Tape two, side one:

LL: ...interview with Henry Froehlich. You were saying when these people were...

HF: When these people...the night before they had to go to the Consulate the father confided to me that the son is his son but the daughter is not his daughter but is his wife's daughter who was a widow and that when they now have to present the birth certificates in front of the Consul, the children might find out that they're not brother and sister. And how do we handle this? Could I speak to the Consulate and tell them not to disclose this to the children? And the mother spoke to me in the same fashion and told me also the children don't know this. The same evening, the son said could he speak to me alone? And he said, "My mother and father don't know this, but I know she is not my sister." And then the sister spoke to me and said the same thing, "My brother doesn't know this and my parents don't know this, but he is not my brother." So we had a very interesting family situation. I got them all together and I told them, "You have no longer any more secrets. You know, you all know what's what. As far as that concerns, you can go with good confidence to the Consulate." They went to the Consulate the next day. The son had the low number as a result of having written to President Roosevelt. He was given a visa. He was told that he can leave and go to America and the parents were told to come back a year-and-a-half later.

LL: And...

HF: That's the story of the numbers.

LL: Did you ever follow up on this?

HF: Oh yes. They're all here.

LL: They did manage to come out, thank God.

HF: They did, they all came. They all managed to come. Yeah, they all managed to come out. The son became a very rich man. The daughter is, has been in touch with me from time to time. But the story was fascinating at the time.

LL: Yes.

HF: And it was fascinating to the Consulate. My work at the *Oberrat* and Consulate and the Immigration Services was fascinating and I was far, I had a position far beyond my age. And I became very emaciated as a result of the work there. And when my number came up and I was supposed to be coming before the Consulate for my visa, everybody knew me. I knew the Consulate, the Consuls and the Vice Consuls, and I had no problem, and no worry that I wouldn't pass. Except for one thing. I had never told them about my crippled brother. And in fact, we never told anyone about my crippled brother, simply because that would have been the immediate excuse of having to look into the medical history of the family and finally reject me because there might be something hereditary. So we absolutely declared that we had only one brother, that we had a father who was killed, and then had a mother. And we made no information to the Consulate

about my brother. And the time came in January that I was called to the Consulate to go there in February or in early March. And I think it was March the 5th that I was supposed to go to the Consulate.

LL: This is 1939?

HF: 1940. I jumped into 1940 now. I had already been working for a whole year there, these two years, yeah.

LL: In other words, you were working there...

HF: For two years.

LL: When the war had begun.

HF: Oh yes, oh yes. Jumping around a bit...shortly after the war began and when Poland was captured—I don't know if you were in Germany at the time; no, you were gone—after Poland was captured and we had the big map on the Central Square in Stuttgart in front of the castle where they every day showed the position of the German Army and they showed how, then, all of a sudden, they announced by mail through our office—the Gestapo used our office to send a letter to all the Jewish families in Stuttgart—that they must turn in their radios. And the letter was sent out deliberately to arrive on Yom Kippur, 1939. And we had instructed, we had been instructed to send it out the day before Yom Kippur or two days before Yom Kippur. And it was from the Gestapo and it said, "Because of the tendency of Jews to be helping the enemies of Germany, they cannot have any radios and they must surrender the radios on the *Schlossplatz*,"—it means on the main square in Stuttgart—"at 9:00 on Yom Kippur day." On that day, which happened to be Yom Kippur.

LL: Well, Yom Kippur was after the beginning of World War II.

HF: Right.

LL: And by the way, there obviously were no services because the synagogue had been bombed.

HF: No, we had services in makeshift classrooms and things like that.

LL: Was it allowed or was that...

HF: That was, there was no allowance needed. Services could be held. But the letter went out. We knew what the letter contained. We knew that it would arrive on Yom Kippur. And we knew that the very Orthodox people would not go open the mail, let alone carry a radio downtown. To my absolute disgust, I was delegated to go to the *Schlossplatz* and see who shows up. Because we told people, "You don't, you really, you maybe have a risk, but you don't go. It's Yom Kippur. It's your holiest day. You don't go. You go the next day if you want to." To my disgust, the most Orthodox people that I could think, look up to for Orthodoxy were the first ones fighting in line to turn their radios in. And it is an unhappy experience for me because from then on I dropped all interest in religion until many, many years later. It happened to be Yom Kippur day, and as a result of having seen what was going on there—and I did not take my radio in at the time—and as a result of having seen what was going on there, I became so un-Jewish and so upset that I went to a nearest restaurant and had something to eat on Yom Kippur, which I never did before!

LL: Yeah?

HF: It's an unhappy story to tell, but it's...it has to be told. When I, when my day came in March to go to the visa, to go to the American Consulate, my people at the office said, "You'll never pass. You're too weak. You're too emaciated. You must get some rest and some relaxation. And here, somebody has to feed you...something." And there's a home that the *Oberrat* owns, which is in Herrlingen near Ulm. Herrlingen is H-E-R-R-L-I-N-G-E-N, and Ulm is U-L-M. And that's in, that has been made for this, used to be a school, a special school, for special education. It is a *Landschulheim*. I don't want to spell that, but it's, it was a special education...

LL: A country school.

HF: Well, a special, there was people interested in a special method of education who then transferred that entire school to England. Not just for Jewish children, but for general public.

LL: It was a certain educational method.

HF: Like Pestalozzi[1] and people like that.

LL: Yeah.

HF: It was a certain teaching method.

LL: Yes.

HF: And also it was teaching agriculture and the sciences and everything else, in a communal environment. And that school was very famous but it was evacuated completely and taken to England. And it became, it was owned by the Jewish community, by the Jewish Central Community, *Oberrat*, and we turned it into an old age home, for old age people.

LL: For Jewish people.

HF: For Jewish people. That home was in an idyllic part of the country, and it was...

LL: Good climate?

HF: Excellent climate, and excellent caretakers there. Excellent kitchen, excellent surroundings.

LL: In spite of the war.

HF: In spite of the war. The, they sent me there. They said, "You spend the time there. Forget about the Immigration Office. Forget about the Consulate. Eat, eat, eat. And make yourself healthy so that you'll pass when you come up to the office." I was there for four weeks, and I passed with flying colors. But the Herrlingen community entranced me and I became enchanted with the people there and the servants there. I became friendly with one of the girls who was a housekeeper there. And she is now one of the few survivors. All the people in that old age home were eventually transported to Auschwitz or to some other places where they were...

[1]Pestalozzi, Johann Heinrich, a Swiss educator who devised a certain teaching method.

LL: Theresienstadt, perhaps?

HF: She went to Theresien-, this girl came to Theresienstadt. A few people went to Theresienstadt. Most of them were killed. And subsequent, when all of the people were gone from the home, the townspeople rummaged the home for all the belongings that were left there, and the German government seized the home and made it the home of General Rommel, when he was retired from the army. And he was in, already had been partly disgraced by Hitler because he was suspected to have been in on the July plot to kill Hitler. But they couldn't easily tie any evidence to him. But he was put in that home, in that house, and it became his villa. And from there he was taken at one point by the visiting Generals who had accused him of being in on the plot. He was given the choice of committing suicide or going under trial, becoming, being tried for the attempt on Hitler's life. They took him in to the forest and they gave him a pill and he came back. The ambulance had already been sent up there before the soldiers arrived, and they took him to Ulm. And in Ulm they examined him and he had died; he was reported of having died of a hemorrhage and got a State funeral. They promised him a State funeral if he commits suicide. I met some of the people that were witnesses to this afterwards. And I've been back to the town. And there is a historian who has been together with me wrote the history of this entire home, from the Landschulheim to the old age home to the Rommel situation and who has traced every Jewish person that was in that home, down to the last person, as to where they were killed.

LL: Is that right?

HF: And I have helped find...

LL: And you were one of those that survived.

HF: And I and the young girl that was the housekeeper there are the survivors. Her husband was one of the people there that was a caretaker. He disguised himself as a Nazi and went to the nearest military camp, saluted the people there and said he came to collect potatoes and onions and vegetables and loaded the truck up and said, "*Heil Hitler*!" And everybody stood at attention and he loaded the truck up and took all the belongings for them, to keep feeding the Jewish people in the old age home!

LL: Brave person.

HF: Unfortunately he has been, he is very, very old now and very sick. But he also lives in Connecticut. And he was a very brave person, a very courageous person.

LL: Yes, certainly.

HF: And she is one of the survivors. I am one of the survivors, and I helped the historian there to make this book project. And I was made a citizen of the town.

LL: I see. Honorary citizen, yes? Now let's get back to when you left Germany. On which ship did you come?

HF: Well I'm, on the 28th of...I left on the 20th of, 22nd of March from Italy, from the *Conte Dis*-, on the *Conte Di Savoya*.

LL: You went by train?

HF: By train over the Brenner Pass.

LL: From, was it a sealed train? Were there other Jews on that train?

HF: No, no, no, no, no, a regular.

LL: Just regular train.

HF: A regular train from...Stuttgart over the Brenner Pass to Genoa on a regular ticket. And the train stopped at the Brenner Pass for four hours before it could cross the border. And then at that...

LL: Were you nervous?

HF: Very. And at the time after the train was let go again, the next day I was in Genoa. I saw it in the paper that Hitler and Mussolini were meeting that night on the Brenner Pass.

LL: Oh my goodness!

HF: That was causing the four-hour holdup.

LL: And you were traveling alone?

HF: Alone, yes.

LL: You left behind...?

HF: My mother and my brother.

LL: Your younger brother?

HF: No, my younger brother left four weeks before as a [on]children's transport.

LL: To?

HF: To America, to Philadelphia.

LL: I see. And your older brother and your mother were still in Stuttgart.

HF: Right.

LL: O.K. And how did you find conditions here, and what was your impression?

HF: I was met on the ship by my cousin of mine who had come here five years earlier who was working at some factory and who had helped get an affidavit for me from someone who was a very, very distant relative and who issued the affidavit on the condition that I would never lean on him and never want to see him. And I never saw him. I thanked him by mail and that is the only reason I'm here, because he issued the affidavit. My cousin lived in Queens. He already had a small apartment where every little bed was taken, and I got the bathtub as my first place to sleep in. And I spent the first four weeks with a little black book, where I had written all the names of people that I had helped in Stuttgart who had settled in New York. And I visited every one of them [weeping]...

LL: Yes.

HF: To raise money for my mother. [weeping; tape off then on] My cousin still lives in Queens, and he tells me stories that I can't believe to this day, but he was there. He said that I set out every morning to visit people whose addresses I had, and I told them I needed $390 for my mother's ship ticket, to come because I, before I left I had arranged for the, with the Consulate that she would have a specific date on which she can come to the Consulate. And they set this specific date for May. And they promised me they would

take good care of her. O.K., when I tried to raise the money, I found out that everybody was willing to give me two or three dollars...

LL: Yes.

HF: If I needed it at the end. So after the first week I went to everybody back and I said, "I have $390. I need two dollars more. I need five dollars more." [chuckling] And with that I raised the $392 dollars.

LL: Did you really?

HF: Yeah!

LL: It's amazing. What a very ingenious way of doing it.

HF: Well there was no other way. Everybody was willing to give something if it's the last dollar that I needed. Some people said, "I can get you ten dollars...if you're short of ten dollars at the end, come to me." I said, "I am short of ten dollars." [chuckles] I paid them all back.

LL: Yeah. And you, and so your mother was able...

HF: Was able to come here. And before she left, she had to take care and find a home for my brother. And she found a Catholic Home for the Crippled Children and they took him in. That's what she told me. And they put...

LL: Did they know he was Jewish?

HF: Oh yes, oh yes.

LL: But they took him in.

HF: And they took him in. And then he was in this Catholic Home for Crippled Children. The address I don't have. And by 1943, I had a chance conversation with William Schirer, who wrote a book about the Third *Reich*.

LL: Yes?

HF: And he told me about the euthanasia program, because we had no way of finding anything out about my brother. And he said, "There is no question that that's what happened, to all the cripples, all the crippled people in Germany." And he later on verified it all. But I have not found out to this day where it happened, and how it happened. My mother arrived in May, and...

LL: Had you found a job by then?

HF: By then I was already out of New York. I was, as soon as I had the money raised for my mother, I went to the employment people and they said that the best thing for me to do is to join a CCC Camp. It's the Civilian Conservation Corps. Under Roosevelt there was a Civilian Conservation Corps in the United States and you could trade, you could learn a trade and get paid. And the place for the Civilian Conservation Corps, I said, "I'd like to have a place outside New York." They said, "How is Berlin, New Hampshire?" I said, "That's fine." I'd never been to Berlin, Germany. I might as well go to Berlin, New Hampshire. And I went to Berlin, to New Hampshire, and I was housed in a house with about 40 other young men, all of whom were there to learn to become automobile mechanics. And I did not know much English. And I learned my first English there, a very

colloquial English and very rough English, and roomed with a young fellow whose secret passion was to become an undertaker. And he had a mummy in his room with me!

LL: As long as he didn't mix the two of you up you were O.K.!

HF: That's right! Yeah, right! But I did not last very long in Berlin, New Hampshire, because as I told you before, I was suspected of being a German spy.

LL: Explain that a little further.

HF: Berlin, New Hampshire is very close to the Canadian border and the Jewish newspapers, there was a small Jewish community in Berlin and I tried to become acquainted with them because I was the first refugee they'd ever seen. And they wanted to take good care of me and help me. And then there was a whisper campaign going on, that some people had written in the papers that the Germans were trying to sneak their spies through the Canadian border into the United States disguised as Jewish refugees. And I fit the pattern very easily because I also had a camera and I was taking pictures all over town. So, they said I should prove to them that I am Jewish by reciting some Jewish prayers and going to synagogue and doing certain rituals, like laying *tfillin*. And I couldn't do that. I didn't remember it from my *bar mitzvah*. I hadn't done it since my *bar mitzvah*. And they thought that for a German spy I wasn't doing very badly.

LL: And this was in 1940?

HF: This was in 1940.

LL: Before we came into the war.

HF: Oh yeah, before we came into the war.

LL: Yes.

HF: And they, one family there that had a store, general store, in Berlin, had a young man who was very sympathetic towards me and he said that he had a, his in-laws had a grocery store in Bethlehem, New Hampshire, and some other relatives had a hotel in Bethlehem, New Hampshire. And that's further away from the Canadian border and I don't have any of the repercussions. So I should try to go to Bethlehem. He'll give me a letter to his in-laws, and he'll give me a job in a grocery store. So I hiked my way out of Berlin, New Hampshire by way of the daily delivery bread truck who went to the grocery store. And he delivered me to the grocery store. And they had been informed that this greenhorn was coming in, and they should give him a job. And I got the job and I made some extra money bell hopping at the hotel. And I corresponded with my mother who was by then in Philadelphia, and my brother. And they said that the situation was not very, very pretty. My mother worked as a house, as a domestic in a house. My brother was in a home for children where they were being properly fed, but used as laborers, doing car washing and other odds and end jobs to have more income for the house, for the people who took them in. And it was not a very pleasant place for them to be.

LL: How old was your brother?

HF: In 1940 he was 14.

LL: He was not going to school?

HF: He went...to school, I believe he went to school in Philadelphia, yes. He must have gone to Philadelphia, this must have been after school. He definitely went to school in Philadelphia.

LL: And your mother came to Philadelphia because he was already there?

HF: Because he was already there, yes.

LL: O.K.

HF: And there were friends of friends of friends who gave her the job as a domestic...in a very nice home of some attorney firm, of an attorney who had a nice home in Germantown.

LL: I see.

HF: The Bethlehem situation was one whereby the town is open only for the summer. It's a resort town for the summer. But, by September it closes up. And I saved every penny I made in the store. I learned a good deal of English. I learned how to drive a car. And...

LL: How old were you by then?

HF: 18.

LL: O.K.

HF: 18. There were people to whom I delivered groceries who lived in Philadelphia. And I saw their license plate with Pennsylvania and I made myself acquainted with them and they liked the idea that there was a refugee applying himself to all these things. And I said, "I have to find a way of coming to Philadelphia when the season is over." And they said, "We'll take you there." And they gave me a home when I first came here and the next thing I did, I found a job in Philadelphia in...a company that made photographic lights, on Arch Street. And as soon as I made some money, we rented, I rented an apartment with, and brought my brother and my mother into the apartment and we were then, had started the beginning of a household.

LL: And you were back to being a family.

HF: We went back to being a family, and that's when I probably met Liesl Joseph, a little later.

LL: Did you feel strengthened in your experiences by religious faith after a while again, or by an ideology such as Zionism or Socialism or any such feelings?

HF: I definitely continued to feel Zionistic.

LL: Yes?

HF: I felt very much that America is a way station to Israel, or to Palestine. In Stuttgart I belonged to a youth group, called *Hashomer Hatzair*. And this youth group was planning to move *en masse*, as a total group, to Palestine, with the intention of settling there and forming a *kibbutz*. I was part of that, and I was planning to go with them. The certificates that the English authorities issued for people coming to Palestine—I don't know what they called them at the time; do you remember what they called those certificates?

LL: No.

HF: They were issued one certificate per family. So if a person who was single was going to use up a certificate, we absolutely forbade them to go, we being the *Oberrat*. We said, "You've got to get married and take somebody with you."

LL: Ah, I see. Even if those marriages would be dissolved again?

HF: Absolutely. So I was ready to get married to a very nice girl in Stuttgart, and so was everybody else in the group. They were all going to use up half the number of certificates, to go as couples. And at the last minute—this was before my father was killed—my father said, "No, you can't go. If you go to Palestine, there'll be no chance for us to ever get any place else." You asked me about whether I believe in it. I had a very, very fundamental faith in the sentence that became from my name, that was imbedded in me because of my name, Hans. Everybody said, "*Der Hans-derKann's*."

LL: Which means?

HF: You can do. You're the can do person. And I had an absolute strong faith in that I can do it.

LL: Yes.

HF: That with optimistic belief in that it can be done. And it has followed me all my life.

LL: I want to thank you for a very interesting and informative interview. Thank you very much. [tape off then on] Interviewer's comment: Today Henry is a very successful businessman. He lives with his wife, Marian, in Larchmont, New York and he has two children, a boy and a girl, and three grandchildren—two girls and a boy.