

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,630

2

00:00:03,630 --> 00:00:06,690

This is the United States  
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3

00:00:06,690 --> 00:00:11,190

volunteer collection interview  
with George Arnstein conducted

4

00:00:11,190 --> 00:00:17,430

by Gail Schwartz on  
October 23rd, 2011

5

00:00:17,430 --> 00:00:23,590

in Washington D.C. This  
is track number one.

6

00:00:23,590 --> 00:00:25,690

What is your full name?

7

00:00:25,690 --> 00:00:32,520

I am George, middle name  
is Ernest, Arnstein.

8

00:00:32,520 --> 00:00:36,010

And where were you born,  
and when were you born?

9

00:00:36,010 --> 00:00:43,650

I was born in Stuttgart,  
Germany on September 20th, 1924.

10

00:00:43,650 --> 00:00:45,930

Let's talk a little  
bit about your family.

11

00:00:45,930 --> 00:00:48,190

Your parents' names?

12

00:00:48,190 --> 00:00:54,120  
My father was named Arnold  
Arnstein, my mother Elizabeth,

13  
00:00:54,120 --> 00:01:05,129  
maiden name Weil, W-E-I-L.  
And they married in 1922, '23.

14  
00:01:05,129 --> 00:01:07,725  
I have the exact date  
written down, of course.

15  
00:01:07,725 --> 00:01:18,150  
[LAUGHS] In Stuttgart, both from  
solid, comfortable middle-class

16  
00:01:18,150 --> 00:01:19,180  
families.

17  
00:01:19,180 --> 00:01:24,090  
How far back does your family  
go in generations in Stuttgart?

18  
00:01:24,090 --> 00:01:28,800  
In Stuttgart, only as  
far as my grandparents.

19  
00:01:28,800 --> 00:01:31,980  
But in that corner  
of Southwest Germany,

20  
00:01:31,980 --> 00:01:37,410  
I have documented it because  
I do family history back

21  
00:01:37,410 --> 00:01:41,250  
to 1660, 1670.

22  
00:01:41,250 --> 00:01:43,990  
What kind of work  
did your father do?

23  
00:01:43,990 --> 00:01:46,590

He was a leather  
wholesaler jobber.

24  
00:01:46,590 --> 00:01:49,700

25  
00:01:49,700 --> 00:01:53,330  
The name of the business  
was Weil and Arnstein,

26  
00:01:53,330 --> 00:01:57,150  
and it was established  
by my grandfather.

27  
00:01:57,150 --> 00:02:00,890  
I have finally found  
out who Mr. Weil was,

28  
00:02:00,890 --> 00:02:03,440  
but I have negligible  
data on him.

29  
00:02:03,440 --> 00:02:09,000  
He died quite early, and then my  
father took over the business.

30  
00:02:09,000 --> 00:02:11,840  
Did you, or do you,  
have any siblings?

31  
00:02:11,840 --> 00:02:17,100  
I have one sister who died  
two years ago in California.

32  
00:02:17,100 --> 00:02:20,840  
She had both Alzheimer's  
and Parkinson's and--

33  
00:02:20,840 --> 00:02:23,380

34  
00:02:23,380 --> 00:02:23,950  
period.

35

00:02:23,950 --> 00:02:24,873

I'm sorry.

36

00:02:24,873 --> 00:02:26,290

Was she older or  
younger than you?

37

00:02:26,290 --> 00:02:27,260

Three years younger.

38

00:02:27,260 --> 00:02:29,000

And her name?

39

00:02:29,000 --> 00:02:33,280

Her birth name was  
Susanne Carola Arnstein.

40

00:02:33,280 --> 00:02:37,630

41

00:02:37,630 --> 00:02:40,660

When she first came to this  
country in junior high school,

42

00:02:40,660 --> 00:02:43,450

she changed it to  
Carol, because she

43

00:02:43,450 --> 00:02:46,840

didn't want to be called Susie.

44

00:02:46,840 --> 00:02:51,340

So you said before that you  
came from a middle-class family.

45

00:02:51,340 --> 00:02:55,120

Did you live right in  
the center of Stuttgart?

46

00:02:55,120 --> 00:02:56,710

In the heart of the city.

47

00:02:56,710 --> 00:03:02,710

Not downtown, but my father  
bought a four-story building

48

00:03:02,710 --> 00:03:07,840

before he got married, and  
we lived on the second floor

49

00:03:07,840 --> 00:03:12,490

and there were tenants on  
the other three floors.

50

00:03:12,490 --> 00:03:14,710

And did your mother work?

51

00:03:14,710 --> 00:03:16,720

No, she did not.

52

00:03:16,720 --> 00:03:19,360

That's not quite true.

53

00:03:19,360 --> 00:03:22,670

She went to an arts  
and crafts school.

54

00:03:22,670 --> 00:03:28,630

And when she was single, she  
worked in a porcelain painting

55

00:03:28,630 --> 00:03:29,770

factory.

56

00:03:29,770 --> 00:03:32,470

Factory is an exaggeration.

57

00:03:32,470 --> 00:03:36,730

And after she got  
married, I own two pieces

58

00:03:36,730 --> 00:03:42,400

with her initials, LA, Lisa

Arnstein, and I own one piece

59

00:03:42,400 --> 00:03:45,220  
signed LW, Lisa Weil.

60

00:03:45,220 --> 00:03:47,920

61

00:03:47,920 --> 00:03:52,030  
She did work, but not  
after she was married.

62

00:03:52,030 --> 00:03:55,900  
Did your mother have  
any help in the house?

63

00:03:55,900 --> 00:03:56,440  
Yes.

64

00:03:56,440 --> 00:03:57,200  
Any housekeepers?

65

00:03:57,200 --> 00:03:57,790  
Yes.

66

00:03:57,790 --> 00:04:04,270  
We had a full-time live-in  
maid until the Nuremberg

67

00:04:04,270 --> 00:04:10,090  
laws of 1935, and then  
we had part-time help.

68

00:04:10,090 --> 00:04:13,630  
Well, we'll get to the 1935.

69

00:04:13,630 --> 00:04:17,019  
Let's talk a little  
bit about you.

70

00:04:17,019 --> 00:04:18,519  
What language did

you speak at home?

71

00:04:18,519 --> 00:04:20,769

Did you speak German at home?

72

00:04:20,769 --> 00:04:21,970

German.

73

00:04:21,970 --> 00:04:25,810

And I even spoke the local  
dialect when I played soccer

74

00:04:25,810 --> 00:04:28,060

with the kids, or the boys.

75

00:04:28,060 --> 00:04:30,550

But at the dinner  
table, we were expected

76

00:04:30,550 --> 00:04:34,780

to speak reasonably  
correct German.

77

00:04:34,780 --> 00:04:38,740

My parents cautiously  
spoke French.

78

00:04:38,740 --> 00:04:42,520

When they didn't want the  
children to understand whatever

79

00:04:42,520 --> 00:04:44,930

it is they were  
talking about later,

80

00:04:44,930 --> 00:04:46,210

they switched to English.

81

00:04:46,210 --> 00:04:50,410

My father spoke both languages  
better than my mother.

82

00:04:50,410 --> 00:04:54,370

Not terribly well, but better.

83

00:04:54,370 --> 00:04:55,970

How would you describe yourself?

84

00:04:55,970 --> 00:04:59,898

Were you an independent  
child when you were young?

85

00:04:59,898 --> 00:05:01,690

Or were you more  
dependent on your parents?

86

00:05:01,690 --> 00:05:05,080

87

00:05:05,080 --> 00:05:07,420

I don't know how to answer that.

88

00:05:07,420 --> 00:05:09,820

Yes, I like to think  
I was independent,

89

00:05:09,820 --> 00:05:13,870

but on the other hand, up  
to the age of 13 or 14,

90

00:05:13,870 --> 00:05:16,300

you're necessarily dependent.

91

00:05:16,300 --> 00:05:21,710

And in our home, my  
father made the decisions.

92

00:05:21,710 --> 00:05:24,110

That does not mean he  
disregarded my mother,

93

00:05:24,110 --> 00:05:26,870

but he clearly was in charge.

94



00:05:26,870 --> 00:05:30,020

He is the one who decided  
that I would attend

95

00:05:30,020 --> 00:05:34,880

a secondary school  
known as a Gymnasium

96

00:05:34,880 --> 00:05:39,740

where one of the foreign  
languages was Latin.

97

00:05:39,740 --> 00:05:43,670

And as he said, in my day, we  
had to take Latin and Greek.

98

00:05:43,670 --> 00:05:46,550

99

00:05:46,550 --> 00:05:48,810

Let's talk about your education.

100

00:05:48,810 --> 00:05:51,980

You first started at  
what kind of a school?

101

00:05:51,980 --> 00:05:55,130

Within walking distance,  
there was an elementary school

102

00:05:55,130 --> 00:05:56,360

with two wings.

103

00:05:56,360 --> 00:05:59,060

One wing, the larger,  
was Protestant.

104

00:05:59,060 --> 00:06:02,240

The other wing,  
smaller, was Catholic.

105

00:06:02,240 --> 00:06:04,650

I attended the Protestant wing.

106

00:06:04,650 --> 00:06:07,850  
I could have been excused from  
religious instruction, which

107

00:06:07,850 --> 00:06:10,610  
was part of the curriculum.

108

00:06:10,610 --> 00:06:14,430  
I was not, and I  
attended, and to this day,

109

00:06:14,430 --> 00:06:19,730  
I remember some  
Protestant catechism.

110

00:06:19,730 --> 00:06:23,090  
It was within walking distance,  
and it was a public school.

111

00:06:23,090 --> 00:06:27,300  
Strangely enough, coeducational.

112

00:06:27,300 --> 00:06:34,350  
There were 20 boys and 10 girls,  
and I have a photograph taken

113

00:06:34,350 --> 00:06:37,170  
in third grade or second grade.

114

00:06:37,170 --> 00:06:40,110  
And I used to say, I can  
still recall the names.

115

00:06:40,110 --> 00:06:40,770  
Not true.

116

00:06:40,770 --> 00:06:43,540  
[LAUGHS]

117

00:06:43,540 --> 00:06:48,120  
So speaking of being in

the Protestant section,

118  
00:06:48,120 --> 00:06:51,970  
was your family  
religiously Jewish?

119  
00:06:51,970 --> 00:06:53,350  
Ethnically Jewish.

120  
00:06:53,350 --> 00:06:54,540  
Religiously, no.

121  
00:06:54,540 --> 00:06:55,690  
No.

122  
00:06:55,690 --> 00:06:56,890  
How would you describe them?

123  
00:06:56,890 --> 00:06:58,616  
Were they very assimilated?

124  
00:06:58,616 --> 00:07:01,640

125  
00:07:01,640 --> 00:07:05,420  
My father had a slightly  
younger brother named Ernest--

126  
00:07:05,420 --> 00:07:08,720  
which is why I'm  
named George Ernest--

127  
00:07:08,720 --> 00:07:13,040  
who apparently was  
quite enterprising.

128  
00:07:13,040 --> 00:07:17,410  
He broke his neck skiing  
in the Italian Alps

129  
00:07:17,410 --> 00:07:21,880  
at age 17, 18,

something like that,

130

00:07:21,880 --> 00:07:28,400  
which meant that my grandfather  
had to decide on a burial plot

131

00:07:28,400 --> 00:07:32,660  
to bury uncle Ernest, whom  
I never knew, of course.

132

00:07:32,660 --> 00:07:37,160  
And he picked a plot in  
the Protestant section

133

00:07:37,160 --> 00:07:40,730  
of the cemetery, not  
the Jewish section.

134

00:07:40,730 --> 00:07:43,970  
I cite that as an example.

135

00:07:43,970 --> 00:07:47,420  
And that, of course, is  
then where my grandfather

136

00:07:47,420 --> 00:07:50,450  
was buried in the family plot.

137

00:07:50,450 --> 00:07:55,500  
So was my maternal grandfather.

138

00:07:55,500 --> 00:08:00,700  
That is an indirect  
answer to your question.

139

00:08:00,700 --> 00:08:06,548  
So did your parents do  
anything Jewishly in the home?

140

00:08:06,548 --> 00:08:08,340  
I'm talking about when  
you were very young.

141

00:08:08,340 --> 00:08:10,080

Absolutely not.

142

00:08:10,080 --> 00:08:13,095

I did not know where  
the synagogue was.

143

00:08:13,095 --> 00:08:16,690

144

00:08:16,690 --> 00:08:21,640

There were three words which  
I assumed to be German,

145

00:08:21,640 --> 00:08:24,040

and in fact, they mostly are.

146

00:08:24,040 --> 00:08:26,200

One was "schlemiel,"  
and the other one

147

00:08:26,200 --> 00:08:29,950

was "pleite," which  
means "bankrupt."

148

00:08:29,950 --> 00:08:36,685

But it's so part of  
the German language.

149

00:08:36,685 --> 00:08:39,830

150

00:08:39,830 --> 00:08:42,610

Anyway, I did not know  
those were Jewish words.

151

00:08:42,610 --> 00:08:46,340

Heu-- Well, there was Western  
Yiddish and there was Eastern

152

00:08:46,340 --> 00:08:46,940

Yiddish, but--

153  
00:08:46,940 --> 00:08:47,617  
Right.

154  
00:08:47,617 --> 00:08:49,700  
Did you know you were  
Jewish when you were little?

155  
00:08:49,700 --> 00:08:50,840  
When you were young?

156  
00:08:50,840 --> 00:08:53,890  
No, not until the  
Nazis came to power.

157  
00:08:53,890 --> 00:08:54,740  
Oh.

158  
00:08:54,740 --> 00:08:55,340  
Oh.

159  
00:08:55,340 --> 00:08:57,410  
So for nine years, you--

160  
00:08:57,410 --> 00:08:59,605  
Well, yes.

161  
00:08:59,605 --> 00:09:01,730  
So you didn't, obviously--  
it goes without saying--

162  
00:09:01,730 --> 00:09:02,720  
It didn't matter!

163  
00:09:02,720 --> 00:09:07,490  
--did you go to any  
family occasions

164  
00:09:07,490 --> 00:09:10,310  
like a Seder or  
anything like that?

165

00:09:10,310 --> 00:09:14,420

No, but I do remember after  
the Nazis came to power,

166

00:09:14,420 --> 00:09:21,080

about 1935, my sister  
and I went to Hellingen,

167

00:09:21,080 --> 00:09:24,500

which is a village not  
far from Stuttgart,

168

00:09:24,500 --> 00:09:29,390

where there was a Jewish  
Training Center, presumably

169

00:09:29,390 --> 00:09:33,260

preparing people for Palestine.

170

00:09:33,260 --> 00:09:36,860

And all I remember from  
that is that I did not

171

00:09:36,860 --> 00:09:39,110

like the taste of horseradish.

172

00:09:39,110 --> 00:09:40,790

And that's all I remember.

173

00:09:40,790 --> 00:09:42,770

That's all you remember.

174

00:09:42,770 --> 00:09:45,380

So you went to  
this public school,

175

00:09:45,380 --> 00:09:52,520

and you were in the  
Protestant wing or section.

176

00:09:52,520 --> 00:09:53,990

What were your other interests?

177  
00:09:53,990 --> 00:09:55,700  
Did you like to read at all?

178  
00:09:55,700 --> 00:09:58,890  
Oh, we played soccer,  
we went bicycling.

179  
00:09:58,890 --> 00:10:01,100  
I was one of the boys, and--

180  
00:10:01,100 --> 00:10:02,680  
Did you like to read books?

181  
00:10:02,680 --> 00:10:06,800  
Oh, I remember the  
first two books I owned.

182  
00:10:06,800 --> 00:10:12,170  
One was in German, of course.

183  
00:10:12,170 --> 00:10:17,540  
Classical mythology in a  
virgin which is kind of poetic.

184  
00:10:17,540 --> 00:10:20,780  
It is so good that  
that version that

185  
00:10:20,780 --> 00:10:23,960  
has been translated into English  
and published in the United

186  
00:10:23,960 --> 00:10:26,810  
States by an author  
named Schwab.

187  
00:10:26,810 --> 00:10:32,600  
S-C-H-W-A-B. I have  
fond memories of that.

188  
00:10:32,600 --> 00:10:37,150



And the other book  
was in German,

189  
00:10:37,150 --> 00:10:40,270  
I come from Rome,  
a battle for Rome.

190  
00:10:40,270 --> 00:10:43,922  
It deals basically with  
the invasion of the Goths.

191  
00:10:43,922 --> 00:10:47,360

192  
00:10:47,360 --> 00:10:49,730  
And of course, I  
identified with the Goths,

193  
00:10:49,730 --> 00:10:50,935  
the victorious Goths.

194  
00:10:50,935 --> 00:10:54,710  
[LAUGHS] I still  
remember, those two books

195  
00:10:54,710 --> 00:10:58,010  
were a present from a  
cousin from Nuremberg.

196  
00:10:58,010 --> 00:11:01,460

197  
00:11:01,460 --> 00:11:02,660  
When you were young--

198  
00:11:02,660 --> 00:11:06,860  
I'm curious-- did you have  
any friends that whom you knew

199  
00:11:06,860 --> 00:11:07,520  
were Jewish?

200

00:11:07,520 --> 00:11:10,490

You didn't know you  
were, but did you know?

201

00:11:10,490 --> 00:11:14,090

It was not a  
question that arose.

202

00:11:14,090 --> 00:11:15,410

OK.

203

00:11:15,410 --> 00:11:18,620

So they may have been,  
but I didn't know.

204

00:11:18,620 --> 00:11:21,950

205

00:11:21,950 --> 00:11:26,330

That changed, of course,  
after the noose tightened.

206

00:11:26,330 --> 00:11:29,630

But, no.

207

00:11:29,630 --> 00:11:36,410

There was a cousin named  
Uncle Emil who owned a factory

208

00:11:36,410 --> 00:11:41,480

and he arrived with a black  
chauffeur-driven limousine.

209

00:11:41,480 --> 00:11:45,020

But it was an Opel, it  
wasn't even a Mercedes.

210

00:11:45,020 --> 00:11:50,000

I mean, he was, he existed,  
but didn't particularly think

211

00:11:50,000 --> 00:11:51,530

about it.

212  
00:11:51,530 --> 00:11:53,840  
All right, well  
let's get to 1933.

213  
00:11:53,840 --> 00:11:57,200  
You were an old man of nine  
years old, eight and a half,

214  
00:11:57,200 --> 00:12:00,020  
nine years old when  
Hitler comes into power.

215  
00:12:00,020 --> 00:12:05,920  
What are your first memories of  
any change from your very happy

216  
00:12:05,920 --> 00:12:09,370  
assimilated childhood?

217  
00:12:09,370 --> 00:12:13,390  
First of all nothing  
changed among the boys

218  
00:12:13,390 --> 00:12:14,470  
in my neighborhood.

219  
00:12:14,470 --> 00:12:17,680  
We continued to play  
soccer, and we continue--

220  
00:12:17,680 --> 00:12:21,690  
this was before bicycles, we had  
scooters, but then gradually.

221  
00:12:21,690 --> 00:12:25,060

222  
00:12:25,060 --> 00:12:28,630  
Nothing happened in  
any significant way

223

00:12:28,630 --> 00:12:31,930  
until the Nuremberg  
Laws, which meant

224  
00:12:31,930 --> 00:12:34,930  
that we could no longer have  
a full-time housekeeper.

225  
00:12:34,930 --> 00:12:39,040  
And that probably led to an  
explanation by my parents

226  
00:12:39,040 --> 00:12:40,733  
that we were different.

227  
00:12:40,733 --> 00:12:41,420  
Ah.

228  
00:12:41,420 --> 00:12:44,050  
Now, do you remember  
your reaction?

229  
00:12:44,050 --> 00:12:44,710  
No.

230  
00:12:44,710 --> 00:12:46,270  
You don't.

231  
00:12:46,270 --> 00:12:52,540  
The other significant thing is  
there was a cousin in Munich.

232  
00:12:52,540 --> 00:12:55,400  
This must have been a  
couple of years later.

233  
00:12:55,400 --> 00:12:58,090  
Her name was Marianne.

234  
00:12:58,090 --> 00:13:10,870  
She was engaged to a gentile  
Bavarian who was terrific.

235

00:13:10,870 --> 00:13:13,510

They took me skiing.

236

00:13:13,510 --> 00:13:21,280

They owned a small Fiat, and  
at the age of 12, on country

237

00:13:21,280 --> 00:13:23,260

roads, I was allowed to drive.

238

00:13:23,260 --> 00:13:23,760

[LAUGHS]

239

00:13:23,760 --> 00:13:24,802

Oh, I won't tell anybody.

240

00:13:24,802 --> 00:13:25,930

OK.

241

00:13:25,930 --> 00:13:28,480

So no wonder I  
think well of him.

242

00:13:28,480 --> 00:13:37,220

And she became a  
Catholic, a convert.

243

00:13:37,220 --> 00:13:38,390

Didn't do any good.

244

00:13:38,390 --> 00:13:42,980

And moved to Stuttgart and  
became kind of an older sister

245

00:13:42,980 --> 00:13:44,210

to us.

246

00:13:44,210 --> 00:13:47,900

Or, she was appreciably  
older, but she

247

00:13:47,900 --> 00:13:49,790  
became part of our household.

248  
00:13:49,790 --> 00:13:53,210  
And most significantly,  
he owned a car,

249  
00:13:53,210 --> 00:13:56,630  
and we were mechanized  
for the first time.

250  
00:13:56,630 --> 00:14:01,970  
I cite this only as a  
reasonably vivid recollection

251  
00:14:01,970 --> 00:14:04,850  
of the influence of  
the Nuremberg laws,

252  
00:14:04,850 --> 00:14:07,280  
and the realization  
that we were different

253  
00:14:07,280 --> 00:14:09,541  
and Marianne was different.

254  
00:14:09,541 --> 00:14:13,230

255  
00:14:13,230 --> 00:14:16,910  
The other significant  
difference is

256  
00:14:16,910 --> 00:14:23,240  
swimming pools started to have  
signs saying, no Jews allowed.

257  
00:14:23,240 --> 00:14:24,603  
And--

258  
00:14:24,603 --> 00:14:26,270  
So you not only knew  
you were different,

259  
00:14:26,270 --> 00:14:28,260  
you knew you were Jewish?

260  
00:14:28,260 --> 00:14:29,000  
Yes.

261  
00:14:29,000 --> 00:14:31,700  
Yeah.

262  
00:14:31,700 --> 00:14:34,682  
Exactly when and how that  
happened, I don't recall.

263  
00:14:34,682 --> 00:14:36,140  
You don't remember  
that discussion.

264  
00:14:36,140 --> 00:14:37,830  
I was different.

265  
00:14:37,830 --> 00:14:44,410  
And the difference  
was Jewish ethnicity.

266  
00:14:44,410 --> 00:14:48,360  
Do you remember being frightened  
about hearing that, or not?

267  
00:14:48,360 --> 00:14:50,110  
That you were different  
than your friends?

268  
00:14:50,110 --> 00:14:52,670  
Not particularly.

269  
00:14:52,670 --> 00:14:56,840  
My fellow soccer players didn't  
treat me any differently.

270  
00:14:56,840 --> 00:15:00,470  
My fellow bicyclists,

who were the same thing.

271

00:15:00,470 --> 00:15:01,580

The same group.

272

00:15:01,580 --> 00:15:04,800

What about the  
teachers in the school?

273

00:15:04,800 --> 00:15:08,570

That is a precipitating cause.

274

00:15:08,570 --> 00:15:14,640

Easter 1938, I had  
not done my homework,

275

00:15:14,640 --> 00:15:18,780

or I was late for class, or  
some minor offense like that.

276

00:15:18,780 --> 00:15:24,690

And the homeroom teacher took  
me to task, and said George--

277

00:15:24,690 --> 00:15:27,120

or Georg, of course--

278

00:15:27,120 --> 00:15:29,460

you who are a guest  
in this country.

279

00:15:29,460 --> 00:15:32,550

280

00:15:32,550 --> 00:15:35,160

And that scored.

281

00:15:35,160 --> 00:15:41,200

I remember today my father  
had offered me earlier,

282

00:15:41,200 --> 00:15:42,810



had raised the  
question, didn't I

283  
00:15:42,810 --> 00:15:46,050  
want to transfer and  
go to school in Geneva,

284  
00:15:46,050 --> 00:15:48,330  
in Switzerland?

285  
00:15:48,330 --> 00:15:52,350  
Where there were family  
friends with a son my age

286  
00:15:52,350 --> 00:15:57,180  
who were going to look after me?

287  
00:15:57,180 --> 00:16:00,720  
Easter '38, I went home  
and I told my father,

288  
00:16:00,720 --> 00:16:03,570  
I'm ready to go to Geneva.

289  
00:16:03,570 --> 00:16:08,700  
And that was the precipitating  
trivial incident.

290  
00:16:08,700 --> 00:16:11,970  
There are a couple of others.

291  
00:16:11,970 --> 00:16:17,400  
We played soccer as  
part of the gym class

292  
00:16:17,400 --> 00:16:23,700  
at school, secondary school,  
and typically we were--

293  
00:16:23,700 --> 00:16:26,260  
The secondary  
school you went to--

294

00:16:26,260 --> 00:16:26,760  
Gymnasium.

295

00:16:26,760 --> 00:16:30,390  
--were you still in a Protestant  
section of the school,

296

00:16:30,390 --> 00:16:31,890  
or was everybody together?

297

00:16:31,890 --> 00:16:34,520

298

00:16:34,520 --> 00:16:37,025  
I don't recall.

299

00:16:37,025 --> 00:16:39,270  
Yes, it was Protestant.

300

00:16:39,270 --> 00:16:43,400  
The Catholics may  
have been excused.

301

00:16:43,400 --> 00:16:48,260  
I can only remember one other  
Jewish boy at that point.

302

00:16:48,260 --> 00:16:50,510  
I still know his name.

303

00:16:50,510 --> 00:16:53,500

304

00:16:53,500 --> 00:16:58,390  
And to my knowledge he's  
a emeritus professor

305

00:16:58,390 --> 00:17:02,060  
at the University of  
Michigan in Michigan State.

306

00:17:02,060 --> 00:17:03,890

What is his name?

307

00:17:03,890 --> 00:17:05,329

Ted Hecht.

308

00:17:05,329 --> 00:17:09,920

H-E-C-H-T. Theodore.

309

00:17:09,920 --> 00:17:14,119

And I haven't been in touch  
with him for years, but--

310

00:17:14,119 --> 00:17:15,950

So he was the only  
other Jewish child?

311

00:17:15,950 --> 00:17:17,300

And he left before me.

312

00:17:17,300 --> 00:17:18,619

He left before you.

313

00:17:18,619 --> 00:17:22,730

I was literally the last one.

314

00:17:22,730 --> 00:17:26,599

What I was getting  
at is the soccer

315

00:17:26,599 --> 00:17:31,280

teams were chosen either  
by height or in turn.

316

00:17:31,280 --> 00:17:37,760

And I was number 11  
or number 12 in size.

317

00:17:37,760 --> 00:17:40,490

And when the teams  
were chosen, I

318

00:17:40,490 --> 00:17:44,360  
was also chosen something  
like 11th or 12th.

319  
00:17:44,360 --> 00:17:45,230  
That's significant.

320  
00:17:45,230 --> 00:17:47,902  
There are 11 soccer  
players to a side.

321  
00:17:47,902 --> 00:17:51,320  
[LAUGHS] The point  
I'm getting at

322  
00:17:51,320 --> 00:17:59,420  
is there were two guys who  
basically deliberately fouled

323  
00:17:59,420 --> 00:18:01,310  
me.

324  
00:18:01,310 --> 00:18:07,900  
And the teacher, alias  
umpire, didn't see it.

325  
00:18:07,900 --> 00:18:09,370  
Again, trivial.

326  
00:18:09,370 --> 00:18:12,820  
But you're asking for examples.

327  
00:18:12,820 --> 00:18:13,660  
Those are the only--

328  
00:18:13,660 --> 00:18:15,118  
Didn't really see  
it or ignored it?

329  
00:18:15,118 --> 00:18:15,650  
Oh, no no.

330

00:18:15,650 --> 00:18:16,900  
Ignored it.

331  
00:18:16,900 --> 00:18:17,590  
Ignored it.

332  
00:18:17,590 --> 00:18:19,610  
Sorry, chose not to see it.

333  
00:18:19,610 --> 00:18:23,290  
Chose not to see it, OK.

334  
00:18:23,290 --> 00:18:26,680  
Those are about the only  
incidents I can remember.

335  
00:18:26,680 --> 00:18:29,500  
What about symbols  
in the streets,

336  
00:18:29,500 --> 00:18:32,260  
or any of the soldiers,  
German soldiers?

337  
00:18:32,260 --> 00:18:34,930  
Do you remember  
symbols in the streets?

338  
00:18:34,930 --> 00:18:37,630  
Did you see any swastikas?

339  
00:18:37,630 --> 00:18:39,520  
Oh, yes, of course.

340  
00:18:39,520 --> 00:18:43,870  
For example, my father, being  
the owner of the building,

341  
00:18:43,870 --> 00:18:48,910  
was expected to fly  
a flag prominently

342

00:18:48,910 --> 00:18:52,620  
on patriotic occasions.

343  
00:18:52,620 --> 00:18:56,580  
And he chose the local  
colors, provincial colors,

344  
00:18:56,580 --> 00:18:58,890  
which were red and black.

345  
00:18:58,890 --> 00:19:03,310  
The city colors were black and  
yellow, but not the swastika,

346  
00:19:03,310 --> 00:19:05,880  
and not black, white,  
and red, which were

347  
00:19:05,880 --> 00:19:09,360  
the alternate national colors.

348  
00:19:09,360 --> 00:19:10,590  
And we got away with it.

349  
00:19:10,590 --> 00:19:14,140

350  
00:19:14,140 --> 00:19:15,640  
What was on his flag?

351  
00:19:15,640 --> 00:19:17,710  
Your father's flag?

352  
00:19:17,710 --> 00:19:19,378  
On his flag?

353  
00:19:19,378 --> 00:19:20,920  
Black and red, the  
provincial colors.

354  
00:19:20,920 --> 00:19:22,240  
Just stripes?

355  
00:19:22,240 --> 00:19:22,785  
Two stripes.

356  
00:19:22,785 --> 00:19:23,285  
Two stripes.

357  
00:19:23,285 --> 00:19:24,160  
Yes.

358  
00:19:24,160 --> 00:19:29,280  
No, no, no, not remotely  
black, white, and red.

359  
00:19:29,280 --> 00:19:33,000  
Parenthetically, my father  
had served in World War

360  
00:19:33,000 --> 00:19:36,030  
I, the full four years.

361  
00:19:36,030 --> 00:19:39,450  
He was promoted from  
approximately corporal,

362  
00:19:39,450 --> 00:19:41,550  
and made Lieutenant.

363  
00:19:41,550 --> 00:19:44,380  
He was wounded twice.

364  
00:19:44,380 --> 00:19:47,130  
I don't know how badly  
he had impaired--

365  
00:19:47,130 --> 00:19:51,230

366  
00:19:51,230 --> 00:19:53,510  
what is it called--

367

00:19:53,510 --> 00:19:59,295  
taste buds, but no other  
evidence of permanent damage.

368  
00:19:59,295 --> 00:20:03,640

369  
00:20:03,640 --> 00:20:05,650  
He had medals.

370  
00:20:05,650 --> 00:20:09,130  
He wore them once and put  
them away in the drawer.

371  
00:20:09,130 --> 00:20:09,970  
I saw them once.

372  
00:20:09,970 --> 00:20:13,660  
In fact, I still own them.

373  
00:20:13,660 --> 00:20:19,660  
But he was not  
terribly patriotic.

374  
00:20:19,660 --> 00:20:22,720  
And there are two  
explanations for that.

375  
00:20:22,720 --> 00:20:27,310  
His mother, my grandmother,  
was born in San Francisco.

376  
00:20:27,310 --> 00:20:30,020

377  
00:20:30,020 --> 00:20:34,990  
She came to Stuttgart  
at age 12, more or less.

378  
00:20:34,990 --> 00:20:40,650  
Her English was  
there, but not fluent.



379

00:20:40,650 --> 00:20:43,560

Nevertheless, that  
made a difference.

380

00:20:43,560 --> 00:20:46,500

She was one of six sisters.

381

00:20:46,500 --> 00:20:49,440

Three of them married  
Germans, but one

382

00:20:49,440 --> 00:20:51,870

married a Frenchman, one  
married an Englishman.

383

00:20:51,870 --> 00:20:56,820

So my father had first  
cousins in London,

384

00:20:56,820 --> 00:21:00,660

and had a first  
cousin in Paris, which

385

00:21:00,660 --> 00:21:04,080

is how he spent a year there  
learning English and learning

386

00:21:04,080 --> 00:21:05,530

French.

387

00:21:05,530 --> 00:21:08,400

Which also probably  
explains why he

388

00:21:08,400 --> 00:21:11,220

was less patriotic  
than one would

389

00:21:11,220 --> 00:21:14,340

think of a German lieutenant.

390

00:21:14,340 --> 00:21:18,770

391  
00:21:18,770 --> 00:21:22,430  
While we're on that  
theme, let's finish it.

392  
00:21:22,430 --> 00:21:27,570  
After Kristallnacht, The  
Night of Broken Glass--

393  
00:21:27,570 --> 00:21:28,580  
I was in Geneva.

394  
00:21:28,580 --> 00:21:31,640  
I only read about it--

395  
00:21:31,640 --> 00:21:35,190  
he was arrested the  
following morning.

396  
00:21:35,190 --> 00:21:41,720  
He was sent to the local police  
station-- our part of town--

397  
00:21:41,720 --> 00:21:45,120  
told to empty his pockets.

398  
00:21:45,120 --> 00:21:48,120  
And what came out,  
among other things,

399  
00:21:48,120 --> 00:21:51,690  
was orders for Reserve  
Lieutenant Arnstein

400  
00:21:51,690 --> 00:21:54,900  
to report for either  
a physical exam

401  
00:21:54,900 --> 00:21:58,230  
or, I don't remember  
those details.

402  
00:21:58,230 --> 00:21:59,310  
It didn't do any good.

403  
00:21:59,310 --> 00:22:01,020  
He still wound up at Dachau.

404  
00:22:01,020 --> 00:22:03,450  
But as long as we were  
on the military team,

405  
00:22:03,450 --> 00:22:05,152  
I thought I'd include that.

406  
00:22:05,152 --> 00:22:05,652  
[LAUGHS]

407  
00:22:05,652 --> 00:22:07,500  
Yeah, well, we'll  
get back to that.

408  
00:22:07,500 --> 00:22:11,116  
Kind of confusing,  
enemy of the state.

409  
00:22:11,116 --> 00:22:14,010  
And asked to report  
for, you know.

410  
00:22:14,010 --> 00:22:20,100  
Let's talk about, again,  
your experience from '34

411  
00:22:20,100 --> 00:22:22,380  
to '35 on, before you left.

412  
00:22:22,380 --> 00:22:24,370  
And so you saw these  
symbols in the street.

413  
00:22:24,370 --> 00:22:26,460  
Did you see soldiers marching?

414  
00:22:26,460 --> 00:22:27,180  
Oh, yes.

415  
00:22:27,180 --> 00:22:28,530  
Did you see uniforms?

416  
00:22:28,530 --> 00:22:30,600  
What did you as a young boy--

417  
00:22:30,600 --> 00:22:33,360  
well, you weren't that  
young, you were 12, 13--

418  
00:22:33,360 --> 00:22:35,423  
what was your reaction to that?

419  
00:22:35,423 --> 00:22:36,090  
Do you remember?

420  
00:22:36,090 --> 00:22:36,720  
Was it--

421  
00:22:36,720 --> 00:22:38,370  
I was one of the boys.

422  
00:22:38,370 --> 00:22:40,530  
I went along with it.

423  
00:22:40,530 --> 00:22:44,460  
I vaguely remember that  
Hitler came through town.

424  
00:22:44,460 --> 00:22:48,480  
There was a parade and it  
was within walking distance

425  
00:22:48,480 --> 00:22:53,640  
of home, and I think I stood  
in the audience and watched it.

426  
00:22:53,640 --> 00:22:59,140

That doesn't mean I approved  
or even saluted with--

427  
00:22:59,140 --> 00:23:03,030

428  
00:23:03,030 --> 00:23:07,770  
What did Hitler mean  
to you as a young teen?

429  
00:23:07,770 --> 00:23:15,070  
Well, first of all, you have  
to realize the newspapers

430  
00:23:15,070 --> 00:23:18,250  
and everything else  
were now coordinated

431  
00:23:18,250 --> 00:23:23,860  
and spoke with a single  
voice of enthusiasm.

432  
00:23:23,860 --> 00:23:28,420  
I knew my father listened  
to Radio Strasbourg, which

433  
00:23:28,420 --> 00:23:34,000  
broadcast in French and  
in German deliberately.

434  
00:23:34,000 --> 00:23:37,010  
I also knew that this  
was either illegal,

435  
00:23:37,010 --> 00:23:39,950  
but anyway, one  
didn't talk about it.

436  
00:23:39,950 --> 00:23:45,740  
So in that sense, I  
became politically aware.

437  
00:23:45,740 --> 00:23:49,280

But what did Hitler mean to me?

438

00:23:49,280 --> 00:23:51,500

Oh he was going to  
build the Autobahn

439

00:23:51,500 --> 00:23:54,590

and, oh, good heavens,  
that was three years away.

440

00:23:54,590 --> 00:23:58,250

441

00:23:58,250 --> 00:23:59,520

Didn't mean all that much.

442

00:23:59,520 --> 00:24:01,070

So at that point,  
he wasn't somebody

443

00:24:01,070 --> 00:24:03,952

who was fearsome to you?

444

00:24:03,952 --> 00:24:06,635

No, except-- well, yes.

445

00:24:06,635 --> 00:24:09,390

446

00:24:09,390 --> 00:24:14,130

Going back to the  
building and symbols,

447

00:24:14,130 --> 00:24:17,970

the socialists  
also had a symbol.

448

00:24:17,970 --> 00:24:23,360

Not the swastika, of course,  
but three parallel arrows.

449

00:24:23,360 --> 00:24:30,380

And I remember three arrows were  
painted on our sidewalk, which

450  
00:24:30,380 --> 00:24:32,810  
meant the following  
morning, somebody

451  
00:24:32,810 --> 00:24:34,430  
had to scrub and remove them.

452  
00:24:34,430 --> 00:24:37,560

453  
00:24:37,560 --> 00:24:42,300  
There was an annual  
winter relief drive.

454  
00:24:42,300 --> 00:24:45,720  
Where they collected-- nowadays,  
we'd collect canned goods,

455  
00:24:45,720 --> 00:24:50,446  
but in those days it was  
clothing and things like that.

456  
00:24:50,446 --> 00:24:53,180  
That used to be  
done by the army.

457  
00:24:53,180 --> 00:24:59,480  
It was now being done by  
brown-shirted stormtroopers.

458  
00:24:59,480 --> 00:25:01,340  
So there were changes.

459  
00:25:01,340 --> 00:25:06,830  
And there is that  
terrible word, which

460  
00:25:06,830 --> 00:25:08,780  
I don't know how to  
translate, and I don't

461  
00:25:08,780 --> 00:25:11,120  
think anybody else does either.

462  
00:25:11,120 --> 00:25:13,550  
Gleichschaltung.

463  
00:25:13,550 --> 00:25:17,600  
Which kind of means,  
coordination, coordination,

464  
00:25:17,600 --> 00:25:21,170  
penetration, where  
everything was made over.

465  
00:25:21,170 --> 00:25:24,090  
And the winter relief  
drive is an example.

466  
00:25:24,090 --> 00:25:27,230  
It used to be the army,  
and theoretically neutral,

467  
00:25:27,230 --> 00:25:32,990  
and now it became stormtroopers.

468  
00:25:32,990 --> 00:25:34,040  
Gleichschaltung.

469  
00:25:34,040 --> 00:25:44,930  
Spelled G-L-E-I-C-H, one  
word, S-C-H-A-L-T-U-N-G.

470  
00:25:44,930 --> 00:25:47,060  
I do not know how  
to translate it.

471  
00:25:47,060 --> 00:25:51,110

472  
00:25:51,110 --> 00:25:52,873  
So these are--



473  
00:25:52,873 --> 00:25:54,290  
But what I'm trying  
to get at, you

474  
00:25:54,290 --> 00:25:58,074  
weren't especially fearful,  
frightened, scared?

475  
00:25:58,074 --> 00:26:00,860

476  
00:26:00,860 --> 00:26:03,320  
No, I was not  
particularly fearful.

477  
00:26:03,320 --> 00:26:09,910  
Mostly because my playmates, my  
fellow bicyclists, et cetera,

478  
00:26:09,910 --> 00:26:10,915  
one--

479  
00:26:10,915 --> 00:26:14,510  
he died only eight  
years ago, and I've

480  
00:26:14,510 --> 00:26:18,240  
been in touch with  
them for 70 years.

481  
00:26:18,240 --> 00:26:19,440  
His name was Herman.

482  
00:26:19,440 --> 00:26:23,660  
His father was a minor  
government official.

483  
00:26:23,660 --> 00:26:27,035  
He joined the junior  
version of the Hitler Youth.

484

00:26:27,035 --> 00:26:30,200

485

00:26:30,200 --> 00:26:32,870

I wasn't there when he  
joined the senior version,

486

00:26:32,870 --> 00:26:36,050

and he became a Lieutenant  
in the German army.

487

00:26:36,050 --> 00:26:40,790

And I looked him up at the end  
of the war when I was a GI,

488

00:26:40,790 --> 00:26:48,270

and he had just been discharged  
from an American POW cage,

489

00:26:48,270 --> 00:26:50,325

so we explored our old  
neighborhood together.

490

00:26:50,325 --> 00:26:55,110

[LAUGHS] He had been  
gone, I'd been gone.

491

00:26:55,110 --> 00:26:57,150

Did you want to be a  
member of the Hitler Youth?

492

00:26:57,150 --> 00:27:00,060

That is what I'm getting at.

493

00:27:00,060 --> 00:27:06,980

He, I think, offered to have  
me join his troop or something

494

00:27:06,980 --> 00:27:07,940

like that.

495

00:27:07,940 --> 00:27:09,710

And of course, I

wasn't eligible.

496

00:27:09,710 --> 00:27:11,510

But sure.

497

00:27:11,510 --> 00:27:14,900

They had uniforms, and they did all kinds of exciting things.

498

00:27:14,900 --> 00:27:18,800

The school year had changed from five and a half days

499

00:27:18,800 --> 00:27:20,330

of school--

500

00:27:20,330 --> 00:27:24,420

Saturday morning-- to five days of school.

501

00:27:24,420 --> 00:27:26,270

No more school on Saturdays.

502

00:27:26,270 --> 00:27:30,630

But the Hitler Youth people, above all, organized

503

00:27:30,630 --> 00:27:33,810

by the school, there were excursions, hikes,

504

00:27:33,810 --> 00:27:35,130

and things like that.

505

00:27:35,130 --> 00:27:40,110

And of course, the Hitler Youth boys showed up in uniform,

506

00:27:40,110 --> 00:27:42,870

and we did not.

507

00:27:42,870 --> 00:27:44,610

We didn't have a uniform.

508

00:27:44,610 --> 00:27:47,460

"We" being you and  
the other Jewish boy?

509

00:27:47,460 --> 00:27:48,720

I don't remember.

510

00:27:48,720 --> 00:27:51,210

But there were some  
non-members of the Hitler Youth

511

00:27:51,210 --> 00:27:54,180

who were also in my  
school, or in my class.

512

00:27:54,180 --> 00:27:58,020

So some of us were different.

513

00:27:58,020 --> 00:27:59,580

Not necessarily Jewish.

514

00:27:59,580 --> 00:28:04,620

As I said, I was the  
only one in my class.

515

00:28:04,620 --> 00:28:07,260

Ted was, I think,  
a year behind me.

516

00:28:07,260 --> 00:28:12,190

517

00:28:12,190 --> 00:28:16,810

I also remember one incident  
where Herman and I were

518

00:28:16,810 --> 00:28:21,790

going a block or two away,  
possibly on our scooters,

519

00:28:21,790 --> 00:28:24,070  
and ran into a couple  
of other boys who

520  
00:28:24,070 --> 00:28:27,040  
started making  
antisemitic remarks, like,

521  
00:28:27,040 --> 00:28:30,010  
oh you can smell a Jew a  
mile away, and this and that.

522  
00:28:30,010 --> 00:28:34,960  
And Herman would, knowing  
full well that I was Jewish--

523  
00:28:34,960 --> 00:28:40,360  
which I realize contradicts  
some of my earlier comments--

524  
00:28:40,360 --> 00:28:43,750  
kind of goaded them on,  
saying, oh we can smell one,

525  
00:28:43,750 --> 00:28:46,330  
we can see one, they're  
different, all that,

526  
00:28:46,330 --> 00:28:50,380  
knowing all the time that this  
was obviously preposterous.

527  
00:28:50,380 --> 00:28:56,470  
[LAUGHS] That's as close  
as I can come to incidents.

528  
00:28:56,470 --> 00:29:00,450  
So you were never  
physically approached

529  
00:29:00,450 --> 00:29:01,680  
in an antisemitic way.

530

00:29:01,680 --> 00:29:11,500  
Except for the fouling  
during a soccer game.

531  
00:29:11,500 --> 00:29:15,310  
Oh, there was one  
other guy in my class.

532  
00:29:15,310 --> 00:29:21,940  
Big, not very bright,  
who I think kind of

533  
00:29:21,940 --> 00:29:25,840  
wrestled with me once.

534  
00:29:25,840 --> 00:29:29,648  
But I ascribe that to  
stupidity rather than--

535  
00:29:29,648 --> 00:29:30,190  
Antisemitism?

536  
00:29:30,190 --> 00:29:31,720  
--ordinary malice.

537  
00:29:31,720 --> 00:29:33,160  
[LAUGHS]

538  
00:29:33,160 --> 00:29:36,880  
Did you talk over these  
changes with your parents,

539  
00:29:36,880 --> 00:29:41,970  
about Hitler, and the fact that  
now you know you're Jewish?

540  
00:29:41,970 --> 00:29:44,800  
Was this the kind of topics  
that you talked about?

541  
00:29:44,800 --> 00:29:46,225  
I do not recall.

542

00:29:46,225 --> 00:29:49,040

543

00:29:49,040 --> 00:29:51,490

So I'm tempted to  
say no, we didn't.

544

00:29:51,490 --> 00:29:55,550

545

00:29:55,550 --> 00:30:01,220

well they were not willing  
to face up to the fact

546

00:30:01,220 --> 00:30:03,800

that the noose was tightening.

547

00:30:03,800 --> 00:30:08,640

They thought this was  
a temporary difficulty.

548

00:30:08,640 --> 00:30:14,370

But my father did go  
to the--oh, two things.

549

00:30:14,370 --> 00:30:17,670

My American-born grandmother  
lost her citizenship

550

00:30:17,670 --> 00:30:22,680

when she married my grandfather,  
who was a Bavarian local,

551

00:30:22,680 --> 00:30:23,700

well-established.

552

00:30:23,700 --> 00:30:24,990

She lost her US citizenship?

553

00:30:24,990 --> 00:30:28,300

US Citizenship.

554

00:30:28,300 --> 00:30:29,860

And she was widowed.

555

00:30:29,860 --> 00:30:34,580

And in 1933, my  
father said to her,

556

00:30:34,580 --> 00:30:39,730

why don't you go to New York  
and reclaim your citizenship?

557

00:30:39,730 --> 00:30:46,660

Her sister in Nuremberg,  
similarly widowed and situated,

558

00:30:46,660 --> 00:30:47,800

went with her.

559

00:30:47,800 --> 00:30:53,440

And the two ladies spent  
six weeks in New York.

560

00:30:53,440 --> 00:30:56,680

I have a report from  
a distant relative

561

00:30:56,680 --> 00:31:00,400

who claims he invoked the  
help of Senator Wagner.

562

00:31:00,400 --> 00:31:01,330

That's senior.

563

00:31:01,330 --> 00:31:04,480

564

00:31:04,480 --> 00:31:08,800

I don't know how true  
that is, but maybe he--

565

00:31:08,800 --> 00:31:11,350

anyway, they reclaim



their citizenship,

566

00:31:11,350 --> 00:31:15,370

and thus my grandmother  
and her sister

567

00:31:15,370 --> 00:31:18,785

are both natural-born and  
naturalized American citizens.

568

00:31:18,785 --> 00:31:24,940

[LAUGHS] Which  
helped, certainly.

569

00:31:24,940 --> 00:31:28,225

Well, it tells you something  
about my father's attitude.

570

00:31:28,225 --> 00:31:29,093

His awareness, yeah.

571

00:31:29,093 --> 00:31:32,550

572

00:31:32,550 --> 00:31:39,930

It also meant, because I had  
relatives in the San Francisco

573

00:31:39,930 --> 00:31:45,900

Bay Area who had not  
returned to Germany,

574

00:31:45,900 --> 00:31:50,190

when the time came to get  
an affidavit of support,

575

00:31:50,190 --> 00:31:53,100

I assumed, you know,  
that we would not

576

00:31:53,100 --> 00:31:54,240

become public charges.

577

00:31:54,240 --> 00:31:56,910

578

00:31:56,910 --> 00:32:02,700

My grandmother got in touch  
with her genuine first cousin.

579

00:32:02,700 --> 00:32:06,300

In other words, they  
had common grandparents.

580

00:32:06,300 --> 00:32:11,070

And who supplied  
the affidavit which

581

00:32:11,070 --> 00:32:15,030

was rejected by the American  
consulate in Stuttgart,

582

00:32:15,030 --> 00:32:21,060

on the grounds that the cousin  
in San Francisco was too old.

583

00:32:21,060 --> 00:32:24,480

Thereupon, the cousin's  
daughter co-signed,

584

00:32:24,480 --> 00:32:26,510

and that made it legitimate.

585

00:32:26,510 --> 00:32:29,330

586

00:32:29,330 --> 00:32:38,780

So all of this shows that  
my parents, or my father,

587

00:32:38,780 --> 00:32:42,080

certainly were aware of  
the tightening noose,

588

00:32:42,080 --> 00:32:44,120

but didn't want to  
face up to the fact

589  
00:32:44,120 --> 00:32:48,140  
that it was more than  
a temporary condition.

590  
00:32:48,140 --> 00:32:50,930  
You had mentioned  
previously that you

591  
00:32:50,930 --> 00:32:54,665  
had help in the house, German  
help, and then that changed.

592  
00:32:54,665 --> 00:32:57,420

593  
00:32:57,420 --> 00:33:01,010  
How much of a change was  
it when the laws came in?

594  
00:33:01,010 --> 00:33:03,230  
No change whatsoever.

595  
00:33:03,230 --> 00:33:05,570  
They were treated well.

596  
00:33:05,570 --> 00:33:09,770

597  
00:33:09,770 --> 00:33:13,190  
Your mother was able to  
keep the housekeeper?

598  
00:33:13,190 --> 00:33:18,260  
She then had temporary,  
non-live-in help

599  
00:33:18,260 --> 00:33:22,760  
after the Nuremberg  
laws forbade,

600

00:33:22,760 --> 00:33:28,970

because all Jewish men  
lusted after gentile girls

601

00:33:28,970 --> 00:33:29,790

or young women.

602

00:33:29,790 --> 00:33:30,290

I see.

603

00:33:30,290 --> 00:33:32,720

So that was the  
assumption, so you

604

00:33:32,720 --> 00:33:35,060

couldn't have  
full-time live-in help,

605

00:33:35,060 --> 00:33:38,720

but you could have part-time.

606

00:33:38,720 --> 00:33:40,110

OK.

607

00:33:40,110 --> 00:33:46,360

So now, you are  
going through school,

608

00:33:46,360 --> 00:33:50,830

and you said the teacher  
made that comment to you,

609

00:33:50,830 --> 00:33:54,880

and you came home to your  
father and talked about leaving.

610

00:33:54,880 --> 00:33:58,150

And I said, I'm ready  
to go to Geneva, which

611

00:33:58,150 --> 00:34:01,450

of course represented

some financial problems,

612

00:34:01,450 --> 00:34:05,890

because there were  
financial controls.

613

00:34:05,890 --> 00:34:10,340

German Jews could not dispose  
of their money freely.

614

00:34:10,340 --> 00:34:18,520

They had to petition for not  
for not for internal household

615

00:34:18,520 --> 00:34:24,130

expenses, but for foreign  
expenses or unusual expenses,

616

00:34:24,130 --> 00:34:27,770

like buying real estate  
or that kind of stuff.

617

00:34:27,770 --> 00:34:30,204

I'm not quite up-to-date.

618

00:34:30,204 --> 00:34:33,639

619

00:34:33,639 --> 00:34:37,030

I don't remember that clearly,  
because after all, money

620

00:34:37,030 --> 00:34:38,545

was not discussed  
with the children.

621

00:34:38,545 --> 00:34:43,449

622

00:34:43,449 --> 00:34:47,290

So within two weeks,  
I transferred--

623

00:34:47,290 --> 00:34:51,880

as I recall-- very quickly,  
I transferred to Geneva.

624

00:34:51,880 --> 00:34:59,980

Where my friend Roger, the  
son of these family friends,

625

00:34:59,980 --> 00:35:04,240

introduced me to the  
College Saint-Antoine,

626

00:35:04,240 --> 00:35:06,940

where I was in the sixieme.

627

00:35:06,940 --> 00:35:12,520

And they were ahead  
of us in Latin.

628

00:35:12,520 --> 00:35:14,740

Also seeds of Gallic  
Wars, but they were

629

00:35:14,740 --> 00:35:16,690

further along than we were.

630

00:35:16,690 --> 00:35:20,450

In some other area, like  
arithmetic or geometry,

631

00:35:20,450 --> 00:35:22,150

they were not as far.

632

00:35:22,150 --> 00:35:24,040

I don't remember  
those details either.

633

00:35:24,040 --> 00:35:28,750

But above all, I  
flunked the sixieme.

634

00:35:28,750 --> 00:35:31,600

And of all things to  
flunk, I flunked German,

635  
00:35:31,600 --> 00:35:36,830  
because I couldn't translate  
it into French and vice versa.

636  
00:35:36,830 --> 00:35:43,470  
So when I repeated sixieme in  
the fall, I did much better.

637  
00:35:43,470 --> 00:35:49,720  
And by early December, I left.

638  
00:35:49,720 --> 00:35:51,883  
Let's get back to Germany  
for just a moment.

639  
00:35:51,883 --> 00:35:54,050  
There are a few other  
questions I wanted to ask you.

640  
00:35:54,050 --> 00:35:56,530  
Was your father's  
business affected at all?

641  
00:35:56,530 --> 00:35:57,160  
Oh, yes.

642  
00:35:57,160 --> 00:35:57,750  
In what way?

643  
00:35:57,750 --> 00:36:01,460

644  
00:36:01,460 --> 00:36:05,650  
That may have been the  
Depression rather than--

645  
00:36:05,650 --> 00:36:13,100  
he gave up his business  
in 1929 or thereabouts,

646

00:36:13,100 --> 00:36:17,480

and went to work for  
a leather and shoe

647

00:36:17,480 --> 00:36:21,140

factory in the suburbs.

648

00:36:21,140 --> 00:36:25,820

I have since recovered  
some of this information

649

00:36:25,820 --> 00:36:29,900

because the grandson of the  
owner of the shoe factory

650

00:36:29,900 --> 00:36:34,050

published the memoirs of his  
great-grandfather, all of this

651

00:36:34,050 --> 00:36:36,110

within the past year.

652

00:36:36,110 --> 00:36:39,670

And I have some of  
the details wrong.

653

00:36:39,670 --> 00:36:45,280

But he had a good job  
with this shoe factory.

654

00:36:45,280 --> 00:36:51,250

Probably as the leather  
buyer, or I don't know that.

655

00:36:51,250 --> 00:36:57,240

What I do remember is it was  
still dark on a winter night

656

00:36:57,240 --> 00:37:01,650

at 7:30 in the morning when he  
joined a carpool-- a carpool,

657



00:37:01,650 --> 00:37:03,510  
probably--

658  
00:37:03,510 --> 00:37:05,880  
the brother of the owner  
who had a car, and they

659  
00:37:05,880 --> 00:37:09,690  
drove out to the  
suburbs to go to work.

660  
00:37:09,690 --> 00:37:13,590  
That somehow or other  
sticks in my memory.

661  
00:37:13,590 --> 00:37:21,810  
By the time the Nazis  
came to power, maybe

662  
00:37:21,810 --> 00:37:23,860  
the factory ran into problems.

663  
00:37:23,860 --> 00:37:24,930  
I don't know.

664  
00:37:24,930 --> 00:37:30,430  
He re-established his  
business on a minor scale.

665  
00:37:30,430 --> 00:37:35,680  
Instead of having a separate  
office and storage facility,

666  
00:37:35,680 --> 00:37:39,100  
he operated out of his  
mother's-- my grandmother's--

667  
00:37:39,100 --> 00:37:43,560  
apartment, where  
he had an office.

668  
00:37:43,560 --> 00:37:45,420  
My aunt, his sister--

669

00:37:45,420 --> 00:37:50,370

unmarried-- was  
kind of secretary,

670

00:37:50,370 --> 00:37:57,010

and I don't know those details  
because money business was not

671

00:37:57,010 --> 00:37:59,560

discussed in front  
of the children.

672

00:37:59,560 --> 00:38:02,950

Our lifestyle, as  
far as I can tell,

673

00:38:02,950 --> 00:38:05,320

did not change appreciably.

674

00:38:05,320 --> 00:38:11,110

675

00:38:11,110 --> 00:38:16,470

Why do you think that that  
one remark bothered you

676

00:38:16,470 --> 00:38:18,180

so much that you  
wanted to leave?

677

00:38:18,180 --> 00:38:20,610

You said that you really  
didn't experience--

678

00:38:20,610 --> 00:38:22,590

aside from the soccer  
game and so forth--

679

00:38:22,590 --> 00:38:24,870

much antisemitism.

680

00:38:24,870 --> 00:38:29,040

It must have been a  
maturation, a realization,

681

00:38:29,040 --> 00:38:36,960

of gradually increasing  
obnoxiousness.

682

00:38:36,960 --> 00:38:45,110

Obviously, it is a trivial  
incident that did it.

683

00:38:45,110 --> 00:38:46,882

What was it like to  
leave your parents?

684

00:38:46,882 --> 00:38:47,840

I mean, you were young.

685

00:38:47,840 --> 00:38:49,790

You were what, 14?

686

00:38:49,790 --> 00:38:50,360

13.

687

00:38:50,360 --> 00:38:50,860

13.

688

00:38:50,860 --> 00:38:51,860

For a 13-year-old child?

689

00:38:51,860 --> 00:38:54,650

It was quite  
difficult, which is why

690

00:38:54,650 --> 00:38:58,400

I had turned it down in  
1937 when my father first

691

00:38:58,400 --> 00:39:01,170

offered it.

692

00:39:01,170 --> 00:39:05,690

On the other hand, I did  
know the family friends

693

00:39:05,690 --> 00:39:10,070

in Geneva who did a very  
nice, competent job of kind

694

00:39:10,070 --> 00:39:12,110

of looking after me.

695

00:39:12,110 --> 00:39:14,300

I lived in a boarding house.

696

00:39:14,300 --> 00:39:17,190

Just to get back to Germany, I  
wanted to finish Germany first.

697

00:39:17,190 --> 00:39:18,320

OK.

698

00:39:18,320 --> 00:39:23,595

Did you have any ID cards,  
identification cards when

699

00:39:23,595 --> 00:39:24,720

you were living in Germany?

700

00:39:24,720 --> 00:39:26,258

The answer is no, but--

701

00:39:26,258 --> 00:39:27,300

Because you were a minor?

702

00:39:27,300 --> 00:39:30,720

--for the purposes  
of immigration,

703

00:39:30,720 --> 00:39:37,770

I had a imitation passport,  
which I still have.

704

00:39:37,770 --> 00:39:40,500

It basically is an  
identification sheet

705

00:39:40,500 --> 00:39:43,860

which says this serves in lieu  
of a passport for purposes--

706

00:39:43,860 --> 00:39:45,402

--because you were  
a minor, you mean?

707

00:39:45,402 --> 00:39:46,300

Yes.

708

00:39:46,300 --> 00:39:48,060

What about your parents'  
identifications?

709

00:39:48,060 --> 00:39:49,440

They had passports.

710

00:39:49,440 --> 00:39:54,450

And when the law  
went into effect,

711

00:39:54,450 --> 00:39:58,140

that all Jews had to  
take middle names,

712

00:39:58,140 --> 00:40:04,140

namely, my father did  
not become Arnold Israel

713

00:40:04,140 --> 00:40:06,420

because he had a  
passport which did not

714

00:40:06,420 --> 00:40:08,520

expire for another two years.

715

00:40:08,520 --> 00:40:10,800

My mother had to

renew her passport,

716

00:40:10,800 --> 00:40:14,730  
and she became Elizabeth Sarah.

717

00:40:14,730 --> 00:40:16,470  
I still have both passports.

718

00:40:16,470 --> 00:40:20,160

719

00:40:20,160 --> 00:40:24,450  
And I still have the  
imitation identification paper

720

00:40:24,450 --> 00:40:26,370  
for purposes.

721

00:40:26,370 --> 00:40:30,460  
I guess I had to have it in  
order to go to Switzerland.

722

00:40:30,460 --> 00:40:33,570  
But again, when your mother had  
to put that additional name,

723

00:40:33,570 --> 00:40:35,385  
she didn't talk about it to you?

724

00:40:35,385 --> 00:40:38,250  
Or do you know how  
it affected her?

725

00:40:38,250 --> 00:40:39,400  
I mean, what was her state?

726

00:40:39,400 --> 00:40:40,272  
As a mother--

727

00:40:40,272 --> 00:40:41,910  
I was gone by then.

728  
00:40:41,910 --> 00:40:43,020  
Oh, OK.

729  
00:40:43,020 --> 00:40:46,440  
And not only that.

730  
00:40:46,440 --> 00:40:51,240  
Well, this is probably  
also pertinent.

731  
00:40:51,240 --> 00:40:54,750  
Every summer, we went away  
for a nearby summer vacation.

732  
00:40:54,750 --> 00:40:58,710  
Black Forest, or  
that kind of thing.

733  
00:40:58,710 --> 00:41:06,950  
In 1933, we went to Pfronten,  
which is in Bavaria,

734  
00:41:06,950 --> 00:41:09,860  
close to the Austrian border.

735  
00:41:09,860 --> 00:41:20,810  
In 1934, Hitler had  
imposed a 1,000 mark duty

736  
00:41:20,810 --> 00:41:24,740  
if you wanted to cross over  
from Germany into Austria,

737  
00:41:24,740 --> 00:41:29,070  
in an attempt to, of  
course, choke it off.

738  
00:41:29,070 --> 00:41:31,650  
And that was our last  
summer in Bavaria.

739  
00:41:31,650 --> 00:41:34,350

Then we started  
going to Switzerland

740  
00:41:34,350 --> 00:41:36,330  
for summer vacations.

741  
00:41:36,330 --> 00:41:38,340  
But I remember  
that very vividly,

742  
00:41:38,340 --> 00:41:41,140  
how the change was from  
one year to the next.

743  
00:41:41,140 --> 00:41:45,510  
We could go into Austria  
one year, and no longer.

744  
00:41:45,510 --> 00:41:48,750  
Austria being a  
piddling distance away.

745  
00:41:48,750 --> 00:41:54,030

746  
00:41:54,030 --> 00:41:56,940  
So the change of  
going to Switzerland

747  
00:41:56,940 --> 00:42:00,360  
was fairly significant in  
the sense my father wanted

748  
00:42:00,360 --> 00:42:02,230  
to read different newspapers.

749  
00:42:02,230 --> 00:42:05,040

750  
00:42:05,040 --> 00:42:09,630  
But there were  
financial controls



751

00:42:09,630 --> 00:42:14,060

which made it possible,  
but difficult,

752

00:42:14,060 --> 00:42:18,200

to go abroad for vacations.

753

00:42:18,200 --> 00:42:21,290

Did your sister not leave with  
you because she was too young?

754

00:42:21,290 --> 00:42:25,150

755

00:42:25,150 --> 00:42:26,140

Yes.

756

00:42:26,140 --> 00:42:29,890

Also, when I think back on  
it-- this is speculation--

757

00:42:29,890 --> 00:42:31,130

I'm the firstborn.

758

00:42:31,130 --> 00:42:36,970

My father may have wanted  
to save his firstborn.

759

00:42:36,970 --> 00:42:38,018

This is speculation.

760

00:42:38,018 --> 00:42:39,310

Well, and she was much younger.

761

00:42:39,310 --> 00:42:41,620

She was three years younger.

762

00:42:41,620 --> 00:42:47,630

Blonde, blue-eyed,  
to the point where

763

00:42:47,630 --> 00:42:52,480

my mother went to  
her school once,

764

00:42:52,480 --> 00:42:59,545

and the principal asked her, are  
you sure that he is the father?

765

00:42:59,545 --> 00:43:04,040

766

00:43:04,040 --> 00:43:08,403

Actually my sister looks enough  
like other family members

767

00:43:08,403 --> 00:43:09,320

that there's no doubt.

768

00:43:09,320 --> 00:43:16,810

But [LAUGHS] blonde,  
blue-eyed and had--

769

00:43:16,810 --> 00:43:21,460

well, I can't say I had  
difficulties because I

770

00:43:21,460 --> 00:43:23,680

had brown eyes and brown hair.

771

00:43:23,680 --> 00:43:27,150

772

00:43:27,150 --> 00:43:31,090

Do you remember saying  
goodbye to your parents?

773

00:43:31,090 --> 00:43:32,040

No?

774

00:43:32,040 --> 00:43:36,580

No, because there  
is an odd variation.

775

00:43:36,580 --> 00:43:40,990

Our appointment at  
the American consulate

776

00:43:40,990 --> 00:43:55,760

to be interviewed for the  
visa was December 2nd, 1938.

777

00:43:55,760 --> 00:43:58,310

I was in Geneva.

778

00:43:58,310 --> 00:44:00,260

I came home for that--

779

00:44:00,260 --> 00:44:00,890

home.

780

00:44:00,890 --> 00:44:03,410

Returned to Stuttgart  
for that weekend

781

00:44:03,410 --> 00:44:06,530

so I could go to the American  
consulate and be interviewed,

782

00:44:06,530 --> 00:44:09,020

and then I went back to Geneva.

783

00:44:09,020 --> 00:44:14,750

And I knew that was the  
final visit to Stuttgart.

784

00:44:14,750 --> 00:44:17,570

But I knew I was going to see  
my parents in another month

785

00:44:17,570 --> 00:44:22,790

because we met in Paris and  
embarked on Christmas Eve 1938.

786

00:44:22,790 --> 00:44:25,070

[LAUGHS]

787  
00:44:25,070 --> 00:44:30,110  
Tell me a little bit about your  
recollections of Kristallnacht.

788  
00:44:30,110 --> 00:44:34,340  
You said you were in Geneva at  
the time and you read about it?

789  
00:44:34,340 --> 00:44:37,260  
I read about it.

790  
00:44:37,260 --> 00:44:39,060  
I knew about it.

791  
00:44:39,060 --> 00:44:41,220  
Somehow or then, never  
made the connection

792  
00:44:41,220 --> 00:44:44,600  
that my father would be  
one of those arrested.

793  
00:44:44,600 --> 00:44:45,970  
How did you find out he was?

794  
00:44:45,970 --> 00:44:48,850

795  
00:44:48,850 --> 00:44:53,290  
The friends who looked kind  
of looked after me in Geneva

796  
00:44:53,290 --> 00:44:58,270  
were told by my mother, and  
were told not to tell me.

797  
00:44:58,270 --> 00:45:03,400  
So I didn't find out till  
I reported to Stuttgart

798  
00:45:03,400 --> 00:45:05,440

for the interview  
at the consulate,

799  
00:45:05,440 --> 00:45:10,570  
where I encountered my  
father who was a mess.

800  
00:45:10,570 --> 00:45:15,330  
I mean, he was a broken  
man psychologically,

801  
00:45:15,330 --> 00:45:19,740  
possibly more than physically.

802  
00:45:19,740 --> 00:45:21,630  
How long was he incarcerated?

803  
00:45:21,630 --> 00:45:22,350  
Three weeks.

804  
00:45:22,350 --> 00:45:24,900

805  
00:45:24,900 --> 00:45:28,050  
They had far more inmates  
than they had planned on.

806  
00:45:28,050 --> 00:45:33,150  
[LAUGHS] And the only thing  
that I remember his ever

807  
00:45:33,150 --> 00:45:38,220  
talking about was  
he survived better

808  
00:45:38,220 --> 00:45:42,600  
because he had been  
in the German army,

809  
00:45:42,600 --> 00:45:48,180  
and the guards, of course,  
were also veterans.

810

00:45:48,180 --> 00:45:50,115

So he knew how to behave.

811

00:45:50,115 --> 00:45:52,680

812

00:45:52,680 --> 00:45:54,930

Maybe, and this  
is speculation, he

813

00:45:54,930 --> 00:45:58,440

got a little bit more  
respect because the Germans

814

00:45:58,440 --> 00:46:01,740

are very fussy in  
making distinctions

815

00:46:01,740 --> 00:46:11,000

between civilian life, military  
service, combat service.

816

00:46:11,000 --> 00:46:14,000

They make the distinction.

817

00:46:14,000 --> 00:46:20,830

It's very important to have been  
a frontline combatant rather

818

00:46:20,830 --> 00:46:23,710

than in the supply corps.

819

00:46:23,710 --> 00:46:31,220

And he had been a combatant,  
so that got him brownie points.

820

00:46:31,220 --> 00:46:34,670

So in what you said, he  
was a broken man after?

821

00:46:34,670 --> 00:46:37,582

In what way, and how did you

know that as a 14-year-old?

822

00:46:37,582 --> 00:46:40,750

823

00:46:40,750 --> 00:46:43,450

Well...

824

00:46:43,450 --> 00:46:46,390

Just by his  
appearance, his look?

825

00:46:46,390 --> 00:46:53,390

After all, I lived with him  
for two years in San Francisco,

826

00:46:53,390 --> 00:47:04,180

where he felt terribly  
declassé and poor, dependent

827

00:47:04,180 --> 00:47:09,490

and irritable and in bad health.

828

00:47:09,490 --> 00:47:13,600

829

00:47:13,600 --> 00:47:16,930

I do not know, to this  
day, whether he died

830

00:47:16,930 --> 00:47:20,655

of stomach cancer or stomach--

831

00:47:20,655 --> 00:47:23,650

832

00:47:23,650 --> 00:47:25,430

Ulcers?

833

00:47:25,430 --> 00:47:25,930

--ulcers.

834

00:47:25,930 --> 00:47:30,310

835

00:47:30,310 --> 00:47:32,650

I don't know.

836

00:47:32,650 --> 00:47:35,620

Possibly both.

837

00:47:35,620 --> 00:47:38,440

When you came back to Stuttgart  
to get the American visa,

838

00:47:38,440 --> 00:47:41,170

did you see a lot of  
damage from Kristallnacht,

839

00:47:41,170 --> 00:47:43,800

or had it been cleaned up?

840

00:47:43,800 --> 00:47:44,460

No.

841

00:47:44,460 --> 00:47:44,960

No.

842

00:47:44,960 --> 00:47:46,820

You did not see--

843

00:47:46,820 --> 00:47:52,790

Well, I spent 48 hours,  
maybe 72 hours there.

844

00:47:52,790 --> 00:47:59,360

And I visited my grandmothers,  
two grandmothers, and family

845

00:47:59,360 --> 00:48:02,240

and maybe childhood friends.

846

00:48:02,240 --> 00:48:03,100



But--

847

00:48:03,100 --> 00:48:05,480

I was just wondering if you  
saw any destroyed synagogues,

848

00:48:05,480 --> 00:48:07,400

things like that.

849

00:48:07,400 --> 00:48:09,590

Synagogue was on the  
other side of town.

850

00:48:09,590 --> 00:48:13,370

I mean, that was not  
part of my ambit.

851

00:48:13,370 --> 00:48:20,780

852

00:48:20,780 --> 00:48:24,860

I may have seen some broken  
windows in the department

853

00:48:24,860 --> 00:48:29,090

store, but that may be  
retroactive imagination.

854

00:48:29,090 --> 00:48:31,120

I do not know.

855

00:48:31,120 --> 00:48:34,430

So you get the visa, you  
go back to Switzerland--

856

00:48:34,430 --> 00:48:35,660

For three weeks.

857

00:48:35,660 --> 00:48:38,900

--for three weeks, and then?

858

00:48:38,900 --> 00:48:42,320

Met my parents in Paris.

859

00:48:42,320 --> 00:48:44,840

You got yourself from  
Switzerland to Paris?

860

00:48:44,840 --> 00:48:45,360

Oh yes.

861

00:48:45,360 --> 00:48:49,500

862

00:48:49,500 --> 00:48:51,930

In some ways, I was  
quite independent.

863

00:48:51,930 --> 00:48:52,740

In terms of--

864

00:48:52,740 --> 00:48:54,700

That's why I was asking  
that question, how

865

00:48:54,700 --> 00:48:55,867

you would describe yourself.

866

00:48:55,867 --> 00:48:56,790

Well--

867

00:48:56,790 --> 00:48:59,670

I mean, you were only 14!

868

00:48:59,670 --> 00:49:04,680

When I returned from Geneva  
to Stuttgart in order

869

00:49:04,680 --> 00:49:10,870

to go to the consulate,  
I had bought the ticket--

870

00:49:10,870 --> 00:49:13,030

or maybe they bought

it for me-- and I

871

00:49:13,030 --> 00:49:18,670  
was supposed to go from  
Geneva to Zurich to Karlsruhe

872

00:49:18,670 --> 00:49:22,690  
and change there to an  
express to Stuttgart.

873

00:49:22,690 --> 00:49:25,930  
Well, wise guy George, when  
he got through Karlsruhe,

874

00:49:25,930 --> 00:49:28,810  
figured out that there  
was a semi-express which

875

00:49:28,810 --> 00:49:33,040  
left earlier and would get to  
Stuttgart half an hour earlier.

876

00:49:33,040 --> 00:49:35,690  
So I took it, of course.

877

00:49:35,690 --> 00:49:39,010  
My mother traveled  
to Karlsruhe in order

878

00:49:39,010 --> 00:49:44,770  
to meet me and intercept  
me, so that was a disaster.

879

00:49:44,770 --> 00:49:50,710  
But it's evidence, or  
example, of my independence.

880

00:49:50,710 --> 00:49:52,830  
Very much so.

881

00:49:52,830 --> 00:49:58,120  
So, yes, traveling from Geneva  
to Paris on my own at age--

882  
00:49:58,120 --> 00:49:59,310  
14?

883  
00:49:59,310 --> 00:50:00,090  
Barely 14.

884  
00:50:00,090 --> 00:50:02,640

885  
00:50:02,640 --> 00:50:06,930  
And by that time, I spoke  
reasonably fluent French, so

886  
00:50:06,930 --> 00:50:08,460  
nothing to it.

887  
00:50:08,460 --> 00:50:11,790  
So now you're in France?

888  
00:50:11,790 --> 00:50:15,695  
We only spent three days in  
Paris where we had relatives--

889  
00:50:15,695 --> 00:50:18,720  
This is your parents  
and your sister, right?

890  
00:50:18,720 --> 00:50:23,250  
I think my Aunt Nelly was  
part of the package too.

891  
00:50:23,250 --> 00:50:26,730  
Single sister of my  
father, unmarried.

892  
00:50:26,730 --> 00:50:32,380

893  
00:50:32,380 --> 00:50:37,570  
Paris was quite meaningful,  
because the cousin who

894  
00:50:37,570 --> 00:50:40,900  
had given me my first  
two books from Nuremberg,

895  
00:50:40,900 --> 00:50:45,940  
they had emigrated  
in 1933 to Paris

896  
00:50:45,940 --> 00:50:52,810  
and were completely assimilated,  
at least to my outsider's view.

897  
00:50:52,810 --> 00:50:55,600  
And that was quite an  
interesting experience.

898  
00:50:55,600 --> 00:50:58,600  
We had, probably,  
Christmas dinner with them.

899  
00:50:58,600 --> 00:51:05,140  
Oh, they all were  
converts to Catholicism.

900  
00:51:05,140 --> 00:51:08,200  
And all of the  
descendants are Catholic.

901  
00:51:08,200 --> 00:51:13,360  
I have them in my family  
tree, but they do not

902  
00:51:13,360 --> 00:51:15,130  
wish to maintain contact.

903  
00:51:15,130 --> 00:51:19,320

904  
00:51:19,320 --> 00:51:23,440  
I'm not being critical,  
I'm merely noting.

905

00:51:23,440 --> 00:51:27,560

So those were three  
days in Paris.

906

00:51:27,560 --> 00:51:29,510

Interesting.

907

00:51:29,510 --> 00:51:32,030

Because I spoke French,  
I was probably more

908

00:51:32,030 --> 00:51:34,490

important to my parents than--

909

00:51:34,490 --> 00:51:36,110

Yes, more of a help, you mean.

910

00:51:36,110 --> 00:51:38,540

Yeah.

911

00:51:38,540 --> 00:51:42,140

Do you remember your little  
sister's state of mind

912

00:51:42,140 --> 00:51:43,580

about leaving Germany?

913

00:51:43,580 --> 00:51:45,770

No.

914

00:51:45,770 --> 00:51:47,040

Leaving friends, and--

915

00:51:47,040 --> 00:51:50,260

916

00:51:50,260 --> 00:51:52,510

I'm sure she did well.

917

00:51:52,510 --> 00:51:58,220

She certainly adjusted

in San Francisco

918

00:51:58,220 --> 00:52:01,200  
faster than any of us.

919

00:52:01,200 --> 00:52:07,190  
She went to elementary  
school and then junior high.

920

00:52:07,190 --> 00:52:11,472  
But then she also is a  
much more sensitive--

921

00:52:11,472 --> 00:52:14,300

922

00:52:14,300 --> 00:52:19,470  
or was-- in terms of  
interpersonal relations

923

00:52:19,470 --> 00:52:20,210  
than I am.

924

00:52:20,210 --> 00:52:23,500  
So she adjusted better.

925

00:52:23,500 --> 00:52:28,150  
Did you notice anything  
in Paris related

926

00:52:28,150 --> 00:52:30,010  
to the war at that point?

927

00:52:30,010 --> 00:52:31,270  
Did you--

928

00:52:31,270 --> 00:52:32,200  
I'm sorry?

929

00:52:32,200 --> 00:52:34,090  
Did you notice people  
talking about Hitler,

930  
00:52:34,090 --> 00:52:36,340  
the French people,  
when you were there?

931  
00:52:36,340 --> 00:52:38,560  
Three days in Paris,  
really, is not

932  
00:52:38,560 --> 00:52:42,205  
enough to notice or remember.

933  
00:52:42,205 --> 00:52:46,150

934  
00:52:46,150 --> 00:52:49,150  
And in Switzerland, of  
course, I tended to associate

935  
00:52:49,150 --> 00:52:52,060  
with people who  
were antifascist,

936  
00:52:52,060 --> 00:52:54,400  
to use a modern term.

937  
00:52:54,400 --> 00:52:58,150  
When you were in  
Germany, did you ever

938  
00:52:58,150 --> 00:53:00,250  
listen to the  
speeches on the radio?

939  
00:53:00,250 --> 00:53:01,960  
Hitler's speeches on the radio?

940  
00:53:01,960 --> 00:53:06,640  
Probably, but I can't  
answer for sure.

941  
00:53:06,640 --> 00:53:09,010



You don't remember  
any reaction you had,

942  
00:53:09,010 --> 00:53:10,450  
or your parents' reactions?

943  
00:53:10,450 --> 00:53:16,480  
The very fact that my father  
listened to Radio Strausberg

944  
00:53:16,480 --> 00:53:18,730  
tells you something about--

945  
00:53:18,730 --> 00:53:23,830  
oh, and he had one close  
friend, maybe even two,

946  
00:53:23,830 --> 00:53:32,830  
and they went to the salon  
then, and they talked

947  
00:53:32,830 --> 00:53:35,980  
politics and smoked cigars.

948  
00:53:35,980 --> 00:53:39,100  
And I wasn't supposed  
to know about that.

949  
00:53:39,100 --> 00:53:44,850

950  
00:53:44,850 --> 00:53:49,620  
But I certainly did know that  
it was subversive, if you wish.

951  
00:53:49,620 --> 00:53:50,730  
This is in Stuttgart?

952  
00:53:50,730 --> 00:53:52,830  
Oh yes.

953  
00:53:52,830 --> 00:53:58,860

And the two friends  
in particular,

954  
00:53:58,860 --> 00:54:02,490  
I remember, one was  
an artist, a painter.

955  
00:54:02,490 --> 00:54:08,970  
In fact, I have two of his  
paintings in my living room.

956  
00:54:08,970 --> 00:54:13,020  
He went to Buenos  
Aires, where he died.

957  
00:54:13,020 --> 00:54:17,710  
My wife and I visited  
him 20 years ago.

958  
00:54:17,710 --> 00:54:21,120  
And the other one was  
a newspaper reporter,

959  
00:54:21,120 --> 00:54:23,700  
and I don't know  
what happened to him.

960  
00:54:23,700 --> 00:54:27,650  
Did you see any evidences  
of antisemitism?

961  
00:54:27,650 --> 00:54:29,130  
Not to yourself.

962  
00:54:29,130 --> 00:54:32,280  
On the streets of  
Stuttgart, anything?

963  
00:54:32,280 --> 00:54:33,300  
Yes.

964  
00:54:33,300 --> 00:54:36,510  
I mentioned that the

swimming pool had

965

00:54:36,510 --> 00:54:39,150

a sign saying no Jews allowed.

966

00:54:39,150 --> 00:54:42,870

The public comfort

stations had signs,

967

00:54:42,870 --> 00:54:50,160

and our parents would kind of

stand guard if we had to go.

968

00:54:50,160 --> 00:54:56,340

And across the street,

there was a bakery

969

00:54:56,340 --> 00:54:58,650

with a cafe, two entrances.

970

00:54:58,650 --> 00:55:01,850

971

00:55:01,850 --> 00:55:07,160

I think both posted the sign

no Jews wanted or allowed,

972

00:55:07,160 --> 00:55:11,510

but the delivery boy

continued to deliver the rolls

973

00:55:11,510 --> 00:55:12,830

in the morning.

974

00:55:12,830 --> 00:55:13,520

To you all?

975

00:55:13,520 --> 00:55:15,320

To us.

976

00:55:15,320 --> 00:55:18,920

In other words, business was

more important than ideology.

977

00:55:18,920 --> 00:55:24,630

978

00:55:24,630 --> 00:55:27,810

In the neighborhood,  
we never felt it.

979

00:55:27,810 --> 00:55:29,460

So you never felt threatened?

980

00:55:29,460 --> 00:55:34,290

Any threats or antisemitism  
that I can recall.

981

00:55:34,290 --> 00:55:36,190

You didn't see other  
people getting beaten,

982

00:55:36,190 --> 00:55:38,070

or anything like that?

983

00:55:38,070 --> 00:55:40,830

I didn't know of any other  
Jews in the neighborhood.

984

00:55:40,830 --> 00:55:43,750

Well, there was  
around the corner,

985

00:55:43,750 --> 00:55:48,390

there was a tobacco  
store, a tobacconist.

986

00:55:48,390 --> 00:55:53,690

And the owners were Jewish,  
which I didn't know.

987

00:55:53,690 --> 00:55:58,780

Not only that, I think  
they were Polish Jews.

988

00:55:58,780 --> 00:56:03,690

And-- it embarrasses  
me to say this today--

989

00:56:03,690 --> 00:56:05,850

but Polish Jews were different.

990

00:56:05,850 --> 00:56:10,470

991

00:56:10,470 --> 00:56:13,070

You know Hans Hirsch?

992

00:56:13,070 --> 00:56:17,640

Hans and I got in a  
discussion, disagreement,

993

00:56:17,640 --> 00:56:22,020

when I told him yes,  
I have since found out

994

00:56:22,020 --> 00:56:26,160

there was a Stuttgart  
chapter of B'nai B'rith,

995

00:56:26,160 --> 00:56:32,430

and it had a clause saying no  
Polish Jews admitted or wanted.

996

00:56:32,430 --> 00:56:34,890

And he said, oh,  
no, you're wrong.

997

00:56:34,890 --> 00:56:39,130

So we pulled down  
the book that--

998

00:56:39,130 --> 00:56:39,910

I was right.

999

00:56:39,910 --> 00:56:42,400

You were right.

1000  
00:56:42,400 --> 00:56:46,500  
It's probably the only time in  
my life that Hans was wrong.

1001  
00:56:46,500 --> 00:56:48,330  
[LAUGHS]

1002  
00:56:48,330 --> 00:56:51,685  
Did you feel bad  
about leaving Germany?

1003  
00:56:51,685 --> 00:56:54,190

1004  
00:56:54,190 --> 00:56:55,590  
This was where you were born.

1005  
00:56:55,590 --> 00:56:59,190  
This was your home, and you  
were leaving your country.

1006  
00:56:59,190 --> 00:56:59,940  
What was that?

1007  
00:56:59,940 --> 00:57:03,390  
Yes, there probably  
was some nostalgia,

1008  
00:57:03,390 --> 00:57:07,050  
but I cannot answer  
the question for sure.

1009  
00:57:07,050 --> 00:57:09,280  
I've been back several  
times since then,

1010  
00:57:09,280 --> 00:57:13,140  
and yes, this was  
home and it feels

1011  
00:57:13,140 --> 00:57:17,010

quite comfortable and  
homey in some ways,

1012  
00:57:17,010 --> 00:57:22,650  
because all of the traces of  
the nastiness have been erased.

1013  
00:57:22,650 --> 00:57:25,380

1014  
00:57:25,380 --> 00:57:28,810  
How I felt at the  
time of leaving,

1015  
00:57:28,810 --> 00:57:32,340  
I can't answer that  
question either, how I felt.

1016  
00:57:32,340 --> 00:57:34,590  
Did you-- besides  
those two books

1017  
00:57:34,590 --> 00:57:37,170  
that you loved-- did you take  
anything else special with you?

1018  
00:57:37,170 --> 00:57:43,980

1019  
00:57:43,980 --> 00:57:48,270  
My parents arranged  
for a so-called lift,

1020  
00:57:48,270 --> 00:57:52,620  
which is a massive container  
to store the furniture

1021  
00:57:52,620 --> 00:57:53,520  
to be shipped.

1022  
00:57:53,520 --> 00:57:57,330  
Furniture, linens, et cetera.

1023

00:57:57,330 --> 00:58:00,970

It never arrived  
in San Francisco,

1024

00:58:00,970 --> 00:58:02,840

even though it was  
prepaid and insured.

1025

00:58:02,840 --> 00:58:12,630

[LAUGHS] My mother established  
photo albums when I was born,

1026

00:58:12,630 --> 00:58:15,840

and a separate album  
when my sister was born.

1027

00:58:15,840 --> 00:58:19,500

She had the wit to shove  
those in the suitcase,

1028

00:58:19,500 --> 00:58:24,390

and I own mine to this day,  
and my sister owns-- owned--

1029

00:58:24,390 --> 00:58:27,540

well, her kids own  
it to this day.

1030

00:58:27,540 --> 00:58:30,630

And I had occasion to use it  
just a couple of days ago,

1031

00:58:30,630 --> 00:58:33,660

but yes.

1032

00:58:33,660 --> 00:58:35,850

Anything personal  
besides that, that you

1033

00:58:35,850 --> 00:58:37,785

took as a 14-year-old boy?

1034



00:58:37,785 --> 00:58:39,000  
Besides your books?

1035  
00:58:39,000 --> 00:58:41,670  
That is, again,  
difficult to answer,

1036  
00:58:41,670 --> 00:58:45,360  
because my grandmother's  
lift household

1037  
00:58:45,360 --> 00:58:48,720  
container was also lost.

1038  
00:58:48,720 --> 00:58:50,970  
Also prepaid.

1039  
00:58:50,970 --> 00:58:57,360  
My Aunt Nelly, single, unmarried  
sister of my father, her lift

1040  
00:58:57,360 --> 00:58:59,250  
came.

1041  
00:58:59,250 --> 00:59:01,470  
Well, because she's  
unmarried, she

1042  
00:59:01,470 --> 00:59:04,590  
lived with her mother,  
my grandmother.

1043  
00:59:04,590 --> 00:59:09,120  
To this day, I have inherited  
a few things that go back

1044  
00:59:09,120 --> 00:59:12,370  
to my grandmother,  
and I sometimes fail

1045  
00:59:12,370 --> 00:59:18,960  
to make the distinction  
whether it was my home or hers.

1046  
00:59:18,960 --> 00:59:26,010  
There is a certain continuity,  
and that is how I own two

1047  
00:59:26,010 --> 00:59:30,570  
pictures, two paintings by  
this artist who was a friend

1048  
00:59:30,570 --> 00:59:32,220  
of my father's.

1049  
00:59:32,220 --> 00:59:37,950  
So where did you sail from  
and what boat did you go on?

1050  
00:59:37,950 --> 00:59:39,630  
Can we stop at this point?

1051  
00:59:39,630 --> 00:59:41,180  
Sure.