because in those
days, there were

791
00:40:44,020 --> 00:40:46,120
inspectors that
came into the house

792
00:40:46,120 --> 00:40:49,600
to make sure there was
no child labor, and such.

793
00:40:49,600 --> 00:40:51,470
So she was able, whenever
the doorbell rang,

794
00:40:51,470 --> 00:40:53,848
she was able to stuff all
her stuff into the stove

795
00:40:53,848 --> 00:40:54,390
and close it.

796

00:40:54,390 --> 00:40:57,010

797

00:40:57,010 --> 00:41:01,600

She actually worked at
night when we were asleep.

798

00:41:01,600 --> 00:41:04,180

She would fill the
bathtub with cold water

799

00:41:04,180 --> 00:41:06,910

and sit at the edge of
the tub and continue

800

00:41:06,910 --> 00:41:09,580

her piecework, her buttons,
and things like that,

801

00:41:09,580 --> 00:41:10,690

while we were asleep.

802

00:41:10,690 --> 00:41:13,520

We were totally unaware
of that until years later,

803

00:41:13,520 --> 00:41:15,420

when she told us about it.

804

00:41:15,420 --> 00:41:18,750

So she worked incredibly hard.

805

00:41:18,750 --> 00:41:22,450

And I have to give her a
lot of credit for that.

806

00:41:22,450 --> 00:41:24,690

When the war was over--

807

00:41:24,690 --> 00:41:26,060

oh, no, let me back up.

808

00:41:26,060 --> 00:41:28,060

You said you helped make
the cigarette lighters.

809

00:41:28,060 --> 00:41:29,740

What was your task?

810

00:41:29,740 --> 00:41:31,760

It consisted of
various components,

811

00:41:31,760 --> 00:41:33,580

including a wick, an
orange-colored wick,

812

00:41:33,580 --> 00:41:35,270

that was about a foot long.

813

00:41:35,270 --> 00:41:38,150

And you had to stuff it
into a little cylinder.

814

00:41:38,150 --> 00:41:45,830

You had to assemble the wheel,
the flint, and a spring.

815

00:41:45,830 --> 00:41:47,260

Everybody got
involved with that.

816

00:41:47,260 --> 00:41:48,802

We all got involved
with the buttons,

817

00:41:48,802 --> 00:41:50,920

as well, because the
material had to be cut,

818

00:41:50,920 --> 00:41:53,590

the little round
circles of cloth.

819

00:41:53,590 --> 00:41:57,900
And we got involved with
the packing, the delivery.

820
00:41:57,900 --> 00:42:01,180
When my mother had
an order for buttons,

821
00:42:01,180 --> 00:42:03,820
I had to take them on the
subway to deliver them

822
00:42:03,820 --> 00:42:10,180
to the customer in the city.

823
00:42:10,180 --> 00:42:13,000
So we all pitched in.

824
00:42:13,000 --> 00:42:15,220
We had a drying
rack in the kitchen.

825
00:42:15,220 --> 00:42:18,850
All the kitchens in those days
had a drying rack for laundry.

826
00:42:18,850 --> 00:42:22,000
It pulled up on a pulley and
then hung against the ceiling.

827
00:42:22,000 --> 00:42:25,300
And then it had clothespins.

828
00:42:25,300 --> 00:42:28,990
And that became
part of the factory.

829
00:42:28,990 --> 00:42:32,375
My father hung the ribbons on
there for the powder puffs.

830
00:42:32,375 --> 00:42:36,340
And it was rolled down, and we

cut it into the various strips.

831
00:42:36,340 --> 00:42:39,640
We were always
busy, always busy.

832
00:42:39,640 --> 00:42:42,850
When the war was over
and news came out

833
00:42:42,850 --> 00:42:47,680
about the terrible death
camps, and so forth,

834
00:42:47,680 --> 00:42:50,920
what did that do for
you and your family?

835
00:42:50,920 --> 00:42:53,770
I'm not sure that we found
out right after the war.

836
00:42:53,770 --> 00:43:01,660
I don't seem to recall
anyone talking about it.

837
00:43:01,660 --> 00:43:03,550
Maybe we were shielded.

838
00:43:03,550 --> 00:43:06,140
I just don't remember.

839
00:43:06,140 --> 00:43:10,515
But again, there are things
one remembers 50, 60 years,

840
00:43:10,515 --> 00:43:11,890
and there are
things one doesn't.

841
00:43:11,890 --> 00:43:15,010
So I really don't know.

842

00:43:15,010 --> 00:43:16,960

I wish I could
remember, but I don't.

843

00:43:16,960 --> 00:43:19,900

844

00:43:19,900 --> 00:43:21,400

You went on to college.

845

00:43:21,400 --> 00:43:24,367

Your parents and your
brothers were abroad.

846

00:43:24,367 --> 00:43:25,700

And then what happened with you?

847

00:43:25,700 --> 00:43:27,990

Did you go over to visit them?

848

00:43:27,990 --> 00:43:28,490

Yes.

849

00:43:28,490 --> 00:43:30,710

In June 1950, it
was my graduation

850

00:43:30,710 --> 00:43:33,170

present to visit them in Europe.

851

00:43:33,170 --> 00:43:37,340

And I flew--

852

00:43:37,340 --> 00:43:39,470

KLM Lockheed Constellation.

853

00:43:39,470 --> 00:43:42,680

It was a grand experience.

854

00:43:42,680 --> 00:43:46,430

If you can imagine, you got a

program, a seating arrangement.

855

00:43:46,430 --> 00:43:49,190

So you knew the names of
your other passengers.

856

00:43:49,190 --> 00:43:55,580

You got a menu of this gourmet
meal that they served you.

857

00:43:55,580 --> 00:44:00,020

I wanted to feel very grown-up,
so I decided to take a pipe.

858

00:44:00,020 --> 00:44:02,270

I had no idea you couldn't
smoke a pipe on a plane.

859

00:44:02,270 --> 00:44:05,870

And I was quickly admonished
by the stewardess.

860

00:44:05,870 --> 00:44:08,630

They were called
stewardesses in those days.

861

00:44:08,630 --> 00:44:14,020

The plane refueled in
[PLACE NAME] and [PLACE NAME],,

862

00:44:14,020 --> 00:44:16,070

in that order.

863

00:44:16,070 --> 00:44:19,310

And it wasn't long after I--

864

00:44:19,310 --> 00:44:22,637

865

00:44:22,637 --> 00:44:23,720

well, no, that's not true.

866

00:44:23,720 --> 00:44:26,770
The Korean War had broken
out when I made that trip.

867
00:44:26,770 --> 00:44:33,438
But once I arrived in Holland,
then I stayed the whole summer.

868
00:44:33,438 --> 00:44:34,480
It was a wonderful visit.

869
00:44:34,480 --> 00:44:38,200
My parents had a very nice
apartment near the zoo,

870
00:44:38,200 --> 00:44:44,770
overlooking a canal,
a picturesque canal.

871
00:44:44,770 --> 00:44:47,795
But the Korean War was on, and
we were obsessed with that.

872
00:44:47,795 --> 00:44:50,995
And we got the International
Herald Tribune.

873
00:44:50,995 --> 00:44:55,210
And I read that every day,
listened to the news every hour

874
00:44:55,210 --> 00:44:57,280
of the day.

875
00:44:57,280 --> 00:44:59,560
My main concern, of
course, was being drafted.

876
00:44:59,560 --> 00:45:02,540

877
00:45:02,540 --> 00:45:04,660
And I stayed till, I

guess, September, when

878

00:45:04,660 --> 00:45:08,480
it was time to go to college.

879

00:45:08,480 --> 00:45:10,340
And luckily, I was deferred.

880

00:45:10,340 --> 00:45:13,720
So I did not have to
serve in the army.

881

00:45:13,720 --> 00:45:15,160
While you were in
Europe, did you

882

00:45:15,160 --> 00:45:21,413
have any desire to travel,
to go back to Genoa or Essen?

883

00:45:21,413 --> 00:45:24,520

884

00:45:24,520 --> 00:45:26,500
No.

885

00:45:26,500 --> 00:45:27,100
I didn't.

886

00:45:27,100 --> 00:45:31,180
I made a number of side trips,
weekend trips with my parents.

887

00:45:31,180 --> 00:45:35,940
My father was then
director of the company.

888

00:45:35,940 --> 00:45:40,990
He had a chauffeur-driven
Mercedes company car.

889

00:45:40,990 --> 00:45:47,875

And so we went to very nice
places in Holland, in Belgium.

890
00:45:47,875 --> 00:45:51,500

891
00:45:51,500 --> 00:45:52,850
Yes, we did go to Germany.

892
00:45:52,850 --> 00:45:56,590
Yes, we did, but not
to Essen, not to Essen.

893
00:45:56,590 --> 00:46:00,040
What was it like to
go back to Germany?

894
00:46:00,040 --> 00:46:04,105
It was a wonderful feeling to
be an American in those days.

895
00:46:04,105 --> 00:46:05,560
You sat on top of the world.

896
00:46:05,560 --> 00:46:09,190
The dollar was almighty.

897
00:46:09,190 --> 00:46:12,520
People knew you were American
just from looking at you,

898
00:46:12,520 --> 00:46:16,480
because we dressed differently.

899
00:46:16,480 --> 00:46:18,430
Did your parents feel German?

900
00:46:18,430 --> 00:46:20,260
No, my parents
felt very American.

901
00:46:20,260 --> 00:46:21,940

They refused to speak German.

902
00:46:21,940 --> 00:46:24,940

903
00:46:24,940 --> 00:46:27,250
My mother was the most
chauvinistic American

904
00:46:27,250 --> 00:46:28,360
I have ever met--

905
00:46:28,360 --> 00:46:31,110

906
00:46:31,110 --> 00:46:38,020
very, very proud to be
American, yes, indeed.

907
00:46:38,020 --> 00:46:45,250
But my brothers had bicycles
with a little rack in the front

908
00:46:45,250 --> 00:46:48,733
on the handlebar that had five
or six little American flags.

909
00:46:48,733 --> 00:46:50,650
That attracted so much
attention in Rotterdam,

910
00:46:50,650 --> 00:46:53,800
it made the front
page of the newspaper.

911
00:46:53,800 --> 00:46:56,630
It was glorious
to be an American.

912
00:46:56,630 --> 00:47:02,610
What were your thoughts and
feelings about Germany then?

913

00:47:02,610 --> 00:47:09,720

I never felt comfortable
among Germans.

914

00:47:09,720 --> 00:47:11,600

I don't do today.

915

00:47:11,600 --> 00:47:18,420

I try to bury that
sense of unease.

916

00:47:18,420 --> 00:47:25,613

But particularly when I meet
Germans of my generation,

917

00:47:25,613 --> 00:47:27,530

the first thought that
flashes through my mind

918

00:47:27,530 --> 00:47:31,820

is, what did you
do during the war?

919

00:47:31,820 --> 00:47:34,320

Can't get away from it.

920

00:47:34,320 --> 00:47:39,950

In fact, today we belong
to a Swim and Tennis Club

921

00:47:39,950 --> 00:47:43,790

in Carderock Springs,
about a mile from here.

922

00:47:43,790 --> 00:47:46,610

Many, many Germans belong
to it, because it's

923

00:47:46,610 --> 00:47:49,248

near the German school.

924

00:47:49,248 --> 00:47:50,665

So there are many
German diplomats

925
00:47:50,665 --> 00:47:51,750
who are members there.

926
00:47:51,750 --> 00:47:54,810
And although we belonged to
[? this stuff ?] for 25 years,

927
00:47:54,810 --> 00:47:59,000
we've never spoken a word
of German, Evelyn and I.

928
00:47:59,000 --> 00:48:00,620
We understand their
conversations,

929
00:48:00,620 --> 00:48:02,510
are amused by them,
but we have never

930
00:48:02,510 --> 00:48:06,950
let on that we are indeed
conversant in German.

931
00:48:06,950 --> 00:48:12,340

932
00:48:12,340 --> 00:48:15,300
You came back to college.

933
00:48:15,300 --> 00:48:20,064
And then can you summarize
what your career took

934
00:48:20,064 --> 00:48:22,500
and how it went?

935
00:48:22,500 --> 00:48:25,220
I went to City
College of New York.

936

00:48:25,220 --> 00:48:27,510

It took me five years.

937

00:48:27,510 --> 00:48:30,915

During the summers, I
worked for the Kaufman firm.

938

00:48:30,915 --> 00:48:34,300

I became an instant hide
inspector, in the fact,

939

00:48:34,300 --> 00:48:38,010

There were a lot
of slaughterhouses

940

00:48:38,010 --> 00:48:40,950

in New York in those
days, some on 10th Avenue.

941

00:48:40,950 --> 00:48:44,490

There's a composition slaughter
on 10th Avenue, Richard

942

00:48:44,490 --> 00:48:45,690

Rodgers.

943

00:48:45,690 --> 00:48:50,130

There were a lot of kosher
butchers in Brooklyn. .

944

00:48:50,130 --> 00:48:53,250

So I became a hide inspector
and did some paper work

945

00:48:53,250 --> 00:48:55,800

for the company, office work.

946

00:48:55,800 --> 00:48:58,090

That sustained me
during the summers.

947

00:48:58,090 --> 00:49:00,540

I actually wanted to go
into the hide business

948
00:49:00,540 --> 00:49:01,980
and follow my
father's footsteps.

949
00:49:01,980 --> 00:49:03,520
He wouldn't hear of it.

950
00:49:03,520 --> 00:49:06,720
He saw it as a dying business.

951
00:49:06,720 --> 00:49:08,190
And he was right.

952
00:49:08,190 --> 00:49:10,680
For his time, he didn't
know that every luxury

953
00:49:10,680 --> 00:49:12,560
car in Bethesda,
[INAUDIBLE] would

954
00:49:12,560 --> 00:49:17,010
have leather seats nowadays.

955
00:49:17,010 --> 00:49:21,000
But I graduated
from City College.

956
00:49:21,000 --> 00:49:23,340
I had no idea what
I wanted to do

957
00:49:23,340 --> 00:49:26,610
with myself, which was a
source of great unhappiness

958
00:49:26,610 --> 00:49:28,560
to my father.

959

00:49:28,560 --> 00:49:30,630

So I volunteered
to go to the army.

960

00:49:30,630 --> 00:49:32,200

I was going to be
drafted anyways,

961

00:49:32,200 --> 00:49:38,730

so I sped up the process by
volunteering in March of 1955.

962

00:49:38,730 --> 00:49:41,070

I went into the army.

963

00:49:41,070 --> 00:49:46,440

And as luck would have
it, I was sent to Germany.

964

00:49:46,440 --> 00:49:50,610

I was stationed in Mainz.

965

00:49:50,610 --> 00:49:54,690

And as you know, my parents
were living in Rotterdam.

966

00:49:54,690 --> 00:49:57,510

So when I was able
to get a pass,

967

00:49:57,510 --> 00:50:00,270

a weekend pass, I was
actually able to go on a train

968

00:50:00,270 --> 00:50:04,285

and go home, in effect,
home being Rotterdam then,

969

00:50:04,285 --> 00:50:07,330

and getting a good
home-cooked meals.

970

00:50:07,330 --> 00:50:09,420

Were you stationed
in Germany because

971
00:50:09,420 --> 00:50:14,100
of your knowledge of German--

972
00:50:14,100 --> 00:50:14,600
No.

973
00:50:14,600 --> 00:50:15,660
--and your background?

974
00:50:15,660 --> 00:50:15,900
No.

975
00:50:15,900 --> 00:50:17,430
I thought I was being
sent to Germany.

976
00:50:17,430 --> 00:50:19,097
I'd hoped I would
become an interpreter.

977
00:50:19,097 --> 00:50:21,660
It turned out there were so
many German-speaking GIs,

978
00:50:21,660 --> 00:50:23,970
there was a surplus.

979
00:50:23,970 --> 00:50:26,070
It was one of those
lucky things, I think.

980
00:50:26,070 --> 00:50:30,180
I've had so much
luck in my life.

981
00:50:30,180 --> 00:50:33,130
I actually had advanced
infantry training,

982

00:50:33,130 --> 00:50:35,315
which is most unusual.

983
00:50:35,315 --> 00:50:37,710
It was most unusual for
any college graduate

984
00:50:37,710 --> 00:50:39,420
to go through so much
infantry training.

985
00:50:39,420 --> 00:50:42,240
I didn't know how to
finagle my way out of it.

986
00:50:42,240 --> 00:50:47,220
But in the end, I was lucky,
because I was sent to Germany.

987
00:50:47,220 --> 00:50:50,430
The other piece of luck I had
was that they made a mistake

988
00:50:50,430 --> 00:50:53,040
in my records, the army did.

989
00:50:53,040 --> 00:50:56,700
They listed my
occupation as teacher,

990
00:50:56,700 --> 00:50:58,270
which I didn't correct.

991
00:50:58,270 --> 00:51:00,320
I thought it my stand
me in good stead.

992
00:51:00,320 --> 00:51:01,140
And indeed it did.

993
00:51:01,140 --> 00:51:04,890
Because about six months
after I arrived in Mainz.

994

00:51:04,890 --> 00:51:07,220

The army was looking
for former teachers.

995

00:51:07,220 --> 00:51:10,730

And they found two,
another fellow and me.

996

00:51:10,730 --> 00:51:12,570

And what they
wanted was to set up

997

00:51:12,570 --> 00:51:18,270

a program for the kids of the
American families stationed

998

00:51:18,270 --> 00:51:21,720

in Mainz, a recreation program.

999

00:51:21,720 --> 00:51:24,300

So this other chap
and I did that.

1000

00:51:24,300 --> 00:51:31,502

And we organized girls' softball
teams, gymnastics, outings,

1001

00:51:31,502 --> 00:51:32,460

and that sort of thing.

1002

00:51:32,460 --> 00:51:34,820

I actually became a
Boy Scout. leader.

1003

00:51:34,820 --> 00:51:36,570

I'd never been a Boy
Scout, and the reason

1004

00:51:36,570 --> 00:51:38,737

I never was a Boy Scout was
that my parents couldn't

1005
00:51:38,737 --> 00:51:40,260
afford the dues.

1006
00:51:40,260 --> 00:51:41,520
But I was a Boy Scout leader.

1007
00:51:41,520 --> 00:51:44,280
And I actually went on a hiking
trip with the Boy Scouts.

1008
00:51:44,280 --> 00:51:49,500
But because of my German,
I somehow hooked up

1009
00:51:49,500 --> 00:51:52,110
with the German
consulate in Mainz

1010
00:51:52,110 --> 00:51:56,310
and persuaded them to let
me set up a parallel program

1011
00:51:56,310 --> 00:51:58,970
for German kids, which I did.

1012
00:51:58,970 --> 00:52:05,460
In my off-duty time, had
square dances for German kids.

1013
00:52:05,460 --> 00:52:09,330
Taught them how to
square dance, went on

1014
00:52:09,330 --> 00:52:12,180
outings, and that sort of thing.

1015
00:52:12,180 --> 00:52:15,300
I actually met a young lady that
I thought I wanted to marry,

1016
00:52:15,300 --> 00:52:20,430
and became engaged,

a Christian girl.

1017
00:52:20,430 --> 00:52:23,524

1018
00:52:23,524 --> 00:52:27,240
It had a devastating
effect on my parents.

1019
00:52:27,240 --> 00:52:33,900
And being the dutiful son
that I was, I ended it.

1020
00:52:33,900 --> 00:52:36,560
She made it easy.

1021
00:52:36,560 --> 00:52:38,250
Her father had died in the war.

1022
00:52:38,250 --> 00:52:41,700
Her mother forbade her to go out
with me, because I was a Jew.

1023
00:52:41,700 --> 00:52:45,150
so by mutual agreement,
we ended that.

1024
00:52:45,150 --> 00:52:46,860
And it was a good thing we did.

1025
00:52:46,860 --> 00:52:52,500

1026
00:52:52,500 --> 00:52:57,540
But it was interesting to
be a GI, a German-born GI.

1027
00:52:57,540 --> 00:53:00,150

1028
00:53:00,150 --> 00:53:05,710
In 1957, the German Army

came into being again.

1029
00:53:05,710 --> 00:53:09,600
It started with
an officer corps.

1030
00:53:09,600 --> 00:53:13,570
And the American
army was looking

1031
00:53:13,570 --> 00:53:17,440
for German-speaking GIs.

1032
00:53:17,440 --> 00:53:21,730
So I was selected, of course,
for a one-week program

1033
00:53:21,730 --> 00:53:25,040
to indoctrinate these
new German officers, who

1034
00:53:25,040 --> 00:53:30,760
were going to be the cadre
of the reborn German army,

1035
00:53:30,760 --> 00:53:34,810
to teach them and train them
in the use of American weapons,

1036
00:53:34,810 --> 00:53:38,720
from tanks to machine
guns to M1 rifles.

1037
00:53:38,720 --> 00:53:39,850
It was an interesting week.

1038
00:53:39,850 --> 00:53:43,900

1039
00:53:43,900 --> 00:53:46,870
The way it worked was it
was one German-speaking GI

1040

00:53:46,870 --> 00:53:50,140
with an American officer
and a group of about 20

1041

00:53:50,140 --> 00:53:52,330
or 30 German officers.

1042

00:53:52,330 --> 00:53:54,060
Those were the groupings.

1043

00:53:54,060 --> 00:53:58,090
They had forgotten to tell us
where we were going to eat.

1044

00:53:58,090 --> 00:54:04,030
Part of the program included
showing them an American army

1045

00:54:04,030 --> 00:54:06,490
field kitchen.

1046

00:54:06,490 --> 00:54:12,850
And so I guided my 20 or 30
German officers to their tent

1047

00:54:12,850 --> 00:54:15,520
where they were going to be fed
and shown how an American field

1048

00:54:15,520 --> 00:54:16,900
kitchen works.

1049

00:54:16,900 --> 00:54:19,770
But I stood there
outside, not knowing

1050

00:54:19,770 --> 00:54:21,140
where I was supposed to eat.

1051

00:54:21,140 --> 00:54:23,530
They had forgotten
to tell us that.

1052
00:54:23,530 --> 00:54:26,250
Well, this German captain--

1053
00:54:26,250 --> 00:54:29,410
he was either a
captain or a major--

1054
00:54:29,410 --> 00:54:34,300
came to me, clicked his heels--

1055
00:54:34,300 --> 00:54:37,300
some habits are
hard to give up--

1056
00:54:37,300 --> 00:54:40,390
and said, that if I
had no other plans,

1057
00:54:40,390 --> 00:54:44,410
the colonel, who was the
highest-ranking member

1058
00:54:44,410 --> 00:54:47,470
of their group, would be
honored to have me sit with him

1059
00:54:47,470 --> 00:54:49,405
for lunch, which I accepted.

1060
00:54:49,405 --> 00:54:51,280
And the first question,
as you might imagine,

1061
00:54:51,280 --> 00:54:55,680
was how did I learn
to speak German?

1062
00:54:55,680 --> 00:54:58,050
Well, I was born in
America, I told him.

1063

00:54:58,050 --> 00:55:01,480
But before the war, my father
worked in the German embassy

1064
00:55:01,480 --> 00:55:02,750
in Berlin.

1065
00:55:02,750 --> 00:55:05,110
And I made many trips, and
I learned speak German.

1066
00:55:05,110 --> 00:55:07,900
I was not going to be let on.

1067
00:55:07,900 --> 00:55:10,143
And whether they
swallowed it or not,

1068
00:55:10,143 --> 00:55:11,560
they certainly
gave the impression

1069
00:55:11,560 --> 00:55:13,890
that they believed it.

1070
00:55:13,890 --> 00:55:17,320
And I ask, why were you
not going to let them know?

1071
00:55:17,320 --> 00:55:22,240
I did not admit that I was born
in Germany until very recently,

1072
00:55:22,240 --> 00:55:22,870
very recently.

1073
00:55:22,870 --> 00:55:25,830

1074
00:55:25,830 --> 00:55:28,660
As you could hear, I have a
bit of an accent or inflection.

1075

00:55:28,660 --> 00:55:33,820

And up until quite
recently, when I was asked,

1076

00:55:33,820 --> 00:55:37,590

I would say New Zealand,
which is what people thought.

1077

00:55:37,590 --> 00:55:40,930

They never pinpointed Germany.

1078

00:55:40,930 --> 00:55:43,090

I wanted to erase
that part of my past.

1079

00:55:43,090 --> 00:55:47,320

I wanted to be an American in
the strongest possible way.

1080

00:55:47,320 --> 00:55:50,470

Somehow, admitting that
I was born in Germany

1081

00:55:50,470 --> 00:55:53,170

made me seem inferior.

1082

00:55:53,170 --> 00:55:56,380

I cannot rationalize it or
explain it any better than

1083

00:55:56,380 --> 00:55:58,810

that.

1084

00:55:58,810 --> 00:56:00,250

It's actually only
since I started

1085

00:56:00,250 --> 00:56:05,620

working at the Holocaust Museum
that I not only admit it,

1086

00:56:05,620 --> 00:56:07,300

but I'm now proud to say it.

1087
00:56:07,300 --> 00:56:11,470
And when I orient groups of
kids, the first question I

1088
00:56:11,470 --> 00:56:14,050
ask them, does everybody
hear anything funny

1089
00:56:14,050 --> 00:56:15,770
about the way I speak?

1090
00:56:15,770 --> 00:56:17,580
And all these hands go up.

1091
00:56:17,580 --> 00:56:20,540
And that's how I get them hooked
into my little introductory

1092
00:56:20,540 --> 00:56:21,040
talk.

1093
00:56:21,040 --> 00:56:24,020

1094
00:56:24,020 --> 00:56:27,850
I want to talk a little
bit about that later.

1095
00:56:27,850 --> 00:56:30,280
And then you came home.

1096
00:56:30,280 --> 00:56:34,120
And what did you do when you
came back to the United States?

1097
00:56:34,120 --> 00:56:37,810
My parents were still in
Europe when I came home.

1098
00:56:37,810 --> 00:56:40,510

Again, I had no idea
what I wanted to do.

1099
00:56:40,510 --> 00:56:48,190
But some-- actually, it
was one of the wives of one

1100
00:56:48,190 --> 00:56:51,970
of the executives
of the Kaufman firm

1101
00:56:51,970 --> 00:56:56,440
heard I was back from
the army and asked

1102
00:56:56,440 --> 00:56:59,680
what I was interested in doing.

1103
00:56:59,680 --> 00:57:03,940
And not me personally, she asked
somebody, my father, my mother,

1104
00:57:03,940 --> 00:57:07,448
and was told that I'm
interested in books and writing,

1105
00:57:07,448 --> 00:57:07,990
or something.

1106
00:57:07,990 --> 00:57:10,690
I thought I might become
a short story writer.

1107
00:57:10,690 --> 00:57:15,400
So she had a friend on
Esquire magazine, also

1108
00:57:15,400 --> 00:57:19,750
a Jewish gentleman, Bamberger,
I think his name was.

1109
00:57:19,750 --> 00:57:21,578
And he granted me an interview--

1110
00:57:21,578 --> 00:57:23,120
I only got this
interview, of course,

1111
00:57:23,120 --> 00:57:25,460
because of this connection--

1112
00:57:25,460 --> 00:57:29,390
a nice gentleman, who asked
me what I wanted to do.

1113
00:57:29,390 --> 00:57:32,560
And I said, well, I want
to work for a magazine.

1114
00:57:32,560 --> 00:57:38,980
And of course, I had no
experience, no training.

1115
00:57:38,980 --> 00:57:43,180
And he very kindly told me,
that since I had no experience,

1116
00:57:43,180 --> 00:57:44,920
they had no job for me.

1117
00:57:44,920 --> 00:57:48,250
But he suggested that I go
over to The New York Times.

1118
00:57:48,250 --> 00:57:53,380
He said, and I quote,
sometimes they hire copy boys.

1119
00:57:53,380 --> 00:57:54,550
So I did that.

1120
00:57:54,550 --> 00:57:57,730
I think the following day, I
went to The New York Times--

1121

00:57:57,730 --> 00:58:00,250
again, one of these
extremely lucky things.

1122
00:58:00,250 --> 00:58:04,690
They must have had
resumes by the hundreds,

1123
00:58:04,690 --> 00:58:09,310
I imagine, for people who wanted
to work for The New York Times.

1124
00:58:09,310 --> 00:58:12,350
The next day, this young
woman who interviewed me

1125
00:58:12,350 --> 00:58:15,940
in the personnel
office, called me

1126
00:58:15,940 --> 00:58:17,190
and asked if I was interested.

1127
00:58:17,190 --> 00:58:18,800
They had an opening.

1128
00:58:18,800 --> 00:58:21,300
I'm sure she thought I was--

1129
00:58:21,300 --> 00:58:24,670
she took a liking to me--

1130
00:58:24,670 --> 00:58:26,170
not in a--

1131
00:58:26,170 --> 00:58:28,820
I don't want to give the wrong
impression-- a sexual way.

1132
00:58:28,820 --> 00:58:31,340
She was an older lady.

1133

00:58:31,340 --> 00:58:32,330
She was married.

1134
00:58:32,330 --> 00:58:34,300
She just thought I was--

1135
00:58:34,300 --> 00:58:35,780
she just liked me, I guess.

1136
00:58:35,780 --> 00:58:39,220
There's no other explanation
for calling me the next day.

1137
00:58:39,220 --> 00:58:42,050
And of course, I
jumped at the chance

1138
00:58:42,050 --> 00:58:44,360
to work for the
great New York Times.

1139
00:58:44,360 --> 00:58:46,820
I mean, ever since I
took the subway to school

1140
00:58:46,820 --> 00:58:49,490
to Brooklyn Tech
for Manhattan, there

1141
00:58:49,490 --> 00:58:52,430
were two kinds of people for
me in the world in the subway--

1142
00:58:52,430 --> 00:58:55,500
the good guys who read The
New York Times and then

1143
00:58:55,500 --> 00:59:02,780
The Herald Tribune, and the
tabloids, which I frowned upon.

1144
00:59:02,780 --> 00:59:05,300
So this was a great,

great opportunity.

1145

00:59:05,300 --> 00:59:14,600

And in those days, copy boys did everything but write or edit,

1146

00:59:14,600 --> 00:59:15,500

of course.

1147

00:59:15,500 --> 00:59:17,390

It was a glorified errand boy.

1148

00:59:17,390 --> 00:59:22,520

And my very first job was in the so-called white tower--

1149

00:59:22,520 --> 00:59:26,270

excuse me, ivory tower, where the editorial writers sat.

1150

00:59:26,270 --> 00:59:28,490

And if you can picture this, my job

1151

00:59:28,490 --> 00:59:33,290

was to take a shopping cart, a supermarket type shopping cart,

1152

00:59:33,290 --> 00:59:36,460

and distribute the newspapers to all these writers

1153

00:59:36,460 --> 00:59:40,730

who sat around this bank of offices--

1154

00:59:40,730 --> 00:59:43,160

The Times, The Tribune, The Daily News,

1155

00:59:43,160 --> 00:59:45,260

some foreign newspapers.

1156

00:59:45,260 --> 00:59:47,480

Then when I did that,
I did the same thing,

1157

00:59:47,480 --> 00:59:51,110

again distributing the mail;
then the galley proofs.

1158

00:59:51,110 --> 00:59:53,160

I bought lunches
for them, coffees.

1159

00:59:53,160 --> 00:59:56,000

I ran all kinds of errands.

1160

00:59:56,000 --> 01:00:00,470

In fact, one day, I
had the most unusual

1161

01:00:00,470 --> 01:00:02,540

among many unusual errands.

1162

01:00:02,540 --> 01:00:05,990

One of the editorial
writers had become

1163

01:00:05,990 --> 01:00:08,750

infected with a tropical
disease, during World War II,

1164

01:00:08,750 --> 01:00:10,580

in the Pacific.

1165

01:00:10,580 --> 01:00:12,140

And about once a
month, he had to go

1166

01:00:12,140 --> 01:00:13,265

to the medical department--

1167

01:00:13,265 --> 01:00:15,270

The Times had its own

medical department--

1168
01:00:15,270 --> 01:00:17,430
to have a test tube
of blood taken.

1169
01:00:17,430 --> 01:00:19,160
And I had to rush
out to a Park Avenue

1170
01:00:19,160 --> 01:00:22,720
specialist on the subway,
in a brown paper envelope.

1171
01:00:22,720 --> 01:00:24,410
It was still warm, the blood.

1172
01:00:24,410 --> 01:00:28,390
That's the kind of things copy
boys had to do in those days.

1173
01:00:28,390 --> 01:00:31,233
A few months later, I heard
of an opening in the Sunday

1174
01:00:31,233 --> 01:00:33,650
department, which sounded more
interesting, because that's

1175
01:00:33,650 --> 01:00:37,070
where the magazine is, the
Sunday Book Review, the Travel

1176
01:00:37,070 --> 01:00:38,500
section [INAUDIBLE].

1177
01:00:38,500 --> 01:00:40,880
I did basically the
same thing, but the work

1178
01:00:40,880 --> 01:00:43,550
was more interesting.

1179

01:00:43,550 --> 01:00:48,020

And just as I had taught
myself English years earlier,

1180

01:00:48,020 --> 01:00:52,790

I taught myself how
to be a journalist

1181

01:00:52,790 --> 01:01:00,350

by watching and observing
what other people did,

1182

01:01:00,350 --> 01:01:05,120

making the connection
between the clips I had

1183

01:01:05,120 --> 01:01:10,130

to get from the morgue,
the subject of the clips,

1184

01:01:10,130 --> 01:01:13,550

and the finished story
in that Sunday's paper

1185

01:01:13,550 --> 01:01:15,360

that the writer wrote.

1186

01:01:15,360 --> 01:01:18,240

So I learned a
great deal that way.

1187

01:01:18,240 --> 01:01:22,560

But there was no
way to move ahead.

1188

01:01:22,560 --> 01:01:28,070

I actually spent a total
of three years doing that

1189

01:01:28,070 --> 01:01:31,850

and worked my way to
an assistant picture

1190

01:01:31,850 --> 01:01:37,070
editor on the magazine,
replacing a woman who

1191

01:01:37,070 --> 01:01:41,090
had gone on maternity leave.

1192

01:01:41,090 --> 01:01:44,108
And she decided to come
back, so I was out of a job,

1193

01:01:44,108 --> 01:01:44,900
and I had to leave.

1194

01:01:44,900 --> 01:01:47,550

1195

01:01:47,550 --> 01:01:50,420
I got a job then on a
small paper in New England,

1196

01:01:50,420 --> 01:01:56,010
in Danbury, Connecticut, as
a reporter and then editor.

1197

01:01:56,010 --> 01:01:58,550
Did that for two years.

1198

01:01:58,550 --> 01:02:02,640
And again, one of those very
incredibly lucky things that

1199

01:02:02,640 --> 01:02:06,680
have happened so many
times in my life, one day,

1200

01:02:06,680 --> 01:02:09,310
I got a call from
The New York Times,

1201

01:02:09,310 --> 01:02:11,700
and they asked me if

I wanted to come back.

1202
01:02:11,700 --> 01:02:14,390
I don't know where
they knew I was.

1203
01:02:14,390 --> 01:02:17,310
I had no contact
with them whatsoever.

1204
01:02:17,310 --> 01:02:20,798
I don't know why this
happened, but it happened.

1205
01:02:20,798 --> 01:02:22,340
And I went back to
The New York Times

1206
01:02:22,340 --> 01:02:26,930
and moved back to New York and
worked on the news of the Week

1207
01:02:26,930 --> 01:02:28,025
in Review--

1208
01:02:28,025 --> 01:02:30,180
it's now called
Review of the Week--

1209
01:02:30,180 --> 01:02:33,110
as a writer, as a
staff writer, one

1210
01:02:33,110 --> 01:02:36,830
of the group of eight
staff writers, which I

1211
01:02:36,830 --> 01:02:37,730
did for four years.

1212
01:02:37,730 --> 01:02:41,140

1213
01:02:41,140 --> 01:02:46,510
And then there was
a change of editors.

1214
01:02:46,510 --> 01:02:48,910
The job became boring.

1215
01:02:48,910 --> 01:02:50,867
And I decided to leave.

1216
01:02:50,867 --> 01:02:52,450
I got a job at
Business Week magazine.

1217
01:02:52,450 --> 01:02:57,250
I was a copy editor,
did that for five years.

1218
01:02:57,250 --> 01:03:01,710
When, again, a change of
editor at the magazine,

1219
01:03:01,710 --> 01:03:03,850
a man who was very unhappy
with The Washington

1220
01:03:03,850 --> 01:03:06,142
Bureau and the quality of
the writing in The Washington

1221
01:03:06,142 --> 01:03:10,810
Bureau, and I was offered the
job of assistant news editor

1222
01:03:10,810 --> 01:03:13,780
in The Washington Bureau.

1223
01:03:13,780 --> 01:03:16,600
So by then, we
had two daughters.

1224
01:03:16,600 --> 01:03:18,700

And the company
paid for our trip

1225
01:03:18,700 --> 01:03:21,130
to Washington, which
was a wonderful thing,

1226
01:03:21,130 --> 01:03:27,310
because New York was not
a place to bring up kids.

1227
01:03:27,310 --> 01:03:29,860
And here we are in
Bethesda, Maryland.

1228
01:03:29,860 --> 01:03:33,130
I spent altogether 21
years with McGraw-Hill--

1229
01:03:33,130 --> 01:03:36,895
McGraw-Hill, of course, is the
company that publishes Business

1230
01:03:36,895 --> 01:03:38,350
Week--

1231
01:03:38,350 --> 01:03:43,780
and retired just about
10 years ago at age 55.

1232
01:03:43,780 --> 01:03:47,320
I've been freelancing
ever since.

1233
01:03:47,320 --> 01:03:49,210
Let's talk a little
bit about your work

1234
01:03:49,210 --> 01:03:50,590
at the Holocaust Museum.

1235
01:03:50,590 --> 01:03:56,350
What prompted you to

be involved there?

1236
01:03:56,350 --> 01:03:59,020
I first read about
that there were

1237
01:03:59,020 --> 01:04:00,640
plans for a Holocaust Museum.

1238
01:04:00,640 --> 01:04:03,730
I had no idea what it
was going to be like.

1239
01:04:03,730 --> 01:04:08,050
I had no idea it was going to
be this grand building, that it

1240
01:04:08,050 --> 01:04:10,372
was going to be a
government project.

1241
01:04:10,372 --> 01:04:11,830
For some reason or
other, I thought

1242
01:04:11,830 --> 01:04:16,510
it was going to be this
small endeavor put together

1243
01:04:16,510 --> 01:04:17,560
by a group of Jews.

1244
01:04:17,560 --> 01:04:20,770
And I knew I just had
to be involved with it.

1245
01:04:20,770 --> 01:04:22,350
And I didn't get anywhere.

1246
01:04:22,350 --> 01:04:25,180
I made numerous phone calls.

1247

01:04:25,180 --> 01:04:30,340
I don't know how I got the
number that I was calling.

1248
01:04:30,340 --> 01:04:32,350
I guess it was on L Street.

1249
01:04:32,350 --> 01:04:36,268
It must have been a friend
or a friend of a friend.

1250
01:04:36,268 --> 01:04:37,810
I don't think they
took me seriously,

1251
01:04:37,810 --> 01:04:40,400
because when they asked
what I wanted to do, I said,

1252
01:04:40,400 --> 01:04:43,510
in all sincerity, I'll do
anything you want me to do.

1253
01:04:43,510 --> 01:04:45,520
I will even clean the bathroom.

1254
01:04:45,520 --> 01:04:46,660
And I meant it--

1255
01:04:46,660 --> 01:04:48,160
again, thinking
this was going to be

1256
01:04:48,160 --> 01:04:51,850
a small thing in some rented
store, or something like that.

1257
01:04:51,850 --> 01:04:55,720
This is the image I
had, for some reason.

1258
01:04:55,720 --> 01:04:56,620
So they ignored me.

1259
01:04:56,620 --> 01:04:59,440
And I just kept pestering
them and pestering them,

1260
01:04:59,440 --> 01:05:02,290
until I was called
for an interview

1261
01:05:02,290 --> 01:05:06,610
and was in the first
group of trainees.

1262
01:05:06,610 --> 01:05:09,010
You said you knew that you
just had to get involved.

1263
01:05:09,010 --> 01:05:11,200
Why?

1264
01:05:11,200 --> 01:05:18,400
Because the Holocaust,
although I was not

1265
01:05:18,400 --> 01:05:21,790
in a concentration camp,
the whole immigration

1266
01:05:21,790 --> 01:05:25,060
is the seminal event of my life.

1267
01:05:25,060 --> 01:05:30,790
I feel very grateful
to be here, to be

1268
01:05:30,790 --> 01:05:36,610
able to talk about it, to have
escaped with so few scars--

1269
01:05:36,610 --> 01:05:38,620
a few psychological
scars, to be sure.

1270

01:05:38,620 --> 01:05:43,540

But compared to what
others suffered--

1271

01:05:43,540 --> 01:05:46,950

I read a great deal
about the Holocaust,

1272

01:05:46,950 --> 01:05:50,848

Evelyn doesn't understand how
I can read all these books

1273

01:05:50,848 --> 01:05:51,640

or why I read them.

1274

01:05:51,640 --> 01:05:53,080

But I do.

1275

01:05:53,080 --> 01:05:54,970

There's one on my
table right now.

1276

01:05:54,970 --> 01:05:58,930

1277

01:05:58,930 --> 01:06:01,390

When I heard about the
museum, even though I didn't

1278

01:06:01,390 --> 01:06:03,540

know what it was
going to be like,

1279

01:06:03,540 --> 01:06:04,915

I just knew I had
to be involved.

1280

01:06:04,915 --> 01:06:07,810

1281

01:06:07,810 --> 01:06:14,740

And I have missed a very

few Thursday afternoons.

1282

01:06:14,740 --> 01:06:19,478

When I was interviewed by the first director of volunteers,

1283

01:06:19,478 --> 01:06:21,770

Betsy [PERSONAL NAME],, she asked me what I want to do.

1284

01:06:21,770 --> 01:06:22,870

I said, no brain work.

1285

01:06:22,870 --> 01:06:28,660

I want to be on the floor with the public.

1286

01:06:28,660 --> 01:06:31,630

I don't want to be behind the scenes.

1287

01:06:31,630 --> 01:06:34,120

And I've been doing that now since the beginning.

1288

01:06:34,120 --> 01:06:39,700

And I truly look forward to my four hours there every

1289

01:06:39,700 --> 01:06:42,370

Thursday.

1290

01:06:42,370 --> 01:06:45,640

I am not doing more, in part because, although I

1291

01:06:45,640 --> 01:06:50,170

did retire 10 years ago, I am actually still working,

1292

01:06:50,170 --> 01:06:53,230

for all practical purposes, full-time.

1293
01:06:53,230 --> 01:06:57,310
I make up for the
time I'm at the museum

1294
01:06:57,310 --> 01:07:02,590
by working at least
one night a week,

1295
01:07:02,590 --> 01:07:07,030
and sometimes more, and quite
a bit on weekends as well.

1296
01:07:07,030 --> 01:07:09,505
Why did you want to be
on the floor with people

1297
01:07:09,505 --> 01:07:12,790
rather than behind the scenes?

1298
01:07:12,790 --> 01:07:16,180
Behind the scenes-- well.

1299
01:07:16,180 --> 01:07:17,290
Two reasons, I think.

1300
01:07:17,290 --> 01:07:19,370
It seemed to be studios work.

1301
01:07:19,370 --> 01:07:26,630
It seemed to be too much like
a job that I had left behind--

1302
01:07:26,630 --> 01:07:30,470
in other words,
table work, research.

1303
01:07:30,470 --> 01:07:34,480
I'm not good at that.

1304
01:07:34,480 --> 01:07:39,890
I just wanted to be in the

exhibits, to be with people.

1305

01:07:39,890 --> 01:07:44,160

I just had the sense
I had to be there.

1306

01:07:44,160 --> 01:07:47,190

It was difficult
in the beginning.

1307

01:07:47,190 --> 01:07:52,890

But I don't mind being assigned
to the permanent exhibit, which

1308

01:07:52,890 --> 01:07:55,320

doesn't happen
very often anymore.

1309

01:07:55,320 --> 01:07:57,440

I don't mind being there.

1310

01:07:57,440 --> 01:08:00,990

It refreshes my memory
of where things are.

1311

01:08:00,990 --> 01:08:04,630

It always reinforces a
sense of thankfulness.

1312

01:08:04,630 --> 01:08:07,516

1313

01:08:07,516 --> 01:08:11,090

I just can't get away from that.

1314

01:08:11,090 --> 01:08:15,080

And as you see, I get emotional.

1315

01:08:15,080 --> 01:08:20,240

What do you think you bring
to the museum that someone who

1316

01:08:20,240 --> 01:08:21,609
did not go through what you--

1317
01:08:21,609 --> 01:08:24,729

1318
01:08:24,729 --> 01:08:26,830
as she did?

1319
01:08:26,830 --> 01:08:28,229
What I bring to the museum?

1320
01:08:28,229 --> 01:08:30,910
Yeah, so another
volunteer talking

1321
01:08:30,910 --> 01:08:33,790
to people, who was
born in this country

1322
01:08:33,790 --> 01:08:36,670
and didn't experience what
you experience-- what do you

1323
01:08:36,670 --> 01:08:38,632
bring because of
your experience?

1324
01:08:38,632 --> 01:08:41,229

1325
01:08:41,229 --> 01:08:43,590
Unfortunately, not a great deal.

1326
01:08:43,590 --> 01:08:47,740
I wish there were more
opportunity to do that.

1327
01:08:47,740 --> 01:08:54,340
I wish the museum would make
better use of people like me.

1328

01:08:54,340 --> 01:08:59,229
In point of fact,
they have changed

1329
01:08:59,229 --> 01:09:03,580
the orientations
to make them now

1330
01:09:03,580 --> 01:09:07,810
content-free, which
deprives someone

1331
01:09:07,810 --> 01:09:14,319
like me of talking to groups
of kids about our experiences.

1332
01:09:14,319 --> 01:09:17,260

1333
01:09:17,260 --> 01:09:20,529
I'm very sorry about that.

1334
01:09:20,529 --> 01:09:28,330
I think my fellow survivors
are equally sorry.

1335
01:09:28,330 --> 01:09:34,990
I know that it added another
dimension to my involvement

1336
01:09:34,990 --> 01:09:36,609
with the museum.

1337
01:09:36,609 --> 01:09:41,380
I would like to think it added
a dimension to the visitors.

1338
01:09:41,380 --> 01:09:46,600
I certainly had a lot
of people listening

1339
01:09:46,600 --> 01:09:50,680
to my every word in a way

that no longer happens.

1340
01:09:50,680 --> 01:09:52,387
And of course,
the volunteers who

1341
01:09:52,387 --> 01:09:54,220
had much more interesting
experiences than I

1342
01:09:54,220 --> 01:10:00,460
did have much more to
tell, had much more reason

1343
01:10:00,460 --> 01:10:03,760
to be utilized in that fashion.

1344
01:10:03,760 --> 01:10:09,610
It is no longer the case, except
for the Fannie Mae program,

1345
01:10:09,610 --> 01:10:12,490
which I am not involved
with, because, as I said,

1346
01:10:12,490 --> 01:10:16,390
I'm not retired, and I can't
devote that much time yet.

1347
01:10:16,390 --> 01:10:18,580
Those kids do get
an orientation,

1348
01:10:18,580 --> 01:10:22,120
but it's only the kids in
that program from the DC

1349
01:10:22,120 --> 01:10:23,840
and Baltimore schools.

1350
01:10:23,840 --> 01:10:27,740
It's not the people who come
in from all around the country.

1351
01:10:27,740 --> 01:10:30,370
So what exactly are your duties?

1352
01:10:30,370 --> 01:10:36,670
Very routine-- manning
the information desk

1353
01:10:36,670 --> 01:10:39,730
and tearing tickets and
holding the elevators,

1354
01:10:39,730 --> 01:10:43,240
patrolling the permanent
exhibit, answering questions.

1355
01:10:43,240 --> 01:10:44,920
Unfortunately, most
of the questions

1356
01:10:44,920 --> 01:10:52,540
are not very
intellectually challenging.

1357
01:10:52,540 --> 01:10:57,400
When you walk into the
museum from the street,

1358
01:10:57,400 --> 01:10:59,110
does it do something for you?

1359
01:10:59,110 --> 01:10:59,950
I'm home.

1360
01:10:59,950 --> 01:11:02,540
I belong here.

1361
01:11:02,540 --> 01:11:05,110
It's an incredible feeling.

1362
01:11:05,110 --> 01:11:08,880

1363
01:11:08,880 --> 01:11:13,450
I have never had such a sense
of belonging to anything.

1364
01:11:13,450 --> 01:11:14,210
I feel I own it.

1365
01:11:14,210 --> 01:11:19,611

1366
01:11:19,611 --> 01:11:22,070
Excuse me.

1367
01:11:22,070 --> 01:11:24,120
I always cry.

1368
01:11:24,120 --> 01:11:25,110
I cry very easily.

1369
01:11:25,110 --> 01:11:27,630

1370
01:11:27,630 --> 01:11:30,600
I've been asked questions.

1371
01:11:30,600 --> 01:11:33,390
In the beginning-- this no
longer happens with me--

1372
01:11:33,390 --> 01:11:36,870
in the beginning, when
the museum first opened,

1373
01:11:36,870 --> 01:11:38,220
there were a lot of survivors.

1374
01:11:38,220 --> 01:11:43,203

1375
01:11:43,203 --> 01:11:44,120

I did a lot of crying.

1376

01:11:44,120 --> 01:11:49,730

1377

01:11:49,730 --> 01:11:51,820

I was better at hiding
it than I am now.

1378

01:11:51,820 --> 01:11:55,508

1379

01:11:55,508 --> 01:11:59,430

But i think most of
those people have come.

1380

01:11:59,430 --> 01:12:02,930

It was a pilgrimage for them.

1381

01:12:02,930 --> 01:12:09,500

And unfortunately,
majority of visitors

1382

01:12:09,500 --> 01:12:13,900

now are quite ignorant
of the Holocaust.

1383

01:12:13,900 --> 01:12:15,410

I hope they learn something.

1384

01:12:15,410 --> 01:12:19,730

1385

01:12:19,730 --> 01:12:24,040

But it's a wonderful
place to be.

1386

01:12:24,040 --> 01:12:27,640

Has it changed you in
any way by working there?

1387

01:12:27,640 --> 01:12:31,227

1388
01:12:31,227 --> 01:12:32,560
I don't think it has changed me.

1389
01:12:32,560 --> 01:12:41,430
I think it has reconnected
me more with my Jewishness.

1390
01:12:41,430 --> 01:12:47,220

1391
01:12:47,220 --> 01:12:48,770
Some people say I'm religious.

1392
01:12:48,770 --> 01:12:50,370
I don't think I really am.

1393
01:12:50,370 --> 01:12:56,300
I'm not exactly observant, but
I'm very connected to my past,

1394
01:12:56,300 --> 01:12:58,140
to my German Jewish past.

1395
01:12:58,140 --> 01:13:02,390
I'm actually proud
to be a German Jew.

1396
01:13:02,390 --> 01:13:07,890
It's a twin prime, the
Jewishness and the German-ness.

1397
01:13:07,890 --> 01:13:10,560
I'm even now grappling
with the question

1398
01:13:10,560 --> 01:13:13,365
of whether I should forgive.

1399
01:13:13,365 --> 01:13:14,517
I haven't decided yet.

1400
01:13:14,517 --> 01:13:15,600
I have to do more reading.

1401
01:13:15,600 --> 01:13:19,520

1402
01:13:19,520 --> 01:13:28,470
But I'm very grateful, as I
said, not only to have escaped,

1403
01:13:28,470 --> 01:13:33,550
that our whole entire
family escaped,

1404
01:13:33,550 --> 01:13:39,220
but that this museum exists.

1405
01:13:39,220 --> 01:13:42,880
It has also been a source
of some unhappiness for me--

1406
01:13:42,880 --> 01:13:46,240

1407
01:13:46,240 --> 01:13:50,870
hard to explain,
hard to rationalize.

1408
01:13:50,870 --> 01:13:55,126
I feel very hostile
to some people

1409
01:13:55,126 --> 01:14:00,280
who have absolutely no interest
in the museum, who I think

1410
01:14:00,280 --> 01:14:02,240
should have an interest in it.

1411
01:14:02,240 --> 01:14:10,130
And I number among those

people like my brothers,

1412
01:14:10,130 --> 01:14:11,780
who have no interest.

1413
01:14:11,780 --> 01:14:13,550
Parenthetically,
one of my brothers,

1414
01:14:13,550 --> 01:14:16,150
George, is an Episcopalian.

1415
01:14:16,150 --> 01:14:18,620
He converted.

1416
01:14:18,620 --> 01:14:22,010
And I think there
is no question,

1417
01:14:22,010 --> 01:14:25,220
but that the
strange relationship

1418
01:14:25,220 --> 01:14:29,890
I have with my brothers
stems from this.

1419
01:14:29,890 --> 01:14:35,060
So people who I think
should visit the museum

1420
01:14:35,060 --> 01:14:40,430
and don't, other
than those who feel

1421
01:14:40,430 --> 01:14:44,720
that it's too much of an
emotional experience for them,

1422
01:14:44,720 --> 01:14:46,722
I can understand that.

1423

01:14:46,722 --> 01:14:51,040
But people who have no interest,
I just can't grasp that.

1424
01:14:51,040 --> 01:14:55,590

1425
01:14:55,590 --> 01:14:59,970
I think it's a pilgrimage that
certainly, every Jew should

1426
01:14:59,970 --> 01:15:01,520
make.

1427
01:15:01,520 --> 01:15:04,368