

Before the war, did you have any feeling about Jews?

I had a feeling about them as I did about anyone else. I liked them fine if they were nice people and that was all there was to it.

What word on this page comes closest, on the page 13, to the way you've felt about Jews before the war?

Well, I thought well of those that I knew that were my friends.

Yes. The others you did not know.

I didn't know them. Can't say how I felt about them.

Yes. And during the war did your feeling about Jews change?

No.

On page 13, what number on the scale comes closest to the way you felt about Jews during the war?

I thought well of them.

Before the war, did you have any feeling about gypsies?

No. I never thought about it.

What number on the scale comes closest to the way you felt?

I did not feel.

During the war, the feeling about gypsies change?

No.

On page 13, please tell me the number on the scale that comes closest to the way you felt during the war about gypsies.  
No, nothing.

Before the war, did you have any feeling about Nazis?

Yes.

On page 13, what number on the scale comes closest to the way you felt about the Nazis before the war?

Seven.

During the war, did your feeling about the Nazis change?

No.

On page 13, what number on the scale comes closest to the way you felt about Nazis during the war?

[LAUGHING] 600.

So we put seven. Now I have here thinking about your feelings in this present time, please pick the word that comes

closest to the way you feel about each of the following statements. Where were you living for the longest period of time during the war, in what place and country?

So that was Amersfoort again and Holland.

Would you like to spell it again?

Sure. A-M-E-R-S-F-O-O-R-T.

Would you like to turn to page 14? And you say that was a small city

Yes, a small city.

Did you live in a house or an apartment?

In a house.

How many stories did the house have?

Two.

Not counting the cellar and the attic.

No, two stories.

And was there a cellar?

No.

And then attic?

Yes.

Did you own the house or you rented it?

We rented it.

How many rooms were in the home, not counting the bathrooms.

But counting the kitchen?

Just not the bathrooms.

OK. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Were there other members who were living with you during the war? Relatives?

No, just our own family.

Before the war, were there any Jews living in the community where you were staying?

Yes.

Were there many Jews living or some Jews.

Some.

Did you have a sense of belonging in the community?

Yes.

Now I would like to make a list of the people who were living in your household before the war broke out in 1939. I don't need the names again, just the relationship to you and their ages in 1939.

OK. There were just my mother and my brother and myself.

In 1939.

Yes.

And mother was the head?

Yes.

And what were their ages in 1939?

My mother was 36 and my brother would have been 14.

Mother did do something in 1939 or just--

No.

--she was a housewife? So that includes everyone living in your house?

She rented out the rooms in 1939. Oh no, that was 1940, sorry. But in any case, they were not in our household. They were just--

And not family. Before the war, were you very well off financially?

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

Neither poor nor--

Neither rich nor poor. And before the war, on page 17, did you think of yourself as being upper class? Middle class?

Middle class.

You did not get married during the war?

No. They had me really [? small ?].

During the war, did you have some close friends, a few close friends, or no close friends?

A few.

Before the Second World War, were you a member of a political party?

No.

After the war started, did you belong to a group that opposed the Nazis?

No.

On page 20, if someone needed your help, would you be more likely to help someone you know, someone you don't know, or wouldn't make any difference?

Well, I guess being human I would give help to someone I know. But if I were asked to give help to someone I didn't know, I would do that too.

There is no difference.

Yeah, there is a difference, but OK. Too subtle to discuss in yes/no.

Because the people whom you said they were not known and you did it. During the war, did you ever help any Jews?  
Yes.

Yes.

What kind of things did you do?

Again, we concealed them, concealed Jews and fed them and looked after them.

Was there ever a time when you wanted to help but you felt that you could not?

Yes, I suppose. But at the point where all the beds were filled we could not take on any more people.

That was by the circumstances.

Yeah. When all space was taken.

During the war, were there any leaders that you admired, and who were they?

No.

No leaders you admired?

No.

Because you lived in Holland. Between 1939 and 1945 were you ever unjustly treated by any government officials?

No.

Was anyone you cared about ever to unjustly treated by the Nazis?

Well, certainly the people that were with us were unjustly treated. Oh, and yes, my uncle was in prison, that's right. Yes. OK then. I don't know when it was that he was in prison. Are we talking about treated in fact or treated as part of a group? Because you see the Jews were all unjustly treated by the Nazis.

Yes, so anyone who cared about--

The very people that we were hiding.

--whom you knew also. Or it could be the people you have been close to them.

Well then my uncle. And that was--

When was that?

That I can't tell you. I can't tell when it was. Sometime during 1943, I think.

What happened to him?

He was picked up by the Nazis and put in prison.

For what?

For hiding Jews.

Did you ever witness mistreatment of Jews by the Nazis?

No.

So you say you never--

No, never seen anyone actually being mistreated.

Did you ever witness mistreatment of anyone by the Nazis?

Yes. But you said mistreated by the Nazis--

I know, but I didn't witness it. I didn't see it. Unless we're talking now about the very fact that they were persecuted and that it was necessary to have them hide.

Also those people who were hiding in your place, so they were probably mistreated and therefore they came. They were kicked out of their homes.

But I wasn't there when that happened. I did not see that.

You did not witness the act.

No. But I was aware of it. But to be a witness means that you saw it with your own eyes, right?

Yes. In the street or so to hanged and so on. And did you ever witness mistreatment of anyone by the Nazis?

Yes.

Yes. And when was that and what happened?

That was in 1940.

Yes.

A German soldier was kicked and beaten by his--

A German soldier was kicked and beaten by his own commanding officer.

On what occasion did you become aware of what the Nazis intended to do with the Jews?

It was when I saw the signs appear on public places that Jews were not allowed entrance to, for instance, swimming pools, restaurants, libraries, and even could not use park benches.

How did you feel the first time when you saw a Jew wearing the yellow Star of David?

I thought it was very peculiar that they should be singled out like that.

What was the most stressful situation you were in during the war?

I remember one time particularly when I was alone at home with our guests and my mother had to go out to get something, I think ration coupons, from an area near the railroad station. And it was being bombed at the time when she was away and we could see the bombing from our window. But we did not know exactly where she was.

Bombing the street.

The railroad station.

And worrying.

And worrying that my mother was there.

What was your reaction to the stress?

Stomach cramps. Really. I was really very frightened.

So very frightened.

We would like a list of the people who were living with you at the present time, their relationship to you, the first and last names, age, and whether you knew during the Second World War.

You want the names of my family?

Yes.

All right then. Maybe I have better write it down myself.

Yes.

Well, there's first myself then, Maria Jacobs Benalot Moen. Lot more female. And I'm 53 years old. And my husband Peter Benalot Moen. He's male, and he's 53. And I did not know him during the war. And then there's my daughter, Cecilia Benalot Moen. Female. She's 19. And my son, Francis Benalot Moen. He's male, and he's 13.

We would like the exact address of the place where you lived the longest during the Second World War, the number and the street.

OK 18 Borneoplein. That is still B-O-R-N-E-O-P-L-E-I-N. There's apartment number. The city Amersfoort. A-M-E-R-S-F-O-O-R-T.

And what was the name of the family who lived at this address?

That was my mother's name. Well, you see this is a problem. My mother's name was one thing and our name was something else, my brother and I. My mother's name was Lucie.

That was on her name. Lucie. L-U-C-I-E. L-U-C-I-E.

Yes.

Wolsak. W-O-L-S-A-K

OK.

Does this apartment still exist, or the house?

The house still exists.

Now are there any publication or articles about your rescue activity?

Yes.

What is the name of the publication or the article and who is the author?

You have it right there. It's that book. So the answer was yes, it is a book. And the title of it is Precautions Against Death. Precautions Against Death.

And the author?

The author is myself.

So I think we are through this whole interview and we have to thank you very much for giving us this precious account. And I hope we are able to use it for very useful successes And thank you again for taking your time and your effort.

Oh, you're most welcome. Thank you.