

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:06,580

2

00:00:06,580 --> 00:00:09,580

This is the United States
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3

00:00:09,580 --> 00:00:14,830

volunteer collection interview
with Michel Margosis conducted

4

00:00:14,830 --> 00:00:22,330

by Gail Schwartz on August 20,
1998 in Arlington, Virginia.

5

00:00:22,330 --> 00:00:25,990

This interview is part
of the museum's project

6

00:00:25,990 --> 00:00:29,410

to interview Holocaust survivors
and witnesses who are also

7

00:00:29,410 --> 00:00:32,439

volunteers with the museum.

8

00:00:32,439 --> 00:00:34,270

This is a follow-up
interview that

9

00:00:34,270 --> 00:00:40,870

will focus on Mr Margosis'
post-Holocaust experience.

10

00:00:40,870 --> 00:00:43,300

In preparation for
this interview,

11

00:00:43,300 --> 00:00:46,210

I read the summary
of the interview

12

00:00:46,210 --> 00:00:48,580

you conducted with
me, Gail Schwartz,

13

00:00:48,580 --> 00:00:52,600

for the Jewish Community
Council of Greater Washington

14

00:00:52,600 --> 00:00:56,680

on February 26, 1989.

15

00:00:56,680 --> 00:01:02,020

And I read a 20-page memoir that
you wrote in December of 1988

16

00:01:02,020 --> 00:01:05,379

as well as the section of
the book, Triumph and Spirit

17

00:01:05,379 --> 00:01:08,140

by Nicholas Del Calzo.

18

00:01:08,140 --> 00:01:10,030

I will not ask you
to repeat everything

19

00:01:10,030 --> 00:01:12,280

you said in that interview.

20

00:01:12,280 --> 00:01:13,960

Instead, I will
use this interview

21

00:01:13,960 --> 00:01:17,200

as an opportunity to
follow up on that interview

22

00:01:17,200 --> 00:01:21,070

and focus on your
post-Holocaust experiences.

23

00:01:21,070 --> 00:01:29,040

This is tape number 1, side

A. What is your full name?

24

00:01:29,040 --> 00:01:31,270

Michel Margosis.

25

00:01:31,270 --> 00:01:35,680

And your date of birth
and place of birth.

26

00:01:35,680 --> 00:01:40,600

September 2, 1928 in
Brussels, Belgium.

27

00:01:40,600 --> 00:01:43,750

As I said, you've been
interviewed extensively

28

00:01:43,750 --> 00:01:46,960

already, but just to put this
interview in a framework, let's

29

00:01:46,960 --> 00:01:50,990

summarize where you
were during the war.

30

00:01:50,990 --> 00:01:55,390

Both of your parents
were born in Odessa.

31

00:01:55,390 --> 00:01:58,450

Your father was a journalist,
an active Zionist,

32

00:01:58,450 --> 00:02:00,825

and he was sent to Siberia.

33

00:02:00,825 --> 00:02:03,430

34

00:02:03,430 --> 00:02:07,840

He was married at the time.

35

00:02:07,840 --> 00:02:11,260

He later escaped
from Siberia and went

36

00:02:11,260 --> 00:02:14,830

to Persia where your parents
became Iranian citizens.

37

00:02:14,830 --> 00:02:18,460

And your older brother and
sister were born in Iran.

38

00:02:18,460 --> 00:02:21,000

Then your family
later went to Belgium,

39

00:02:21,000 --> 00:02:23,560

and your father published
two weekly newspapers

40

00:02:23,560 --> 00:02:25,960

in Yiddish and in French.

41

00:02:25,960 --> 00:02:30,370

And you three children
belonged to Hashomer Hatzair.

42

00:02:30,370 --> 00:02:33,760

There was not much
activity immediately

43

00:02:33,760 --> 00:02:38,470

after September 1, 1939 when the
war began until May 10, 1940,

44

00:02:38,470 --> 00:02:42,940

when the Germans
invaded Belgium.

45

00:02:42,940 --> 00:02:46,510

Four days later, the five
of you went by train.

46

00:02:46,510 --> 00:02:48,280

You were strafed
by German planes.

47

00:02:48,280 --> 00:02:50,250

You had to hide under
the benches of the train,

48

00:02:50,250 --> 00:02:54,490

and you crossed into France,
just south of Toulouse.

49

00:02:54,490 --> 00:02:59,050

And in the summer of 1940,
you hid and worked on a farm.

50

00:02:59,050 --> 00:03:01,030

Your father tried to
get a visa but then

51

00:03:01,030 --> 00:03:03,730

had to flee to Portugal.

52

00:03:03,730 --> 00:03:06,430

Soon after, your mother
decided to go to Marseilles

53

00:03:06,430 --> 00:03:09,750

to go to the Persian
Legation for help.

54

00:03:09,750 --> 00:03:12,670

And the four of you were
detained in Toulouse in a camp,

55

00:03:12,670 --> 00:03:15,820

but you were able to
escape that night.

56

00:03:15,820 --> 00:03:19,870

On October 1941, you
arrived in Marseilles.

57

00:03:19,870 --> 00:03:21,640

Your mother was able
to support the family

58

00:03:21,640 --> 00:03:23,880

by selling on the black market.

59

00:03:23,880 --> 00:03:29,230

And the order arranged for
you to go to a scout camp.

60

00:03:29,230 --> 00:03:31,600

After the Allied
invasion of North Africa,

61

00:03:31,600 --> 00:03:34,660

your mother made plans
to leave and got papers

62

00:03:34,660 --> 00:03:37,330

to go through the Pyrenees.

63

00:03:37,330 --> 00:03:40,030

You took a train to
Toulouse where your mother

64

00:03:40,030 --> 00:03:42,190

pretended to use sign
language when you all

65

00:03:42,190 --> 00:03:44,620

saw the German soldiers.

66

00:03:44,620 --> 00:03:47,500

Two days after
arriving at the resort,

67

00:03:47,500 --> 00:03:51,160

two gendarmes offered to
guide your family to Spain,

68

00:03:51,160 --> 00:03:55,180

and your mother was able to
pay them \$40,000 for that.

69
00:03:55,180 --> 00:03:59,980
Then another guide offered to
take you further to Barcelona.

70
00:03:59,980 --> 00:04:02,890
Along the way, you
were all arrested

71
00:04:02,890 --> 00:04:04,480
and you were taken
to an orphanage.

72
00:04:04,480 --> 00:04:06,310
And the other three
members of your family

73
00:04:06,310 --> 00:04:08,950
were taken to a
jail in Barcelona.

74
00:04:08,950 --> 00:04:11,200
After two weeks, you, and
your mother, and your sister

75
00:04:11,200 --> 00:04:14,260
were sent to a hotel sponsored
by the Joint Distribution

76
00:04:14,260 --> 00:04:17,620
Committee, and your brother
was sent to a concentration

77
00:04:17,620 --> 00:04:20,037
camp near Bilbao.

78
00:04:20,037 --> 00:04:21,579
The Joint Distribution
Committee then

79
00:04:21,579 --> 00:04:23,800

arranged for your
brother and your family

80
00:04:23,800 --> 00:04:26,200
to get together in Barcelona.

81
00:04:26,200 --> 00:04:30,160
And they sponsored a convoy
for children under 16

82
00:04:30,160 --> 00:04:32,650
to go to the United States.

83
00:04:32,650 --> 00:04:34,780
You took a train
to Lisbon and were

84
00:04:34,780 --> 00:04:37,880
able to see your father
for a whole week.

85
00:04:37,880 --> 00:04:39,670
And then you got on
a small Portuguese

86
00:04:39,670 --> 00:04:43,420
ship with a group of
children to make the voyage.

87
00:04:43,420 --> 00:04:47,050
Some German U-boat
sailors boarded your ship

88
00:04:47,050 --> 00:04:49,520
during the voyage but
did leave you alone.

89
00:04:49,520 --> 00:04:53,530
And then on June 22, 1943,
you landed in Philadelphia,

90
00:04:53,530 --> 00:04:56,200
went to New York, eventually

to your cousin's house

91
00:04:56,200 --> 00:04:57,970
in Brooklyn.

92
00:04:57,970 --> 00:05:02,080
You became a citizen in
1949, graduated from college,

93
00:05:02,080 --> 00:05:06,070
was in the army for two
years, got a master's, worked

94
00:05:06,070 --> 00:05:07,840
for the Food and
Drug Administration

95
00:05:07,840 --> 00:05:10,590
of the federal government.

96
00:05:10,590 --> 00:05:12,340
You are married and
you have two children.

97
00:05:12,340 --> 00:05:16,060

98
00:05:16,060 --> 00:05:19,750
Before we go on to your
post-Holocaust experiences,

99
00:05:19,750 --> 00:05:22,780
I just wanted to
clarify some points.

100
00:05:22,780 --> 00:05:25,540
How would you describe
yourself as a child?

101
00:05:25,540 --> 00:05:27,657
Were you very independent?

102

00:05:27,657 --> 00:05:28,990
Were you able to be by yourself?

103
00:05:28,990 --> 00:05:32,230

104
00:05:32,230 --> 00:05:33,970
I must have been
quite independent,

105
00:05:33,970 --> 00:05:37,570
because my parents were working.

106
00:05:37,570 --> 00:05:39,680
When we were alone
in Marseilles,

107
00:05:39,680 --> 00:05:44,520
my mother was
looking to survive,

108
00:05:44,520 --> 00:05:45,910
dealing in black marketing.

109
00:05:45,910 --> 00:05:48,610
And we were alone
very much of the time

110
00:05:48,610 --> 00:05:51,190
so that we were independent--

111
00:05:51,190 --> 00:05:54,890
in fact, so independent many
times I didn't come home.

112
00:05:54,890 --> 00:05:58,570
I had a friend whose father
had a restaurant or bakery

113
00:05:58,570 --> 00:06:01,890
and I was able to
get in there and be

114

00:06:01,890 --> 00:06:05,660
fed that way on many occasions.

115

00:06:05,660 --> 00:06:08,920
So we were very
much independent.

116

00:06:08,920 --> 00:06:12,910
I'd go to the beach every
day or do whatever I wanted.

117

00:06:12,910 --> 00:06:16,900
Were you a very optimistic
child even though the conditions

118

00:06:16,900 --> 00:06:18,370
were difficult?

119

00:06:18,370 --> 00:06:21,540
I think I've always
been optimistic.

120

00:06:21,540 --> 00:06:25,780
Back then, I never realized
the danger I was in.

121

00:06:25,780 --> 00:06:33,300
But it's when I came here I
found out what I had escaped.

122

00:06:33,300 --> 00:06:35,880
What kind of relationship did
you have with your mother?

123

00:06:35,880 --> 00:06:39,060
Was it a very
close relationship?

124

00:06:39,060 --> 00:06:41,570
Pretty close with
the whole family--

125

00:06:41,570 --> 00:06:44,910
not my sister, my brother.

126
00:06:44,910 --> 00:06:47,780
Four years apart from my
sister-- she had her friends,

127
00:06:47,780 --> 00:06:49,810
and I had mine.

128
00:06:49,810 --> 00:06:51,630
And my brother, three
years difference,

129
00:06:51,630 --> 00:06:53,430
we were fairly close.

130
00:06:53,430 --> 00:06:56,850
We got closer as we got older.

131
00:06:56,850 --> 00:07:01,670
But as I said, we
were very independent.

132
00:07:01,670 --> 00:07:04,740
What language did you speak
with your sister, brother,

133
00:07:04,740 --> 00:07:06,580
and parents?

134
00:07:06,580 --> 00:07:14,000
Well, we had a three-tier
language in the family.

135
00:07:14,000 --> 00:07:18,440
My parents spoke Yiddish to each
other, Russian to the children,

136
00:07:18,440 --> 00:07:21,910
and the children spoke
French to each other.

137

00:07:21,910 --> 00:07:25,830

So my Russian is
strictly kitchen Russian.

138

00:07:25,830 --> 00:07:28,920

I learned Yiddish here when I
came because my cousin could

139

00:07:28,920 --> 00:07:32,010

not understand anything
else except English,

140

00:07:32,010 --> 00:07:35,560

and I certainly didn't
know any of that.

141

00:07:35,560 --> 00:07:39,620

And the words that I did hear
from my parents, I remembered.

142

00:07:39,620 --> 00:07:43,320

And Yiddish came back to me.

143

00:07:43,320 --> 00:07:48,000

You were 12 years old
when Belgium was attacked.

144

00:07:48,000 --> 00:07:52,830

What is it like to experience
something like that at age 12?

145

00:07:52,830 --> 00:07:56,300

146

00:07:56,300 --> 00:08:00,210

It's difficult to
get back to that age

147

00:08:00,210 --> 00:08:04,990

and remember how it felt. I
knew that something terrible

148

00:08:04,990 --> 00:08:05,960
was happening.

149
00:08:05,960 --> 00:08:10,630
And I remember seeing
movies about World War I

150
00:08:10,630 --> 00:08:16,240
even when I was younger than
12, and particularly seeing

151
00:08:16,240 --> 00:08:18,910
things about the French
building the Maginot Line,

152
00:08:18,910 --> 00:08:20,170
and we felt so secure--

153
00:08:20,170 --> 00:08:23,440
and caught up in
the false security,

154
00:08:23,440 --> 00:08:28,460
but it was still a feeling of
we were practically impervious.

155
00:08:28,460 --> 00:08:30,620
We could do anything.

156
00:08:30,620 --> 00:08:33,080
So as I said, I was
optimistic then.

157
00:08:33,080 --> 00:08:40,000
And I don't know the thing
about the safety of the time,

158
00:08:40,000 --> 00:08:43,210
but I was not too worried.

159
00:08:43,210 --> 00:08:46,450
My father was, my parents
were, because they

160
00:08:46,450 --> 00:08:49,330
went through the
Russian revolution

161
00:08:49,330 --> 00:08:50,890
and internment over there.

162
00:08:50,890 --> 00:08:54,670
But I never had any of that.

163
00:08:54,670 --> 00:08:56,620
Did you go to your
parents for comfort

164
00:08:56,620 --> 00:08:57,890
when the invasion started?

165
00:08:57,890 --> 00:09:00,950

166
00:09:00,950 --> 00:09:06,735
I do not remember being worried
about it and seeking support.

167
00:09:06,735 --> 00:09:09,300

168
00:09:09,300 --> 00:09:15,300
I know that my father, even
before the invasion of Belgium.

169
00:09:15,300 --> 00:09:20,150
From 1933 on, he was
looking to migrate.

170
00:09:20,150 --> 00:09:23,110
So being a
journalist, he kept up

171
00:09:23,110 --> 00:09:26,670
on all these affairs

of state of Belgium,

172

00:09:26,670 --> 00:09:28,640

and Germany, and
what was happening,

173

00:09:28,640 --> 00:09:31,780

and the plight of
the Jews in Russia.

174

00:09:31,780 --> 00:09:33,110

He kept up with that.

175

00:09:33,110 --> 00:09:36,130

And he it's obvious
that the world is

176

00:09:36,130 --> 00:09:39,490

going to the dogs, and
the best place to go

177

00:09:39,490 --> 00:09:41,970

was the United States.

178

00:09:41,970 --> 00:09:44,020

But we were never
allowed to come.

179

00:09:44,020 --> 00:09:46,870

180

00:09:46,870 --> 00:09:49,570

Why weren't you allowed to come?

181

00:09:49,570 --> 00:09:51,640

Because they had a quota system.

182

00:09:51,640 --> 00:09:54,940

And the quota system was
particularly favorable

183

00:09:54,940 --> 00:09:56,750

if you were British-born
or German-born,

184
00:09:56,750 --> 00:10:00,910
but not to the Slavic people
or the Middle Eastern.

185
00:10:00,910 --> 00:10:03,950
We were the last ones.

186
00:10:03,950 --> 00:10:06,790
So I don't know how they
managed to come here in '46,

187
00:10:06,790 --> 00:10:11,260
but there were patient.

188
00:10:11,260 --> 00:10:15,010
You said your father even
since 1933 was very concerned

189
00:10:15,010 --> 00:10:15,940
about the conditions.

190
00:10:15,940 --> 00:10:19,540
Did he talk this over
with you, or your brother,

191
00:10:19,540 --> 00:10:20,260
or your sister?

192
00:10:20,260 --> 00:10:22,150
Or did he try to
protect children?

193
00:10:22,150 --> 00:10:26,360

194
00:10:26,360 --> 00:10:30,240
I do not remember him
talking to us about it.

195

00:10:30,240 --> 00:10:32,220
He talked to, of
course, his colleagues,

196
00:10:32,220 --> 00:10:37,390
and he wrote about it in
the paper extensively.

197
00:10:37,390 --> 00:10:41,430
At that age, I don't think
children are involved

198
00:10:41,430 --> 00:10:43,080
in the world's politics.

199
00:10:43,080 --> 00:10:46,590
And I don't think they
worry about these things.

200
00:10:46,590 --> 00:10:51,540
I know that after the war we
talked about it quite a bit.

201
00:10:51,540 --> 00:10:57,000
Did your parents treat you
like a child or as an adult

202
00:10:57,000 --> 00:10:57,815
after the invasion?

203
00:10:57,815 --> 00:11:01,250

204
00:11:01,250 --> 00:11:03,280
Well, my father left
soon after that--

205
00:11:03,280 --> 00:11:05,600
just a few months.

206
00:11:05,600 --> 00:11:09,980
I think around June 1940,
he went to Portugal.

207
00:11:09,980 --> 00:11:12,680
At that point, we had to
be treated like adults

208
00:11:12,680 --> 00:11:14,690
because we had to
work on the farm.

209
00:11:14,690 --> 00:11:16,610
They expected us to
do certain things

210
00:11:16,610 --> 00:11:23,400
and not just live as a
guest of the people there.

211
00:11:23,400 --> 00:11:29,960
But we worked that
adults would do, I guess.

212
00:11:29,960 --> 00:11:33,710
When you left Belgium four
days after the invasion,

213
00:11:33,710 --> 00:11:37,280
did you take anything
special with you?

214
00:11:37,280 --> 00:11:38,970
Again, you were
only 12 years old.

215
00:11:38,970 --> 00:11:41,300
Do you remember
anything about that?

216
00:11:41,300 --> 00:11:45,230
I don't remember taking
anything with me from Belgium.

217
00:11:45,230 --> 00:11:47,960
But I remember that

while I was in France,

218
00:11:47,960 --> 00:11:51,060
I had acquired a few things.

219
00:11:51,060 --> 00:11:53,690
And as I crossed
the border to Spain,

220
00:11:53,690 --> 00:11:56,820
I remember carrying
a big dictionary--

221
00:11:56,820 --> 00:11:59,180
Le Roux's dictionary.

222
00:11:59,180 --> 00:12:01,700
And somehow when I got
here to the States,

223
00:12:01,700 --> 00:12:05,210
that dictionary had disappeared.

224
00:12:05,210 --> 00:12:10,610
Later on my brother admitted
that he purloined it from me.

225
00:12:10,610 --> 00:12:13,340
But I had that, and
I also collected

226
00:12:13,340 --> 00:12:16,275
stamps which I managed to save.

227
00:12:16,275 --> 00:12:18,960

228
00:12:18,960 --> 00:12:22,250
But from Belgium, I don't
remember having anything.

229
00:12:22,250 --> 00:12:24,500

I was just wondering if there
was something particular

230
00:12:24,500 --> 00:12:28,250
that a 12-year-old boy
would bring with him.

231
00:12:28,250 --> 00:12:33,140
Well, Belgian candy was not bad,
but I didn't even think of it.

232
00:12:33,140 --> 00:12:36,300
Well, how did you feel
about leaving Belgium?

233
00:12:36,300 --> 00:12:39,180
You were born there,
did you feel Belgian?

234
00:12:39,180 --> 00:12:40,680
Was it difficult
for you to leave?

235
00:12:40,680 --> 00:12:43,940

236
00:12:43,940 --> 00:12:45,770
I just went along
with the family.

237
00:12:45,770 --> 00:12:48,830
And my family didn't
feel Belgian--

238
00:12:48,830 --> 00:12:53,000
although we felt welcome
there and well-treated

239
00:12:53,000 --> 00:12:56,570
by the administration there.

240
00:12:56,570 --> 00:13:00,417
We had no problems with it.

241
00:13:00,417 --> 00:13:02,000
And when I left, I
didn't know that it

242
00:13:02,000 --> 00:13:04,480
would be a permanent move.

243
00:13:04,480 --> 00:13:07,150
We were just refugees,
and we were just

244
00:13:07,150 --> 00:13:09,310
going to go to another
city in Belgium.

245
00:13:09,310 --> 00:13:12,490
It just happened that the
city, as we get closer to it,

246
00:13:12,490 --> 00:13:13,740
it got further away from us.

247
00:13:13,740 --> 00:13:16,760

248
00:13:16,760 --> 00:13:25,160
But I had no thoughts about
leaving, or returning, or--

249
00:13:25,160 --> 00:13:27,080
You said your family
did not feel Belgian.

250
00:13:27,080 --> 00:13:30,680
Did you since you
were born there?

251
00:13:30,680 --> 00:13:32,930
Not really.

252
00:13:32,930 --> 00:13:36,920

Being the only Belgian-born
doesn't make me really more

253
00:13:36,920 --> 00:13:38,480
Belgian than anybody else.

254
00:13:38,480 --> 00:13:42,690

255
00:13:42,690 --> 00:13:46,100
I married an
American, and I don't

256
00:13:46,100 --> 00:13:49,550
know whether she felt any
more American than I did.

257
00:13:49,550 --> 00:13:52,220
How would you have described
yourself at 12, then,

258
00:13:52,220 --> 00:13:54,620
if it weren't Belgian?

259
00:13:54,620 --> 00:13:56,310
As a happy-go-lucky kid.

260
00:13:56,310 --> 00:13:57,650
I was going to school.

261
00:13:57,650 --> 00:13:59,150
I didn't have any worries.

262
00:13:59,150 --> 00:14:05,130
I was just living
a childhood life.

263
00:14:05,130 --> 00:14:07,560
When you were on the
train, and got strafed,

264
00:14:07,560 --> 00:14:10,320

and you hid under
the bench, did that

265
00:14:10,320 --> 00:14:14,080
bring back memories of the
invasion a few days before?

266
00:14:14,080 --> 00:14:18,630
No, that's a totally
different experience.

267
00:14:18,630 --> 00:14:24,810
The invasion, to me, consisted
of the morning of May 10,

268
00:14:24,810 --> 00:14:29,220
hearing strange noises which
happened to be bombings.

269
00:14:29,220 --> 00:14:32,765
But that was the only experience
that I had known directly.

270
00:14:32,765 --> 00:14:34,140
And then that
wasn't even a worry

271
00:14:34,140 --> 00:14:36,190
because it was in the distance.

272
00:14:36,190 --> 00:14:38,480
My father recognized
it immediately.

273
00:14:38,480 --> 00:14:41,100
The strafing is a
lot more immediate,

274
00:14:41,100 --> 00:14:46,320
where most of the people run ran
of the train, and many of them

275
00:14:46,320 --> 00:14:48,810

didn't make it back.

276

00:14:48,810 --> 00:14:51,840

My father had the
foresight to hide us

277

00:14:51,840 --> 00:14:57,620

under the benches, where
if we were going to be hit,

278

00:14:57,620 --> 00:15:04,140

the shots would ricochet
off the seats in the cabins

279

00:15:04,140 --> 00:15:06,200

where they were.

280

00:15:06,200 --> 00:15:13,800

So again, I was too optimistic
or too worried to be scared.

281

00:15:13,800 --> 00:15:16,970

I wasn't afraid--
might have been silly,

282

00:15:16,970 --> 00:15:18,000

but I was not afraid.

283

00:15:18,000 --> 00:15:20,710

284

00:15:20,710 --> 00:15:22,870

In France when your
father left, did

285

00:15:22,870 --> 00:15:25,420

he say anything special
to you before he went?

286

00:15:25,420 --> 00:15:27,980

287

00:15:27,980 --> 00:15:32,460

When he left, we were in
Cazeres, in that small town.

288

00:15:32,460 --> 00:15:35,450

And my father had
gone to Vichy hoping

289

00:15:35,450 --> 00:15:38,510

to catch some of the
foreign legations there.

290

00:15:38,510 --> 00:15:40,940

By the time he got
there, it was too late.

291

00:15:40,940 --> 00:15:43,850

Everybody had moved,
although we had

292

00:15:43,850 --> 00:15:45,712

heard that some had
gone to Marseilles,

293

00:15:45,712 --> 00:15:46,670

and that's why we went.

294

00:15:46,670 --> 00:15:50,390

But by the time he got there,
he had papers for himself,

295

00:15:50,390 --> 00:15:52,910

he could not get anything else.

296

00:15:52,910 --> 00:15:59,460

And he wrote a letter, actually,
I don't think he phoned.

297

00:15:59,460 --> 00:16:02,928

Telephones were not as
popular back in those days.

298

00:16:02,928 --> 00:16:04,470

Just saying that he
had to go, and he

299
00:16:04,470 --> 00:16:09,690
would do anything he
could to try to get us

300
00:16:09,690 --> 00:16:11,760
with him as soon as possible.

301
00:16:11,760 --> 00:16:15,000
That took a little time,
but eventually my mother

302
00:16:15,000 --> 00:16:16,950
had to do it on her own.

303
00:16:16,950 --> 00:16:19,890
When your family got the
letter, what was your reaction?

304
00:16:19,890 --> 00:16:22,590
Was it frightening to know
that your father wasn't

305
00:16:22,590 --> 00:16:25,740
coming right back?

306
00:16:25,740 --> 00:16:27,150
No.

307
00:16:27,150 --> 00:16:28,470
My mother cried, of course.

308
00:16:28,470 --> 00:16:31,500

309
00:16:31,500 --> 00:16:34,140
But she was strong--

310
00:16:34,140 --> 00:16:36,340
very strong.

311
00:16:36,340 --> 00:16:40,540
And she was able
to carry on and do

312
00:16:40,540 --> 00:16:50,220
what had to be done for four of
us to survive and go on living.

313
00:16:50,220 --> 00:16:53,870
The communication with my
father continued for a while,

314
00:16:53,870 --> 00:16:55,960
even though it was in Portugal.

315
00:16:55,960 --> 00:16:59,110
We were able to
write to each other.

316
00:16:59,110 --> 00:17:01,960
The letters were,
of course, censored.

317
00:17:01,960 --> 00:17:06,609
We could see that was taped
and plainly written, censored.

318
00:17:06,609 --> 00:17:09,940
And after a while, it stopped.

319
00:17:09,940 --> 00:17:13,800
But I don't think my
mother ever flinched,

320
00:17:13,800 --> 00:17:16,079
at least none that
I could detect.

321
00:17:16,079 --> 00:17:18,280
I'm sure she did.

322

00:17:18,280 --> 00:17:23,069
But when the letters stopped,
was that upsetting to you?

323
00:17:23,069 --> 00:17:25,800
I think the letters
stopped more on our side

324
00:17:25,800 --> 00:17:28,020
than from Portugal's
side, because I

325
00:17:28,020 --> 00:17:31,620
don't think they allowed
too much mail to go out

326
00:17:31,620 --> 00:17:33,495
from France.

327
00:17:33,495 --> 00:17:35,030
At that point, I
don't know where

328
00:17:35,030 --> 00:17:36,260
the communication stopped.

329
00:17:36,260 --> 00:17:38,780
I don't know whether it
was a government thing.

330
00:17:38,780 --> 00:17:44,700
Portugal was dominated mainly
by the Allies in policy,

331
00:17:44,700 --> 00:17:48,740
even though it was a
dictator there too.

332
00:17:48,740 --> 00:17:51,140
I don't know what
happened at that part.

333
00:17:51,140 --> 00:17:53,540

You did say your mother
was a very strong woman,

334
00:17:53,540 --> 00:17:57,470
and she did sound very
courageous and very strong.

335
00:17:57,470 --> 00:17:59,180
Can you just talk
a little bit more

336
00:17:59,180 --> 00:18:01,550
about where she got
this strength from?

337
00:18:01,550 --> 00:18:03,630
Do you know?

338
00:18:03,630 --> 00:18:07,760
Well, she left Russia when
my father was in Siberia

339
00:18:07,760 --> 00:18:13,190
and joined him in
Palestine on her own.

340
00:18:13,190 --> 00:18:15,560
She left her family--

341
00:18:15,560 --> 00:18:19,300
her mother, and
sister, brother--

342
00:18:19,300 --> 00:18:23,600
I never knew she had a brother
until many years later.

343
00:18:23,600 --> 00:18:29,000
But she joined them and
became a family again.

344
00:18:29,000 --> 00:18:34,700
In 1939, my father

had to go to Geneva

345

00:18:34,700 --> 00:18:40,000
to report on the Zionist
convention at that time.

346

00:18:40,000 --> 00:18:43,780
And when he could not get back
because war had been declared,

347

00:18:43,780 --> 00:18:47,060
that delayed his
return for many months.

348

00:18:47,060 --> 00:18:51,640
She was there, and she
did what she had to do.

349

00:18:51,640 --> 00:18:55,940
And as time went on,
she showed more courage

350

00:18:55,940 --> 00:18:56,900
than I had ever seen.

351

00:18:56,900 --> 00:19:01,440

352

00:19:01,440 --> 00:19:06,573
Would she confide in you and
talk to you about her concerns

353

00:19:06,573 --> 00:19:08,490
while she was dealing
with all these problems?

354

00:19:08,490 --> 00:19:11,400

355

00:19:11,400 --> 00:19:12,210
I don't think so.

356

00:19:12,210 --> 00:19:14,700
She kept very much to herself.

357
00:19:14,700 --> 00:19:17,360

358
00:19:17,360 --> 00:19:19,580
She might have talked
once with my sister.

359
00:19:19,580 --> 00:19:20,795
She was the older one.

360
00:19:20,795 --> 00:19:23,330

361
00:19:23,330 --> 00:19:25,640
But she did not
confide her plans

362
00:19:25,640 --> 00:19:28,040
as to what she was going to do.

363
00:19:28,040 --> 00:19:30,020
We found out she was
dealing in black market

364
00:19:30,020 --> 00:19:33,110
only, because we
saw the chocolate

365
00:19:33,110 --> 00:19:34,990
and cigarettes in the house.

366
00:19:34,990 --> 00:19:36,530
And sometimes I
would borrow them.

367
00:19:36,530 --> 00:19:39,050

368
00:19:39,050 --> 00:19:47,770

But as events developed,
we found out then--

369
00:19:47,770 --> 00:19:49,540
oh, we're going to the Pyrenees.

370
00:19:49,540 --> 00:19:50,130
That's good.

371
00:19:50,130 --> 00:19:52,820
My sister needed some treatment.

372
00:19:52,820 --> 00:19:55,030
So we had a paper to
show from the doctor

373
00:19:55,030 --> 00:20:03,690
that she needed treatment
of Saratoga-type waters.

374
00:20:03,690 --> 00:20:06,170
So we went there, and I
thought it was natural.

375
00:20:06,170 --> 00:20:08,940

376
00:20:08,940 --> 00:20:10,500
When we decided to
cross the borders,

377
00:20:10,500 --> 00:20:13,410
my mother said, well,
we have some money

378
00:20:13,410 --> 00:20:17,710
we can spare to take us over.

379
00:20:17,710 --> 00:20:23,570
But as things developed, as we
found out about these things--

380

00:20:23,570 --> 00:20:28,370
maybe it was for the best,
because then we could not

381
00:20:28,370 --> 00:20:32,220
dissuade or discourage
her from doing anything

382
00:20:32,220 --> 00:20:34,080
that she wanted to do.

383
00:20:34,080 --> 00:20:38,310
She made the decisions
and stuck to them.

384
00:20:38,310 --> 00:20:41,790
When you were detained
in that camp in Toulouse,

385
00:20:41,790 --> 00:20:45,720
were you very frightened?

386
00:20:45,720 --> 00:20:48,660
Originally, it was a
reception camp for refugees.

387
00:20:48,660 --> 00:20:53,130
I didn't know that we
were being detained.

388
00:20:53,130 --> 00:20:54,840
We were received
there as refugees

389
00:20:54,840 --> 00:20:59,880
and know that would feed us
a little bit and blankets.

390
00:20:59,880 --> 00:21:06,090
But as we talked to a
few inmates at the time,

391
00:21:06,090 --> 00:21:10,200

my mother was particularly
discouraged about what

392
00:21:10,200 --> 00:21:12,170
this might be.

393
00:21:12,170 --> 00:21:15,320
So after everybody
was asleep, we just

394
00:21:15,320 --> 00:21:19,010
raised the canvas
of the tent and just

395
00:21:19,010 --> 00:21:22,320
snuck out, never to return--

396
00:21:22,320 --> 00:21:24,650
which is a good thing,
because I believe

397
00:21:24,650 --> 00:21:31,178
that all these people ended
up in Drancy and Auschwitz.

398
00:21:31,178 --> 00:21:32,470
Did you want to leave the camp?

399
00:21:32,470 --> 00:21:34,930
Were you frightened
about leaving?

400
00:21:34,930 --> 00:21:35,770
Leaving at midnight?

401
00:21:35,770 --> 00:21:38,260
That's so romantic.

402
00:21:38,260 --> 00:21:42,920
No, I didn't want
to leave the camp.

403

00:21:42,920 --> 00:21:46,100
I didn't mind leaving the camp.

404
00:21:46,100 --> 00:21:50,120
The camp didn't appeal to
me in a military barracks.

405
00:21:50,120 --> 00:21:51,040
That was no fun.

406
00:21:51,040 --> 00:21:54,420

407
00:21:54,420 --> 00:21:58,710
So leaving, it was
just what we needed

408
00:21:58,710 --> 00:22:02,910
to do [INAUDIBLE] lifted
our spirits in a way.

409
00:22:02,910 --> 00:22:04,290
Did you feel very brave?

410
00:22:04,290 --> 00:22:07,200
You were just 13 years old.

411
00:22:07,200 --> 00:22:10,350
Did you feel 13?

412
00:22:10,350 --> 00:22:14,040
No, I felt probably older,
like most teenagers.

413
00:22:14,040 --> 00:22:18,540

414
00:22:18,540 --> 00:22:19,780
Brave?

415
00:22:19,780 --> 00:22:22,100
No, I don't think so.

416
00:22:22,100 --> 00:22:25,900
I did things because
they were there.

417
00:22:25,900 --> 00:22:29,320
I was hungry and I
lived in the country.

418
00:22:29,320 --> 00:22:35,060
I lived in a small town and I
was able to go in the fields.

419
00:22:35,060 --> 00:22:38,330
And when I was hungry,
I'd stop and eat

420
00:22:38,330 --> 00:22:40,400
five, 10 pounds of grapes--

421
00:22:40,400 --> 00:22:43,100
just not worrying
about the consequences,

422
00:22:43,100 --> 00:22:45,590
or climbing a tree
and having fruits

423
00:22:45,590 --> 00:22:50,750
or even climbing on
a truck and having

424
00:22:50,750 --> 00:22:55,100
watermelons from somebody else.

425
00:22:55,100 --> 00:22:56,520
And I wasn't brave.

426
00:22:56,520 --> 00:22:57,240
I was hungry.

427
00:22:57,240 --> 00:23:00,580

428
00:23:00,580 --> 00:23:03,740
And it was an exciting
youth, I guess.

429
00:23:03,740 --> 00:23:06,330
It's different from
most of the kids

430
00:23:06,330 --> 00:23:07,510
that you talk to these days.

431
00:23:07,510 --> 00:23:10,315

432
00:23:10,315 --> 00:23:12,940
Were you upset that you weren't
able to have a bar mitzvah when

433
00:23:12,940 --> 00:23:14,770
you turned 13?

434
00:23:14,770 --> 00:23:17,140
Was that important to you?

435
00:23:17,140 --> 00:23:20,960
My brother had a
fabulous bar mitzvah.

436
00:23:20,960 --> 00:23:26,020
One of the foremost honors
of Europe was invited--

437
00:23:26,020 --> 00:23:27,550
Joseph Schmitz.

438
00:23:27,550 --> 00:23:30,550
He was well-known
back in those days.

439
00:23:30,550 --> 00:23:35,230

He escaped to Switzerland,
but he never made it.

440
00:23:35,230 --> 00:23:38,560
His car was blown up--

441
00:23:38,560 --> 00:23:41,850
a well-known personality.

442
00:23:41,850 --> 00:23:46,370
I remember some of the
preparation from his bar

443
00:23:46,370 --> 00:23:49,150
mitzvah, so I was envious.

444
00:23:49,150 --> 00:23:54,110
But I always gave
myself the excuse

445
00:23:54,110 --> 00:23:57,660
that, well, the Germans
didn't allow me to do that.

446
00:23:57,660 --> 00:24:00,830
So I didn't miss it too much.

447
00:24:00,830 --> 00:24:03,520
I could have made it up when my
son was bar mitzvah'd, and we

448
00:24:03,520 --> 00:24:05,570
were thinking of doing
a double bar mitzvah,

449
00:24:05,570 --> 00:24:07,550
but then I chickened out--

450
00:24:07,550 --> 00:24:10,940
too much work, I was too
involved professionally,

451

00:24:10,940 --> 00:24:13,670
and that just didn't pan out.

452
00:24:13,670 --> 00:24:16,070
When you were on the
train and your mother

453
00:24:16,070 --> 00:24:18,110
had to resort to sign
language because she

454
00:24:18,110 --> 00:24:23,470
saw these German soldiers,
what did the German soldiers

455
00:24:23,470 --> 00:24:26,050
represent to you?

456
00:24:26,050 --> 00:24:28,390
The enemy.

457
00:24:28,390 --> 00:24:31,000
Again, I did not know
what they represented

458
00:24:31,000 --> 00:24:34,050
and what they could do.

459
00:24:34,050 --> 00:24:39,340
But when I saw my mother
gesticulating sign language,

460
00:24:39,340 --> 00:24:45,250
I was amazed that she had
the thought to do this.

461
00:24:45,250 --> 00:24:49,370
And in retrospect,
I think it was

462
00:24:49,370 --> 00:24:51,830
extremely courageous,
number one, to stay

463
00:24:51,830 --> 00:24:55,460
on the train with the troops.

464
00:24:55,460 --> 00:25:01,880
And it was just fantastic.

465
00:25:01,880 --> 00:25:06,260
Again, I was not too worried.

466
00:25:06,260 --> 00:25:08,210
I considered more or
less like a native,

467
00:25:08,210 --> 00:25:13,490
and my French was as good
as any of the natives.

468
00:25:13,490 --> 00:25:16,490
When I left Belgium and
lived in Marseilles,

469
00:25:16,490 --> 00:25:20,570
I acquired a Marseilles accent,
and I lost my Belgian accent.

470
00:25:20,570 --> 00:25:24,640
Nobody could ever
differentiate me from a local.

471
00:25:24,640 --> 00:25:29,050
Were the German soldiers
are fearful sight to you?

472
00:25:29,050 --> 00:25:30,620
No.

473
00:25:30,620 --> 00:25:32,840
I didn't talk to the strangers.

474
00:25:32,840 --> 00:25:34,880
They kept to themselves,

and they were laughing,

475

00:25:34,880 --> 00:25:36,770

and they were talking.

476

00:25:36,770 --> 00:25:39,740

That didn't represent
anything at that point.

477

00:25:39,740 --> 00:25:43,730

I remember that back
then before '39,

478

00:25:43,730 --> 00:25:48,920

we always referred to
the Germans as the Boche.

479

00:25:48,920 --> 00:25:50,540

It's only now that
they differentiate

480

00:25:50,540 --> 00:25:53,950

between German and Nazis.

481

00:25:53,950 --> 00:25:55,760

And back then it was strictly--

482

00:25:55,760 --> 00:25:59,380

I didn't know about
the Nazis philosophy

483

00:25:59,380 --> 00:26:02,590

that I found out later on.

484

00:26:02,590 --> 00:26:04,810

Did you know about a man
named Hitler at that time?

485

00:26:04,810 --> 00:26:05,700

Oh yes.

486

00:26:05,700 --> 00:26:09,470

We used to sing dirty
songs about him.

487
00:26:09,470 --> 00:26:12,760
Maybe that's why he
invaded Belgium, who knows?

488
00:26:12,760 --> 00:26:14,700
Yes, I knew some of the things.

489
00:26:14,700 --> 00:26:16,130
I used to read the paper.

490
00:26:16,130 --> 00:26:18,490
And that I skipped
some of the details,

491
00:26:18,490 --> 00:26:24,810
but I knew about Hitler,
and Goering, and even

492
00:26:24,810 --> 00:26:27,510
the propaganda.

493
00:26:27,510 --> 00:26:30,720
Propaganda became a
big word back then.

494
00:26:30,720 --> 00:26:33,150
And then I knew
there was something

495
00:26:33,150 --> 00:26:36,960
to fear-- that the continent
was going in that direction.

496
00:26:36,960 --> 00:26:45,080
But being as optimistic as I
was, I didn't worry too much.

497
00:26:45,080 --> 00:26:47,450
At that time, did
you talk things over

498
00:26:47,450 --> 00:26:50,670
with your brother or sister?

499
00:26:50,670 --> 00:26:51,980
No.

500
00:26:51,980 --> 00:26:54,570
We were fairly isolated
from each other.

501
00:26:54,570 --> 00:27:01,410
And he had his friends, she had
her friends, and I had mine.

502
00:27:01,410 --> 00:27:05,180
And that age group,
when you are 14,

503
00:27:05,180 --> 00:27:06,890
you have 14-year-old friends.

504
00:27:06,890 --> 00:27:09,630
When you are 17,
the 14-year-olds,

505
00:27:09,630 --> 00:27:12,020
you want to have
nothing to do with them.

506
00:27:12,020 --> 00:27:14,720
And the same with the girls.

507
00:27:14,720 --> 00:27:18,110
My sister was much more mature.

508
00:27:18,110 --> 00:27:21,160
And she wouldn't have anything
to do with the little kids.

509
00:27:21,160 --> 00:27:23,230
No, we didn't talk

to each other.

510
00:27:23,230 --> 00:27:25,070
I meant at home, let's
say, in the evening--

511
00:27:25,070 --> 00:27:27,140
In the evening, we
just had our dinner.

512
00:27:27,140 --> 00:27:30,880
And I guess we went out.

513
00:27:30,880 --> 00:27:31,550
I don't know.

514
00:27:31,550 --> 00:27:34,720
I don't remember much
of what we did evenings.

515
00:27:34,720 --> 00:27:36,880
During the day, we were active.

516
00:27:36,880 --> 00:27:40,320
I used to go skating
and go to the beach.

517
00:27:40,320 --> 00:27:45,270
And I got to know the
city pretty well--

518
00:27:45,270 --> 00:27:49,380
almost every street there,
but also hiding in the slums,

519
00:27:49,380 --> 00:27:52,410
and I knew those slums
better than any other part

520
00:27:52,410 --> 00:27:54,360
of the city.

521

00:27:54,360 --> 00:27:56,460

When your family
was arrested and you

522

00:27:56,460 --> 00:27:58,560

were put in the orphanage,
was that separation

523

00:27:58,560 --> 00:27:59,500

difficult for you?

524

00:27:59,500 --> 00:28:02,850

525

00:28:02,850 --> 00:28:05,910

No, that separation
was not too bad,

526

00:28:05,910 --> 00:28:08,300

because there were
other kids that were

527

00:28:08,300 --> 00:28:09,840

in the same situation as mine.

528

00:28:09,840 --> 00:28:14,290

And I knew we were in
a code neutral country.

529

00:28:14,290 --> 00:28:20,700

So I had no thought of
being returned to France,

530

00:28:20,700 --> 00:28:26,610

although I heard that before
the invasion of North Africa,

531

00:28:26,610 --> 00:28:30,450

the Spanish authorities did
return many of the refugees

532

00:28:30,450 --> 00:28:33,060

back into France.

533
00:28:33,060 --> 00:28:34,070
But I didn't do that.

534
00:28:34,070 --> 00:28:36,590
So you were confident that you
would see your mother again.

535
00:28:36,590 --> 00:28:37,430
Oh yes.

536
00:28:37,430 --> 00:28:40,670
There was no problem,
no fear of that.

537
00:28:40,670 --> 00:28:43,600

538
00:28:43,600 --> 00:28:47,210
I even thought that
the little problem

539
00:28:47,210 --> 00:28:49,130
of being separated for
a while was strictly

540
00:28:49,130 --> 00:28:53,120
because we didn't
have official entry

541
00:28:53,120 --> 00:28:56,690
papers, like a passport and
visa and being able to travel.

542
00:28:56,690 --> 00:28:59,570
But I figured within
a few days, I should

543
00:28:59,570 --> 00:29:02,240
be able to see my father even.

544
00:29:02,240 --> 00:29:03,680

So I was looking
forward to that.

545
00:29:03,680 --> 00:29:08,120

546
00:29:08,120 --> 00:29:12,990
When you heard your brother was
sent away, was that upsetting?

547
00:29:12,990 --> 00:29:16,520
That was a little more
upsetting because it was more

548
00:29:16,520 --> 00:29:21,500
of a residence for adults rather
than for children in my group.

549
00:29:21,500 --> 00:29:24,110
And I'd heard that there
was quite a bit of violence

550
00:29:24,110 --> 00:29:28,180
in that camp from the residence.

551
00:29:28,180 --> 00:29:33,030
But I had heard it was
mainly due to the Poles--

552
00:29:33,030 --> 00:29:35,630
refugees who were
arrested there.

553
00:29:35,630 --> 00:29:38,480
And there were
still some prisoners

554
00:29:38,480 --> 00:29:40,720
from the civil war in that camp.

555
00:29:40,720 --> 00:29:44,130

556

00:29:44,130 --> 00:29:47,300

But I didn't hear
too much about him,

557

00:29:47,300 --> 00:29:51,190

when he wrote just to
my mother, not to me.

558

00:29:51,190 --> 00:29:54,130

What was your reaction
when you heard that you'd

559

00:29:54,130 --> 00:29:55,630

be going to the United States?

560

00:29:55,630 --> 00:29:58,630

You'd be leaving
your family behind.

561

00:29:58,630 --> 00:30:00,010

We made plans for that.

562

00:30:00,010 --> 00:30:03,870

In fact, my mother asked
me first if I wanted to go.

563

00:30:03,870 --> 00:30:08,680

And I said, well, it's
only for children under 16.

564

00:30:08,680 --> 00:30:11,660

And if I go there, I'll be
able to be in a better position

565

00:30:11,660 --> 00:30:13,910

to work on the papers
so that you can join us

566

00:30:13,910 --> 00:30:15,590

later on much faster.

567

00:30:15,590 --> 00:30:19,370

Otherwise, it may
linger even more.

568
00:30:19,370 --> 00:30:21,950
So in a way, I was happy
that I was able to go.

569
00:30:21,950 --> 00:30:28,180
And as soon as I got here, I
made myself a pest of my uncle.

570
00:30:28,180 --> 00:30:30,420
I said, why don't
you send the papers?

571
00:30:30,420 --> 00:30:33,410
And I went to different people.

572
00:30:33,410 --> 00:30:38,270
I went to the consulate,
and I got in touch

573
00:30:38,270 --> 00:30:39,770
with the State Department.

574
00:30:39,770 --> 00:30:44,690
And they said, you'll
just have to wait.

575
00:30:44,690 --> 00:30:50,780
That was frustrating,
but I waited.

576
00:30:50,780 --> 00:30:52,310
So it sounds like
you were acting

577
00:30:52,310 --> 00:30:55,890
when you came older than a
typical 15 and 1/2 year old,

578
00:30:55,890 --> 00:30:56,900
16-year-old child.

579
00:30:56,900 --> 00:30:59,390
Yeah.

580
00:30:59,390 --> 00:31:02,080
I was acting-- I wanted
them to come and join me.

581
00:31:02,080 --> 00:31:07,760
At that point, I was
close to 15 already.

582
00:31:07,760 --> 00:31:12,960
And I had to go to school, which
was a new experience for me.

583
00:31:12,960 --> 00:31:16,900
I hadn't been in school
in about three years.

584
00:31:16,900 --> 00:31:20,420
And so I had a few
more responsibilities.

585
00:31:20,420 --> 00:31:25,920
But getting them over here
was a primary responsibility.

586
00:31:25,920 --> 00:31:27,670
What thoughts were
going through your mind

587
00:31:27,670 --> 00:31:29,680
when you were on the
voyage to the United States

588
00:31:29,680 --> 00:31:35,110
and then those German
sailors boarded your ship?

589
00:31:35,110 --> 00:31:38,415
Being a Portuguese ship, I
said, this is strictly neutral.

590
00:31:38,415 --> 00:31:39,790
They're not going
to do anything.

591
00:31:39,790 --> 00:31:40,290
They can't.

592
00:31:40,290 --> 00:31:42,460
It's not legal.

593
00:31:42,460 --> 00:31:45,800
Indeed, they left
everybody alone.

594
00:31:45,800 --> 00:31:48,530
But we did know this
somehow or other

595
00:31:48,530 --> 00:31:51,800
when we started the trip
again that one of the cooks

596
00:31:51,800 --> 00:31:54,080
was missing.

597
00:31:54,080 --> 00:31:56,270
We don't know what happened.

598
00:31:56,270 --> 00:31:59,960
Somebody thought
that he jumped over.

599
00:31:59,960 --> 00:32:01,618
I don't know why--

600
00:32:01,618 --> 00:32:02,910
must have been something there.

601
00:32:02,910 --> 00:32:06,740
And maybe they were
looking strictly for him.

602
00:32:06,740 --> 00:32:09,280

603
00:32:09,280 --> 00:32:10,210
I wasn't afraid.

604
00:32:10,210 --> 00:32:15,710
Again, being as
optimistic as I am.

605
00:32:15,710 --> 00:32:19,220
What was it like to put your
foot down on American soil

606
00:32:19,220 --> 00:32:19,940
when they landed?

607
00:32:19,940 --> 00:32:22,610

608
00:32:22,610 --> 00:32:24,680
Actually, when we
first landed, it

609
00:32:24,680 --> 00:32:29,120
was more scary than I
would have expected,

610
00:32:29,120 --> 00:32:33,080
because I saw all these
dirigibles in the sky covering

611
00:32:33,080 --> 00:32:36,630
the whole port of Philadelphia,
and then the same in New York,

612
00:32:36,630 --> 00:32:38,060
and the whole
coast-- just nothing

613
00:32:38,060 --> 00:32:43,140

but those balloons
that are petroleum.

614
00:32:43,140 --> 00:32:44,050
What's going on?

615
00:32:44,050 --> 00:32:49,330
I know it's wartime, but
it felt pretty good--

616
00:32:49,330 --> 00:32:51,450
especially when I
saw all these goods,

617
00:32:51,450 --> 00:32:54,750
all the stores open,
and all the activities.

618
00:32:54,750 --> 00:32:58,880
I didn't think the war
was touching anybody here.

619
00:32:58,880 --> 00:33:03,720
What did you know about
America before you came here?

620
00:33:03,720 --> 00:33:05,670
I knew they spoke
English here and they

621
00:33:05,670 --> 00:33:08,940
made a lot of good movies.

622
00:33:08,940 --> 00:33:13,830
I know the American Indian was
strictly an American feature

623
00:33:13,830 --> 00:33:14,610
and the cowboy.

624
00:33:14,610 --> 00:33:17,040
And we didn't have
cowboys in Belgium--

625
00:33:17,040 --> 00:33:19,680

626
00:33:19,680 --> 00:33:22,170
not much more.

627
00:33:22,170 --> 00:33:23,340
I didn't study it.

628
00:33:23,340 --> 00:33:30,570
Well, I knew that it did become
independent from England.

629
00:33:30,570 --> 00:33:32,900
But I didn't know
about the feelings--

630
00:33:32,900 --> 00:33:38,010
it took 200 years for the
feelings to dissipate.

631
00:33:38,010 --> 00:33:39,193
I didn't know much about it.

632
00:33:39,193 --> 00:33:41,610
I certainly didn't know anything
about the racial problems

633
00:33:41,610 --> 00:33:42,318
that we had here.

634
00:33:42,318 --> 00:33:44,840

635
00:33:44,840 --> 00:33:50,840
And I hate to use the term,
but some of my best friends

636
00:33:50,840 --> 00:33:54,730
in France were not white.

637

00:33:54,730 --> 00:33:57,280

In fact, my best
friend was Black.

638

00:33:57,280 --> 00:33:59,580

I think I might have
mentioned that before--

639

00:33:59,580 --> 00:34:04,530

his mother was Danish, and
his father was Cameroonian.

640

00:34:04,530 --> 00:34:08,730

And in retrospect, I
remember that Cameroon

641

00:34:08,730 --> 00:34:11,940

was under German
domination as a protector

642

00:34:11,940 --> 00:34:15,820

until the end of World War I.

643

00:34:15,820 --> 00:34:18,760

So he might have had still
these German attachments,

644

00:34:18,760 --> 00:34:23,270

and he did work for
the German government

645

00:34:23,270 --> 00:34:25,139

when we were in Marseilles.

646

00:34:25,139 --> 00:34:28,989

But these kids couldn't
tolerate that either.

647

00:34:28,989 --> 00:34:31,800

So we were active.

648

00:34:31,800 --> 00:34:33,780

We did a lot of things together.

649

00:34:33,780 --> 00:34:35,850

But again, he was too
young either for my brother

650

00:34:35,850 --> 00:34:39,690

or for my sister
to consort with.

651

00:34:39,690 --> 00:34:43,340

How good was your English
when you came here?

652

00:34:43,340 --> 00:34:47,540

I think I could say,
love, and that's about it.

653

00:34:47,540 --> 00:34:51,489

I don't even know if I
knew how to say, thank you.

654

00:34:51,489 --> 00:34:54,909

I heard the word,
love, in many songs--

655

00:34:54,909 --> 00:34:55,670

that's all I knew.

656

00:34:55,670 --> 00:34:58,910

657

00:34:58,910 --> 00:35:01,590

And so when you
went to high school,

658

00:35:01,590 --> 00:35:04,460

was that a very difficult
adjustment for you?

659

00:35:04,460 --> 00:35:08,660

Well, I received
help from a teacher

660
00:35:08,660 --> 00:35:13,140
who registered me, because
he was a French teacher.

661
00:35:13,140 --> 00:35:18,440
So for the first year
or two, I took French.

662
00:35:18,440 --> 00:35:21,298
So in the French class, I
was able to learn English,

663
00:35:21,298 --> 00:35:23,090
and the kids would
learn French, of course.

664
00:35:23,090 --> 00:35:26,110
And that's where I
learned most of it.

665
00:35:26,110 --> 00:35:31,040
But I had a hard time in English
and all the other courses.

666
00:35:31,040 --> 00:35:35,300
Civics-- I had to learn
about New York government.

667
00:35:35,300 --> 00:35:39,450
And I couldn't care
less by that time.

668
00:35:39,450 --> 00:35:42,130
But second year,
I did much better.

669
00:35:42,130 --> 00:35:45,340
I was able to read Shakespeare
by the second year.

670
00:35:45,340 --> 00:35:51,670
And we had to analyze

Midsummer Night's Dream--

671

00:35:51,670 --> 00:35:52,420
but I would cheat.

672

00:35:52,420 --> 00:35:55,510
I would read in French first.

673

00:35:55,510 --> 00:35:59,080
But by the third year,
I was good enough

674

00:35:59,080 --> 00:36:00,580
to join the senior society--

675

00:36:00,580 --> 00:36:03,640
the honorary society.

676

00:36:03,640 --> 00:36:06,760
And that was gratifying.

677

00:36:06,760 --> 00:36:08,710
I felt pretty good to
be able to communicate

678

00:36:08,710 --> 00:36:12,960
with the rest of
my neighborhood,

679

00:36:12,960 --> 00:36:15,280
because the first words
I learned in this country

680

00:36:15,280 --> 00:36:21,430
were Italian cusses
from the neighbors--

681

00:36:21,430 --> 00:36:22,465
you have to learn this.

682

00:36:22,465 --> 00:36:27,400
This is the nicest thing

you could say to a relative.

683

00:36:27,400 --> 00:36:28,460

But I got over it.

684

00:36:28,460 --> 00:36:39,150

685

00:36:39,150 --> 00:36:42,240

This is a continuation of
United States Holocaust Memorial

686

00:36:42,240 --> 00:36:47,160

Museum volunteer collection
interview with Michel Margosis.

687

00:36:47,160 --> 00:36:50,100

This is tape number
1, side B. And we

688

00:36:50,100 --> 00:36:52,290

were talking about your
adjustment in high school

689

00:36:52,290 --> 00:36:54,450

when you came to this country.

690

00:36:54,450 --> 00:36:58,230

Did you talk about your European
experience, your childhood,

691

00:36:58,230 --> 00:37:04,340

and what you went through with
the other American teenagers?

692

00:37:04,340 --> 00:37:05,990

Not really.

693

00:37:05,990 --> 00:37:07,900

I was interviewed
once in high school,

694

00:37:07,900 --> 00:37:11,210
and I remember just
when apparently I

695
00:37:11,210 --> 00:37:13,340
spoke well enough English,
but it was reported

696
00:37:13,340 --> 00:37:17,420
in the local school paper.

697
00:37:17,420 --> 00:37:20,765
The neighborhood kids
were particularly--

698
00:37:20,765 --> 00:37:24,530
I don't know what the
word is-- surprised

699
00:37:24,530 --> 00:37:27,680
whenever I would
jump and hide when

700
00:37:27,680 --> 00:37:30,530
a plane would fly overhead.

701
00:37:30,530 --> 00:37:34,640
My kind of reaction was
to hide against the curb.

702
00:37:34,640 --> 00:37:38,880
But outside of that, I
think they were pretty good.

703
00:37:38,880 --> 00:37:42,100
What did you say to
them why you did that?

704
00:37:42,100 --> 00:37:48,660
Well, I said, I don't know is
it a friendly or enemy plane.

705
00:37:48,660 --> 00:37:52,260

I'm not going to try to look.

706
00:37:52,260 --> 00:37:54,350
I can't tell anyways.

707
00:37:54,350 --> 00:37:57,610
But I said we will
protect ourselves.

708
00:37:57,610 --> 00:37:59,830
What was their reaction?

709
00:37:59,830 --> 00:38:02,020
No problem.

710
00:38:02,020 --> 00:38:05,440
How long did that go on,
that you reacted that way?

711
00:38:05,440 --> 00:38:08,230
About a year.

712
00:38:08,230 --> 00:38:11,900
Then I realized that the
enemy didn't come here yet.

713
00:38:11,900 --> 00:38:17,190
Well, they still had
the bund over here,

714
00:38:17,190 --> 00:38:20,540
and other organizations,
and the spy system,

715
00:38:20,540 --> 00:38:25,650
but the neighborhood was fine.

716
00:38:25,650 --> 00:38:28,700
I made friends with most
of the neighborhood kids,

717
00:38:28,700 --> 00:38:32,270

and we did quite well.

718
00:38:32,270 --> 00:38:35,750
We had Jews, we had
Italians, we had Greeks.

719
00:38:35,750 --> 00:38:40,370
I learned a few words in
Greeks, little Italian.

720
00:38:40,370 --> 00:38:43,220
We got along beautifully.

721
00:38:43,220 --> 00:38:46,610
How meaningful was it for you
the day you became a citizen?

722
00:38:46,610 --> 00:38:49,810

723
00:38:49,810 --> 00:38:51,970
That became a very
important day in my life.

724
00:38:51,970 --> 00:38:56,220

725
00:38:56,220 --> 00:38:59,850
The witnesses were
naturalized citizens too

726
00:38:59,850 --> 00:39:03,180
that were the aunt
and uncle of young man

727
00:39:03,180 --> 00:39:06,850
who came with me
on the same ship.

728
00:39:06,850 --> 00:39:12,750
And that's a strange feeling
as I'm now an American.

729

00:39:12,750 --> 00:39:16,190

I'll be able to vote.

730

00:39:16,190 --> 00:39:20,120

And I was very proud.

731

00:39:20,120 --> 00:39:22,940

732

00:39:22,940 --> 00:39:24,860

Did you really
feel American then?

733

00:39:24,860 --> 00:39:27,800

734

00:39:27,800 --> 00:39:29,220

That's difficult to say.

735

00:39:29,220 --> 00:39:32,110

What is really American?

736

00:39:32,110 --> 00:39:35,080

I don't know what
really American is.

737

00:39:35,080 --> 00:39:37,570

Does the American Indian
feel he's really American,

738

00:39:37,570 --> 00:39:42,820

or somebody who came
on the Mayflower?

739

00:39:42,820 --> 00:39:45,400

I don't think I'm any less
American than anybody else

740

00:39:45,400 --> 00:39:47,600

here.

741

00:39:47,600 --> 00:39:49,730

I don't know if
I'm more American.

742

00:39:49,730 --> 00:39:52,410

I worked for the government
for so many years,

743

00:39:52,410 --> 00:39:57,860

and I don't know if that's part
of the repayment for taking me

744

00:39:57,860 --> 00:40:00,040

in.

745

00:40:00,040 --> 00:40:06,930

I feel as grateful today
as ever that I'm here.

746

00:40:06,930 --> 00:40:10,250

And I would never change
that for anything.

747

00:40:10,250 --> 00:40:12,080

I don't miss Belgium.

748

00:40:12,080 --> 00:40:14,750

I don't mind taking a
trip over there, you know?

749

00:40:14,750 --> 00:40:16,565

It's nice to visit
Belgium, but I don't

750

00:40:16,565 --> 00:40:17,690

think I want to live there.

751

00:40:17,690 --> 00:40:20,240

752

00:40:20,240 --> 00:40:21,110

This is fine.

753

00:40:21,110 --> 00:40:23,420

I'm very happy here.

754

00:40:23,420 --> 00:40:27,380

I don't think I could have
found any greater contentment

755

00:40:27,380 --> 00:40:32,190

anywhere else as I have
found here in every respect,

756

00:40:32,190 --> 00:40:35,600

with all the problems we have.

757

00:40:35,600 --> 00:40:40,310

I wouldn't change
anything for that.

758

00:40:40,310 --> 00:40:42,710

What were your feelings when
you put on an American army

759

00:40:42,710 --> 00:40:45,140

uniform?

760

00:40:45,140 --> 00:40:47,227

Goody goody.

761

00:40:47,227 --> 00:40:48,185

I'm part of the system.

762

00:40:48,185 --> 00:40:51,080

763

00:40:51,080 --> 00:41:00,140

I accepted the uniform better
than I accepted the soldiering.

764

00:41:00,140 --> 00:41:05,390

I didn't think much of the
NCOs or even the company

765

00:41:05,390 --> 00:41:08,250
commander at Fort Dix.

766

00:41:08,250 --> 00:41:12,010
Of course, we were
told that we were

767

00:41:12,010 --> 00:41:18,790
going to be treated like
pack animals or numbers.

768

00:41:18,790 --> 00:41:21,830
They just called his
buddies, but they

769

00:41:21,830 --> 00:41:23,080
didn't like to use our names.

770

00:41:23,080 --> 00:41:27,440

771

00:41:27,440 --> 00:41:30,070
That's a little humiliating.

772

00:41:30,070 --> 00:41:35,590
Escape a world where
we are animals,

773

00:41:35,590 --> 00:41:37,480
and then go back to the
pack animal feeling.

774

00:41:37,480 --> 00:41:40,990
It sounds pretty good.

775

00:41:40,990 --> 00:41:45,320
I'm glad I did my service.

776

00:41:45,320 --> 00:41:49,270
And I enlisted too, which most
my friends do not understand.

777

00:41:49,270 --> 00:41:51,820

But I enlisted.

778

00:41:51,820 --> 00:41:54,910

And like I said,

I served my time.

779

00:41:54,910 --> 00:41:56,530

Do they treat you

any differently

780

00:41:56,530 --> 00:42:00,640

knowing the childhood

that you had?

781

00:42:00,640 --> 00:42:03,320

I don't think anybody in

the army knew my childhood.

782

00:42:03,320 --> 00:42:06,640

I never told anybody about it.

783

00:42:06,640 --> 00:42:13,050

And I didn't have anybody in

the army that I could talk to.

784

00:42:13,050 --> 00:42:16,440

I did not make any

friends there--

785

00:42:16,440 --> 00:42:22,050

not even when I changed

my occupational specialty

786

00:42:22,050 --> 00:42:25,440

from rifleman to medic.

787

00:42:25,440 --> 00:42:28,710

I just didn't have any friends

I could talk to about it.

788

00:42:28,710 --> 00:42:33,340

And back then, I didn't think
of myself as a survivor.

789
00:42:33,340 --> 00:42:37,100
I was a refugee,
like so many others.

790
00:42:37,100 --> 00:42:42,400
I was elevated when the
museum came into being.

791
00:42:42,400 --> 00:42:48,590
But before that, I was proud
that I was in the army,

792
00:42:48,590 --> 00:42:52,870
and it was a
worthwhile experience.

793
00:42:52,870 --> 00:42:54,940
I would not repeat it.

794
00:42:54,940 --> 00:42:57,880
I would not reenlist.

795
00:42:57,880 --> 00:43:00,130
I don't think that
a career in the army

796
00:43:00,130 --> 00:43:02,420
would have been good for me.

797
00:43:02,420 --> 00:43:07,360
But yet I have a friend
here who's career army,

798
00:43:07,360 --> 00:43:08,640
and he's from Germany.

799
00:43:08,640 --> 00:43:13,370

800

00:43:13,370 --> 00:43:19,560
When the war was over in 1945,
did you celebrate particularly

801
00:43:19,560 --> 00:43:22,460
in a special way?

802
00:43:22,460 --> 00:43:25,970
I went to Time's Square.

803
00:43:25,970 --> 00:43:29,960
I keep looking for myself on
all the pictures on that show.

804
00:43:29,960 --> 00:43:32,850
I think I saw not just
a sailor kiss a girl,

805
00:43:32,850 --> 00:43:36,590
but there were a lot of
people kissing everybody.

806
00:43:36,590 --> 00:43:39,440
It was extremely exciting--

807
00:43:39,440 --> 00:43:46,070
all the people and say, well,
things has to improve now.

808
00:43:46,070 --> 00:43:48,620
My sister and brother
were in Palestine.

809
00:43:48,620 --> 00:43:51,830
My parents were
still in Portugal,

810
00:43:51,830 --> 00:43:54,960
but at least they were together.

811
00:43:54,960 --> 00:43:58,830
So that was a step ahead.

812
00:43:58,830 --> 00:44:02,120
I said, that's important.

813
00:44:02,120 --> 00:44:05,810
The world is going to heal, it's
going to get better, and just

814
00:44:05,810 --> 00:44:07,860
go forward.

815
00:44:07,860 --> 00:44:10,060
It was exciting.

816
00:44:10,060 --> 00:44:14,440
It was healing, especially
for the young, I would think--

817
00:44:14,440 --> 00:44:16,120
so many things to
look ahead for.

818
00:44:16,120 --> 00:44:21,880

819
00:44:21,880 --> 00:44:24,190
Do you think you would be
a different person today--

820
00:44:24,190 --> 00:44:27,090
a different adult
if you had not gone

821
00:44:27,090 --> 00:44:32,290
through the difficult times
that you did as a child?

822
00:44:32,290 --> 00:44:34,665
I don't know if anybody can
answer that kind of question.

823
00:44:34,665 --> 00:44:37,440

824
00:44:37,440 --> 00:44:39,770
There are so many
variables there

825
00:44:39,770 --> 00:44:45,370
that I wouldn't even venture
to try to answer that.

826
00:44:45,370 --> 00:44:46,770
It's quite possible.

827
00:44:46,770 --> 00:44:49,490
I don't know how
it would affect me.

828
00:44:49,490 --> 00:44:52,980
I don't know how much the war
has affected me, actually.

829
00:44:52,980 --> 00:44:59,170
My values, I guess, are
mostly American values.

830
00:44:59,170 --> 00:45:01,940
And in that respect, I differ
from the rest of my family--

831
00:45:01,940 --> 00:45:04,730
although my sister has
been here for many years.

832
00:45:04,730 --> 00:45:09,200
She recently lost her
husband who was a hero also

833
00:45:09,200 --> 00:45:11,900
during the war.

834
00:45:11,900 --> 00:45:14,210
And I wish he could
have told his story,

835

00:45:14,210 --> 00:45:15,890

but he never allowed it.

836

00:45:15,890 --> 00:45:19,380

837

00:45:19,380 --> 00:45:22,930

I think my family by and large
has accepted American values

838

00:45:22,930 --> 00:45:24,630

also.

839

00:45:24,630 --> 00:45:27,250

How different would I have been?

840

00:45:27,250 --> 00:45:29,270

I have always been
optimistic, and I don't

841

00:45:29,270 --> 00:45:32,210

think that would have changed.

842

00:45:32,210 --> 00:45:38,940

If I'd been in an
annihilation camp,

843

00:45:38,940 --> 00:45:42,680

I would have been a
totally different impact.

844

00:45:42,680 --> 00:45:49,557

But I was extremely lucky that
I was always one step ahead

845

00:45:49,557 --> 00:45:50,390

Thanks to my mother.

846

00:45:50,390 --> 00:45:53,140

847

00:45:53,140 --> 00:45:58,008

How else, how different
would I be today?

848

00:45:58,008 --> 00:45:58,550

I don't know.

849

00:45:58,550 --> 00:46:02,103

850

00:46:02,103 --> 00:46:04,020

Maybe I would not have
survived, I don't know.

851

00:46:04,020 --> 00:46:08,820

852

00:46:08,820 --> 00:46:11,695

What made your mother as
strong and courageous a person

853

00:46:11,695 --> 00:46:14,970

as she was?

854

00:46:14,970 --> 00:46:17,610

I think, number
one, being Jewish.

855

00:46:17,610 --> 00:46:19,380

I think that always
gives a person

856

00:46:19,380 --> 00:46:22,080

more resilience to the world.

857

00:46:22,080 --> 00:46:27,550

858

00:46:27,550 --> 00:46:36,588

Having a husband, being sent to
Siberia, and surviving that--

859

00:46:36,588 --> 00:46:39,794

860

00:46:39,794 --> 00:46:43,580

that should increase the
backbone of any person,

861

00:46:43,580 --> 00:46:45,325

I would think.

862

00:46:45,325 --> 00:46:47,700

Although on the other hand,
some people go the other way.

863

00:46:47,700 --> 00:46:51,090

864

00:46:51,090 --> 00:46:52,700

I think motherhood
and being a woman,

865

00:46:52,700 --> 00:46:57,300

I think, gives her more strength
and more of an equalitarian,

866

00:46:57,300 --> 00:46:57,800

I guess.

867

00:46:57,800 --> 00:47:00,910

868

00:47:00,910 --> 00:47:03,640

Did you inherit her
strength and her courage?

869

00:47:03,640 --> 00:47:07,930

870

00:47:07,930 --> 00:47:10,295

Physically, I look
like my father.

871

00:47:10,295 --> 00:47:13,660

872

00:47:13,660 --> 00:47:18,410

Otherwise, I don't know.

873

00:47:18,410 --> 00:47:20,130

I don't know if I'm strong.

874

00:47:20,130 --> 00:47:27,348

I don't know if I'm as
dedicated as she is, or she was.

875

00:47:27,348 --> 00:47:27,890

I don't know.

876

00:47:27,890 --> 00:47:30,840

877

00:47:30,840 --> 00:47:32,600

I would hope that I
have acquired the best

878

00:47:32,600 --> 00:47:36,530

traits of both of my parents.

879

00:47:36,530 --> 00:47:40,910

That's a good
thing to aspire to.

880

00:47:40,910 --> 00:47:45,440

Are there any sights
or sounds today

881

00:47:45,440 --> 00:47:50,930

that would bring back
[INAUDIBLE] times in Europe,

882

00:47:50,930 --> 00:47:52,430

which were difficult.
I remember you

883

00:47:52,430 --> 00:47:56,080
did allude when you were
younger, the plane flying over

884
00:47:56,080 --> 00:47:59,930
were frightening to you for
at least the first year.

885
00:47:59,930 --> 00:48:03,830
Were there any other
experiences that kind of

886
00:48:03,830 --> 00:48:10,600
triggered your memories
of being a child?

887
00:48:10,600 --> 00:48:15,900
When I first came here,
I moved to Brooklyn.

888
00:48:15,900 --> 00:48:19,900
That had a few neighborhoods
where they still had trolleys.

889
00:48:19,900 --> 00:48:21,900
Whenever I heard the clang
clang of the trolley,

890
00:48:21,900 --> 00:48:25,660
sometimes that reminded me
of the trolleys in Europe.

891
00:48:25,660 --> 00:48:27,870
In fact, we have been
to Europe a few times,

892
00:48:27,870 --> 00:48:31,050
and more so in Holland
than any other country,

893
00:48:31,050 --> 00:48:34,290
they have trolleys
and that reminded me

894

00:48:34,290 --> 00:48:37,470

of when I was more
audacious as a kid.

895

00:48:37,470 --> 00:48:39,810

And I used to sneak
onto the trolleys

896

00:48:39,810 --> 00:48:41,260

and go from place to place.

897

00:48:41,260 --> 00:48:44,270

898

00:48:44,270 --> 00:48:45,320

Not much else.

899

00:48:45,320 --> 00:48:47,200

The food is totally different.

900

00:48:47,200 --> 00:48:50,020

The restaurants--
I suppose as a kid,

901

00:48:50,020 --> 00:48:53,460

I never went to restaurants.

902

00:48:53,460 --> 00:49:00,150

In Belgium, they had two major
department stores at the time.

903

00:49:00,150 --> 00:49:06,350

And they were not that much
different department stores

904

00:49:06,350 --> 00:49:08,690

of today are different
from back then.

905

00:49:08,690 --> 00:49:11,090

But I don't think they were
too different from when

906
00:49:11,090 --> 00:49:12,680
they were in Belgium.

907
00:49:12,680 --> 00:49:16,640
I used to love to
ride the escalator,

908
00:49:16,640 --> 00:49:20,790
and try to run down
the escalator going up.

909
00:49:20,790 --> 00:49:25,260
I don't remember
any specific sounds.

910
00:49:25,260 --> 00:49:29,280
The smell of the French
fries in Belgium--

911
00:49:29,280 --> 00:49:31,350
they had little
street carts where

912
00:49:31,350 --> 00:49:33,300
they would sell French fries.

913
00:49:33,300 --> 00:49:38,020
That is something
that is particularly

914
00:49:38,020 --> 00:49:40,193
heartwarming thinking about it.

915
00:49:40,193 --> 00:49:41,860
Is there anything
today that brings back

916
00:49:41,860 --> 00:49:44,270
that negative feeling
of running away

917

00:49:44,270 --> 00:49:48,790
or your life being in danger?

918
00:49:48,790 --> 00:49:50,650
No, I don't remember
of any of it.

919
00:49:50,650 --> 00:49:53,940

920
00:49:53,940 --> 00:49:55,740
It was a bad time when
I was in the army.

921
00:49:55,740 --> 00:49:58,440
I was stationed in Verdun
part of the time, which

922
00:49:58,440 --> 00:50:01,510
is a cemetery of France.

923
00:50:01,510 --> 00:50:04,435
And that is depressing,
even more so

924
00:50:04,435 --> 00:50:05,560
than working in the museum.

925
00:50:05,560 --> 00:50:08,370

926
00:50:08,370 --> 00:50:11,240
There's still have
fields where people walk

927
00:50:11,240 --> 00:50:17,160
and they can still find
the human bones and shells.

928
00:50:17,160 --> 00:50:23,920
And being stationed
there was no picnic.

929

00:50:23,920 --> 00:50:24,680

But I did it.

930

00:50:24,680 --> 00:50:30,110

And I was a medic by that time,
and I did my tour of duty.

931

00:50:30,110 --> 00:50:34,130

But in fact, when
I finished there,

932

00:50:34,130 --> 00:50:38,860

I went to Belgium
for annual leave.

933

00:50:38,860 --> 00:50:41,620

I did not feel
Belgian at that time.

934

00:50:41,620 --> 00:50:44,320

I felt American.

935

00:50:44,320 --> 00:50:47,620

When I went into
Paris, I felt American.

936

00:50:47,620 --> 00:50:51,230

I could speak the
language, and the people

937

00:50:51,230 --> 00:50:55,870

did not look at me-- they
didn't know I was not French,

938

00:50:55,870 --> 00:51:00,570

but I did not feel at
home until I came back

939

00:51:00,570 --> 00:51:04,620

to Brooklyn and to the States.

940

00:51:04,620 --> 00:51:09,135

When we travel
outside the country,

941
00:51:09,135 --> 00:51:10,760
the first thing we
do when we come back

942
00:51:10,760 --> 00:51:15,920
is they say, thank
you for having us.

943
00:51:15,920 --> 00:51:18,290
In fact one time we came back--

944
00:51:18,290 --> 00:51:24,890
when we had a one-year
sabbatical in France, in Paris,

945
00:51:24,890 --> 00:51:37,780
we came back, the agent
said, both my wife and I,

946
00:51:37,780 --> 00:51:39,240
welcome back to
the United States.

947
00:51:39,240 --> 00:51:48,350

948
00:51:48,350 --> 00:51:49,613
Quite an experience.

949
00:51:49,613 --> 00:51:53,870

950
00:51:53,870 --> 00:51:56,848
My wife said she was ready--

951
00:51:56,848 --> 00:51:58,270
ready to cry again too.

952
00:51:58,270 --> 00:52:03,110

953

00:52:03,110 --> 00:52:09,910

This is where we feel totally
at home, totally comfortable.

954

00:52:09,910 --> 00:52:12,440

And I think people should
go out periodically

955

00:52:12,440 --> 00:52:13,950

to visit other
parts of the world

956

00:52:13,950 --> 00:52:18,000

so they can appreciate
their own home a lot more.

957

00:52:18,000 --> 00:52:21,820

And there is a strong
feeling for that.

958

00:52:21,820 --> 00:52:24,640

I still love to travel.

959

00:52:24,640 --> 00:52:26,520

And I still love
French restaurants,

960

00:52:26,520 --> 00:52:27,750

and I still love the sites.

961

00:52:27,750 --> 00:52:30,770

962

00:52:30,770 --> 00:52:33,500

We love Paris-- it's the most
beautiful city in the world.

963

00:52:33,500 --> 00:52:37,370

Even after seeing the museums
there, we come home and say,

964

00:52:37,370 --> 00:52:41,000

I don't know, the National
Gallery may not be as good,

965

00:52:41,000 --> 00:52:43,890

but we love it just as much.

966

00:52:43,890 --> 00:52:46,580

So it's great to be back
and to appreciate this.

967

00:52:46,580 --> 00:52:49,120

968

00:52:49,120 --> 00:52:52,570

Are we more American today?

969

00:52:52,570 --> 00:52:55,080

Just as American.

970

00:52:55,080 --> 00:52:57,370

It's a good feeling.

971

00:52:57,370 --> 00:53:01,180

Is your wife from Europe?

972

00:53:01,180 --> 00:53:07,220

My wife is at least second
or third generation American.

973

00:53:07,220 --> 00:53:08,630

Her parents were born here.

974

00:53:08,630 --> 00:53:11,750

One grandparent was born here.

975

00:53:11,750 --> 00:53:13,050

Her father went to Cornell.

976

00:53:13,050 --> 00:53:16,040

She went to Cornell--

977
00:53:16,040 --> 00:53:19,300
can't be any more
American than that.

978
00:53:19,300 --> 00:53:24,710
I went on a date once up in New
York State on an Indian site--

979
00:53:24,710 --> 00:53:26,245
what could be more American?

980
00:53:26,245 --> 00:53:29,890

981
00:53:29,890 --> 00:53:32,815
She doesn't have the same
appreciation of this, I guess,

982
00:53:32,815 --> 00:53:35,020
as I do.

983
00:53:35,020 --> 00:53:37,840
But after traveling, and
then having that feeling,

984
00:53:37,840 --> 00:53:44,830
and being welcomed back,
she appreciates that.

985
00:53:44,830 --> 00:53:51,082
How did you convey the Jewish
religion or Jewish culture

986
00:53:51,082 --> 00:53:51,790
to your children?

987
00:53:51,790 --> 00:53:55,750

988
00:53:55,750 --> 00:54:02,610
Well, when I was in

the army, we used

989

00:54:02,610 --> 00:54:04,470

to have what I
called GI parties.

990

00:54:04,470 --> 00:54:07,380

Every Friday evening,
we'd take everything out

991

00:54:07,380 --> 00:54:10,260

of the barracks
and hose are down

992

00:54:10,260 --> 00:54:13,670

with strong soaps
and detergents.

993

00:54:13,670 --> 00:54:16,530

Then I found out that
these same Friday nights,

994

00:54:16,530 --> 00:54:18,730

they had services.

995

00:54:18,730 --> 00:54:21,450

I became Jewish.

996

00:54:21,450 --> 00:54:24,360

My parents were orthodox.

997

00:54:24,360 --> 00:54:27,350

Every year for the
Yom Kippur, my father

998

00:54:27,350 --> 00:54:29,580

would have to drag me
by the year practically

999

00:54:29,580 --> 00:54:32,490

to go to services.

1000

00:54:32,490 --> 00:54:36,400

When I was in the army, I
didn't have to be dragged.

1001

00:54:36,400 --> 00:54:39,070

But that was mainly
reform services.

1002

00:54:39,070 --> 00:54:43,270

And lo and behold, I knew what
was going on for a change.

1003

00:54:43,270 --> 00:54:44,920

I never had a chance
to study Hebrew.

1004

00:54:44,920 --> 00:54:47,530

1005

00:54:47,530 --> 00:54:53,640

And when I did go to services, I
began to appreciate what I had.

1006

00:54:53,640 --> 00:54:58,120

Then when I met my
wife, she was reformed,

1007

00:54:58,120 --> 00:55:03,010

because she became reformed when
the father was refused entrance

1008

00:55:03,010 --> 00:55:08,680

to services when he walked
six miles from school.

1009

00:55:08,680 --> 00:55:11,680

They wouldn't accept
him without a ticket.

1010

00:55:11,680 --> 00:55:14,860

If you had not ticket,
you can't pray here.

1011

00:55:14,860 --> 00:55:17,740
And that was orthodox.

1012
00:55:17,740 --> 00:55:19,490
He went to a place,
and they accepted him,

1013
00:55:19,490 --> 00:55:23,470
and that was reform,
and they converted.

1014
00:55:23,470 --> 00:55:26,610

1015
00:55:26,610 --> 00:55:31,950
And then when we got married,
we got married by reform rabbi,

1016
00:55:31,950 --> 00:55:35,400
because their family
were sponsoring it.

1017
00:55:35,400 --> 00:55:38,020

1018
00:55:38,020 --> 00:55:40,830
And when the children
came, it was just

1019
00:55:40,830 --> 00:55:44,740
natural to join
the congregation.

1020
00:55:44,740 --> 00:55:49,670
We belonged to Bethel in
Alexandria since we came here--

1021
00:55:49,670 --> 00:55:55,420
came here in '67.

1022
00:55:55,420 --> 00:55:58,980
Were you ever angry as a
child that you were Jewish

1023
00:55:58,980 --> 00:56:00,838
and these negative
things were happening

1024
00:56:00,838 --> 00:56:02,130
to you because you were Jewish?

1025
00:56:02,130 --> 00:56:05,490

1026
00:56:05,490 --> 00:56:10,170
I remember being called
dirty Jews in Belgium.

1027
00:56:10,170 --> 00:56:13,380
Belgium is no purer than
any other country there--

1028
00:56:13,380 --> 00:56:15,300
except maybe France.

1029
00:56:15,300 --> 00:56:17,280
I have a special feeling
against the French.

1030
00:56:17,280 --> 00:56:20,850

1031
00:56:20,850 --> 00:56:24,320
I didn't have any feeling
against being Jewish.

1032
00:56:24,320 --> 00:56:26,070
In fact, I did know
when they told us

1033
00:56:26,070 --> 00:56:31,420
we are the chosen people,
that means something to us--

1034
00:56:31,420 --> 00:56:35,860

we were chosen by God to
be his representatives.

1035
00:56:35,860 --> 00:56:41,770
But my father had very
strong Jewish feelings--

1036
00:56:41,770 --> 00:56:47,310
being a Zionist, and being
trained in the cheder

1037
00:56:47,310 --> 00:56:55,020
by a foremost poet of
the century, I think--

1038
00:56:55,020 --> 00:56:56,770
Bialik.

1039
00:56:56,770 --> 00:57:00,610
He had strong feelings and
he tried to impart upon us.

1040
00:57:00,610 --> 00:57:05,820
But it wasn't until we were
old enough and on our own

1041
00:57:05,820 --> 00:57:09,210
to be able to
appreciate ourselves.

1042
00:57:09,210 --> 00:57:12,870
But I've belonged to Bethel,
and we belong to Bethel

1043
00:57:12,870 --> 00:57:13,810
since we came here.

1044
00:57:13,810 --> 00:57:16,140
And we still have
the attachment.

1045
00:57:16,140 --> 00:57:19,700

1046
00:57:19,700 --> 00:57:22,430
When your children
were your age when

1047
00:57:22,430 --> 00:57:26,420
you had to leave Belgium and
start your own journey here,

1048
00:57:26,420 --> 00:57:30,310
did that bring back
memories of those times?

1049
00:57:30,310 --> 00:57:34,270

1050
00:57:34,270 --> 00:57:35,800
You said your two
children, and when

1051
00:57:35,800 --> 00:57:38,530
they were your age,
teenagers, when

1052
00:57:38,530 --> 00:57:41,590
it meant that you had to
leave Belgium and make

1053
00:57:41,590 --> 00:57:46,750
the dangerous
journey that you did,

1054
00:57:46,750 --> 00:57:51,310
that bring back memories
of those years to you?

1055
00:57:51,310 --> 00:57:55,950
I don't relate my
children to my experience.

1056
00:57:55,950 --> 00:58:06,110
When my kids went through a
Jewish education, that was also

1057
00:58:06,110 --> 00:58:08,540
under duress, I guess--

1058
00:58:08,540 --> 00:58:12,490
no kid wants to go to Sunday
school if he can help it.

1059
00:58:12,490 --> 00:58:21,690
But Sunday go through
confirmation age 16--

1060
00:58:21,690 --> 00:58:23,910
but even then, he
said he had doubts.

1061
00:58:23,910 --> 00:58:26,130
The rabbi says, fine,
we all have doubts.

1062
00:58:26,130 --> 00:58:32,630
But when he married,
he told me that he

1063
00:58:32,630 --> 00:58:36,171
was going to have to convert
because she's conservative.

1064
00:58:36,171 --> 00:58:39,312

1065
00:58:39,312 --> 00:58:40,145
They go to services.

1066
00:58:40,145 --> 00:58:42,420
They belong.

1067
00:58:42,420 --> 00:58:47,300
My daughter did not marry
a Jew, but the rabbi

1068
00:58:47,300 --> 00:58:50,600

talked to her before that.

1069
00:58:50,600 --> 00:58:53,360
In fact, he married
her, the rabbi.

1070
00:58:53,360 --> 00:58:54,920
He says, I have no
problems with her.

1071
00:58:54,920 --> 00:58:59,680
She knows who she
is, which is good.

1072
00:58:59,680 --> 00:59:03,380
But I don't relate it
to my own experience.

1073
00:59:03,380 --> 00:59:07,960

1074
00:59:07,960 --> 00:59:11,170
I not only meant
religiously, but just

1075
00:59:11,170 --> 00:59:14,740
generally when your children
were young teenagers,

1076
00:59:14,740 --> 00:59:17,620
as you were when
you had to leave,

1077
00:59:17,620 --> 00:59:19,750
did that make you
recall the time?

1078
00:59:19,750 --> 00:59:22,650

1079
00:59:22,650 --> 00:59:24,400
Again, I don't see
any relationship

1080
00:59:24,400 --> 00:59:25,530
between one and the other.

1081
00:59:25,530 --> 00:59:28,540

1082
00:59:28,540 --> 00:59:32,670
I don't know how my growing up
affected my father growing up,

1083
00:59:32,670 --> 00:59:34,120
for instance, in Russia.

1084
00:59:34,120 --> 00:59:37,900
It's a totally
different experience.

1085
00:59:37,900 --> 00:59:41,728
I don't see any
relationship there.

1086
00:59:41,728 --> 00:59:43,520
What are your thoughts
today about Germany?

1087
00:59:43,520 --> 00:59:47,210

1088
00:59:47,210 --> 00:59:49,520
Well, it must exist.

1089
00:59:49,520 --> 00:59:52,450
It's still there.

1090
00:59:52,450 --> 00:59:58,530
I know that in one that the
first compositions that I wrote

1091
00:59:58,530 --> 01:00:02,110
when I was in high school,
I said it would be nice

1092
01:00:02,110 --> 01:00:05,160
if Germany did not exist.

1093
01:00:05,160 --> 01:00:10,130
But I realize
that's not possible.

1094
01:00:10,130 --> 01:00:21,870
Germany has tried to
make restitution and to--

1095
01:00:21,870 --> 01:00:24,050
I don't know whether
to seek forgiveness,

1096
01:00:24,050 --> 01:00:25,265
that's just not possible.

1097
01:00:25,265 --> 01:00:27,780

1098
01:00:27,780 --> 01:00:31,340
But they've tried
really hard to be

1099
01:00:31,340 --> 01:00:33,365
part of the world of nations.

1100
01:00:33,365 --> 01:00:36,050

1101
01:00:36,050 --> 01:00:38,120
To my sorrow, they still
have too many Nazis

1102
01:00:38,120 --> 01:00:38,970
around the world.

1103
01:00:38,970 --> 01:00:42,160

1104

01:00:42,160 --> 01:00:46,010

We should try them, as
ever, like we did before--

1105

01:00:46,010 --> 01:00:48,970

do away with them.

1106

01:00:48,970 --> 01:00:52,280

I guess we'll never be able
to get rid of all Nazis

1107

01:00:52,280 --> 01:00:54,730

and Nazi-like sympathizers.

1108

01:00:54,730 --> 01:00:57,570

1109

01:00:57,570 --> 01:01:00,300

The Germans are not
Nazis, and I don't

1110

01:01:00,300 --> 01:01:03,090

think Nazis are really German.

1111

01:01:03,090 --> 01:01:05,610

So they're two
separate philosophies.

1112

01:01:05,610 --> 01:01:07,720

1113

01:01:07,720 --> 01:01:10,000

Germany today is all right.

1114

01:01:10,000 --> 01:01:12,910

1115

01:01:12,910 --> 01:01:20,050

And sometimes I tend to forget
the past or want to forget it.

1116

01:01:20,050 --> 01:01:21,420
The Austrians want to bury it.

1117
01:01:21,420 --> 01:01:25,830

1118
01:01:25,830 --> 01:01:32,070
And with things happening now
in Switzerland with the claims,

1119
01:01:32,070 --> 01:01:36,080
I don't know what
that's going to lead to.

1120
01:01:36,080 --> 01:01:38,750
Is that what you had in
mind when you ask about?

1121
01:01:38,750 --> 01:01:41,430
No just tell me what
your thoughts were--

1122
01:01:41,430 --> 01:01:44,800
have you visited Germany?

1123
01:01:44,800 --> 01:01:50,860
The first time we went back was
when I first was in the army.

1124
01:01:50,860 --> 01:01:54,610
We ended up in Freiburg.

1125
01:01:54,610 --> 01:01:58,400
And because I was
an interpreter,

1126
01:01:58,400 --> 01:02:02,680
I was sent to Europe
rather than to Korea.

1127
01:02:02,680 --> 01:02:04,180
When we got to
Freiburg, they didn't

1128
01:02:04,180 --> 01:02:06,820
know what to do with me
because I was a chemist,

1129
01:02:06,820 --> 01:02:10,990
I had my degree, I was
there as a interpreter

1130
01:02:10,990 --> 01:02:12,695
for French and Spanish.

1131
01:02:12,695 --> 01:02:13,820
What would they do with me?

1132
01:02:13,820 --> 01:02:16,690
I said, don't leave
me in Germany.

1133
01:02:16,690 --> 01:02:19,800
I said, send me anywhere
else you want to--

1134
01:02:19,800 --> 01:02:21,880
Korea, whatever.

1135
01:02:21,880 --> 01:02:28,240
I do not want to be stationed
in Germany, because I will not

1136
01:02:28,240 --> 01:02:31,420
be able to answer for
my own actions if I do.

1137
01:02:31,420 --> 01:02:32,800
Why did you say that?

1138
01:02:32,800 --> 01:02:35,980
Because I was too
angry from the war.

1139
01:02:35,980 --> 01:02:40,020

That was 1952.

1140

01:02:40,020 --> 01:02:42,010

War was not that far behind me.

1141

01:02:42,010 --> 01:02:45,570

1142

01:02:45,570 --> 01:02:50,070

So they sent me to France,
and I was stationed in France.

1143

01:02:50,070 --> 01:02:57,780

And on our 15th anniversary,
we took the family

1144

01:02:57,780 --> 01:03:02,730

to Europe, and in a way
retracing some of my steps--

1145

01:03:02,730 --> 01:03:07,020

through Belgium, to
France, to Spain.

1146

01:03:07,020 --> 01:03:11,940

And as soon as the
train left Amsterdam,

1147

01:03:11,940 --> 01:03:15,820

I knew exactly when we
crossed the German border.

1148

01:03:15,820 --> 01:03:17,750

I said, we're in Germany.

1149

01:03:17,750 --> 01:03:19,000

Someone said, how do you know?

1150

01:03:19,000 --> 01:03:21,880

I said, I can feel it.

1151

01:03:21,880 --> 01:03:26,440

And the sooner we leave,
the better it will feel.

1152
01:03:26,440 --> 01:03:28,185
They were nasty.

1153
01:03:28,185 --> 01:03:31,809

1154
01:03:31,809 --> 01:03:35,730
We felt very uncomfortable.

1155
01:03:35,730 --> 01:03:38,590
I wanted to leave
as soon as possible.

1156
01:03:38,590 --> 01:03:40,096
That was 1972.

1157
01:03:40,096 --> 01:03:44,950

1158
01:03:44,950 --> 01:03:49,540
I've been back to Germany, but
that was more professional.

1159
01:03:49,540 --> 01:03:55,330
We had a international
meeting in chemistry

1160
01:03:55,330 --> 01:03:58,810
in Vienna, in Salzburg,
in Baden-Baden,

1161
01:03:58,810 --> 01:04:01,360
and I went to these meetings.

1162
01:04:01,360 --> 01:04:03,991
And I associate with Germans--

1163
01:04:03,991 --> 01:04:06,010
I have no problem with them.

1164
01:04:06,010 --> 01:04:08,220
They were individuals
that did not

1165
01:04:08,220 --> 01:04:11,800
present any
political philosophy,

1166
01:04:11,800 --> 01:04:13,050
so I had no problem with them.

1167
01:04:13,050 --> 01:04:16,020

1168
01:04:16,020 --> 01:04:19,710
And while also in
the army, my father

1169
01:04:19,710 --> 01:04:21,790
died while I was
stationed there.

1170
01:04:21,790 --> 01:04:27,110
And they flew me
out from Frankfurt.

1171
01:04:27,110 --> 01:04:29,510
I didn't feel too comfortable
being in Frankfurt

1172
01:04:29,510 --> 01:04:31,570
to catch a plane.

1173
01:04:31,570 --> 01:04:35,510
Again, that's another feeling
that can't be expressed.

1174
01:04:35,510 --> 01:04:39,440
It's just the feeling
of being sick,

1175

01:04:39,440 --> 01:04:43,830
of not being there, of
being uncomfortable--

1176
01:04:43,830 --> 01:04:47,770
not belonging, totally
alone, not being welcome.

1177
01:04:47,770 --> 01:04:51,250

1178
01:04:51,250 --> 01:04:55,180
I have no desire to
see Germany today.

1179
01:04:55,180 --> 01:05:01,360
Austria, because of my
great love for Mozart,

1180
01:05:01,360 --> 01:05:05,210
I'd be willing to go
to Salzburg again.

1181
01:05:05,210 --> 01:05:10,790
Of course I'd be willing to go
to Bern to listen to Beethoven.

1182
01:05:10,790 --> 01:05:14,150
But to this day, I still
don't understand that period.

1183
01:05:14,150 --> 01:05:20,750
How can such cultured people
become such gross animals?

1184
01:05:20,750 --> 01:05:25,650
That's beyond anybody's belief.

1185
01:05:25,650 --> 01:05:29,280
When the war was over and
the information came out

1186
01:05:29,280 --> 01:05:34,300

very publicly about what
happened to the Jews,

1187
01:05:34,300 --> 01:05:39,910
how did you express your
feelings when you learned that?

1188
01:05:39,910 --> 01:05:43,000
Well, I heard about six
million very quickly.

1189
01:05:43,000 --> 01:05:45,980
And on the first
[INAUDIBLE] my father

1190
01:05:45,980 --> 01:05:49,880
had had was the Constitution
of Israel put in the frame

1191
01:05:49,880 --> 01:05:51,260
and put in the house.

1192
01:05:51,260 --> 01:05:56,060
It says that's the price we
had to pay to get a state.

1193
01:05:56,060 --> 01:05:59,730

1194
01:05:59,730 --> 01:06:02,340
I don't know if the
price may be too big,

1195
01:06:02,340 --> 01:06:07,120
but that's a strange feeling.

1196
01:06:07,120 --> 01:06:09,700

1197
01:06:09,700 --> 01:06:12,070
I'm trying to recollect
the question too.

1198

01:06:12,070 --> 01:06:16,180

When you found out about
the camps, and survivors,

1199

01:06:16,180 --> 01:06:18,880

and the amounts of people
that lost their lives.

1200

01:06:18,880 --> 01:06:25,090

The feeling that I
had was more intense

1201

01:06:25,090 --> 01:06:28,580

when I did some of the
work on the museum,

1202

01:06:28,580 --> 01:06:31,100

because I found out certain
things on certain dates.

1203

01:06:31,100 --> 01:06:35,880

Like on September
2, 1943, the Nazis

1204

01:06:35,880 --> 01:06:39,180

were scouring through my
neighborhood in Brussels,

1205

01:06:39,180 --> 01:06:42,930

picked up everybody there.

1206

01:06:42,930 --> 01:06:50,050

And then two years later,
in 1944 on September 2,

1207

01:06:50,050 --> 01:06:54,240

they were scouring my
neighborhood in Marseilles.

1208

01:06:54,240 --> 01:06:58,040

But again, I was one
step ahead of them.

1209

01:06:58,040 --> 01:06:59,370

But that is more personal.

1210

01:06:59,370 --> 01:07:01,440

And that really touches me.

1211

01:07:01,440 --> 01:07:05,235

I was doing the translations
of the deportations.

1212

01:07:05,235 --> 01:07:10,940

I found out a lot of things that
really touched me at the time.

1213

01:07:10,940 --> 01:07:13,350

But six million people,
it's so impersonal.

1214

01:07:13,350 --> 01:07:15,898

1215

01:07:15,898 --> 01:07:17,440

I knew quite a few
of them, actually,

1216

01:07:17,440 --> 01:07:23,980

but it's almost out of
the realm of possibility.

1217

01:07:23,980 --> 01:07:27,810

Did you lose any relatives?

1218

01:07:27,810 --> 01:07:29,460

Not directly that I knew of.

1219

01:07:29,460 --> 01:07:33,330

I think we lost some in Russia,
but we didn't know about it

1220

01:07:33,330 --> 01:07:35,260

until much later.

1221

01:07:35,260 --> 01:07:37,710

And they were more distant.

1222

01:07:37,710 --> 01:07:42,800

Also by that time, anybody left
in Russia became communists.

1223

01:07:42,800 --> 01:07:48,340

And we never talked about
my mother's brother,

1224

01:07:48,340 --> 01:07:53,610

who became an administrator
there, I guess.

1225

01:07:53,610 --> 01:07:56,790

Most of our family
had not left Russia.

1226

01:07:56,790 --> 01:08:02,120

My father did because
he was taken to Siberia.

1227

01:08:02,120 --> 01:08:06,940

In Belgium and France, we
never had any relatives.

1228

01:08:06,940 --> 01:08:13,300

So it's only in 1972
that we found out

1229

01:08:13,300 --> 01:08:16,800

that we had cousins
who left Russia.

1230

01:08:16,800 --> 01:08:18,330

Then we got a
telephone call here.

1231

01:08:18,330 --> 01:08:22,279

1232

01:08:22,279 --> 01:08:25,310

Do you feel sometimes like
you're two different people--

1233

01:08:25,310 --> 01:08:30,350

somebody on the outside
and somebody on the inside?

1234

01:08:30,350 --> 01:08:35,479

I have a friend who says
it's a different life.

1235

01:08:35,479 --> 01:08:41,470

I'm not the one that came here,
but the one before I came here.

1236

01:08:41,470 --> 01:08:44,620

It seems almost
like a bad dream.

1237

01:08:44,620 --> 01:08:48,550

I've been here now
over 50 years--

1238

01:08:48,550 --> 01:08:51,580

55 years.

1239

01:08:51,580 --> 01:08:54,550

That's a whole lifetime
being in this country.

1240

01:08:54,550 --> 01:08:59,250

And yet I have this kind of
attachment to the old country?

1241

01:08:59,250 --> 01:09:02,680

That doesn't seem real.

1242

01:09:02,680 --> 01:09:06,729

And yet when I go to Belgium,
to France, I know where I am.

1243

01:09:06,729 --> 01:09:07,939

I know where I can go.

1244

01:09:07,939 --> 01:09:11,529

And I know my way to
go here, to go there--

1245

01:09:11,529 --> 01:09:14,229

I know exactly where it is.

1246

01:09:14,229 --> 01:09:17,609

But it is not my home anymore.

1247

01:09:17,609 --> 01:09:21,380

And I don't know if it ever was.

1248

01:09:21,380 --> 01:09:24,260

So yes, it feels like
it's a different life,

1249

01:09:24,260 --> 01:09:25,270

it's a different person.

1250

01:09:25,270 --> 01:09:31,229

1251

01:09:31,229 --> 01:09:34,350

What were your thoughts
when the Eichmann trial

1252

01:09:34,350 --> 01:09:37,960

was taking place in Israel?

1253

01:09:37,960 --> 01:09:40,700

Of course, I knew he was
guilty before he was tried.

1254

01:09:40,700 --> 01:09:44,475

But that's not the
way the system works.

1255

01:09:44,475 --> 01:09:47,580

1256
01:09:47,580 --> 01:09:52,590
My thoughts is we have too
many Eichmanns too loose

1257
01:09:52,590 --> 01:09:54,870
in the world.

1258
01:09:54,870 --> 01:09:59,190
And I would like the
Israeli intelligence

1259
01:09:59,190 --> 01:10:02,220
to be able to catch up to
them, because nobody else will

1260
01:10:02,220 --> 01:10:04,290
have the interest to do that.

1261
01:10:04,290 --> 01:10:07,620

1262
01:10:07,620 --> 01:10:10,410
Not only that, but I felt
that this country was hiding

1263
01:10:10,410 --> 01:10:16,240
too many Nazis,
strictly because we

1264
01:10:16,240 --> 01:10:20,060
wanted to find somebody who
was better qualified than what

1265
01:10:20,060 --> 01:10:21,700
we had to fight the communists.

1266
01:10:21,700 --> 01:10:25,210
So we hired the best
Nazis to do the job.

1267
01:10:25,210 --> 01:10:27,780

That's all terrible.

1268

01:10:27,780 --> 01:10:30,860

And I don't think we
should have done it.

1269

01:10:30,860 --> 01:10:32,500

And I guess many
people in government

1270

01:10:32,500 --> 01:10:34,150

feel that we shouldn't
have done it.

1271

01:10:34,150 --> 01:10:38,860

But there's no
government that's pure.

1272

01:10:38,860 --> 01:10:42,590

They all make mistakes, as
we found out again this week.

1273

01:10:42,590 --> 01:10:46,160

1274

01:10:46,160 --> 01:10:48,790

Do you feel that because
of your childhood

1275

01:10:48,790 --> 01:10:52,210

and having to leave under
terrible conditions,

1276

01:10:52,210 --> 01:10:55,810

that you're more
attuned to, let's

1277

01:10:55,810 --> 01:10:59,490

say, the Civil
Rights movement here

1278

01:10:59,490 --> 01:11:01,490

than others that didn't

go through what you did?

1279

01:11:01,490 --> 01:11:04,320

1280

01:11:04,320 --> 01:11:09,010

I probably mentioned also
that while I was in Spain,

1281

01:11:09,010 --> 01:11:14,350

in Barcelona, it was a
strange feeling seeing

1282

01:11:14,350 --> 01:11:18,030

the American flag next to
Nazi flag flying side by side.

1283

01:11:18,030 --> 01:11:21,752

The two embassies were
next to each other.

1284

01:11:21,752 --> 01:11:22,960

And it was a strange feeling.

1285

01:11:22,960 --> 01:11:27,040

Whenever I looked at the
American flag, I was proud.

1286

01:11:27,040 --> 01:11:27,710

I felt good.

1287

01:11:27,710 --> 01:11:30,650

1288

01:11:30,650 --> 01:11:33,340

The British embassy
was further up.

1289

01:11:33,340 --> 01:11:35,820

I didn't have the same
feeling for the British.

1290

01:11:35,820 --> 01:11:39,238

But somehow, the stars
and stripes, there's

1291

01:11:39,238 --> 01:11:40,030

something about it.

1292

01:11:40,030 --> 01:11:44,700

1293

01:11:44,700 --> 01:11:52,310

Did I diverge from what
I was trying to say?

1294

01:11:52,310 --> 01:11:53,540

What was the question again?

1295

01:11:53,540 --> 01:11:54,520

Sorry.

1296

01:11:54,520 --> 01:11:59,890

I was asking if because of your
background and having to leave,

1297

01:11:59,890 --> 01:12:02,680

are you more attuned to the
Civil Rights and the goals

1298

01:12:02,680 --> 01:12:05,200

of the Civil Rights movement
than others who weren't?

1299

01:12:05,200 --> 01:12:07,190

I was thinking about that.

1300

01:12:07,190 --> 01:12:12,170

So that when I came here,
the only thing I knew

1301

01:12:12,170 --> 01:12:15,250

was that Roosevelt had been
in power for so long and so

1302

01:12:15,250 --> 01:12:19,270

entrenched with
his values, and I

1303

01:12:19,270 --> 01:12:21,580

had heard that
Roosevelt is really

1304

01:12:21,580 --> 01:12:23,500

the one who saved the world.

1305

01:12:23,500 --> 01:12:26,800

He got all the credit.

1306

01:12:26,800 --> 01:12:30,580

I did not know that
the St. Louis was not

1307

01:12:30,580 --> 01:12:32,770

allowed to come here.

1308

01:12:32,770 --> 01:12:38,760

I did not know that there was
a Father Coughlin and a lot

1309

01:12:38,760 --> 01:12:42,960

of people who refused entry
to refugees because they

1310

01:12:42,960 --> 01:12:43,530

were Jews.

1311

01:12:43,530 --> 01:12:46,900

1312

01:12:46,900 --> 01:12:48,950

I don't know if that
would have helped.

1313

01:12:48,950 --> 01:12:52,820

That might have made me more
angry about the country,

1314
01:12:52,820 --> 01:12:56,690
but I did not know these things.

1315
01:12:56,690 --> 01:13:01,060
So when I came, I was
more attuned to Roosevelt.

1316
01:13:01,060 --> 01:13:04,810
To me, Roosevelt
typified the nation.

1317
01:13:04,810 --> 01:13:07,000
And then shortly
after that when Truman

1318
01:13:07,000 --> 01:13:11,170
ascended to the
presidency, he seemed

1319
01:13:11,170 --> 01:13:13,090
like a real man of the people.

1320
01:13:13,090 --> 01:13:17,680
And I guess I was a
Democrat at heart.

1321
01:13:17,680 --> 01:13:22,600
And in my experience back then
in Europe, all my friends--

1322
01:13:22,600 --> 01:13:25,015

1323
01:13:25,015 --> 01:13:26,140
most of them were non-Jews.

1324
01:13:26,140 --> 01:13:30,270

1325
01:13:30,270 --> 01:13:32,970
A best friend I had

when I came over

1326

01:13:32,970 --> 01:13:38,000

was a young man who
was born in the Congo.

1327

01:13:38,000 --> 01:13:41,150

And I never could understand
why he wasn't Black.

1328

01:13:41,150 --> 01:13:45,120

1329

01:13:45,120 --> 01:13:48,990

But I guess I was attuned to
people working together that

1330

01:13:48,990 --> 01:13:51,270

got along together.

1331

01:13:51,270 --> 01:13:53,610

If you didn't like somebody,
you didn't associate with.

1332

01:13:53,610 --> 01:13:55,980

But if you like
somebody, you don't

1333

01:13:55,980 --> 01:14:00,720

have to find out what he is to
be able to have fun with them,

1334

01:14:00,720 --> 01:14:03,210

or play with them, or
to work with them--

1335

01:14:03,210 --> 01:14:04,980

it didn't bother me.

1336

01:14:04,980 --> 01:14:12,690

So being attuned to
democratic principles

1337

01:14:12,690 --> 01:14:16,990

of this country I guess
made me more attuned

1338

01:14:16,990 --> 01:14:19,860

to being able to live together.

1339

01:14:19,860 --> 01:14:21,720

Melting pot?

1340

01:14:21,720 --> 01:14:25,000