

**Interview with David Brombart  
May 7, 2007**

**Beginning Tape One, Side A**

Question: This is the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with **David Brombart**, conducted by **Gail Schwartz** on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007, in the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum in **Washington, D.C.** This is tape number one, side **A**. What is your full name?

Answer: **David Brombart**.

Q: And where were you born?

A: Born in **Brussels**, in August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1933.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about your family. How far back, in generations, does your family go, in **Belgium**?

A: In **Belgium**, no more than three generation.

Q: And who were they?

A: Well, I think my father came from a little village in **Poland** called **Blaski**. He had seven brothers, and my father and his brother immigrated in **Belgium**, and a brother came in **Belgium** after the second -- the first World War, okay? One emigrated to **Israel** and another emigrated to the **United States**, and the rest were assassinated of course, by -- by the German.

Q: Wha-What was your father's name?

A: **Aaron. Aaron Brombart**, and -- yes. And he came in **Belgium**, as I found out recently from the **Belgium** government archive, exactly in 1925. And he only married

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my wi -- my mother, sorry, in '39, because he was engaged in a divorce with his first wife, who he married in **Poland** before he came to **Belgium**. And there were all those bureaucratic, you know, legal matters were pending. Then, I don't know exactly when they pronounced the divorce, but what I know, that he ask in 1937, the Polish government to release his mise -- our sister, **Sarah**, in order for her to come to **Belgium**.

Q: So he had a child in **Poland**?

A: In **Poland**, yes, from his first --

Q: Wh-Wh-Where -- where was he born in **Poland**?

A: **Blaski**. Must be a famous village because practically everybody that I -- I met here say they came from **Lódz, Blaski** and all the sur-surrounding area. Then, he marry first in **Poland**, before he came to **Belgium**, and from again, the last documents received from **Belgium** show that his first wife also came at one moment to **Belgium**, and I think he arranged all that.

Q: What was her name?

A: Very complicated name that I have to find out with --

Q: Okay, we'll talk about that later.

A: -- with -- yes. And -- but I never had any contact with her, I never saw her except a glance at one ceremony.

Q: Then his relationship with your mother started when?

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A: I-It started -- he came in '25, I-I was born in '33, then they must have met before that. And there is all kind of story because my mother had two sister, and one sister married a -- a cousin from my father, coming from **Poland**, and I have photos where he -- he's seen in -- in this **Blaski**, the other wearing peasant clothes, he had the nice, you know, jacket and the hat, etcetera. And presumably he was responsible also to bring this cousin to **Belgium**, too, who married the sister of my -- of my -- of my mother. I think it's a -- a little complicated still.

Q: Tell me about your mother's family.

A: Well, my fa -- mother family came from **Poland**, and they were all born in -- i-in **Poland**, and they came in -- in -- in **Belgium**. We have photos etcetera. I think also, '25 - '27. And I don't know in '27.

Q: Because you said in the beginning your family goes back three generations.

A: No, I thi -- I think it's not correct.

Q: Oh, okay. [laughter]

A: I -- is not correct.

Q: Okay.

A: I think it's two generations maybe.

Q: It's just your father.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q: Yeah.

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A: Yeah.

Q: Tell me what kind of work your father did.

A: Yes, he was a -- in the ladder, you know. I know that they work, you know, in a little room for 12 hours a day, etcetera. I think for -- for probably two or three years, before he enter in a very successful business of his own. You know, with -- you know, 20 workers or 30, which is --

Q: Also a ladder business?

A: Yes, a ladder -- a -- a -- and a -- a ladder business. But then came a, you know, a past, you know, story that when he came to **Belgium**, as -- as I mentioned in another oral history, he went directly to work in the mines, coal mines in **Liege** for -- for a year. And he had always a connection with the mining industry, not because -- we talk about later, that there was **[indecipherable]** in the last family who -- who were miners, but h-he took me practically everywhere -- every year back in the mines, you know, to -- to see what's up, I mean, etcetera. And **[indecipherable]** were before -- a-after we went in the mines, etcetera. That h-he became very, as I mentioned, very successful, but again I -- with all those document, I have no proof that -- of the fact that he went directly to **Liege** and work in the mines. This is not in the archive of the -- of the **Belgium** government. They ja -- mentioned that he resided in **Brussels**, that he had this job, that before he went, there were exchange of letter with the Polish consulate, etcetera. And we mentioned that his salary was **X Belgian franks** a year, and that he

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was a good worker [**indecipherable**] and that they will provide housing, etcetera, which was essential for somebody to -- to come to -- to **Belgium** from **Poland**.

Q: Okay, now you were born in 1933.

A: Yeah.

Q: Let's talk about your family at that time, was it a religious family?

A: No, they were not religious. It was not that. They follow, let's say, some practice, okay?

Q: Such as?

A: Passover, **Bar Mitzvah**. I -- I was **Bar Mitzvah**, too. I was very keen to have all the gifts, but anyway, it was a -- in the **Brussels** Jewish family, an event, because not only the ceremony took place at the Grand Synagogue in **Brussels**, but it took three -- three days. You know, the first days with -- the banquet was for the immediate family and friends. The second was for my father clients, you know, and the third one was for all his workers. So, you know, th -- it was a big -- a big things.

Q: But this was after the war.

A: No --

Q: You're talking about your **Bar Mitzvah**?

A: Yes, bar mi -- it was just after the war.

Q: Was just after, okay, let's get back to before the war.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah, before the war?

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Q: Yeah.

A: Yes. As I mentioned, th-the family of my mother, they came from **Warsaw** in '25 - '27, the mother, the father and three sister, okay? And --

Q: So these are your grandparents, and your aunts.

A: Grandparents, correct, and actually they were all employed by my father, you know, and -- but I was born in the basement of a li -- of the apartment from my grandfather, etcetera.

Q: Where -- where did you -- you live in **Brussels**? In the center, or --

A: In -- in one of the -- yes, in -- in **Brussels** area.

Q: In the city?

A: In the city, wa --

Q: In a house or an apartment?

A: In -- in an -- a small apartment [**indecipherable**] a small apartment, but I was born at my grandmother place, and apparently on August the second, but my father went to the city hall on the third, then a-all the papers said I was born on the third. How about that? A-Again, an administrative little problem. And we live in the [**indecipherable**] some kind of basement and -- until we moved to a -- a bigger apartment. This must be then in -- in '35. [**indecipherable**] was born in thir -- '35.

Q: Yeah. Would you describe your family at that time, pre-war, as being middle class -

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A: Oh yes.

Q: -- upper class?

A: My father was certainly middle class, okay? He -- he prosper at that time. I have only remembrance that h-he was very successful. Many things, all the photos that I have, we spent at the seaside, you know, in **Belgium**. I remember at that time, you know, there was all those ballroom dancing, etcetera and I remember each time I had - - they -- they -- they -- they put in front of the bed all the balloons, all the gift, etcetera, a-a-and -- and things like that. Later, it was a very large room, and my sister was in the same room, you know?

Q: Now, this is the sister that was born after you?

A: No, no, no, that's my half sister --

Q: Your half sister.

A: Who came in '37. And I was --

Q: So did -- did your family ha -- did your parents have any more children after you?

A: No, no.

Q: No.

A: And she was pregnant when she was deported, yes. That's -- has been also documented by doctors and all that. Then, many things about -- very nice upbringing, you know, spoiled, like **[indecipherable]** by my mother, a-and my father, certainly. And -- and the rest of the -- the family, my grandfather was a clockmaker, something

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like that, yes, a-and the other wa -- you know, as I mentioned work in my fa-father business, they never make it at the same level that my father, in term of revenue, income, etcetera. And then came the -- the war, you know.

Q: Yeah, well, we'll get to that in a minute. Were your parents Zionists?

A: Let us say that because he had one of -- of his brother in -- in -- in -- in **Israel**, I think he was more or less Zionist. He was a member of the -- the Jewish labor **bun -- bund [indecipherable]**. And this is a very interesting question, because it led to a development later on, when his -- or certainly my mother, were convince that th-there will be not, you know, harm, you know, and therefore th-the -- there was some distance between Zionists, you know, and the belief that th-they will be, you know, recognized as Belgian citizen and so on and s -- and so forth. Then, how -- however, my -- our sister was a leader of the **Hashomeritz --**

Q: **Hatzair**?

A: -- ye -- **Hatzair**, and you know, she -- she develop into a fantastic girl, and they were -- they were debate if they have to leave for **Israel** or not, st -- you know? But I think she was one who says we have to go, but it was too late. Too late.

Q: What language is it you speak at home?

A: At home I speak French with my wife, and she speak Fre --

Q: No, no, I meant when you were growing up.

A: Grow -- oh, French.



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Q: You spoke French.

A: French. But I unders -- began to understand Yiddish, because all my father and -- and -- and his friends were speaking Jewish.

Q: From **Poland** [indecipherable]

A: Fr-From **Poland**, and -- and they were in **Brussels**, th-th-then they finally -- yes, they were speaking --

Q: No, I know [indecipherable]

A: -- yeah, yeah. They were speaking Yi-Yiddish, I never learned Yiddish, I learned a bit of Hebrew because of the **Bar Mitzvah** and the gift, but -- but nothing, nothing else, it was French, I wa -- you know.

Q: Did you live in a -- I know you were very young --

A: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah

Q: -- but I'm asking you questions about the time you were very young, but did you live in a Jewish neighborhood, or a non-Jewish neighborhood --

A: No, non-Jewish neighborhood. The -- the Jewish, they were -- the only strict Jewish neighborhood was in **Antwerp**, you see? Then, in **Brussels** it was very --

Q: Mixed.

A: -- integrated, and the other center was in **Liege**, was also integrated, there -- there -- there was no -- not any form of -- of -- of residences in the street for -- for Jewish, or something like that, no.

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Q: When you were very young, did your parents belong to a synagogue?

A: No, I don't think so. No, I don't think so.

Q: But you still observed Passover?

A: Yes, Passover, but that was done by the grandmother, etcetera, not by -- by -- by her family. Was --

Q: So you remember going over to the relatives for the holiday?

A: Oh yeah, for s -- the holidays, that is --

Q: What about the Sabbath, did you observe the Sabbath at home?

A: No, no, never. No, no, no, no.

Q: And did you have Jewish friends when you were very young?

A: Yes. Yes, and this can be seen by photograph, etcetera. Yes, and --

Q: Again, I'm talking pre-war.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, I went to the seaside and etcetera from -- from -- from **[indecipherable]**

Q: And -- and no -- and non-Jewish friends, also? Both?

A: This I cannot really remember until later.

Q: Yeah, because you were still young, yeah.

A: Un-Until later, until later.

Q: So what are your very first memories?

A: Of?

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Q: Of life.

A: Of life, a-as I say, I -- from '33 til let's say 1940, it was a good memory of a good -  
- you know, family, and -- surrounded by love and understanding and -- and vacation  
and all kind of things which -- which --

Q: So you were a happy child, yeah.

A: Absolutely, I'll say --

Q: Would you consider yourself an independent child at that time, or were you more  
attached to your parents?

A: No, not at the -- not at that time. The independence came much later, after -- even  
after the war.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: After the --

Q: You were still young.

A: Yeah --

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: -- after the war, yeah. A-And --

Q: And so what year did you start school?

A: Well, school, that was the -- the second phase, let us say. I remember very well  
when the German invaded **Belgium**.

Q: Yeah. Okay, well, we'll get to that.

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A: Okay.

Q: Had you started school by then?

A: No.

Q: Oh, you hadn't?

A: Because that was the -- exactly --

Q: So they didn't start at five years old?

A: No, no, no, no, I di -- the school in **Belgium** start when you are six - seven years old.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: You see, yeah, yeah. And there was no, you know, pre -- pre-school, you know, anything --

Q: Did -- did -- yeah -- did you feel Jewish? I'm talking again before the war, did you feel Jewish? Did you know you were Jewish?

A: We know that we were Jewish, but I didn't feel that, that it was something special at that time. I think this was really an integrated, you know, fa -- Jewish family who respect the origin, but you -- we didn't, you know, feel any --

Q: Be-Before the Germans invaded, had you ever heard of a man named **Hitler**?

A: No, no.

Q: You did not.

A: No, no. And --

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Q: So your parents never told you --

A: Nothing, and --

Q: -- the invasion, what was happening in **Europe**?

A: -- and this one certainly something that I'm very frustrated with.

Q: Well, you were a child.

A: Yeah. But it goes further, because it's -- it's -- i-i-if we go into the details of that, he -- especially from my mother's side, she -- and my father, too, never real -- realized that there may be some consequence, though they should have, with the German situation, and with all the fal -- the Jewish immigra --

Q: **Poland**, and --

A: -- **Poland, Germany**, and the newsreel and the paper --

Q: Right.

A: -- etcetera. I -- I will not say that I never forgive them, but I think they did a very big mistake, because the sister of my mother, and th -- and their two ch -- and the father, and the two chil-children, went into hiding, okay? And --

Q: Do you remember their names?

A: Oh yes, their name.

Q: Well what -- what are their names?

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A: When the -- one was **Marie** [indecipherable] they immigrated in the **United States** in the 50, and she died two, three years ago, and the other was **Esther**, who was deported with my mother in the same convoy, oh yes.

Q: And her last name was?

A: **Lewin**. Under [indecipherable]. And --

Q: And your mother's name was?

A: **Melanie** -- **Minna**, you know --

Q: **Minna**.

A: Yeah. And --

Q: **Minna Lewin**?

A: **Lewin**, yes --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- and I think she was the second in ma -- first was **Esther**, her, and then my -- what I want to mention is that in this pre-war period, and leading to the -- the invasion from the German, I know this because after the war, that contrary to some of the friends o -- friends of the family --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- it was my mother who resisted, you know, leaving. She -- she wanted to keep, you know, an eye on -- on her mother and father. The other didn't care, they go -- went. She refused when my father was able to purchase, you know passport from

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Central American countries, who were sending their passport. And some of those families were in a camp, but in -- n-not of the same camp. The German, they -- they were in camp in -- in -- in **France** for -- for -- for a -- for Central American citizen were not in the war, you see?

Q: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

A: Well, I never forgave them, to use the word, and -- and she stay and stay, contrary to my father advice, etcetera, etcetera. And this is why, an illustration of that, that is why my father send me, you know, in hiding before, because he -- he sensed that something, you know, may happen. And unfortunately also, my grandfather became involved in a -- in a Jewish, you know, organization, incorporated with the German, etcetera, etcetera.

Q: What was the name of that --

A: Jewish -- I can -- I -- it was a -- I'm sorry for the name, but I don't know the name.

Q: Okay.

A: The Jewish League, or something like that. The G-Ger -- the German recognize. Then, this period, pre -- pre-invasion also had my father think about, you know, also what may happen, and I remember that he -- the -- after the invasion in May, 1940 --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- he brought me in the factory and showed me where he hide -- has hidden, you know, piles of money, in case something happen. Okay? Remember that. And when --

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again, I don't know when exactly, but I remember that my grandfather came and -- and ask me if he knew that my father put some money, that it will help my mother, who was in there, and I show him the money, and I remember very well, across the street, the -- the -- the Jewish gangster who work for the German, ach -- no, is a -- Mis -- Mr. **Jacques**, you know, in the leather, you know, coat, and who was the one who was the denouncing all the things, etcetera. Then -- this I remember very well.

Q: Let's talk about the German invasion.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: So up to that point --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- your childhood was a happy one.

A: Sure.

Q: And then the -- what is your memory of the German invasion?

A: Yes, I -- very, very clearly again --

Q: Where were you --

A: -- in the apartment on May the -- the ninth, one day before the official -- th-the invasion. But we were living in -- close to an army barracks, okay?

Q: Belgian army barracks?

A: Y-Yes.

Q: Mm-hm.



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A: And on the ninth, some German paratrooper came, and I remember very well that there were some -- some shooting from one side or the other. And we were in the apartment, I remember a sofa. We're sitting there, and there were some friend of ma -- the family, and the next day the German invaded.

Q: You heard shooting?

A: Yeah.

Q: What did that mean to you, as you're seven years old?

A: Nothing, nothing.

Q: Doesn't mean a -- da -- it wasn't frightening?

A: It -- no, I was not frightened, but I -- no, nothing. I didn't know because the -- they never inf -- hinted that something may happen like that, or what.

Q: But as you say, you didn't know -- of course, again, you were very young.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: You didn't know about the Germans invading **Poland** or any of that? Okay.

A: N-No.

Q: Okay.

A: No. And --

Q: **[indecipherable]**. Then the next day, what happened?

A: Well, the next day, the invasion came, they -- they -- they entered the countries.

Then came --

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Q: Okay, what was that like for you? What was your --

A: No --

Q: -- impression, what -- what are the sights, do you have any memories of that day?

A: No, because the-the-they -- they didn't invade, you know, **Brussels** --

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: -- ah, there was no fighting there --

Q: Okay.

A: -- fa -- some fighting in **Liege**. But then came, you know, a -- a -- a situation which I still don't rem -- I remember, but I don't comprehend, is that people were ev -- you know, evacuating from **Belgium** to **France**, even though like in the first World War, you know, they wanted distance. I remember that my father was arrested in **Cambrai**, and I remember seeing him with hundreds of people i-in the -- in the -- again, in the --

Q: Now, when was that?

A: In -- in '40, in for -- a few months after the invasion.

Q: [**indecipherable**] a few, okay a few months.

A: Yeah.

Q: But let's go back to May.

A: Yeah.

Q: Cause I'm not -- what was May like, the rest of May like? N-No -- no difference for you?

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A: No, n -- well, I -- I may have sensed discussions, etcetera, but I have no --

Q: Did your parents have a radio, did they listen to the radio?

A: Yes, yes, but I never --

Q: You didn't pick up on it.

A: I didn't pick up on it. The first thing about tha -- tha -- wa -- we -- there was need to -- to go evacuate, fas -- far as you can from the invasion. You know, hundreds of Belgian all -- not even Jewish, you know, they -- they took all the [indecipherable] and they were bombed during the wi -- the wa -- th -- on th-th-the -- the -- the highways and everything. And we came back, and I think the document of the Belgian government say that we came back a month later.

Q: Now, wh-when you say we came back, where -- when did you leave and when -- where did you go?

A: We -- we leave probably in something -- I have to look in May or June --

Q: Of fo -- of '40?

A: -- you see, and then we came back to **Belgium**. We went to **France**.

Q: Oh, you went to **France**, your family --

A: Yes, all the family went to **France** --

Q: -- to **France**.

A: -- where my father was arrested.

Q: In -- in May?

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A: In j -- May or June --

Q: June.

A: -- of 1940, and then we came back to [indecipherable]

Q: And what was your thoughts as a seven year old child, why am I leaving my home -

-

A: No --

Q: -- to go to a different country?

A: No, no, I think it was some kind -- no, no comprehension whatso --

Q: You didn't question your parents?

A: No, I didn't question --

Q: Okay.

A: -- my parents on that.

Q: Okay.

A: No -- on that.

Q: Do you remember being frightened?

A: No. No.

Q: Okay, you just went along?

A: Along, and there was a ride, and -- and bi --

Q: A trip?

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A: -- a trip or something like that, no -- there was no beating or harassment. You know, at that time the German were very clever --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- they didn't do nothing, you know.

Q: So you saw German uniforms and --

A: We saw German uniform, and --

Q: And what did you think of that as a seven year old boy?

A: No. No, no in --

Q: It wasn't frightening?

A: No, it was not frightening, and their policy was to be amicable and etcetera, because this was '40 --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- because the -- the execution start only in '42, then there was two years in between like that --

Q: Yeah, yeah. So you came back, and then the rest of the summer --

A: The rest of the summer, and I went to school --

Q: In the fall?

A: No. Summer, nothing happened, I don't remem -- ther -- I went to school only in '41, when I was, you know **[indecipherable]**

Q: Oh, oh, you were eight?

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A: Yeah, or sev -- four -- '41? Let me see. Yes --

Q: So you stayed home through 1940?

A: Yes, yes. And I went to school -- I mentioned in th -- I think it was '40 then, in '40, when I was seven.

Q: Yeah.

A: And then -- was in September, okay? And in -- three months later, the German denied the Jewish children to go to school, or to serve in the army, or to serve in the --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- public service. Then they came with the Jewish star, which I remember my mother, you know, knitting that. She was totally irresponsible, I must say. And -- and -  
-

Q: Okay, you --

A: Yeah?

Q: Tell me what it was like to have to wear the Jewish star.

A: I have -- I can -- I have no -- no remembrance that it was something -- it was told that we should -- I think I have seen it in photos, that we have to wear them, and she says we have to wear them. And -- and I don't know where I put all that -- and then I went to school for a few months, okay?

Q: Okay. Was it a re -- just a regular school where --

A: Was regular school --

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Q: -- mi-mixed children -- it wasn't a Jewish school?

A: No, no, it was not a Jewish [indecipherable] school. I -- and by coincidence, after the liberation I went back to the same school, and --

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**Beginning Tape One, Side B**

Q: This is a continuation of the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with **David Brombart**. This is tape number one, side **B**. Let's just make a few corrections.

A: Yeah.

Q: You said you started school, the correct time was?

A: September 1940.

Q: '40. Which was five months after the invasion.

A: After the invasion. And I stay in school until mid-1941.

Q: Okay, okay. Tell me about the school that you went to.

A: Ye -- that was an elementary school.

Q: A pub -- local public --

A: Local, from the --

Q: Neighborhood?

A: -- th-the neighborhood of -- of **Ixelles**, th -- which was where we lived, and it was a -- a preparatory school also, for the -- for the second -- for col -- not for college, but

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for high school [indecipherable] for high school. And I remember the school and people were, and the professor were, you know, concerned about the -- the Star of **David** at this certain time.

Q: Were any of the teachers Jewish?

A: This I don't know, but I don't think so.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But, you know, when it was recreation time, etcetera, they were always discussing, you know, the situation that they were facing with the Jewish kid. There were not too many, but there were some. And --

Q: Okay, these were the teachers that [indecipherable]

A: The teachers, yes. And I remember also, the teacher were discussing -- because I came -- I went back to the same school in September 40 -- 40 -- at the liberation, '44, a-and they were still discussing that some Jewish kids came back, you see, from -- from the school. And it was not possible to distinguish the ones who care, or didn't care, or they had the political agenda, or not. Then th-the -- all those successive decrees from the Germans says that, in mid '41, you cannot attend school any more, etcetera.

Q: Okay. Did you, as a child, sense the tension? Or were you not aware?

A: I wa -- totally was innocent, you know, at that ti -- I was not aware.

Q: Again, you were only seven, seven and a half. You were very young.



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A: I-I was -- I was not a-a-aware of --

Q: Right.

A: -- of thing. I came aware when first, you know, we got to evacuate, a voluntary evacuation to --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- to **France**. And then with tensions, you know --

Q: And di -- did -- did you talk things over with your parents?

A: No.

Q: Did they say anything to you, to --

A: No.

Q: -- your sis -- no.

A: They didn't -- they didn't -- they didn't --

Q: They didn't. They shielded you, they protected you.

A: Yeah, protected me --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- a-a-and --

Q: Well, you were a little boy.

A: Yeah, little boy. I remember we were first hiding in -- not hiding, put in a farm, you know, outside **Tournai** in **Belgium**, where I remember my sister showing a paper, not

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to me, but to the -- the -- the family, the farmers there. I remember this was a few weeks before she was deported, yeah, see?

Q: H-How did -- did your mother tell you that you had worn -- that you had to wear a yellow star?

A: Yes, yeah.

Q: And what was your reaction?

A: Again, we were innocent, she said you have to wear it, and this was all part of her -- of her belief that she will not face anything that, you know, the German will not do anything, you know, and things like that, you know. And this lead to what I mentioned before, that she refused my father a --

Q: Did it -- did --

A: -- a-advice to -- to -- to leave for this **America**, or to **France**, or like all many others who to -- buy those Central American passport, because he had the money to do so, and we would have escape, all of us.

Q: Did it make you feel different, to wear this, from your other friends?

A: Yeah, I -- I think a little, yes, yeah, yes. But th-the significance was not there. And why it will have been more of a significance if I -- I had been member some Jewish group [**indecipherable**] etcetera, like my sister was with **Hashomer Hatzair**, but I was not, I was not. No, no.

Q: Yeah. So then you went to school til mid '41?

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A: Yes.

Q: And then they told you -- Jewish children could not go to school.

A: Can not go to school.

Q: And how did you feel about that?

A: Not remember, no remember.

Q: Okay. Okay.

A: Maybe happy that I didn't have to go to school.

Q: So what did you do during the day?

A: Oh, th-th-the usual, you know, playing with some friends. I remember going -- ma -  
- my mother put me with the scouts, the **Belgium** scouts, etcetera, that I like very  
much, and -- and --

Q: And they didn't discriminate against you being Jewish in the scouts?

A: No, at that time, no.

Q: No. Okay.

A: No, no, because again the -- the really hard decree came in -- in '42.

Q: In '42.

A: In '42.

Q: Okay, so --

A: In '42.

Q: -- once schools were closed you just played around.

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A: Oh, play around [**indecipherable**]

Q: Were you an athletic child?

A: No, no, no, no, no. No. I remember we got all kinds of scouts there -- you know, events there, and some of them I didn't like very much.

Q: Did you like to read? Did you like --

A: Yes, I -- I read, yes, but again, totally absent from th-th-the contemporary situation which prevail at that time --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- at that time. And --

Q: Do you remember your parents sitting around the radio, listening to your -- do you remember scenes like that?

A: Yes, yes, yeah.

Q: But not conveying their worst --

A: No, no, no, no.

Q: Yeah.

A: No.

Q: Okay, and so then things started to tighten?

A: Started to -- to -- to tighten very much so in -- in early '42.

Q: Okay.

A: You see. Then came the --

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Q: You're still in your apartment?

A: We're still in the apartment, and then came th-the decree that young adults who wants to work in **Germany**, you know, will go, I think there is copy of those kind of forms, saying you have to take only one suitcase and things like that, you will -- your fa -- your family will not be touched. That's was her, as a idealist, etcetera, say I have to do that. So -- and I have a photo of it, I don't know where it is, but somewhere, of her standing in front of the station in a fur coat and boots.

Q: This is your sa --

A: Sas -- sister.

Q: Your sister.

A: You know. We -- and then I don't know, though is -- it is mentioned in the documentation that she left in August 40 -- '42, I don't know wh-wh-where exactly the train stopped. Is it in **Brussel**? It seemed that they did -- she didn't go to **Malines**, where th -- all the other Jewish people, like my mother, went when the -- really the -- the -- the arrest --

Q: So was --

A: -- came, etcetera.

Q: -- this was just your sister leaving, on her --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- on her own.

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A: On her own, and you know, they -- we were si -- we deci --

Q: And she thought she was going to work in **Germany**?

A: Yes. And that the family will not be touched. That's was in the --

Q: Form.

A: -- in the form from the -- the government.

Q: Right, right.

A: A-And but what I don't know if they left immediately for **Auschwitz** without going to **Malines**. And this way this -- possibility to get some of the document, we will see if she really went to **Malines**, or she went directly to -- to **Auschwitz**. In asking at the center in **Auschwitz**, they have no trace of her -- a **Brombart**, and I don't know what - what is the significance.

Q: How old was she at the time?

A: Then she was si -- 16, or 17. Born 20 fi-fi -- 25<sup>th</sup>. And I don't know if -- they don't have a-any trace of them, then we don't know.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Though, in -- and again the document that the **Holocs** museum has, from a study of **Belgium** Jewish deported to **Germany**, they mention how many people in the convoy.

Q: Mm-hm.

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A: How many die immediately and later, and who survived, but I never found out who may have survive, and what they did, etcetera. Then -- this is very obscure, and I never dealt with the **[indecipherable]**

Q: Do you know the convoy number, or --

A: Yeah, yeah, everything, you know. The convoy was convoy two.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Then the second one, with 163 people, and it left August 11, '42.

Q: Yeah. So you're home with your -- your mother now, and your father.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: And tell me about your grandfather, you said he was part of this group?

A: Yes.

Q: What did he do in this group?

A: He was member of the board, who -- who again, duties w-were to register the Jewish people in -- in **Belgium**.

Q: So why was he a m -- a member of that?

A: I have no idea. And they, with all those lists, helped the **Belgium** police to arrest, you know, the -- the Jewish families.

Q: Why do you think he was a member -- a member of that group?

A: This group was --

Q: Was he not aware of what they were doing?

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A: No, not at the first time, you know, not at the first, you know, it was established to protect or to -- to -- to -- to -- to even help --

Q: Assist it --

A: -- assist the [**indecipherable**]

Q: -- to assist the Jews. Yeah, and then --

A: -- I don't know why, and -- and -- and -- and they were -- it's -- the story is not yet told. There are some books published in **Belgium**. Was this really an instrument of the German, or it became an opposition to the -- the German, or the arrest. One thing I know, he was there. He -- he tried to -- to collect funds, like what I described before.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: When I mentioned that my father, you know, had some money in the factory. He said afterwards this was to protect your mother, who was pregnant at the time, and actually, she left in one of the -- the latest convoy, it was convoy now 18. My sister was [**inaudible**]

Q: This -- this is your mother you're talking about now?

A: Yes. She went --

Q: How did she know she had to leave?

A: Oh, in **Malines** th-they -- they say at one time you have to --

Q: Oh, so -- so you were not -- you were -- t-tell me where you were. She was not home at the time, or --



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A: No.

Q: What's the **[indecipherable]** of that?

A: Yeah, the commonality is that my --

Q: Your sister left, the three of the you --

A: -- my sister left in August.

Q: -- are -- are back in your apartment.

A: Back, okay

Q: Yeah.

A: My father immediately put me in one of the families.

Q: Right after your sister left?

A: Yes. You see, she left in August, okay, and he put me in this -- in the family

**[indecipherable]** family first, th-th-this Jewish boarding school, and the arrest came in  
December '42.

Q: Okay, let's tal -- let's go back to you -- your sister left.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: And then tell me, your father put you where?

A: First in a -- in a Jewish boarding school.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: In **Ikla**. **Ikla** i-is an -- again, one of the neighborhoods in bif -- from **Brussels**.

Q: Oh, okay.

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A: Okay?

Q: Okay.

A: And this was a boarding school run by some f -- Jewish group, I [indecipherable] certain, and wa --

Q: So there were other Jewish students there?

A: Oh yeah, there were lots of kid, 30 or 40.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And -- and as --

Q: As young as you?

A: As young as me. And I didn't -- immediately didn't like it. The first evening I -- I said I was sick and I was not sick. You know, this became that -- I became aware of something, okay? And that was not a place for me, but --

Q: Why did your parents -- what did they tell you to say that you had to go to this school?

A: That that's an honor [inaudible]

Q: Okay.

A: And he -- the next day I tried to find some money to go back by tramways to the house, and as I have a good photographic memory, I knew exactly where that was, but it was certainly [indecipherable] of marching from that place to the apartment, you

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know? Then when I came back my father immediately put in family wi -- number one, and then -- etcetera.

Q: They were surprised to see you come home.

A: To see me coming, and he says, you have to go. And then --

Q: Did you know why?

A: No, no.

Q: You did not know why.

A: I did not know why. And --

Q: Okay. So then he finds a family for you to live with?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: And who was this family?

A: The family was again some clients of his, you know, and na --

Q: Non-Jewish?

A: Non-Jewish, non-Jewish, okay?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: There were two of them, and one I think decided, you know, I can keep you for a few months, and then it's over, you know, and then the second one was also --

Q: What was the name of the first family, do you remember?

A: No, I don't know their names.

Q: Okay. What was your mother's reaction?

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A: Oh, she --

Q: To -- for the fact that you had to go to this boarding school, then you went to a --

A: -- actually was, I think totally obsessed with mothers and father and the family. I-I -  
- sh-she -- I don't think **[indecipherable]**

Q: I mean, did she agree with your -- your father, that you should be --

A: Maybe she agree ma -- you know, she must have agreed, but I don't think she had  
any -- yeah, she agree. Okay? But I have no idea why she agree, and was -- and why  
she didn't leave, or wa -- as I mentioned before.

Q: Yeah.

A: But i -- but -- okay. Then --

Q: How did the first family treat you? Were they --

A: They -- this I remember, I have no idea why all those thing happens, you know, a-  
and the first family didn't even tell me.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: They did this as a -- a service to my father, okay? A-And the second one did also  
this as a service to my father, okay? But then --

Q: Were there children in the house?

A: No.

Q: So --

A: The first ones all grown up.

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Q: So you were the only child?

A: Yeah, only child.

Q: Were you lonely?

A: No, no --

Q: Did you cry? Were you upset?

A: -- no, no. [indecipherable] I was not upset either.

Q: Now you were -- do you actually remember these experiences, or is this what you were told?

A: Oh yeah, yeah, I -- yeah, I remember.

Q: You remember them?

A: I remember the first family, the second family. Then, the third family --

Q: What -- do you remember any of the -- the names of these families?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: N-No. No. None [indecipherable]

Q: Was your name still **David Brombart** --

A: Yes.

Q: -- did they tell you to keep your name?

A: Yeah, that time.

Q: Okay.

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A: Then when -- then when my father escape from **Malines**, or was arrested in **Brussels** --

Q: Okay, your -- your parents, yeah --

A: Yeah, my father in December.

Q: Just your father?

A: Yes, he --

Q: Was the first to be arrested.

A: It's a conflicting stories, I -- I can't get -- in December of '42, they ar -- they arrested him and my mother in their apartment or, like some papers say, they only arrested her. Mm, yeah. That boat went to **Malines**, where the story was that he escape after he was asked to organize some -- some workshop in **Malines**. And other official papers say only that he was arrested in **Brussels**. No indication that he was in **Brussel** looking fo -- you know, to organize this work -- led the workshop, we don't know. The only document says that my mother was arrested at the apartment, okay? And that the - - like they did at that time, they immediately got all the furniture, the paintings out, you know --

Q: Your parents did?

A: No, no, the German. When they arrest --

Q: Oh.

A: -- a Jewish family, the next day they came with a --

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Q: I see. Right.

A: -- truck and -- and took all the furniture, and the -- the things. And this I know from my mother's sister, at one time, because there was a little café where she saw, you know, the truck, etcetera, they cry because they have nothing. [indecipherable] but when -- whatever happen, arrested in **Brussel**, from **Malines**, or by his own, he escape, and the story was that he escape with a lot of money. He -- he had sa -- th-the money. And therefore, the third family, or the third family --

Q: That you were staying with?

A: That -- no, no, I was -- he -- he send me in another family --

Q: Right.

A: -- they both miners. You know, first two in -- in **Brussel**, and then came [indecipherable] th-the miner's family.

Q: You went to another, a third family?

A: Yes.

Q: A family of miners?

A: Yes, they --

Q: And -- and your father knew them?

A: This -- I don't know how they knew them, but it was like -- he was -- h-he went in the family. He was hidden in **Brussels**, you see? And -- and this family took him, because he had money, apparently.

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Q: Uh-huh.

A: They were no resistance, or whatever, or friends, or -- or people who want to help.

And the same happen with -- suddenly I find myself in with those miner families.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: A-And wh-who -- who prosper because of his money and did some very peculiar thing by themselves, but were extremely nice to me, and -- and fed me and was nothing t-to -- to be said, on the contrary, it was a -- a group of miners, but you know -  
-

Q: These are coal miners?

A: Coal miners, and with all th-the -- they way of the life in end of '42 or '43, all right?

Q: Okay, in the miner -- were you in one miner's family, or different?

A: Yeah, in one miner's family, but they are extended family, the brother and sister living on -- you know.

Q: Were there children in that family?

A: No, there were no -- curiously, no children.

Q: So again you were the only small --

A: Small --

Q: -- child.



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A: -- child. Except a later date, they -- there was a little girl who came from a family, and we have some teena -- no, pre-teenager, you know, thing. Si -- let's -- walking or going in the garden, etcetera, and it was an extended [indecipherable] family, and --

Q: Did you go to school?

A: No, no, no school.

Q: Did -- were -- wh-when you say you were hidden, it --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- did other -- did the neighbors know about you?

A: Well, that comes -- di -- you know, it's another --

Q: It's later on, do you mean?

A: No, it wa -- it was -- it's not a characteristic of what happened in **Belgium**, huh?

Meanings that they knew --

Q: The family.

A: A-A-And --

Q: The neighbors knew?

A: They knew, an -- but nobody denounce you, you know? Contrary to -- to other family, where they denounce that you were [indecipherable] came and arrested the people. Even where m -- where my father was [indecipherable] there, you know, some family knew. And we knew that there were other Jewish family in the village there, who was very af -- all were afraid, of course, of something will happen,

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denunciation, or whatever. Ah, but this was a -- a -- a peculiarity, let us say, when -- a-  
and it's difficult to -- to pinpoint, you know, the psychology, or the reaction to that.  
They knew. But I remember very well the extended miner family, and practically  
every evening they were all around, you know, and they talk about me, this I  
remember, but not [**indecipherable**] my name then was **Verbrugen**.

Q: Oh, you changed your name with the miners?

A: Yes.

Q: What was your new name?

A: **Verbrugen**. It's a Belgian name.

Q: Was it still **David**, the first one?

A: No, of co -- **Daniele**

Q: **Daniele**.

A: **Verbrugen**. And this was the surname of the family where my father was hidden in  
**Brussel**, they were **Verbrugen**, okay? Then they must know each other, etcetera, and  
as I said, my father sent suitcase of food, etcetera. Yeah, yeah.

Q: I was going to ask what was your contact with your father?

A: There was no contact until the -- six months before the liberation, where I went to  
visited for the first time, and we were unable to go back, you know?

Q: So while you were being hidden, you had no contact with your father, he sent stuff?

A: Yes, yes.

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Q: And what was -- again, what was that like for a si -- an eight year old, a -- a nine year old?

A: I -- I -- I --

Q: How did you manage?

A: You know, as I said, I was totally **[indecipherable]** and I couldn't -- I -- I couldn't comprehend really, what happened. For instance, from -- from th-the sleeping room, I remember, I watched through the window, and through the window, they -- y-you know, there was farmland etcetera, but in the background was a train station from another **[indecipherable]** and they were bombing it. And I don't know even what it was, okay? There were some reaction from the police of **[indecipherable]**, because you know, at that time, when you cleared the -- the land for --

Q: Farming?

A: -- for farming wheats, etcetera --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- you know? Because people, some people, you know, everybody was not hungry in -- i-in those places, but **[indecipherable]** wanted extra things. You were allowed to follow the machinery, you know, who picked them. And I was doing that, and I remember one day I said, hey **[indecipherable]** this thing, I took one was, you know, already, you know, assemble and **[indecipherable]** the thing and I carry it, but the po -

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- the policeman, she wa -- wa -- saw me, you know, and went to the family and said, look, now it's very dangerous --

Q: Oh.

A: -- you know, what you are doing.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know, you should not do that because etcetera. And I remember with the wheat and they made some pies and things like that. Then -- but I didn't remember again, I was not -- there, the family tell me that there was an invasion, the German were losing, and **Soviet Union [indecipherable]** that -- etcetera. But --

Q: By that time you obviously knew about a man named **Hitler**. Did you have any thoughts about him, or --

A: Not about **Hitler**, about the German and --

Q: Just Germans in general.

A: -- and German occupation.

Q: Yeah.

A: And the **Belgium** -- some Belgian react -- reaction to that. I went to school when I was, in the few months I was with my father. It was -- I know exactly when, I went with him from May til September, okay?

Q: Of?

A: Of 1944.

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Q: Oh, okay, you're now in '44.

A: Okay. Yeah.

Q: Yeah, we were going to go back a little bit, in time.

A: Oh, okay. But I went to school at that time, and that --

Q: Now what -- what -- what small villages --

A: Yeah?

Q: -- were you living in -- in --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- during these -- these -- when you were being hidden?

A: Yeah, during -- maybe the -- in **Brussels**, those were, let's say, neighbor

**[indecipherable]**

Q: Those were the first two --

A: Yes.

Q: -- houses. Then the next one.

A: Then the next was **Olné**.

Q: Yeah.

A: Okay? And the fourth one was --

Q: **Jistu**?

A: **Jistu**, where my father was hidden.

Q: Okay, but the miners were where?

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A: In **Oln**.

Q: In **Oln**, yeah.

A: In **Oln**, yeah.

Q: What kind of village was that?

A: It's not a -- it was a little --

Q: Mining town?

A: Mining town, you know, with -- I went to see them, there were two or three mine -- mining pits, okay?

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And at that time, you know, y -- you were this mountain of things, then

**[indecipherable]** I remember going, and they took me to a ci-cinema once in awhile, you know? I know th -- that they -- as I think I mentioned, to store where they bought some furniture, you know? And it was the life at that time, they bought those furniture. Of course, never one person sit on them, no, they put plastic on it. No-Nothing, never. The m -- m -- they had the other dining room, never. Every mine town at that time, houses **[indecipherable]** you know, in -- outside the big cities, had the back room, you know, where there was a -- a -- a great oven, you know, and thing, and you were sitting around it, you know. And there was always coffee there, and sugar, you know? This is where everything happens.

Q: So did you feel lonely, did you miss your family --

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A: No.

Q: -- did you think about your parents?

A: No, no, no. I think all -- no, I had the sentiment that they didn't do the right thing, you know, but I mean, it's only later that I realized that they had ample opportunity --

Q: Mm-hm -- y-yeah, yeah.

A: -- you know, to -- to the -- no, nothing. I --

Q: So you weren't angry that they --

A: N-No --

Q: -- made you live in a different place?

A: No, not angry about that. After the war, was angry at my --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- grandfather and all that. Now, then in June --

Q: Did you ha -- did you go to church with them?

A: No, they didn't go to church.

Q: They were not religious?

A: No, no.

Q: Yeah.

A: They were all also from -- you know, th-the -- the socialist group, you know?

Q: Oh, uh-huh.

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A: I imagine by that time -- I know you were in a Catholic party, or you were -- you were in the socialist party. [indecipherable]

Q: And they were all socialists?

A: And they were all socialists and [indecipherable] you know, never anything to do with religions, you know?

Q: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

A: Though they were all baptized, but this is --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- common thing like a **Bar Mitzvah**, it doesn't mean anything for many people.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Okay. Then -- yes. Then what I wanted to mention is that the first time I realize that there was a -- really a war, okay, was when I joined my father in May o-of '44 -- th -- I went to school in that time. And again, everybody knew that I was Jewish, but they -- th-they -- they -- they protected. You know, they, of course, not a -- an issue any more on that time.

**End of Tape One, Side B**



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**Beginning Tape Two, Side A**

Q: This is a continuation of the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with **David Brombart**. This is tape number two, side **A**. And we were talking about your living with the miners. And you stayed with them.

A: Stayed with them.

Q: That was the last -- was that the last family you were [indecipherable]

A: No, a -- th-the last one was when I went to visit, for the first time, my father.

Q: When was that?

A: That was in -- in May of '44 -- of '44.

Q: Okay, so up to that time you had stayed --

A: With th-the -- the miner's family.

Q: With the miner's family.

A: And was a -- mention was a very good with me, and you know, took some chances, you know, in th -- in going to -- to -- to movies, going out, etcetera, and some -- I had the sense that there was a German prob -- i-issue. For instance, I remember very well in front of a [indecipherable] which a -- in the city in **Belgium** close to **Olne**, there was, in front of the train station, I was going somewhere with them -- I remember well that there was a German, or -- or a Belgian **SS** officer in black, you know, and I knew that I should not be close to him, okay? Then when he -- he turned right and turned left. You know, I was circling around, i-if he notice or not. At that time I think they --

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they knew that everything was lost a-and they didn't pay some attention. I will tell you more about the nu -- another illustration of that. Then I went to school, or at least attended some classes where my father was hidden. Again, I think th-the teacher was -- you know, at that time it was one teacher for -- for a big class, you know, I mean so many pe -- and it was a little place, and -- and I realized something very important arrive -- it was in June '44, and he didn't tell us that the invasion arrive, but he --

Q: This is the **Normandy** invasion, right?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: And he didn't -- but he didn't -- he teach us a song, which is -- it was called, "My Lovely **Normandy**." You know, and then --

Q: Can you sing a little bit of it? Why don't you sing a little?

A: I don't know si -- no, I-I -- I -- I have to be -- think about that. **Normandy**, my love, or my tera -- my city, or something like that. A place that I will always return, or something like that, I remember. Then I went to my father, I said something was happen in **Normandy**, you know? And he said, yes, the invasion, because he had the radio. During all this time, in that place, h-he -- he di -- ik -- he never went out for -- for years.

Q: But what town was he in?

A: **Jistu**, in **Jistu**.

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Q: He was in **Jistu**?

A: Yeah, he was **Jistu**, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: This is a place where I visit him in May or something --

Q: '44.

A: -- '44.

Q: So that was the first time you saw him since you left?

A: Since I left, yes.

Q: What was it like when you first saw him?

A: Oh, he was very pleased, of course he was so pleased, and --

Q: How did he look? What was his health like?

A: His health at that time was, I think, still okay. But after, he developed some heart problem. **[indecipherable]**. And he never went out from that house, so it was in -- in a **[indecipherable]** and he was exercising only in an attic, you know?

Q: How long was he hidden?

A: Oh, from -- from '42 til '44, you know.

Q: In the same?

A: No in the same, no. At first he went in **Brussels**, but with the same family. When he escape, or etcetera, he went with that family, did it for money, but that's all right, and then took him to this place in **Jistu**, you know.

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Q: **Jistu**. And he stayed in their --

A: There.

Q: -- house.

A: Yeah, a little farmhouse, I remember, and --

Q: Did he go out at night?

A: No, never. And he just was in this attic, you know.

Q: So no one knew he was there?

A: No.

Q: They were afraid to tell the neighbors.

A: No one know he was there except one and twice that the farmer says, you know, there is somebody there. And the -- the wife -- the -- the wife said it's my brother visiting, or something, you know? And -- and he was in an attic, and he was circling in this attic all the time, I still remember trace of his path, you know? And he was counting some coins, you know, to do something. And -- sorry -- and -- a-and I think he went outside once or twice, because there was no, at that time, bathroom in the house, so of course you have to go outside. And -- and then came, obviously, after the **Normandy** invasion and -- and we saw hundreds of American plane -- or planes coming in, you know, and we couldn't understand what they were dropping, all those aluminum things, you know, that were to escape the **[indecipherable]** system or things like that. And --

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Q: Now, wha --

A: Yeah?

Q: -- did you just visit your father --

A: No.

Q: -- or did you stay with him?

A: I -- I could not return, because of the bombing, y-you know?

Q: You -- you -- you came in-initially just to visit him.

A: Just to visit him, and then I was unable to go back to **Olne** --

Q: Back to where you were hiding --

A: -- because the bridge -- yes, right.

Q: So you stayed with your father in the farm house?

A: Yes.

Q: Up in the attic?

A: No, no, no, no. I was -- no, they couldn't stop me. I was able to -- to -- to move around, to move around.

Q: Okay.

A: All around. And as I mentioned, I attend some of the classes in June of '44.

Q: So you'd -- okay, so you lived in the farmhouse.

A: Yes, with my father, until the liberation in September '44.

Q: Okay.

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A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. And he also --

Q: Wh-When you went to visit him --

A: Yeah?

Q: -- did you know you were going to stay with him, or you

A: Oh no, of course not.

Q: You thought you were just going to visit for the day or something?

A: Sure, sure, yeah. Sure -- no -- yeah. No, th-the plan was to --

Q: To go back.

A: -- back, at least you -- and in like -- probably didn't like the idea for me to be with him if something happen, of course.

Q: So that's when you went to the school in **Jistu**.

A: For -- in **Jistu**, and in June, you know, there was this -- this in -- the invasion --

Q: Right.

A: -- and the teacher mention, etcetera. Then thing became more clearer in term of -- of the invasion, the in -- the American and British are coming, etcetera. And my father was -- he devised something which I think many Jewish family did with their naiveté or their idiocy or whatever. He -- he hided in a -- he had a -- a -- there was a big armoire, you know?

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Q: Mm-hm.

A: And then he had the straw that you can close the door from the inside, outs -- yeah, the inside, so that if everybody went --

Q: He had to hide.

A: -- he will hide, like when the German or the **Belgium** police came, they knew the tricks, of course. It will -- I mean. absolutely nothing, but he did that, you know? But then, i-in -- in August, September, the -- th-the -- the -- the German became to -- to -- to return to **Germany**, you know? And I remember they stop in the village, you know, but they were already disorganized. I remember a German youth smoking a pipe on -- on the head of the cars, you know, they were [**indecipherable**]. But there was a German officer, I have to find out -- he had the yellow uniform, maybe from a tank is still something, and people were obliged to feed him, you know, when he co -- he came in the house, I could not [**indecipherable**], then I went in the dining room, and I don't know what his reaction was, did he know, or did he say the hell with it, you know, ah, we -- we don't do that any more, or didn't want to do it, he was not an **SS**, I have no idea. And they departed. Okay? Then, I remember very well the incident with the German tanks, three or four, passing in the -- you know, we can see the -- in the village. I remember also that the -- the ally bomb some of the roads. And as you know, the German escape with everything they wi -- they had, and with horses and things like that. And I remember the people in the family went to pick up some horse meat, you

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know, from the horses who were, you know, dying of that and whatever. And at one moment, must be in the beginning of September or end of August, we saw three American **Jeep**, you know, passing by. They say hello, but they went. And then on -- after the liberation of **Brussels**, some of the -- the workers of my father, who were still in -- i-in touch with him, because as you know, what happened with this factory and many Jewish similar factory, in order for the German not to -- to take over -- you know, my father sold the -- the business to -- to them, you know, okay? Then they came with a truck and we went back to **Brussels**, you know?

Q: But they were not in touch with your father while he was in hiding?

A: He was -- they were in touch.

Q: How were they in touch with him while he was in hiding?

A: I don't know. For -- for money question, for anything. They probably knew the family **Verbrugen** etcetera.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: Because during that time, they bought, with [**indecipherable**] money of my father, a very big mansion in **Brussels**, you know, and we returned to that. We saw this with a sign, this is not -- not enter, you know, property of the **Belgium** government. It was a - - an office from the German, or something like that, okay, which --

Q: Now, did you think your mother was still alive? Did -- what did you know at that point?



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A: I knew that she was deported.

Q: But did you think she was still alive?

A: You know, there were -- I remember meetings with Jewish friend, my family, etcetera, they were all talking about that, okay? And all a -- a-all of them had somebody wh-who -- who has arrested, deported, okay? And I remember one or two saying, you see, your mother is not alive any more.

Q: Okay, now -- but I'm talking about when you were in hiding.

A: Yes.

Q: Those different houses. Did you always at that time think she was still alive?

A: Difficult to say. I was totally out of -- o-of this whole picture, who-who-who-who-whole picture.

Q: Right.

A: Even after the liberation, my father never talked to me about the details, I mean.

Q: Yeah.

A: It's only in '45 or later, when he show me a letter from the international Red Cross, who says, you know, we have to -- to tell you that your sister -- because he mention **[indecipherable]** and mother are dead. Okay? A-A-And that's all what he say -- h-he said, okay?

Q: Do you remember how your father reacted? Was he an emotional man, or was he very reserved?

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A: He was reserved, but emotional too, because at that time this whole affair with my -  
- my grandfather and the Jewish committee came out, you see?

Q: Oh, okay, let's talk about that.

A: And -- and i -- I think he simply blamed the grandfather not to have protect more  
my mother, who was being arrested --

Q: This is his mother -- this is his wife's father, or his father?

A: No, that is the f -- th-th-the father of my mother.

Q: Okay, your -- your maternal grandfather.

A: Maternal. Th-th-the grand -- his grand -- his -- my grandfather from that side, the  
**[indecipherable]** remain in **Poland**, no --

Q: Okay, okay.

A: -- with no knowledge of nothing. I don't know. But then, after the war, i-i-it wake  
up, that he accuse my -- probably my grandfather of no -- to have not protected enough  
my mother --

Q: Right, he's --

A: -- though he got all tho-those kinds of money, you know, that she was not supposed  
**[indecipherable]** to be put in the train, but to remain --

Q: Right. And what did your grandfather say?

A: I don't know. But I really refused to have any relation with **[indecipherable]** you  
know, practically. Just when he got paralyzed, I visited once. And my grandmother

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survive his death in -- in si -- in the 50's or 60's. I-I -- I -- I visited her. She was also very angry about this other sister who never help her [**indecipherable**] help -- helped her, etcetera. And I remember that she -- she came to -- to my wedding, you know, dinner or something, you know? And my brother-in-law was a doctor, you know, help her when she was sick, etcetera, etcetera. But then I visited my grandfather maybe once or twice, I didn't want to go there. There was all this thing in my head, but -- that I could not really express, you know, in details, and I had a reaction to that. You know, I didn't want anything to do with them, or things like that. I kept relation with this other sister who finally immigrate to **United States**.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: They want to immigrate to **Israel**, but that's -- it didn't work out. A-And --

Q: Tell me your grandfather's name again?

A: It's a l -- **Lewin**, but that [**indecipherable**]

Q: [**indecipherable**]

A: -- and we have his --

Q: His first name?

A: -- his -- yeah, his first name. We have this -- well -- well, no, it's not in this.

Q: Okay.

A: Afa -- we have all the -- this -- no, I have it somewhere.

Q: Well, that's o --

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A: This was the -- seriously the first waha -- here he is. **Lewin -- Shano. Noah.**

Q: Uh-huh. Yeah. **Noah.** Yeah, yeah.

A: Yeah, **Noah**, yes. And there was a si -- a br -- a brother too that I forget, who also was deported.

Q: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

A: Then three sister -- well, they are all here, three sister and a -- and -- and a brother.

Q: So, the liberation came. Were -- do you remember ever being frightened seeing the bombings from a distance in --

A: No, I wa -- no. Not frightened, and I was e -- not even frightened when -- when the German launched those **V1** and **V2**, you know?

Q: Right.

A: A-And I began to a -- to -- to say well -- to -- to understand that when they were passing through, there was no danger. It when -- it -- th-the -- the noise stop, then there was dane --

Q: The noise stop --

A: You see, and this I registered very well, because I went to school, I went ha -- walking, and I saw them, I say well, okay, fine.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: It's -- was somebody else, or another city, in **Antwerp**, because their aim, like in the Battle of the Bulge was to -- to -- to stop any -- any landing of material and goods

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in **Antwerp**, of course, like that, yes. Then I went back, as I mentioned before, to the same school, and it has been a hell of -- of -- for me to -- to catch up, because I didn't go to school --

Q: Okay you're now -- you're -- it's the end of the war for you --

A: Yeah.

Q: And you are -- you go back to where, to **Brussels**?

A: To **Brussels**, in September.

Q: In September.

A: And I --

Q: Of --

A: Of '44.

Q: -- '44.

A: And then immediately I --

Q: It's you and your father.

A: Yeah.

Q: You go back to your old apartment?

A: No, no, in this new house that the woo -- that the -- hi-his management bought during the war, from us --

Q: Oh, okay.

A: -- you know, that --

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Q: Just the two of you living there?

A: Y-Yeah. Well, it was a huge place, that [indecipherable] and -- and -- and funny enough, the **Belgium** archive have no notice of that, nothing. But the police [indecipherable] had that he return, that his address was this.

Q: That y-you and your father returned there?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I went to s --

Q: And it was not damaged or anything?

A: No, no, no, it was a -- no.

Q: Okay.

A: It was a -- they did -- the German did an office building of it, and I remember --

Q: The Germans had used it?

A: Used it.

Q: As their office building?

A: As one of the office building, but not -- I don't know the timing, but not for very long when we came back.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay, it was not [indecipherable]. What I remember is was plenty of desk and everything, and I remember in the basement where my father found some guns,

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etcetera. And like stupidly, he -- he -- he gave them back to the poli -- **Belgium** police, a-and things like that. Yeah. And I went to school, and then it has been a very difficult period for me to catch up, because I didn't go to school.

Q: You're now 11 years old.

A: 11 years old, didn't go to school.

Q: Did you feel -- did you feel very old?

A: No.

Q: You didn't?

A: No.

Q: After all that you had lived, you'd lived without your parents --

A: No, no, because immediately it was back to the -- th-the -- this af -- more or less affluent life, you know, with my father, who pu --

Q: But you didn't have a typical childhood, obviously, and so --

A: Oh, u-under -- I forgot, you know --

Q: -- did you feel older than some of the other children --

A: No.

Q: -- because you'd been in hiding?

A: No, no, no.

Q: So who were the other children in the classes when you went back? Were there Jewish children?

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A: No, of course not. It was in the same public school that I went to in '41, okay? And th-there may be some Jewish, but I don't remember that.

Q: You don't remember talking about what they -- what they went through during the war, that's **[indecipherable]**

A: No, no, no, no, a -- a -- yes, I -- I -- not in that school, okay?

Q: Okay.

A: All right? That -- it was difficult time. I had to -- to -- to learn the grammar, to write, it was a disaster. My father pay for some extra courses at home, and things like that.

Q: This is all in French, of course.

A: Oh -- oh yes, that was all in French. And -- and piece of **[indecipherable]** I realize what happened with my mother **[indecipherable]** but not the intensity of it, or th-the murder, or the assassination, the arrest. And I began to -- to -- to get back to the same ki -- guys I was friendly when -- before the war, who -- who had been put in cemetery, cemetery with nuns.

Q: Oh.

A: And he was a -- th-they wanted to make a priest out of him.

Q: I-In a convent, you mean?

A: Yeah, convent or something like that.

Q: Mm-hm.



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A: And yes, and then we talk about the -- the -- the --

Q: What you went through?

A: -- went through, and what he went through and -- and this was the beginning of a -- of a new chapter where I begin to -- to be interested in politics an-and labor unions, you know? Because a-again a reaction to -- to what happened before, okay? And we became active in some organizations, okay? And -- and this was the period from '44 til '49. Was still, you know, discussion and then I became active in the political movement, you know.

Q: Okay, but for -- we-we'll get to that.

A: Yeah.

Q: Tell me about the end of the war, what was that like for you?

A: Oh, it wa --

Q: -- and liberation --

A: Yes, it was a **[indecipherable]** and everybody was happy. People who were like my -- my aunt came back to **Brussels**, you know. We were to **[indecipherable]** and the people who were in a camp in **Switzerland** came back, and they went -- the ones who were in the ca -- escaped to **Switzerland**. They were -- they were in **Kerbene, France** for all the **[indecipherable]** came back. We had a lot of memories, and I remember the discussion then was the situation in **Israel**, and you know, the -- the -- the independence **[indecipherable] Israel** and this I remember all that. Some were

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member of the [indecipherable] who wanted the greater **Israel**, and the [indecipherable] and so on and so forth. I remember that we were, of course, concerned [indecipherable] the Egyptians were 15 miles from **Tel Aviv**. Of course, there it doesn't count, everything is so close. We -- and this I remember, and a son from one of my father brothers in **Poland** also immigrated in **Belgium**, okay? And he became a famous **radiolog**, one of the top, you know, doctors in radiology, okay? Write a thousand of book. If you look on the web, you will see his books all over, all over the place. But then came the story that because he was a doctor, he -- he went -- he was asked to join the **UN** observer in **Palestine**, you know, during the beginning of the war. And do you know that he took me with him, you know, and I knew that my uncle was there, etcetera. I didn't -- still don't understood, but it was very fun --

Q: Are we talking about the 1948?

A: Yes.

Q: You're talking about the 1948 War of Independence?

A: Yeah, yeah, War of Independence. He was the **UN** observer.

Q: And he took you and you were 15?

A: 15, o-or what. And it was a trip in the plane, in the army plane and then all that.

And then I began also to -- t-to -- to -- to learn th -- about what was the politics, you know, I -- I began to sense, beca --

Q: Right now you're in high school?

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A: Oh yes, I was in the high school, okay? And -- but it was '48 like you -- you mention, and I learned more about the events with **Palestine**, the creation of the state, about the Egyptian, etcetera, and about international politics. Because m-my uncle was in the **UN** observer, never observe anything. We were always in the beach in **Tel Aviv**, you know? And when the -- the -- the -- the -- the -- some other people in the **UN** says, you know, you have to go and observe the Jewish are doing things like that, they went in another direction. You know, when the -- when the -- th-the **[indecipherable]** you have to say what they did. Nothing. And you know, we landed in -- not in **Tel Aviv**, there was no airport, but in **Haifa**, you know, in the little place of that, and it was fun, except that I took the events seriously, beginning to -- to understand and there -- what was going on. And -- and met some -- my uncle was there, you know, and other member of the family, you -- a-a-and I forgot to mention who I met in **Belgium** after the liberation. They were in the -- in the Jewish brigade.

Q: I see.

A: You see? And the Jew -- I remember the Jewish brigade when th-the -- the allies told the officer of the Jewish brigade, you know, it's enough, you are killing enough German, you have to be done **[indecipherable]** any more over there in **Germany**, in the occupation. Then they came to rest in **Belgium**. I remember walking very calmly with one of my uncle was the Jewish brigade, etcetera **[indecipherable]** which I met later, he was in the army, he was in the army paper all the time, and -- and of course

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they departed. And the -- of course explaining that we don't care about the British, we don't care about anybody. Want to learn -- want to -- to use the arms, you know, with [indecipherable] as you know in the history in **Lebanon** th -- and things like that [indecipherable] that was the bi -- the main group, a thousand of them. Okay, then I met them again, anything. And my father joined me at that time also --

Q: He came over from **Belgium**?

A: -- from **Belgium** in '48, and that was my first trip.

Q: How long were you there for?

A: I think three weeks only, because nobody care about this **UN** business anyway. The same today. [laughter]. Same. It was already clear at that time.

Q: When you said your Uncle **Lukt** --

A: Yeah?

Q: -- was supposed to go and observe --

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: -- instead he went to the beach, did he purposely not want to observe, or he just wanted to go to the beach?

A: No, no, he -- he was one of the -- the many who realized this was a futile exercise, that both the Israeli, the Israeli, we were there, didn't want them --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- to observe anything.

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Q: So he purposely went to the beach?

A: Yes, like with the other officer -- and -- and -- and after awhile -- I don't know the details, but I presume the UN says, you know, this is enough [indecipherable] think they won this thing, and you know, there is no point, because there were things that the Jewish did because they had to do it at that time with the arms and things like that.

And were not very, you know, acceptable in -- in quotation, but there was nothing else to do, huh? And that's was it. And --

Q: So you came back to **Brussels**?

A: I came back to **Brussels** and --

Q: Went to -- back to high school.

A: Went to high school, and explained the kind of high school, it was a [indecipherable] then the -- the socialist party who -- in **Belgium** high school, you know, where they train people at that time for the different movement in the sort of -- the co-ops movement, cooperative movement. Of course, does not exist any more, it's -- that thing -- for the health service, because until today the health service is run by political party in **Belgium**, and [indecipherable] then you are to go in a socialist health plan or Catholic health plan. And there a story with that too. My wife was a very conservative [indecipherable] and didn't want -- not practi -- religious for [indecipherable] but still today says something against the -- the socialist movement. Anyway, the fa -- my son **Eric** was born in the socialist hospital. And then she say, n-

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never again, [indecipherable]. Then [indecipherable] my daughter, **Sarah**, she went to the red -- Red Cross hospital. Then the third one was the political -- you know, strict political party and the other were the -- th-the humanitarian and things like that.

**End of Tape Two, Side A**

**Beginning Tape Two, Side B**

Q: This is a continuation of the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with **David Brombart**. This is tape number two, side **B**. You were talking about your experiences in high school, you had come back from **Israel**, and then you went and you were talking about the health care system.

A: Yeah, well, in -- yeah.

Q: Okay. So you finished high school, or --

A: No.

Q: Or what was your high school experience?

A: Well, after the liberation I went to the first years of high school.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Okay. And then because I began to be influenced by politics and [indecipherable] I -- I went to the socialist training center school, okay? With, a-at that time a boarding school, but I didn't go to -- because it was in **Brussels**, I didn't go to the boarding school, and this was an institution delivering a diploma in social work, okay? Again, see, in **Belgium** you are th -- e-even in 1907, a public school, and a Catholic school

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system, okay? And the third one is the state's system, okay? And for instance, my wife went to the state social training school, okay? And at that time, th-th-th-th-the -- the social worker's profession was not -- was not recognized as a -- as a university, you know, school. It's only later, now, that it -- it deliver Master, before it was only Bachelor. And because I was so involve in this politics that I didn't even finish th-the - the -- the -- the course. They say, you don't need it, go immediately into you know, the -- the socialist movement, okay? And we will take you as the leader of the socialist youth. When we say socialist, I have to explain this again to some of our American friend. socialist, in the **United State** has a communist meaning. Of course, this was not the case, this is social democrats. Like, for the election of the last few days in **France**, when they call a socialist, he is not more socialist than I am, but it -- it -- it is to be understood on the basis -- then I-I -- I went to work for them, but before that, when I was 19 years old --

Q: This is 1952?

A: Yes. I was drafted in the army, because in **Belgium** in th -- it was compulsory, okay? Then, you know --

Q: Let -- let -- let's back up --

A: -- yeah, yeah.

Q: -- let's back up --

A: Yeah, yeah.

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Q: -- a little bit. 1952.

A: Yeah.

Q: T-Talk -- yo-you did talk about your **Bar Mitzvah** a little bit --

A: Yes. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah --

Q: -- but -- but -- but let's talk a little bit more about it, cause this --

A: **Bar Mitzvah** --

Q: -- would be 1946.

A: Yes.

Q: So --

A: **Bar Mitzvah** --

Q: -- you said you had three days of celebration, but what were your thoughts? Did

you feel more Jewish after what you had been through, because --

A: No. No. I --

Q: -- you had to be hidden because you were a Jew?

A: -- no, I -- I knew for me it was something linked with the heritage. Something that

you cannot -- like my other -- like this doctor tried to -- he said to divorce himself

from, you know, the Jewish identity, okay? I know that I was Jewish because we had

the -- my friend was Jew -- friend of my father was Jewish. We came to -- to be a -- a

member of the **Maccabee** in -- in **Brussels**.



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Q: But weren't you angry that because you were Jewish you had to go through what you went through --

A: No, no --

Q: -- and you lost your **[indecipherable]**

A: No, well, you know, I --

Q: There was no feelings of anger.

A: -- there is no -- no feeling of -- no, it was more the feeling of the stupidity of the entire situation, you know, because of the -- as I tried to mention, if I had anything to say, we were -- we were -- we would have left **Belgium** even before the invasion, you know, like many did. And it is an accident of, and a tragedy of the Jewish people in history that one -- two brothers came to **Belgium**, the other went to -- to -- to -- to **U.S.**, and -- and the other ones were -- went to **Israel**. Then it's more of that kind of things, because in this political action, there was never any sign of anti-Semitism, any sign of you are Jewish, or not. This never, never, never happen. It may have happened here, in the **United States**, but not -- and so --

Q: But when you -- but for you, in growing up, you had no anti-Semitism --

A: No, no, no, no. When I went to the army -- you know, when you ask in the army, I want to go there, they just do the opposite, you see? A-And -- and -- and -- and I -- I ended up in the Air Force near a -- we were the few planes that **Belgium** had, you know? And -- but it was very important in my, let's say, development. Hu -- I became

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totally independent, I didn't want to hear about my father saying you have to take th -- over the business, or whatever. All this was something else. Okay, I become an activist and -- and -- and developed this whole campaign that no **Belgium** conscript, draftees, can be sent to **Korea** -- it was the time of the Korean war.

Q: Korean war.

A: And I say, you know, send the volunteers, but we have nothing -- you know, we were all in favor of facing the Chinese and all that, but we didn't want drafting to come. No, i-it is a bit like here, when they decide no draft any more, volunteer. And certainly when later on [**indecipherable**] the campaign against sending **Belgium** to -- in the **Congo**, was the same thing. I say, you can send anything you want, except the draftees, you see. And of course, now there is no more draft, then this was a -- a good idea to advance at tha -- on that time. And the army was a lot of fun again [**indecipherable**] because it was a comedy, you know. When I finished th-the instructions, you know. And of course when we were French speaking, they were sending you in the Flemish speaking, you know, training. I -- nobody could understand. I --

Q: Did you know any Flemish?

A: Yes, because in **Brussels** you had to learn in school Flemish, and [**indecipherable**] still bilingual today, you know? [**indecipherable**] I could. And I remember one or two questions from officers, but are you really Belgian? Because you know, at that time

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you can see [indecipherable] I didn't look when I was young, like I look now. I became more, you know, tan and [indecipherable]. Then I say, what do you think? If not, I will not be here, and things like that. They never said Jewish or anything, you know. That I use for the first time during my military service, my Jewish origin, you know? And this is --

Q: In what sense?

A: In the sense that I-I knew somebody who said, you know, the Jewish holidays are coming, you know? Go to the commandant and say you are Jewish, I want to attend. He says, you're crazy, because I was already before active in the socialist movement. I said, no, no, no, no. You don't go to the synagogue. I say, here, the letter. I knew the -- the cantor, who was -- who -- oh, my father, you know, as -- a -- a something -- a [indecipherable] -- I don't know the word. Oh my father, the fact that he became one of the -- in the army, the -- the religious om -- officer [indecipherable]

Q: The chaplain.

A: The chaplain. And he went to my father and say, look, I want to be this chaplain, I n -- I need a letter from you saying that I speak Flemish. If not, I will not get the job. Then my father say, you know, you've -- good, very good friend, you're Flemish. And then he's the one who says, you know, you're the Flemish. Then, it was really crazy because it was the training camp, it was September, you know, I went in August. I was with a girlfriend in **France**, in holiday, my father say look, you have to go. I say okay.

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And -- and -- and I went to the commandant, he sa -- gave me a week, you know? And said at that time we were trying to -- to train for a parade, where we were giving, you know, a blind man a -- a -- a dog, you know. And then they say you cannot do that, you will not be there. You know, you have to stay and watch all the -- th-the -- the guns, you know, make -- it was a comedy. Of course, when I ca -- went back, they got me, but in turn that I was every day on -- on duty. And -- and I say yeah. Anyway, that's a -- a -- a [indecipherable]. It was a comedy because the commandant of the **Brussels** airport, you know guards, we were guards, so-called special unit to guard the airport, introduce -- I introduced myself. They say **Brombart, Brombart**. He got i-in his book and he find oh, that his mistress asked to watch for a **Brombart**, in case you have a **Brombart** treat him well. So funny, huh?

Q: How di --

A: Yeah?

Q: What was the connection?

A: Well, he had mistress who knew probably my father.

Q: Oh.

A: Maybe she was also his mistress, I have no idea. [indecipherable]. He say okay fine, you will -- you will serve in my office, he was the -- the -- the food thing. I had to check the balance of every can of champagne for the officer, etcetera. I had many visits from the inspector, you know, if the -- the [indecipherable] but for me it was

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nothing, I-I knew five bottles less, two, etcetera. And na-na -- I learn all the tricks. Keeping the coupon from the chocolates, you know. And the officer guy came and say I want five bottle of wine, and -- and I gave -- I put, you get fi -- you got five, fine. But only -- he got only three, I got the two other. And it was a comedy. And I was immediately assigned to be in the education offices, and I run the -- the information center on the thing, and I remember when my biggest audience and people in was when **Stalin** died in '53, and that was something. He was still believed to be somebody, and they came. And we were -- we were not eating in the mess, we were eating in the kitchen, you know? It was a [**indecipherable**]. And at the end they say, you know, [**indecipherable**] just get out of our way and they gave me the living out pass. Then every night I was at home, have to go back in the morning. Was really a comedy. And -- and a -- I was supposed to serve 24 --

Q: Months?

A: -- 24 months --

Q: Months.

A: -- because of the Korean war.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And I serve only -- it was 18.

Q: Uh-huh.

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A: And then it was 12, and then there was nothing left. So, very good. And because I am now a so-called Korean veteran, I got another 500 dollars a year. It's crazy -- it's crazy, I say, what do you think? Then they say, you have this -- this free a -- free health service, and free on the train, I say, oh, now I have another train [indecipherable] free three times a day, or -- or anyway, that's the whole [indecipherable] on the thing. But anyway --

Q: Then you left the army.

A: And then immediately --

Q: And then what did you do?

A: I immediately was as -- asked by the party to serve as in the -- as head of the social democratic youth.

Q: Youth, uh-huh.

A: Yeah, mm-hm.

Q: So you stayed in **Brussels**?

A: Oh yeah, stay in **Brussels** and --

Q: For how long?

A: Oh, til '58.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: '58.

Q: Mm-hm. Living with your father?

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A: Living with Father, more or less, yes.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And -- and at that time it was not the same man any more. I-I-I-Is --

Q: Was he bitter about what happened?

A: No, but he lost his business, more or less. Then he had some real difficulties.

Q: Did he talk about your mother at all?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: But many people says, you know, your father don't remarry because of you, he wants to, you know, cover you so much. And when he wants me to go in his business, I say, I -- you know, I'm going into the socialist movement. And of course, he was s-s- so concerned about me. But he was --

Q: Did he become more religious after the war?

A: No, no.

Q: He did not?

A: No, no. But he was really concern about me when I was going to be in the army.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: He thought that I will find some difficulties, etcetera. And on the contrary, I -- I assert myself very well, and everybody was as-as -- very surprised. Ha -- very surprised. And then I went to work from '64 to '58 in the socialist party, and -- full

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time and paid etcetera. And -- but at the same time, I was also a -- active, and a militant of a [indecipherable] group, who was called the young socialist guards, you see?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And all crazy people. But then they were -- I follow still the [indecipherable] here, and about -- and -- and -- and you see them on **TV** yesterday after the French election, the riots in the street, it is the same -- the same crowd. And -- but what I wanted to -- to say then --

Q: Could you repeat the dates?

A: Yeah.

Q: Cause I think you --

A: '54 I left the -- '52 I went to the --

Q: Army.

A: -- army. '54 I left.

Q: Right.

A: '54 I joined the -- the -- the -- the s -- socialist party stuff.

Q: Right.

A: Until '58.

Q: '58.



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A: And during this [**indecipherable**] party, I was also, as I mentioned, active in the more hard left of the socialist party.

Q: Yeah, right, right. From '54 to '58.

A: No. Til -- til let's say '56 or something like that.

Q: Okay, '56.

A: When the party say, look, now you have to choice, either you go with them, or you go with us.

Q: Uh-huh. Oh, oh yeah, yeah.

A: Okay. And with the president, who became a minister, and -- and like many politician in **Belgium**, a crook at the end, left th-the young socialist guards, and came - - became [**indecipherable**] and everything. And then I began to attend international conference and meeting, etcetera, until I was ask to be lay s -- labor secretary of an international youth organization in '58.

Q: Mm.

A: Okay? Then from '58 to '64, after spending '88 - '89, more or less 10 months in **Paris** before this organization was expelled from **Paris** back to [**indecipherable**]

Q: What do you mean '88 - '89, what do you mean?

A: I was in **Paris**.

Q: Not '88.

A: A -- 19 --

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Q: '58.

A: '58, thi -- sorry, '58 - '59, when I joined th-this organization called at that time, the World Assembly of Youth.

Q: Okay.

A: Way?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: We went in **Paris**.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And then, because of our political action, at that time again, the French in **Nigeria**, **de Gaulle** expelled the organization. And I was very, very happy to return to **Belgium**.

Q: [indecipherable]

A: Because in **Paris** at that time -- it was then '58 - '59, the housing condition were horrible, like in **London**. I had to share a bed with an African student on the beginning. Then after I was in the little boarding hose -- house, with a little home of nothing. I was really ba -- then I went in the big apartment in **Paris**, no central heating.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: You know, it was a disaster. You know, at that time, and even no -- before -- after the liberation, my father took me to **Nice** in **France**. And we had to bring, you know, the butter and the sausage, there was nothing. Like in **England**, nothing. They won the war, but they are nothing. For years, huh? And then we went back to **Brussel** and

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luckily found immediately [**indecipherable**] studio with separate kitchen, separate bathroom, it was [**indecipherable**]. Everybody was happy to be in **Brussels**. That was then the -- '64.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: But meanwhile, I met, you know, my wife --

Q: Oh, and --

A: Yes, si --

Q: -- and how did you meet your wife?

A: She was the best friend of my girlfriend [**laughter**] -- who was my secretary in the party.

Q: Okay.

A: A-A-A -- in the -- in the party. And we -- we maintained contact until I moved to brus -- to **Paris**, back to **Brussels**.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Okay. And my wife came in the office all the time, you know, etcetera, etcetera. And like many thing in life, etcetera, she had the boyfriend in **Spain**, [**indecipherable**] all kind of [**indecipherable**] but then complained that she has no money to go to **Spain**, etcetera, to my girlfriend. I say look, I wa -- gonna give you the money to go to **Spain**. Though I didn't have any money at that time [**indecipherable**]. But I was still working, she was already a social worker in the Ministry of Health, and she said, I'll

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repay you, she repay me, etcetera, and that's i -- how it -- it went. And we married in '61.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: In '61.

Q: Now, is -- was -- is she Jewish?

A: No, no.

Q: She's not, okay.

A: She is --

Q: So she didn't go through -- she's Belgian?

A: She was Belgian too --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- but Flemish.

Q: Flemish.

A: You know, at that time --

Q: So during the war, she did not obviously go through what you went through.

A: No, no, no.

Q: No.

A: But she -- she explain a lot because, I mean, in the cities they were very hungry, there was nothing --

Q: Yeah.

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A: -- to eat, etcetera. No, and Jewish for her, or Catholic for me, there was no meaning, there was no nothing.

Q: She's Catholic, she's Catholic?

A: Born Catholic, she never went and she doesn't practice.

Q: Was her family upset that she was marrying a Jewish person?

A: I don't think they were upset, she -- they -- they say she is, like always, very crazy. And they said, this marriage will not last. It last 43 years, or 45 years. But it -- they were -- that was not certain -- not what they told about -- my father, I never ask any question either, because he met her and she immediately was so -- so good with her, she -- she -- she was a good lady. And --

Q: So you stayed in **Belgium** til '64?

A: '64. And during this period at the World Assembly of Youth as labor secretary '58 til -- '56 til let's see -- s-s-si -- '58 --

Q: Right.

A: -- til '64, it was the big time of my international work.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Uh-huh. And the -- really the heart of the Cold War period, you see. And because we were really set up to -- to try to stop the influence of the **Soviet Union** in western **Europe**, in every cultural field student in **Europe**, I became into contact with one of the greatest labor diplomat in the **U.S.**, **Irving Brown**, who got the medal of freedom,

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etcetera, for his work. And we began to -- to attend the same meeting, to be on the same line of thought, and he -- he says, you know, the **AFL-CIO** is organizing an African institute. They already on an American -- Latin American one, and after that they had the Asian one and then the European one. Now everything is consolidated in what is called the American Center for Labor Solidarity, still exists in 2007, at that time **Africa** -- and I was [indecipherable] ideal man, because I was involved in **Africa** and **North Africa** specially and they needed a director for the French speaking area. And this is why I never got any -- got rid of my French accent, because I was traveling all the time in the French speaking area, I-I --

Q: Did you know any English at this point?

A: Oh yes, I knew English [indecipherable]

Q: Where -- where did you pick up English?

A: Attending those international meetings. You know, [indecipherable] it was international and we had to talk English and it was an easy thing. I spent some time in **England** learning a bit English, staying with a family also, but it was a few months. And that's it. And he says, you know, we are creating that, okay, and he was a -- one of the most extraordinary person in the world. Then he send once a telegram and says, okay, you have to come next week. Then I say, well, how can I come next week when --

Q: Come to the **United States**?

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A: Yeah, with the -- what? And -- and the children. It was like that. Then he says, okay, you come in a month. I say, I have to get my visa. He say, what the [indecipherable] that was the guy. He say, I am calling the ambassador, who was a son of [indecipherable] and in the afternoon he send a car. I say look, [indecipherable] you are Belgian, you have to go, etcetera. The quota of the **Belgium** to the **United States** is not filled, that means no problem, and there was a very nice lady or -- on the council, I say, I never saw that, you know, a paper, etcetera, in a day, go to the doctor -- you know, you have to pass the visit.

Q: Yeah.

A: And this is curious because even when they left **Poland**, they had to pass the visit to the doctor saying [indecipherable]. And the doctor says, you are, you know, Mrs. **Brombart** [indecipherable] a medical examination, everything had to be rush, rush, rush.

Q: You had children already?

A: Yes, the boy was born in '64, you know, in -- in October. No, let me -- I'm crazy. The girl was born in October '64 a few months before we came, and my son was born in '61.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: Okay. And that's it. Then, it's an all -- it's an interesting period with this -- send me a letter saying your salary will be 8,400 dollar. Then the -- the people dealing with the

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**AFL-CIO**, are you out of your mind? You know, he has to get 12,000. No, no, no.

Which was a good salary --

Q: Right.

A: -- in -- in '64. Then -- but he was like that. I remember his son came once to s -- at the office, he say, I need some pair of shoes, then it's 20 dollar. I s -- he had no idea. All his life, he has live on these expenses. He could have bought half of **Brussel**, half of **Paris**, you know, in those time, and afterwards, nothing. To get in a suit, you know, we had to carry him, you know, to a -- to a [**indecipherable**] to a tailor. Literally carrying, yeah. Because -- you know. Anyway he say, this and this, there was a good sect -- a secretary, assistant, main assistant who says, you know -- she was the one who says, you know, he needs 12,000 dollar or we'll never, you know,

[**indecipherable**]. When I arrive --

Q: Okay, you arrive in the **United States** with your family?

A: No, a month before the family.

Q: A month before?

A: Before. Again --

Q: What was it like for you to come to the **United States**?

A: Oh good, I had visited the **United States** once or twice on my international travels.

Q: Oh, you had been there already.

A: Okay, and then at that time I was so --



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Q: What did the **United States** mean to you at that point?

A: Oh, th-th-th-th-the -- the liberation people, and th-the fr -- the th-the fight for freedom, because we were all in the Cold War operation.

Q: But you're Belgian and you're leaving your home country.

A: Oh, it was international business. We had so many friends who worked in **Paris**, at **UNESCO** or in **Geneva**. You know, it was at that time, you know --

Q: But did you feel Belgian? Do you know what I mean, you -- you did not feel Belgian?

A: No. No, I -- I -- no. [indecipherable] feel Belgian [indecipherable] anyway, for us, it was the nin -- in where I was born, and where I work, it was in **Belgium**. You know, I serve in the military service. You know I [indecipherable] politic life in **Belgium**, that it was very important to me. But at that time the young people were looking for in-international exposure. At that time it was very important to -- to me. It's not the same today, because --

Q: Did you think you were coming temporarily, and you'd be going back to **Belgium**?

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah, okay.

A: Or somewhere else.

Q: Mm-hm.

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A: And -- but i-i-in the 70's, people didn't want to leave their pro -- because the salary were higher in their own country than internationally, and they were [indecipherable]. No, for me it was great, because of **Irving**, and all the others, like Mrs. **Kirkland**, but that was a bit later, when her husband succeeded **George Meany**. It was th-th-th-th-the -- the **maxima**, and, as I indirectly says, began to be associate with the **AFL-CIO**, and **Irving** -- y-you know, disclose a lot of his operation in western **Europe** in -- from **Greece**, etcetera. We knew -- he -- he told me those are government finance operations now, you know, he begin to talk. And I say yes, I-I say, including the organization you are working in. I say very well. And this was good for me. And when, in '67, when was in [indecipherable] the disclosure came that all those organization went financed by the **CIA** -- you see, I say I don't care a damn [indecipherable] **CIA** or not. **CIA** for me is an org -- agency of the **U.S.** government, and I don't think if they do many thing [indecipherable] president of the na-national [indecipherable] council or the Congress don't know, that's their business.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: [indecipherable]

**End of Tape Two, Side B**

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**Beginning Tape Three, Side A**

Q: This is a continuation of the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with **David Brombart**. This is tape number three, side **A**. Tell me a little more about **Irving Brown**. Was he Jewish?

A: Yes, he was Jewish. Bu --

Q: Did you dis -- did you discuss your childhood with him? Did he ever ask you about what you went through with -- during the war?

A: Never. No.

Q: So you didn't --

A: All this was aft -- and he -- o-only what I was doing at that time --

Q: Okay.

A: -- where I came from in terms of the politics of the **[indecipherable]**

Q: Yeah, but I meant your earlier experiences as this --

A: Oh no, no, no.

Q: -- as a child, and what you went through --

A: No, no.

Q: -- as a Jewish child.

A: He knew certainly that I was Jewish.

Q: Yeah.

A: Okay? But I didn't know until much, much later, because it's a physical --

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Q: That he was Jewish.

A: -- yes, his physical appearance was -- was not Jewish, okay? And it help him very much, I presume, is a be -- when he was working with the Arab countries. Where I -- I succeeded him in the Arab countries, but at that time they knew that I was Jewish.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And this is particularity of the old **U.S.** policy in north **Africa**, in the **Maghreb**, and -- a-and the fact that I knew very well that there was no unity between **Algeria**, **Morocco**, **Tunisia**. That actually they hated -- if -- themselves. That in **Tunisia** they were totally in favor of **Israel**, you know? And -- and actually when the -- their leader came to our convention in the **United States**, of the **AFL-CIO**, you know, Congress, first thing they ask, where are the Jewish restaurant? Cause they want the delicatessen, they know that the food will be that much better. Even it was not a kosher, there was not set up, but I remember in ra -- in -- very well in **Chicago** and in **San Francisco**, etcetera, the [indecipherable] because they want their white fish, they want the [indecipherable] anything else. Anyway, we were very much together, and [indecipherable] we were -- **Egypt**, of course, later on **Lebanon** and **Terpa** anyway, it's a big story. But anyway -- yes?

Q: When you first came --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- to the **United States**, where did you live?

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A: Yes, that's a story too. **Irving Bo** --

Q: In the -- in **New York**?

A: In **New York**, in **Manhattan**, but tha -- it's a story by itself because h-he provide us -- us with an apartment in the **IGW** cooperative housing on the 27<sup>th</sup>, and something near the old **Madison** -- no, near the -- where the new **Madison** Square is, okay? And it was, I discovered -- he got this because of his political influence, of course, like the visa, or anything he does. Takes the phone, I need 100,000 dollar for that.

[**indecipherable**]. No -- not -- those things are over, huh? But anyway, he got this apartment from his friend -- I know the name, **Zimmerman** and **Harry**

[**indecipherable**] etcetera, in the co-op, you know? And the co-ops is -- you know, it's incredible, it never happen. There is a waiting list of 300 people there. Yi -- they put some -- through somebody, I all -- I don't know what. Anyway, we arrive there,

**Manhattan**. It was a one -- two bedroom apartment [**indecipherable**] a little balcony, etcetera. And one month later, my wife want to [**indecipherable**] it -- I always move and she did all the work, of course. And she -- she came, she say, I'm coming. I say th-

the -- the -- there was a strike in **Belgium**, the fur -- the furnishing not here. Then I rented an apartment in **Queens** from the Danish -- it was the World Fair at that time.

And I say, well, we have to stay here, and, but I got you some help. Was a Latin American [**indecipherable**] 35 dollar a week that was, you know? Doesn't speak a word of -- of English --

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Q: English.

A: Oh.

Q: Did your wife speak English?

A: Yeah, yes, she -- she **[indecipherable]**. And -- oh yeah, and my wife tried to say go and buy some ham, you know, two pounds of ham. Anyway, it was a -- luckily she went, we had the American girl, etcetera. Then she say, I -- I want to go in that apartment. Okay. Then there was a strike in **New York** at that time. Then **Irving** said to somebody in the main office, give them their bloody containers, you know? And I say, we don't do that **[indecipherable]** container. Then the -- the -- the mayor talked to -- to the customs and the custom inspectors say **[indecipherable]** came to the apartment with the thing, and -- and -- a-and they are **[indecipherable]** in front of -- in -- in the apartment, you know? Okay. This is where we lived for a year and a half, until my wife got totally mad at me, and say, what are we doing here? Because she was reading the paper, and you remember in '64, the houses were 12,000 dollar, and three months free, I don't know what happen. She said, I don't stay here with the two little baby. And we began to visit places in **New Jersey** at the beach, but the commuting was too si -- house -- 20,000 dollar, o-on the beach, you know, etcetera. We went to -- to **New Jersey** twice. And then I had a friend, who work with me in **Europe**, who live in **Larchmont, Westchester**, and say, **David**, don't look more, you come here. And he lied to us because he was -- his address was **Larchmont**, but he

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was really living in [indecipherable]. Then he did access to a beach in **Larchmont** where he showed us. Then we made one offer, two offer, and finally we bought the house for 36,000 dollar, because I didn't want to go higher, I say it's the double of my salary at the time was 75, so it was perfect. I said -- and my wife said [indecipherable] we have to -- to -- to buy in the [indecipherable] only, on the **Long Island Sound**. I say, I don't want to hear about that. It was 50,000, I said [indecipherable] course those house were one hundred -- one million and a half now, and in **Larchmont** when we sell -- sold the house because we were coming in **Washington**, the house sold for a lot of money, but not one million and a half. That's the story where [indecipherable] was well ready for us, where we had to -- to live through it. There was no timing, everything was organized, and I was traveling so much, that you know.

Q: So then you stayed in **New York** for how long?

A: One year and a half.

Q: Oh, just a year and a half?

A: Oh yes.

Q: And then you came to **Washington**?

A: No, no, I w-went to **Larchmont**.

Q: Oh, no, no, I meant working, I meant --

A: Wor -- we work -- no, no, in -- it was in **New York**.

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Q: I see.

A: It was **New York**.

Q: You worked in **New York** for how long?

A: From --

Q: '64.

A: '64 til '79.

Q: Was -- oh, okay.

A: '79, in September I moved to **London**.

Q: The whole family?

A: Oh yeah, yeah. Well, [**indecipherable**] a bit later for --

Q: Yeah, but you [**indecipherable**]

A: -- a-and the whole family, and the -- the boy was one year in the senior American school in **London**.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And the girl wa -- was three year --

Q: Were you working for the same organization or did you change jobs?

A: I chane -- I change job. But this is a --

Q: Right.



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A: -- yeah, change job. And then from **England** in '82, I went back to **Belgium**. By accident, because the International Labor Movement offices, headquarters in -- is in **Brussel** -- was in **Brussel** and still is in **Brussels**, okay? Then I st -- I --

Q: So the whole family moved to **Brussels**?

A: My wife and I moved to **Brussels**.

Q: Mm.

A: My boy was in --

Q: At school.

A: In school in **Amherst**.

Q: Yeah.

A: And she was in **Boston**, in her city.

Q: Yeah.

A: They came to **Brussels**.

Q: Yeah.

A: And they say, we don't move any more, you see? And -- and -- because after three years, three years **Irving**, and the leader, she said, we need you --

Q: Back.

A: -- back here as deputy director, and they stay --

Q: They went back to **New York**?

A: No, to -- to **Washington** then.

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Q: Oh.

A: The office then had meanwhile moved from **New York** to **Washington**.

Q: Okay.

A: Then it was our first experience in **Washington, D.C.**

Q: In -- so you moved here in --

A: In -- in '86.

Q: '86, mm-hm.

A: And the office was downtown. I live one year in a rented apartment because my wife was selling the house in **Larchmont**, okay? And at that time --

Q: And your official title then was what?

A: Deputy director.

Q: Of?

A: Of the **AFL-CIO** international department.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: And -- and then I became a acting executive director under --

Q: When did you move over to the **AFL**, because you were with that other African-American --

A: In -- in -- in -- when I came in in '64.

Q: Oh.

A: I was recruited to work for the African section.

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Q: Th -- of the **AF** --

A: Of the **AFL-C** --

Q: -- oh that was a part of the **AFL-CIO**?

A: Ye -- oh yeah, yeah, it was, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: And then in '79, came deputy, then acting.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: A-And this was under **Lane Kirkland** with **I-Irena**. And then the -- there was a new leadership in the **AFL-CIO**, and then I was label -- a left over of the Cold War, or a la -- and left over from **Lane**. You know, there was a revolution, a purge, etcetera. And then I was 65, I say okay, I retire. Actu -- I could have stayed, but I re -- I retire. That's the -- the story.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: The story. And immediately u-until now, I have two bro -- **pro bono** position. I am a senior fellow at the international institute of -- internati -- Institute of International Studies, okay? And I am also the political director for a labor construction institute who works in **Egypt** and in the Arab land, etcetera. That's it.

Q: So do you go there on trips?

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A: Yes, until a few years ago. And -- because this -- the -- th-the -- th-the -- the German, or the president of the this union, the bricklayer's unions, also retired, you know.

Q: Right.

A: Then he's lost a l-l-lot, including his private plane.

Q: Oh.

A: Then we don't travel [**indecipherable**]. And then I am two days in one and three days in the others, only in the afternoons.

Q: Yeah.

A: Okay?

Q: Yeah.

A: Then -- okay. That's --

Q: Can we talk a little bit about your thoughts now, now that you've gone through your life. [**laughter**] What effect do you think the experience that you had a child, as a hidden child, has on you? Are you a different -- do you think you would be a different person today if you hadn't gone through what you did?

A: Well, maybe in term of -- first of the schooling. I think the fact that I didn't go in s -  
- to school --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- in three, four years --

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Q: For those years, yeah.

A: -- you see, it was a great handicapped --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- for my intellectual developments, cer-certainly. Certainly. I may have follow my -- my uncle in some economic studies easily, but the opportunity was not there. The opportunity was not there even in th -- in the high school I --

Q: Was this your uncle the radiologist?

A: Yes, yes. And --

Q: Did you continue to have relations with him after your trip to **Israel** with him?

A: Not too much, because of his wife. His wife was anti -- she didn't want him to -- to be anti-Jew -- to -- to have any links with us. You know, she was a -- a --

Q: She was non-Jew -- non-Jewish?

A: Non-Jewish, but a bit --

Q: Yeah.

A: But he had three sons, and one became a **radiolog**.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And was recognize -- well, you know, and they know that he's -- he claims to be Jewish, he [**indecipherable**]. Another one was a businessman, he claims to be Jewish. But the family [**indecipherable**] in **Belgium** around two or three, you know, let's say, people. The doctor, we spoke to him with three sons, with th -- [**indecipherable**]

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Jewish, with -- with two daughter. One daughter that I visit twice in **Israel** was the head of a **kibbutz**, a socialist **kibbutz**, then very strong like my sister [indecipherable]. And then once another son of my father da -- **David**, who marry a sister of my mother marry also a Jew. Then a -- we -- we -- we -- this thing is, we don't know. I-It's a historical circumstances and you know, you don't know where all these thing with -- where they left. These -- all a period of -- of awareness, of international politic etcetera, of [indecipherable] students, if I'd -- I had not been there I don't know. The others went into all kind of profession, engineer, or whatever, or what -- whatever. That we don't kn -- we -- it's difficult to answer. That's probably -- you know, I ha -- I had many Jewish girlfriend -- many a -- well, not too [indecipherable] and I know that the parents were interested, you know, i-in that, and -- but it didn't develop like that, you know? The circle in the socialist movement, oh there were some Jewish guy there, was really a -- an ideology [indecipherable] you know [indecipherable]. What was interesting about th-this whole family, which are -- now, if you look **Brombart** on the internet, you will see that they reach all kind of -- of ways. Educate or crazy girls with a f -- and -- and all kind of [indecipherable] and they are all asking, you know, where we come from. You know, from those branches. But fall -- one of the -- of the Dr. **Brombart, Marcel**, three boys, okay? One became a priest, you see. And I met him and I was in **Brussels**. I was gi -- going my plane to [indecipherable]. I bought, you know, th-the -- the equivalent of the **Times** magazine,

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and it was his story, you know, that I learned that he was a priest -- or at least at that time he was not a priest, but he was in he -- helping this, helping that. Now he's a -- one of the leader of the assumptionist, I never found what group it was, but he goes to the Vatican, he goes to **Israel**, he goes everywhere. And -- but I were very pleased because he is defending antis -- against anti-Semitic in **Belgium**, and -- and is pro-**Israel**. You know, his --

Q: A-And his name is?

A: His name -- **Jean** -- it's a **Brombart** and it's -- **Jean-Claude** is one -- yeah, I think it's **Claude**.

Q: **Claude**.

A: But this I can -- I can y-y -- give you, because it's -- i-is in -- in th -- in internet, it say, **Claude**.

Q: Do you think besides talking about what you would have been in --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- professionally --

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: -- because of what you went through, do you think emotionally you would be different if you hadn't been hidden as a child, away from your family?

A: Well, I think it was -- I was -- I don't know.

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Q: Did it make you more independent, being -- having to manage on your own? I

mean, most nine, 10 - 11 - 12 year olds live with their parents.

A: Yeah, well -- yeah, sure, I don't know --

Q: You had a **[indecipherable]**

A: -- it was block, it was diffuse, I have no, you know --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- no understanding. Maybe I was no responsible even enough. I had si -- intuition,

like to leave in one day this boarding school. You know, I -- I knew about **Normandy**,

I knew about -- you know, th-th-th-the -- the German invasion, about the moving to

**France** for awhile, about my sister, you know, suddenly leaving. You know, bor --

being deported, a-and things of that kind, but --

Q: Do you think about those years often now?

A: No -- yes, but not -- that's very new **[indecipherable]** only since I am retired, and

that communication came because I -- on -- on **[indecipherable]** etcetera on the

internet, they asking about my daughter, who was until now working for a f -- a

German foundation in **Germany**, and they say, are you this, are you the father, or --

the daughter of this, or that or that. And th-the story with -- with **Germany**, because of

the international thing, I have -- I understood that the German people were not the

Nazi, etcetera, though they can be blamed for **[indecipherable]**. And when she

graduate from **Boston**, through my contact, I knew that they were looking for



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somebody at the German foundations, the socialist one, you know, in -- in **Brussels**, and then she immediately got the job, you see? And until today -- and I'll tell you in a minute, she's still the non-German, the only non-German girl in the -- in that foundation. And they paid for a master at the **London** school of economy. They paid for -- I don't know how many times, for a -- a German, you know, schooling. And she spent for them seven years in Latin **America**, you know, until she was brought back to the headquarters in **Bond**, okay? And now she's in two years maternal leave, living just on -- in a -- in a house there. And I don't think she will go back, but that's another story. She wa -- she like to stay in the **U.S.**, and to be close to her mother, and --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- find something else.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah, then --

Q: What about your son?

A: Your s -- my son? After **Amherst**, you know, went to medical school in **Belgium**.

Q: In **Belgium**.

A: Yeah. And he was in the second year when he had cancer of the thyroids, you know?

Q: Ooh.

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A: And then he had to stop that. Then he -- he worked 10 years in public health in the [indecipherable] in Brussels. Moved from one job to the other, but the situation is not good, as far as health. Arthritis and all kind of complication. Then that's it. That's it.

Q: How were your children raised? Were they raised as Catholic?

A: No, no.

Q: Or as Jews, or --

A: No, nothing, nothing.

Q: Nothing.

A: This was not an issue.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Though they know perfectly well that I wa -- I'm Jewish, and my mother was a po -  
- a Catholic, she was Catholic. And the only thing, we took them once in a synagogue,  
once in a -- in -- in a church. And -- and I didn't influence them in -- in any theory, or  
any thing. They said, do you believe in something, I say yes, but I don't really believe  
in anything. Then came the word -- the word that I didn't know exist [indecipherable]

Q: Fantastic, mm-hm.

A: -- it's all gimmicks, you know. You know, either you believe, or [indecipherable].  
You can say like [indecipherable] I believe in something, or creation, etcetera. I -- I  
always remember them when I was under the -- in front of the [indecipherable] guys  
when we are ta -- teaching, you know. One of the first thing they say, the philosophy

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was you know, to put an apple on the table. And they say -- they told you about God, about this and that, all this [indecipherable]. Look at this apple. In a few days you will see insect [indecipherable] coming from the apple. Huh? [indecipherable] came from -- we don't know the answer, from the universe, and -- and these -- and you see now where they -- at that time they say [indecipherable] or we've got natural catastrophe, you know, you co -- you believe what happen in the old time. We have the islands forming, the volcanoes and the belief we -- in God, or in the sun, etcetera [indecipherable] people who were not -- they have la -- then they say look, then -- we answer the -- you know. There are many different apples, you know. And so -- actually not. [indecipherable] this one you just [indecipherable] and that's it, yeah, yeah. No, it's a -- no, it's the -- you know, in the -- when I was retired, came this thing with the **Belgium**, you know, amnesty here and say you can get the [indecipherable] you can think this because then union from the job. And -- and then came this bulletin from the **Diaspora**, you know, you see. This is a bulletin which is written by a group of progressive Jews in -- in **Belgium**, were -- who are trying to -- to have the **Belgium** state recognized, their capability during the war, which has not done, contrary let's say to -- to **France**. And who introduced through politicians, some legislation on that, but until now, even under social democrat government they don't move. They have ceremonies, etcetera in **Malines**, or in other places where there is Jewish past history, but they don't recognize the culpability of the state, saying that most of the arrest,

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etcetera were done by **Belgium** policemen and **gendarmes**. You know, they -- the German were not to be seen too much, but for the Jewish case was this guy named **[indecipherable]** and many collaborators, you know? The German was using them until a certain point, you know, when, in '43 they were losing the war, and then they -- they had to -- to compli -- dominate every sector of the population and against the resistance, which was so and so, so and so because after the war, practically everybody was a resister. And -- and things like that. Then -- then that was the -- the case, and it's only now that they came with this, they ca -- like they came to me with these veteran question. I never ask anything, you know, they say you -- you are Korean veteran, you are a-allowed to get this 500 **euro**, 700 dollar for this, and **[indecipherable]** for that. And then they came with the restituti -- **[indecipherable]** then this group, who was **[indecipherable]** try also to fight anti-Semitism in **Belgium**, which you know is rising like many place in **Europe**. Not through violent acts, but through, you know, speeches by the extremist right and things like that. And also they are attacking the -- the -- the **Belgium** government to av -- agree that all the funds from the restitution be divided between the survivors or the son of the survivors, and -- and given to the creation of a Jewish foundation of things like that. And I became interest because I -- I think, learning what happened here with the claims, with **Eisennstadt** and with **Eggenberger**, th-that it's not acceptable. That the priorities should not be there hundred and hundred of thousand of salaries that they get. Ah, but we were -- we -- the

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-- th-the survivor, and I s -- I ready to say I don't need it, but there are some people who need it, okay? And -- and -- and then this is quite important. Then bu -- they also - - other news about this Belgian archive. Then I wrote to the guy, he was a -- he was Jewish, [indecipherable] and -- who send me all those photo and reports and things like that, which I think is -- is quite important because there were so many, and answer indirectly your question, I was not brief on when they came, what was their history. You know, anyone is that, and what's -- what happened exactly with my brother, my father-in-law, with my mother's resistance to all that, I -- wha -- wha -- what is the truth was not the truth, you know, in this thing. Then it was very important. And this led me to -- to ask about this interview. You see, this is the chronology of the thing. And **Arnheim** said yes, it's very important that there is a second step, that all documentation is in fact, used, in a way that you have nothing extraordinary to tell, a- and I -- I know that. It's just one experience, okay, and it's not the same experience that the -- th-the -- my father was really hidden in the house, couldn't go out , okay? There were some children also in the same situation. And children were denounced by people and send into camp. O-Or my friends sent in a convent or a monastery. Then the situation is very, very, very different. But -- but st --

**End of Tape Three, Side A**

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**Beginning Tape Three, Side B**

Q: This is a continuation of the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with **David Brombart**. This is tape number three, side **B**. Do you feel that you lost your childhood since you were away from your family for so many years?

A: No. I don't have this feeling. I think, as I tried to explain, the early childhood was so gratifying, the memories are all good. A little travel to **Holland**, I photo -- visited the tulip plants, you know, and I --

Q: This is pre-war, with your family?

A: Pre-war, family --

Q: With your family.

A: -- and then it was so -- you see the picture of the seaside, that I show you. This all good memories.

Q: But you were still quite young when you had to be hidden.

A: Yeah, I was quite young, oh bo -- yes, and -- but I remember that the spirit was good.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Good in term of -- of family life, of -- as I mentioned, travel and gifts, when they were going out and the arrival of -- of **Sarah** from **Poland** etcetera. You see how close, or immediately she develop well, and it was so **[indecipherable]**. And -- okay,

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and th-the war year were some kind of an interruption. Because afterwards, I was again spoil like hell from my father and traveling and -- and very close, Didn't want him to marry or something -- I didn't say that, etcetera. Traveling all the time.

Absolutely no -- no -- no problem. **Bar Mitzvah** and -- and --

Q: Did you feel very Jewish at your **Bar Mitzvah**?

A: Oh no, no, no. They tried to tell me all kinds of -- of ne -- knowledge, you see, and I did learn the Hebrew, I could recite, because there was some school you had to go to in the summer. To the synagogue school --

Q: You went to a -- you went a -- a Hebrew school, a synagogue school?

A: Went for the synagogue --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- just for the **Bar Mitzvah**, huh?

Q: Just for the --

A: Yeah, yeah, for -- yeah. E-Everybody who had the **Bar Mitzvah** had to go through that school.

Q: Yeah.

A: For the Hebrew knowledge. All this was good, but I -- I was not interested. Then I didn't know what was happening, huh? Then my father, with his three days of ceremony and all that, gifts and gifts, and people who came even stole some things out of my [**indecipherable**]. A-A-And -- and -- no -- and -- no, I told you th -- the only

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time I feel Jewish, when I was asking to get out for a week from the army. And that -- a-a-and that was quite important, but afterwards really, I was not view like that, okay? Even not in my work in the Arab countries, you know, because of my appearance, I could go anywhere I want in the Arab country, they take me for an Arab.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: When I went -- I remember very well in **Tunis** once, i-in front of the hotel there was some kind of a incident, I don't know what, but anyway, I was looking what's -- may have happen, you see? Then the older man began to -- to scream at me in Arabic, and I said, but I don't speak Arabic. You see, all those young people, Tunisians, you know, speak some French now, you know, sh -- speak Arabic, etcetera. I say okay. May -- ma-many speeches are everywhere in the Arab country, but it was always in French of cour -- of course, huh? Now, the question would be very different, because of the Islamic influence. You know, who penetrates every fiber of -- of society in those places, will be difference, very different. We would not have been welcomed like I was [**indecipherable**] you know, a defender of the liberty and independence and they o -- they ask -- we were in [**indecipherable**] to -- to -- for so many things, including shipment of f-food, under -- you know, the p -- I think it was called **PL40** program of the **United States** to send food abroad, all this or that. Immediately once one of their people were arrested, we were going there, we freed them, you know, etcetera. No, no, no, no -- that's not possible any more. Not possible.



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Q: When you -- you -- you talked about the rise of this militant Islam.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: How do you react to that, considering the fact that your life, your childhood was changed by the rise of some -- you know, a dictator that --

A: Yeah. Well --

Q: -- deprived people of their civil rights

A: Yeah, yeah, sure.

Q: Do you feel more of a connection, cause he -- you had more direct effects from that?

A: Ah, yes, and you know, it's the general knowledge of the danger of authoritarianism and dictatorship and the rise of it and the fact that in **Europe**, twice the **United States** had to come to rescue them, that they did it. It's a -- it's a -- it's a -- i-it's a -- a continent who has been so much involved in internal struggles, going back to **Napoleon** and etcetera, and the same mistake to try to i -- to rule in the su -- these large territories of the **Soviet Unions**. In -- in that sense we saw some parallel with the Islam, the raise of Islam.

Q: But my point is, do you have more of a visceral reaction? Do you know what I mean?

A: Yes.

Q: More emotional, because your life was changed by it?

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A: Yes.

Q: By that.

A: Yeah, yes and no, it's more on the political level again, because I was in charge of a program called -- the first program called Islam against the Islamists, to make the difference between the two, you see, and -- and -- and again, there's nothing religious, it is a group of power monsters, who will do anything to access to the control of a state, uh-huh, and the -- in the **Koran**, everybody knows that i-i-it's -- it's like the Catholicism, a-and -- and the other form, built on the -- o-on an evolution, which -- which show only that with the raise of Islam, we see that they are as primitive like the Catholics were hundreds of years ago, of the Jewish, etcetera. Then this is more on that kind of level, and the fact that this has to be -- has to be stopped because there are new factors, okay, meaning -- especially in western **Europe**, with the immigration from our country. We have the problem here, we have another, the Latin American immigration, etcetera, who is different, of course, from the Jewish immigration, or the Belg -- the **Belgium**. I found in the paper so many story where **Belgium** descendent, even this -- to make a joke, this **D.C.** Madame, you know, etcetera, she is born in -- in a place in **Pennsylvania** called **Charleroi**, who is a -- a name of a city, mean you find, more or less, and in the [indecipherable] you find, you know, that's moving, when they say, he was in the Battle of the Bulge, you see, or before a -- y -- many, many, many things

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when -- went to that [indecipherable] it's full, I mean the -- in the book. And many thing, many way. Ah, you know.

Q: Do you -- you have a d -- a dual citizenship?

A: I have now a double citizen. Before it was not possible. I mean, when I came here from **Belgium**, you renounce your **Belgium** nationality.

Q: You renounced your --

A: But then again, the notion of citizenship --

Q: Was that painful for you to renounce it?

A: Ma -- no. That was not -- not all. Because I made such a difference between a heritage and a situation. And -- and -- and I never asked to go in the Belgian army to defend so-called the king, okay? The king, for me, was a -- a collaborator, the first one, during the war, of course, huh? Meaning that I put this all in -- in perspective. And I didn't come, mind you, American before, I was here seven years. You have to wait five years, a -- two more years, and as we talk about the legendary **Irving Brown**, he says, you know, one thing done, forget your heritage, okay? And -- and I -- he was more French than American anyway, live in **Europe** all his life. I recognize from one of the best [indecipherable] in **France**, etcetera, then it doesn't mean an -- really, when you have this international outlook. This is when somebody says, oh you -- your daughter works in **Germany**. I say, ah, I know -- w-w -- there's no meaning. She could have worked in **Italy** or something else. What is important with -- with all that, a-

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and th-the race of Islamic, you know, i-infiltration in ji -- i-i-in the labor movement, in political life and in the society, i-is ta -- to remember that **Europe** is still divided between many [indecipherable] and the case of **Bosnia, Serogovia**, the fall of **Yugoslavia**. I say everybody can be tomorrow a murderer if you -- if you don't pay atten -- e-everybody can be manipulated in their thinking, in one way or the other, very easily. Where people can be convinced, you know, that **Clinton** was a great president, or you know, it may be, maybe not, but anyway, he's not one of the greatest in this country anyway. A-And -- and the same can be said from -- from the president, who is now here. It is a -- a -- a -- a state of the development of country, of nation, and of the political life. What we can control, and what we cannot control. What a free society means. And now came all those great [indecipherable] thinker even today, in [indecipherable] etcetera. He said, election is not a proof of democracy. But we knew this many, many years, that you know, the fact impose, practically, an election, doesn't mean anything in many countries of the world. Either it's still tribal and you talk about feeling of nationality there -- th-th-th-th-their responsibility is **vis-à-vis** their tribe. It's not the [indecipherable] their country. And there is nothing in this concept of country, of nation. They simply do not exist.

Q: Well, you -- I know you talked about, you know, feeling very international, and --

A: Yeah.

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Q: -- obviously traveling all over the world. Do you have any particular feelings about **Germany** because of World War II?

A: Oh, of course.

Q: Are you comfortable when you're there, when you visit?

A: I wa -- no, I visit two or three time, I'm not comfortable.

Q: Why not?

A: I think, you know -- I remember in **Berlin**, sitting in -- in -- in a restaurant, you know. There were some very old couple. I think th-th-they look at me, you know, and they may -- and I'm -- and they must have been, you know, concentration camp guards, who else, you know, and thing li -- you don't know. You don't know. Going to **Germany** two, three -- I went to **Berlin** in fir -- first time in '56, you know, and -- and the question was not the old **Germany**, it was the east **Germany**, you know, a-and the west **Germany**, what we do to rebuild them, and th -- the -- th-the -- the -- the -- the -- the acceptance of a occupation policy, who was not very wi -- wi -- all the aspect of which are not -- we cannot be very proud, because we use, you know, th-the-the police, we use -- etcetera, you -- i-is simply bring back of what the contemporary situation with **Iraq**, where we did not want to use the army in the [indecipherable] of **Saddam**. And the fact that we didn't do that was a great mistake, because we didn't do it in **Germany**, but -- or in **Japan**, certainly not. Then -- no, I feel co -- uncomfortable there. But I must say I feel uncomfortable in every -- any country where I don't know

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the language, or they don't understand, you know. I -- I -- I never went, because of political reason -- well, I went afterward -- to **Spain** or **Portugal**, because they were under dictatorship and we find -- that's when I was in the young [**indecipherable**] I went back --

Q: So it's interesting, it's because of your professional background --

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q: -- and your political background, not because of your childhood experiences.

A: No, no, no, no. This immediately, you know, dissipated, because of -- of -- I don't know.

Q: Have you met other hidden children?

A: Oh yeah, sure. Sure, sure.

Q: And do you feel a connection to them?

A: Oh yeah, sure, sure. Either because I -- I think I refer -- we were member of the **Maccabee**. Even though -- and **Maccabee** was a, as you know, mo-mostly a sports, you know, activity. We had the gymnasium, and the ping pong, etcetera. But they -- there were some lecture, you know, on -- on Jewish life, etcetera. There were artistic group, etcetera. And we knew that we choose **Maccabee**, not to be in the Zionist group, or not to be in the traditional Orthodox Jews, which didn't exist anyway in **Brussels**, they were all in **Antwerp**, you see. And -- and then we -- we had many debates, you see? But the ones who are here were the -- the ones who -- who -- who

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decided to -- to move on, you know, with the briti -- with the Jewish background and -  
- and that's it. Many people like me went very early to **Israel**, and we ca -- went back -  
- I went back twice or three times.

Q: Do you feel a special connection to --

A: Oh yes, sure. Sure. This is another issue. This was the Jewish state and this was the  
-- let's say an history was started much earlier, under the British empire and  
**[indecipherable]** and all that, yes. And of course we will -- defended -- there's no --  
no -- when I visit the afri -- the -- the Arab countries, my boss, **Irving Brown** at that  
time, when we were in **Tunis [indecipherable]** the Palestinian came a-and want to  
talk to **Irving**. **Irving** says, go to **David**. He didn't want to talk to them. Then we sit  
down and I said, glad to talk to you, okay, but if you raise the question of **Israel**,  
there's no deal, okay? Can talk about anything you want. At that time they didn't even  
want -- they were not talking about a Palestinian states or nothing. They want just to  
be anti-Israeli and a colonial state, or an imperial state. I had many contact, but again,  
through the years he became very dangerous, you know, in terms that we were close  
from the -- the exile group, even from inside and outside the Tunisian of the  
**[indecipherable] Algeria**. And people were -- my friend were assassinated. It is  
another story, I can tell you where we had, for instance, the liberation movement  
against the French in **Algeria**. I visited the border **[indecipherable]** kind from  
**Tunisia, Morocco**, all that. But the people we are dealing with were eliminated by

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their own people after they took independence, you know, their friends had been torn out from this -- from stairways and things, oh, terrible. Some were assassinated in **Paris**, which I knew and I was very con -- of course, concern about it. But again, when you talk to a -- a guy like **Irving Brown**, he accepted that [**indecipherable**] and never talk about that. His best friend die [**indecipherable**] never talk about that. And we were involved in all kind of operation, etcetera, and -- and as a joke with my wife and children, when I was awarded, you know, commander honor of this award, national award, you know, th -- of this officer, of that, and the other, and **chevalier** -- knights of that. **Senegal** and -- and **Doumay**, and -- **Senegal, Doumay**, and oh, what's the third? **Togo**, huh. And I came back each time so proud of the men [**indecipherable**] that they laugh at me. And the na -- the big, you know, diploma, I wanted to put this in my little [**indecipherable**] no, no. It's only -- it's a true story, of course, like everything I told you, of course. I brought it from the basement and I put it back, two of them. One is too big in the -- in my guestroom, and the other one is too big, I -- I left in that. And then people are asking me, but why did you get? I say, look, this is to organize a ch -- regime change, the other was to oppose one. And -- and things like that. But that's another aspect, and I think it's very well describe in -- in several books.

Q: What was your reaction during the **Eichmann** trial, do you remember?

A: Oh yes, of course. We were all in favor of it, and I think my wife wants nothing to do with all that -- with [**indecipherable**] conservative says, why a trial? Kill him



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[**indecipherable**] you know? It's like what she said things about the -- the unfortunately situation with the killings in school, etcetera [**indecipherable**] I say, why do you go thr -- they go all through that, you know? Each time somebody --

Q: Well, I was wondering, did it make you think of the loss of your mother, the loss of your sister?

A: Oh yeah --

Q: Did it -- did it bring you right back?

A: -- th-the -- oh no, the -- yeah.

Q: That's what I meant.

A: Yeah, the whole tragedy o-of that period, of course. And when there is -- I don't know whether before, I was going some movie a-about, you know, **Eichmann** arrest, or about the -- the thing, but you know, in the book on the **Belgium** deportation that there is upst-upstairs [**indecipherable**] that I have it at home, you know, with the list of the convoy, etcetera, there is, at the end, the trial in **Kohn, Germany** of the mi -- the one who did all that in **Belgium**, okay? H-he went free after five years. Then, for me it's another a-aspect, it's a -- it's really showing that -- that the society evolves, that this thing of remembrance, it's -- i-i-i-it's something personal, but when you are involve in all those acts, there is no justice, you know, only for the few.

[**indecipherable**] **Nuremberg** and all that, it's only a few, what, 20 people, or 50 people. Of course, what we did with **denazification** in **Germany** was excellent, of

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course, excellent. And th-there became, like in **Italy**, etcetera, recognition that people have to live with the regime that they have, you know, and as I mentioned before, the populace, the people are -- are subject to so much more [**indecipherable**] that today's -- even an election in a s-so-called civilized country has different meaning for different people.

Q: What is your feeling coming into the Holocaust Museum building?

A: The first time? I went there three times. I went here --

Q: No, I'm talking about this --

A: Yeah, yeah, I went --

Q: -- th-this one in **Washington**.

A: -- three time. Oh yes. I decided --

Q: Do you have any emotional reaction when you come to it?

A: No, I have more -- better illustration of some of the -- th-the situation. I went to -- in the [**indecipherable**] where you can follow the deportation on the screen, you know? Then I look at **Belgium** and I say, that's not enough, it's not even very -- it's quickly done. I don't think that they show any -- you cannot s -- have any remor -- or any comment, you know. I-I went back because they have something of a list, my aunt who ca -- before she fa -- came here and then before she died -- you know, there is -- her name is on it, but her husband name is not on it, you know. Certainly mine is not on it, because I never put it, nobody ask, you see? The best place is the reflection, you

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know, pool there, with the wall, that's important. But to go through a place with all the photos of -- of people deport -- I've seen that, I-I -- you know, it has no -- you know, I've -- this I know about **Belgium**, etcetera. This I know. And to have a little **[indecipherable]** around **Belgium** doesn't mean, you know, anything. Because they concentrate on **Poland**, on the big countries.

Q: Do you belong to any hidden children organizations?

A: Yeah, well, to -- no, yes?

Q: I mean, here in the **United States**?

A: Oh, no, no.

Q: That's **[indecipherable]**

A: I tried to contact one, I saw somebody testify in front -- before the Congress. Some guy who -- who supposed to have a group to defend the survi -- the children of the survivors, etcetera. I look on the Web, and I couldn't find him. But no, I am -- I was really, lately, interested in that, and it's only because I -- I was on the -- with this **Belgium**, you know, all these thing that they put on, and -- and that I pursue **[indecipherable]** this thing, but I would not be member of anything. I'm never ask anything, ju -- this thing really, has been practically through in my head, but -- and I accepted it, voluntary. I would not have accepted 50 years ago, I never accepted it. And while on the basis of all those things, you are **[indecipherable]** you are not accepted if you have receive compensation from the German claim. You know, you

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cannot have both. And now I know that some people got German ca -- oh yes, a lot of them, but they cannot get this [**indecipherable**] etcetera, because you are -- which is totally incomplete. I don't know if I have to say that. You ge -- you put the wrong address, you don't take that. And with this whole business of the non-payment of an insurance premium was just --

Q: Yeah, right.

A: -- a criminal kind of thing. Either you say if your -- you ha -- you had one or not. Because if you had one, it must have been a very --

Q: Is -- is there -- is there anything else you wanted to add to the interview --

A: No, that --

Q: -- or do you feel you've expressed your thoughts?

A: -- no, I am pleased to -- on this opportunity, for what it may be worth, and I think it's a kind of a -- of a normal, let's say duty in terms that I know more because of this research being done, okay? Maybe with the money, and I didn't find anything there, I didn't find anything in the Holocaust Museum. Of course, I went to **Israel** each time on the [**indecipherable**] and in passing through the alley of the -- the -- the [**indecipherable**] of the hide people, th -- you know, th-the -- the ones who save, I say, the people I went -- were hidden from will never be there, because I will never, even they save my life, suggest that they should be there.

Q: Why not?

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A: Because they did it for money, okay? The people who are there --

Q: I see, yeah --

A: -- most of them, you know, took them --

Q: -- yeah. Yeah.

A: -- a great risk -- they had the risk too --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- that's no -- no -- no problem with that, but th-that's part of my re --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- reaction to it -- to -- to the events were taking place.

Q: Well, thank you --

A: Thank you so much.

Q: -- very much for doing the interview.

A: Okay.

Q: This concludes the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with

**David Brombart.**

**End of Tape Three, Side B**

**Conclusion of Interview**