Tape two, side one:

WG: Life in the ghetto was very difficult, especially from an economic point of view. Not only was it very crowded there, but you can't live by taking in each other's washing. You have to have some commercial activity. There was a lot of cultural activity, which is not very productive of export oriented goods, export from the ghetto. But, and it was very difficult to receive a pass to leave the ghetto, either for a few hours, or for a week or so. It could be done at the whim of the Japanese, who ran the ghetto, but it was difficult. So, in fact, in all of Shanghai, during the war, after Pearl Harbor, there was a major depression because Shanghai is a trading town. It depends on stuff coming in and going out, and there wasn't anything coming in or going out, because there was no shipping. U.S. submarines would torpedo shipping trying to get to Shanghai, and so there wasn't anything coming in, and of course if nothing came in, nothing went out. There was fighting in the interior, so there was nothing coming in or out of the hinterland. And it was a rather messy time economically, for everyone, but especially in the ghetto. And even outside the ghetto it was pretty bad economically. My father was very busy because people were sick, as always, but no one had any money to pay. So, it was sort of tough, but not that bad. Now, gradually, as the war went on, things got tougher and tougher economically. Food supplies got scarcer and scarcer. Meat supply effectively dried up, except for the day, or the week after the Japanese closed the Canadrome, which was a dog racing establishment, and suddenly hamburger was for sale, which very few people chose to buy, because one could figure why suddenly there was hamburger for sale. Chickens could be had on occasion. Eggs were available from surrounding farms. Beef, of course, was non-existent. What was passed for beef was usually water buffalo that had died of old age and hard work, and even that was hard to come by. Rice was usually available and bread was usually available. Prices were high, but you could live. Milk, nobody drank anyway, because the cows all had T.B. So, you were used to that anyway. So dairy foods were sort of out, and you lived basically on veggies and pasta of various kinds and you could make it, more or less. It was not the healthiest of diets, but people, very few whites, if any, died of malnutrition. The Chinese, of course, many of them died of malnutrition. There is no such thing, or was no such thing as any organized charity for the Chinese, other than what was known as the Blue Cross Society. The Blue Cross Society was the group that picked up dead bodies off the streets and buried them. And whether this was in honor of the dead or to protect the living, I think it was more of the latter. But certainly there were no such thing as social services for the Chinese community. The Chinese situation was that a family took care of its own, and if you didn't have any family, that was your tough luck. And of course as Shanghai was very crowded with refugees from the fighting in the countryside, a lot of them had no family, and that was their misfortune. The--so, depending on the weather, when it got cold more people died. When it got warm, fewer people died, until there was an outbreak of cholera or small pox and the like, and then more people died. But they would publish the

Blue Cross number in the papers every day, and it usually was a three digit number, anywhere from 100 to 600, and when times got bad, really bad in an epidemic, it would go up to maybe 2,000 or so. And this was the number of corpses that the Blue Cross had picked up that day. Now, out of six million, you'll hardly miss them. If you walked along the street and there happened to be a corpse there, you just stepped over it and ignored it, and kept walking, trying, being very careful not to step on it, because not out of respect for the dead so much as fear of being infected.

MS: I was going to ask, was there a probability or scare of epidemics?

WG: Oh yeah, yeah, you were, you know, you took precautions, but you always did in China. I mean, no one in his right mind would eat anything that had not been washed in potassium permanganate solution. And you certainly didn't eat raw vegetables. You certainly peeled your tomatoes and peeled your apples. You boiled everything. You wouldn't drink the water. You boiled, I mean, that was just normal life there before the war, after the war, at all times in China. The water supply was contaminated. There were some 200,000 Chinese living on Sampans, on little boats in the river, using the river, which was also the water supply, as toilet...

MS: Toilet.

WG: …and bathroom, and laundry facilities, or, eh, but that was normal. That was China, and people--that didn't bother anybody. I mean, it might bother you the first week you were there, the first month, but it certainly never bothered me because I grew up with it. In fact, as an aside, my wife and I went to China on a visit in 1981, and she and I were, I think, the only ones on our tour who did not get the runs. But that's because I told my wife how one should eat in China, whether it's in 1938 or in 1981. One doesn't drink the water. One doesn't eat raw vegetables, even if the salads look inviting, because most of the fertilizer is night soil [human waste]. And you don't do that. You boil and you disinfect everything in sight. So, if you took these precautions, you were O.K. Of course, the people living on the river, the people living in the streets--there were a large number of street people--they couldn't take these precautions and they got sick and a lot of them died. But again, nobody really gave a darn. It just was not anybody's concern. It was their family's concern. If their family didn't take care of them, tough. Communal responsibility simply did not exist as a concept amongst the Chinese in Shanghai. Whether it existed in a village somewhere in the interior, I don't know. But in the cities it did not exist, and there were no formal organizations to take care of it.

MS: It's almost unbelievable.

WG: It's free enterprise. Very low taxes that way. [chuckles]

MS: Another way of looking at it, yes.

WG: You know, that's what you want, that's what you get, you know. The, and life for us outside the ghetto got to be difficult economically until 1942. In 1942, the, after the ghetto was established, about three months thereafter, Japanese Vice Admiral decided he liked the apartment we lived in and gave us three days to get out--which was very nice

of him, he could have given us three hours. But he told us in three days he would occupy the apartment. So we had to move. My father moved his practice in with another doctor in another apartment in a different building, and we looked for a place to live. Now, times were, there just were no places to live that one might want, so you had to take what you could get. What we got was a room in what was officially a licensed private hotel, which was a polite way of saying a brothel.

MS: [chuckles]

WG: One of the girls hadn't paid her rent, and the landlord had her evicted, and we took over her room. So the four of us moved into this room in the Beverly House, and like all the rooms in the Beverly House, it had its own bathroom, which the girls wanted, but of course no kitchen. So you cooked on a little pot bellied stove, or on a hibachi. And we moved into that. And, it was a very strange private hotel, because most of these brothels were either full of white girls or Chinese girls. This one had both. It was segregated. It was a three-story building. The top floor, all the rooms were occupied by white girls, primarily White Russians. The bottom floor was all occupied by Chinese girls, and the middle floor turned out to become "the respectable floor", all occupied by people who'd been thrown out of their apartments by various Japanese officials.

MS: So that was your status.

WG: Our status. We lived on the middle floor, and along there there was a professor from the University, and a, an official Belgian, French official of the customs service, and people who had been thrown out of their apartments. And also living there was a semi-respectable couple, who was one of the Sephardic gals, who was also in the business, but she was a really good looker, so oddly enough she got married, and they lived there too. Her sisters were still in the business, but in different houses. The--and we lived in this one room till I left Shanghai many years later. During the war the Japanese collected all the radiators, all the hot water pipes for scrap metal, so nobody had any heat, except what you could burn, so we burned.

MS: Sure.

WG: Well, we burned furniture. We burned whatever there was. You got coal balls. Coal balls were local inventions. Over the years coal had been shipped into Shanghai for the power plant and, in being shipped in, some of the coal dust and so on would settle on the bottom of the river, at the, there's a, where they unloaded the coal barges. And now divers would go down and dig up this mud, which had coal dust in it, and make brickettes out of it. And they were about 50% mud, 50% coal dust. And that's what you would burn and cook with and heat with. If you ran out of furniture or if you couldn't buy fuel, which, you could also buy rice straw, but that didn't burn very long. So, mostly what was done during the war--of course Shanghai doesn't get very cold, it's about like Savannah, Georgia--it gets down to freezing or a little below for maybe a week or so, but even 40 degrees can be very cold when you have no heat. So what was used a lot was what was known as internal heating, i.e., vodka. It was very popular, and you wore lots of clothes. You wore

as much clothing as you could stand in the winter, and as little as you could stand in the summer. And you'd be surprised how well that system works. And we lived in the Beverly House and, during the war of course everywhere, including outside the ghetto, power was scarce, because the power company, which was owned by Sephardic Jews, which had been taken over by the Japanese, they didn't have much fuel, and so electricity was on for only a few hours a day and you were rationed to roughly ten kilowatt hours a month or less, which meant that you didn--even if the electricity was on, you couldn't run very much. The hot water was non-existent, because all the hot water pipes had been taken away, so you bought your hot water at a hot water shop.

MS: Oh, dear.

WG: And a coolie would bring up a bucket or two. It was usually, if you could afford it, four buckets at a time. And then, you would take a bath, all of you, one after the other, and there was, it's usually in the family some squabbling about who got the bath water first. And you were afforded this luxury once every two or three weeks.

MS: Oh, dear.

WG: Which, it turns out, is quite ample.

MS: [chuckles]

WG: [laughing] Nobody died. Perfume was available.

MS: [laughing]

WG: And, it works. It works. And whether you did it every two or three weeks or every four weeks, and sometimes maybe every week if it was your birthday, but, you managed. And in general life went on, with constraints. I had graduated from high school. I had gone to college.

MS: In...

WG: In Shanghai. I first went to the Lester Institute of Technical Education, where, which was closed down when they interned all the British professors. I then went to East Asia Technical College, which was housed in the same building, and, but was officially run by the Japanese. But all the professors--the language of instruction was English--and all the professors were so-called neutral: Swiss, Swedish, Portuguese, Turkish, whatever they could, and also of course some Jewish refugees who were hired to teach there. It was located within the ghetto area, so there was no problem in that respect. That went on till 1942, in June, no, till 194--till 1944, till 19--in June of '44, the Japanese expelled all non-Asiatics from the East Asia Technical College and fired all the non-Asiatic staff. I then went to a French university, which was run by Jesuit fathers, Aurora University, and they were allowed to operate because, of course, all the French in Shanghai had become very pro-Vichy, and were pro-Axis and pro-Japanese. And so the Jesuit College, University, was allowed to operate. And I went to that from 1944 till I left Shanghai in '47. The French Vichy thing had an odd effect on us. When the war first broke out in Europe, in 1939, my father received a letter asking him not to appear at the French Club, saying Germans were unwelcome until the end of the war. My father wrote them a

letter saying that he was not German. He had no German nationality. And he was certainly as opposed to the German government--the Nazi government--as any of the French. They then rescinded the letter and said, "Oh, we're sorry. Please be very welcome." Until the Vichy government took over in 1940 and they sent a letter asking all Jews to stay away. This one, we lived with, and no Jews went there--at least we didn't--until the war was over. When the war was over, we rejoined the French Club, and of course the administration changed from being pro-Vichy to being very pro-deGaullist. The French troops--which had not been withdrawn from Shanghai prior to Pearl Harbor because of course they had already become pro-Vichy--were now stuck, and it was very embarrassing. Because here they were all collaborationists. So the Colonel in charge, and the two Majors of the regiment--they had a French regiment there--all committed suicide.

MS: Oh!

WG: But they did it the correct French military manner. That is, they shot them selves and missed slightly, so they lived long enough to get absolution, and so they could have full military funerals when they died half an hour later. The priests were, I under stand, were standing by while they shot themselves. And they all lived long enough to be granted absolution and thus could be buried in a Catholic cemetery with full military honors. They had a big parade and everything was very nice. And in the meantime they got a new Colonel and two Majors were sent over from France who had somewhat better credentials than being collaborationists. They did nothing about the other officers or men who had been part of the command, who had really very little choice in the matter of what they did or didn't do. They never really did anything during the war. They were perfectly happy to be sitting out the war in Shanghai doing nothing. The war itself had, the fighting, had relatively little effect. We were bombed by B-29's, who were pretty good in their aim. They aimed mainly for air fields, military installations, and the like. They did make an occasional mistake. They managed to send one bomb onto one of the Jewish refugee homes, killing quite a number of people.

MS: This was in the Hongkew area?

WG: In the Hongkew area, yes, it was a home that was right next to the Japanese naval radio station. They missed the radio station and hit the home. But in general, it was pretty good. As far as knowing what went on in the world at this time, or during this time, the Japanese had censored all news regarding fighting in Asia. No one was allowed to have a short-wave radio. The Japanese broadcast news about the fighting in Asia, which no one believed. And I'll get into why that was a little later. About Europe, militarily, we knew everything that was going on, because the Japanese did not dare censor the Russians, the Soviets. They had their own radio station, XRBN, that would broadcast there, but only allowed to broadcast in Russian. But everybody learned enough Russian to under stand it. They were allowed to publish a Soviet newspaper, which you quickly learned to read, to find out what was going on. And they were allowed to show newsreels at the Soviet Club. So, our first view of General Eisenhower and Marshall Tedder [Royal Air Force deputy to

Eisenhower] and all the other commanders in Europe was at the Soviet Club. They would have open air movies, and--at a slight fee--and I would go, and watch the newsreels about fighting in Europe. We knew, every time of course they showed a B-17 being loaded up to bomb Germany, everybody would applaud furiously, and the Japanese would stalk out. They'd usually have somebody there at the invitation of the Soviet Consulate. And the Soviet Consulate liked to tweak their nose a little bit by showing Germans and the Japane--eh, German and Russian activity. And, so we knew all about the war, where the war was, what was happening in, on the ground. We heard rumors about Jews being moved around Europe. We, I don't think anyone heard of extermination camps as such. We did not know that. We knew that people were being evacuated, being sent here, being sent there.

MS: You didn't know what was happening to Jews in, in...

WG: In Europe.

MS: The European countries though.

WG: We knew that they were being moved around, but that was it. We certainly had no news of my relatives. We had no, nobody had.

MS: No correspondence, then?

WG: There was no correspondence whatsoever and there was no knowledge of the death camps and the like, none. We knew things were bad. We knew what the situation was when the second front opened. We knew the fighting in Stalingrad. We knew all that from the Soviet news agency, but we did not know about the horrors of the Holocaust in detail at all, or in even in broad outline. We just didn't know. I don't know if anybody knew. Certainly I never heard it and none of my family ever heard it until the war was over. But we did know that the, what the Japanese were saying about the war in Asia made no sense, because the B-29's that would come and bomb us would fly higher than their Japanese aircraft could climb, or that their anti-aircraft could reach. So there was never any opposition to them. Yet every time that one or two or three B-29's came and bombed Shanghai, the Japanese would announce that 200 planes attempted to raid Shanghai, and 197 were shot down on the way, and three managed to get through and were shot down on the way out. And we knew this was a bunch of bull, and if you couldn't believe that, you couldn't believe anything. So we never really knew what was going on, except for the fact that we knew what had happened initially, and every now and again the Japanese would announce that they had trapped the American forces into landing on some island or other where they were then going to be annihilated. And they had carefully removed all atlases from the public libraries, and so unless you happened to have an atlas that showed these islands no one had ever heard of, you didn't have the faintest idea where or what. Until they trapped the Americans into landing on the Philippines, and we knew where the Philippines were. And we knew--some of us at least knew--where Okinawa was, so then we said, "Ah ha, it's getting close." And the closer it got, the nastier the Japanese got, of course.

MS: In their treatment to...

WG: In their treatment of everybody. In general, they did not do anything to you if you obeyed their rules. That--rules included if you pass a Japanese sentry, you had to take your hat off and bow down. If you didn't, if he was in a good mood, he'd smack you with the butt end of his rifle. If he was in a bad mood, he'd use the bayonet end. So, you didn't disobey rules. A, one of the German Jewish doctors there, a dentist, Dr. Gandazi, made the mistake of questioning a Japanese sentry. He happened to have a patient in the hospital, and the hospital, it was announced, was closed. What that meant was that the Japanese had some casualties in there. And when they had ca--as they officially never had casualties, people always died in battle. There were no such thing as wounded not fighting to the death. They never admitted to having casualties. So whenever they did have casualties in the hospital, they just closed the hospital, and no non-Japanese doctor was allowed in. Well, this German Jewish dentist had a patient in there for oral surgery. He went to the gate and said, "I want in." And the sentry said, "No." And he says, "Oh yes, let me talk to your commanding officer," which of course was an insult to the Japanese sentry, so he smacked him with his rifle butt and took out an eye.

MS: Oh!

WG: But, everybody felt sorry for the dentist, but they said, "How could you be so stupid as to question a Japanese sentry?" A sentry represents the emperor, and it's like insulting the emperor. So you didn't do that. You stood at attention when a Japanese flag went by. You did thing--we had blackouts. You did not have any light showing. If you did, they would not knock on your door, they would just shoot it out. And if they missed the light and hit somebody, that was their bad luck. But, you didn't have light showing. You made sure you didn't. You didn't break any law. If you didn't break of any of their laws, or any of their rules, they would leave you alone. If they felt, in the slightest, that you were doing something you shouldn't, the punishment was usually very severe. And they got more and more rambunctious as time went on, and as, even with their lying reports, they themselves started to feel things weren't going all that well. So, they got meaner and nastier as time went on. But they were very disciplined, and what everyone was really scared of was, "What happens when the war is over, and the Japanese are no longer under, the Japanese military are no longer under control, and the population--a good deal of which were street people by now--Chinese, starving--what would they do when there was no law and order?" So we were worried about that. We were worried about anti-white feeling, which had always been there, present, and controlled by whatever government there was. Of course, there was no anti-white feeling from the Japanese initially, because the Germans were their allies. The Briti--the Italians were their allies. The Soviets they were scared of. The White Russians were their allies. So there wasn't any. But we said, "What if that changes?" The first scare we got was when Italy surrendered, and the Italians took the surrender seriously. They went and scuttled a, an Italian liner that ha-

Tape two, side two:

MS: ...We'll continue at this point.

WG: They, the Italians, scuttled an Italian liner in the harbor and blocked all traffic as a result. It took the Japanese about a month or so to right the ship up again and float it out. The anti--so, they then interned the Savoy Grenadiers, which was an Italian regiment that had been there, and treated them very badly as prisoners of war and traitors, and all that. But, after the Germans surrendered, after May, '45, we started to get worried, because now those were no longer there to protect us in the sense of being whites that were allies of the Germans. So, it was down to the Soviets, who they were scared of. When the Soviet Union declared war on Japan, we really got scared, because the Japanese put out an immediate edict saying, "All Soviet citizens have to register," and there was talk of interning them and we thought, "Now there's no one left to protect us." But, luckily, the war ended within a week. So, it didn't matter any more. And part of this agreement of the ceasefire was that the Japanese military maintain control until Allied troops could take over. And the Japanese were very disciplined and they maintained control. But now that the Emperor had lost face, people would go up to a Japanese sentry and spit in his face, and he would just stand there and do nothing. They did maintain public order, but they did it in a very efficient manner, until U.S. and Chinese nationalist troops came in about three or four weeks after the war was over.

MS: Weren't they afraid for their lives at that point?

WG: Ehhhh, they still had guns. You know, there's one thing about going and spitting in someone's face. There's another thing in going and attacking them, when they still were armed. And they had their arms with them, so, you know, you take it easy. The, some people, of course, particularly obnoxious ones, disappeared--voluntarily or otherwise, I don't know. They just were gone. One of those was a fellow who lived in the Beverly House where we lived, up on the top floor with a White Russian gal. He was a Korean, who had been very active in the Japanese Secret Police. Everybody knew. In fact, in the house he was known as "Our Savior." Because he lived there, we got more water pressure and a bigger electricity ration than other people did, because he wanted it that way. So, we always considered him...

MS: So you benefited.

WG: We benefited from having him there. We all knew who he was, and were very polite to him, but, it's an aside story. Way back when during the war, a child of the German Consul General got sick, the Nazi Consul General. And their local house doctor had a problem with it and he called my father in as a consultant. And my father treated the child and it got well, and the Consul General asked him for a bill, and my father said he wouldn't take any money--any Nazi money. So, the Consul General sent over two bottles of very good Rhine wine as payment. And my father took them, and he said, I remember distinctly when he got them, he said, "We'll drink the first bottle when the first Allied troops

step on German soil. And we'll drink the second bottle when the war is over." And when the first troops landed on German soil--we knew about it from the Russian news agency--and we ceremoniously drank the bottle. And when the war was ending, my father was a pediatrician for the kids of the Swiss Consul, and so he would sometimes get some information that wasn't readily available because the Swiss Consul, of course, had a short-wave radio. And he came, my father came back and he says, "You know, the war is over. It's really over!" You know, rumors had been flying around, but we said, "Yes?" And he said, "Yes." The Swiss Consul told him not to tell anyone. But, the war was over, so he got out the bottle of, the second bottle of Rhine wine, and we were sitting in our room in this brothel, drinking our bottle of Rhine wine, when there was a knock at the door. And who was there but "Our Savior," this Korean Secret Policeman. And he said, "Ah, you know, war is over." And we just said--you know, we were scared, because, is this a trap, or--so we said, "Oh, war is over? Ah, we know nothing." And he said, "Yes, the war is over. Japanese have lost." And we said, "Oh? Japanese have lost?" And he says, "Yes, please remember, I am Korean. I am very happy Japanese are lost. Are you happy Japanese are lost?" And we said, "Oh, eh, we are always, you know, we're, eh, eh--"What do you answer, you know. So we stood there, sat there rather, and he said, "Remember, I am Korean." We said, "Yes, yes, you are Korean. We know you are Korean. Yes." "Koreans do not like Japanese." We said, "Oh, we did not know that, but thank you for telling us." And he says, "Yes, you remember that." And he went away. And he was obviously building...

MS: Good will.

WG: Good will. We never saw him again. I don't know whether he moved out, whether somebody got to him. Because he certainly, being in the *Kampatai* [phonetic], in the Secret Police, nobody, he must have had plenty of enemies.

MS: Do you have any idea what happened to his wife?

WG: His wife?

MS: Oh, oh, he...

WG: It wasn't a wife, it was just a, he was shacked up with this Russian gal.

MS: Oh, I see. Oh, all right.

WG: And that was Verichke. And Verichke stayed in the business. Other people moved in, moved out. After the American forces came, she made out very well, and she had a side line. She would also roll the guys. You know, give them a Mickey Finn and roll them. And sometimes she overdid it, and we'd get a knock on the door, and Verichke would come and say, "Doctor, doctor, my friend, I think he is dead!" And my father would go upstairs and give him a shot of something and call the shore patrol and say, "Get this guy out," you know, all right. Because she'd overdid it a bit and she couldn't wake him.

MS: [laughing]

WG: [laughing] But that's part of the problem.

MS: Added a lot of color to your life.

WG: Oh yes. And, actually, it was very helpful living in this place. I didn't know it until quite well after the war. After the war, my sister had gotten a job for the U.S. forces as a secretary, and before you know it she met a nice Jewish boy from Baltimore there, and they got engaged, and they got married, and she left as a war bride to the U.S. And once she was there, of course, she sent an affidavit for me to come over too. And I was going to go to the States. And, of course, I needed a passport of some kind. And I didn't, I had no nationality. I was stateless. So I had to have something to have a visa put in. So I went to the U.N. By this time, this was after the war, the U.N. office was open, and I went in to apply for document identification in lieu of passport--which usually took months to get because, the U.N. being a bureaucracy, you had to go through this and this and this and this. It so happened that I walked into this office and who sits there behind a desk but the fellow who is shacked up with Rachel Manasseh in the Beverly House? Now Rachel Manasseh was a Sephardic girl who had gotten married, lived on the polite floor--in the middle floor--with her husband, who was an Austrian Jew, Ernest J. Schwartz. But Ernest J. Schwartz was a little cuckoo and he decided to become a Buddhist monk. So he left her and became a Buddhist monk. And Rachel went back into the business. And she had friends who would come and stay for a month, or two, or three. And after the war this very nice looking English gentleman moved in with Rachel. And I didn't know who he was. I knew, you know, he was the one who is living with Rachel right now. And here I come to the U.N. office, and there is this guy who I found out was Thomas Pincope. And Thomas Pincope was in charge of issuing these identification documents that you needed in order to come. And behind his desk was his credenza, and on his credenza was a picture of his wife and his kiddies, in England. And so he looks at me. I look at him. We both look down at the floor. You know, I try very hard not to burst out laughing. He, God knows what he says. All I know is, he wanted me out of there so fast. [laughing]

MS: [laughing]

WG: And he said, "Yes? The name? And what do you want? You want an, oh, yes, of course. Yeah, right here. We have the form. And your address?" And I felt like saying, "The address! You know the address!" But I told him the address, and he wrote the address down. And he stamped it, and he walked it through the thing, and I was out of there in about 20 minutes with my vis--with everything, well, not my visa, but, all the U.N. documents perfectly in order.

MS: Fantastic.

WG: And I was never so happy about Rachel Manasseh and her friends as I was at that point.

MS: [laughing]

WG: But, it was nice. And that's how I found out what his name was, because, you know, I had ignored him. You know, he was just the guy shacked up with Rachel. What do I care? But it was Thomas Pincope, a name that I will never forget. And there he

was, nice and proper with his wife and kiddies behind him, and Rachel waiting for him in the Beverly House. But, I got my papers, and I left, in 1947.

MS: Well let me ask you...

WG: Sure.

MS: Two questions. How about your college education...

WG: Yes.

MS: … when you went to Aurora? Did you complete a year, or two years, or...

WG: Well, I started out, as I said, collegewise, at the Lester Institute--did one year there. And that was closed down, wiped out. And then I went to East Asia Tech. I went there for a year and got expelled. Now, officially, I had flunked out. Why did I flunk out? Well, there was a course in Japanese that was made compulsory when the Japanese took over and made it the East Asia Technical Institute. And all the students in the course decided to boycott learning Japanese, as a resistance measure. So we would sit there, never take a note, sit--the whole class--but sit with their arms folded, and whenever we were asked a question, we would say, "*Mi no wi so ti mash ta*" [phonetic], "I have forgotten everything." And the teacher, the professor, was irked, but didn't quite know what to do about it. And then he announced that we would have an exam at the end of the year, and the exam would be to write an essay, in Japanese, on the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperities Field, which was the big Japanese dream of owning all of Eastern Asia. And we all sat around, all the students sat around and we said, "What do we do? If we refuse to write this, that's a political offense." And none of us had guts enough to do that, because a political offense, you were in deep trouble. So we decided we'd write the essay, but we wouldn't write it in Japanese. We'd write it in whatever, English, French, Chinese, whatever. But, three-quarters of the class were Chinese. They would write in Chinese and the rest of us would write in whatever language we felt most comfortable in. So we did. Well, the exam came, the blue books were handed out, we wrote our essays, we handed them in. As it turned out, every--all the Chinese got a passing grade. All the non-Chinese got a failing grade. And the school was such that if you failed a course, you were out. So all the whites were out. Of course simultaneously they also sacked all the white faculty. And here I got my report card and it said, you know, "Expelled, Academic Insufficiency," which does not look good on one's record. So we went to the Vice Principal, or Vice Dean or whatever you call him, a Portuguese, and we said--who had just gotten fired--"These look terrible. Can't you do something?" He said, "Sure. He gave us new report cards, with the official stamp, with the course "Japanese" just not on as a course. And of course all the other grades were O.K. And then, instead of "Expelled, Academic Insufficiency," he put down, "Withdrew." And that was a nicer looking record. So with that I went to Aurora University and wanted to transfer. And they said they don't accept transfer students, but I, if I could pass the entrance exam, they'd be happy to take me as a freshman again. Having had two years, I thought, eh, but, what else could you do? The only other university was one that had, was one that was run by missionaries--had been run by missionaries--was run along

"American College Lines," which everyone felt was academically horrendously inferior. And you didn't go there unless you couldn't get into the Aurora. It was St. John's University, where people who couldn't get in, like W. Michael Blumenthal, he went to St. John's because he couldn't make it into Aurora. But--and other such people. Aurora was far superior academically--it was at least considered such. So, I thought, "Well, I'll try for the Aurora." I studied French like crazy for a summer, took the entrance exam, passed, and started in as a freshman again. That was in '44. I went through three years and then I had this opportunity because in '47, my sister had gotten married in '46, and I had the opportunity to get to the States, so I wanted to go. And I went to the Father Chancellor and I said I wanted a transcript, I wanted to transfer to--and he said, "Where are you going? Are you going to France?" And I said, "No, I'm going to the U.S." He said, "Oh, you'll never get into a college in the U.S. with these grades that you have here at the Aurora. Let me see what I can do, because," he said, "Americans like high grades." I thought I had pretty good grades. I was second in my class in the freshman year and first in the sophomore and junior years. You know, I thought I was pretty hot stuff. He says, "Yes, but the numbers look bad to Americans." And he took a blank report transcript form and he took my actual transcript form. He says, "Look at this here. Chemistry. You had a 73. Ooh, that's good. Let's make that a 93."

MS: [laughing]

WG: And here he said, "Here you had a 68. Oh, we'll make that an 86." You know, and he went through, and, because their grading system was very tough. And despite the fact that I had the highest grade in the class, my average was something like maybe 69 or 70. So, he changed all that. And he says, "Now, don't you dare apply to a French University with this! Because they would think you were a second Einstein."

MS: [laughing]

WG: No one in a French University gets grades like that. He says, "But only for American colleges." I said, "Yes, only American colleges." "If you apply to French college, use this one," you know?

MS: Use the original. [laughing]

WG: [laughing] So I have two transcripts, quite different. But, he knew what the score was, and he didn't see why I should be hamstrung because Americans like high numbers. So, I then applied to 27 universities in the U.S., and got admitted at two of them, because this was right when the G.I. Bill was in. And they all said, "Thank you very much, but, try again in three or four years." They just would not accept foreign students. The only two that were willing to accept were Syracuse and the University of Tennessee. And I'd read enough to know that Syracuse was a better choice. So I went to Syracuse. But, there I was shocked at the low standard of American university education relative to the Jesuit university.

MS: Interesting.

WG: Very, very different. It, unfortunately, they looked at my transcript and said, "Oh yes, we can give you transfer credit. They'll give you credit for your courses in Philosophy and French Literature, in Metaphysics, in Ethics, in Mathematics, all this, yes. But, what is this Industrial Chemistry? Well, you'd better take Chemical Engineering from scratch." So, effectively, I got a lot of transfer credits and I had to take three more years at Syracuse before I got a Bachelors. So I ended up with a grand total of eight undergraduate years, which, if someone had told me that when I graduated high school, I probably would have committed suicide on the spot--that I'd have to go to undergraduate school for eight years. But, what the heck, you know. As it was, I was lucky, because very few people of my age got through the war without military service, without any real physical danger, certainly I'm tremendously lucky relative to my cohort that stayed in Europe, or, even in the U.S.

MS: Can I just ask you a few questions?

WG: Sure.

MS: About your relatives...

WG: Yes.

MS: That were living in Europe.

WG: Yes. Well, aside from numerous cousins of my parents, more direct relatives, my mother's sister and her husband were sent to Auschwitz, where my uncle had been a linguist. He was a teacher of Slavic languages. And so the Germans put him in the office at Auschwitz to maintain records and the like and keep books--where he wrote himself and his wife off as dead. And he and his wife lived underground in Auschwitz, as illegal. They couldn't get out, but they officially weren't there. Until the Russians approached and the Germans evacuated everybody--put all the men on the train, my uncle was on a train going to Czechoslovakia; my aunt was put on the train to Bergen-Belsen. She went to Bergen-Belsen, was liberated by the British and sent to Sweden. And in fact still lives in Stockholm. And we're going over to visit her again this August for her 90th birthday.

MS: Ah! Wonderful.

WG: I just talked to her last week on the phone, and she said, "Yes, be sure you bring your wife and children." "Well, my children, I, you know, they're grown men. I don't know if they have vacation or if they can make it, but my wife and I will come." My uncle was sent to Czechoslovakia. His train was stuck on a siding. It got stuck there. It was found by U.S. troops on the day after VE-Day. They opened it up. There were still some people alive in it, but my uncle was not among them, and he is buried in Czechoslovakia, where this train was stuck. My father's oldest brother and his wife were sent to Auschwitz. Their daughter got out on a children's transport to England, where the British naturally interned her as an enemy alien. But she got out and joined the British army and survived the war, and she has since passed away, but she survived. Her parents did not. My father's middle brother, he had, he had been married to a convert. He married

a Christian gal that converted to Judaism, and when they were told that--she was told that she must file for divorce so that this marriage could be broken up, she refused. And both of them were arrested, but not sent to a concentration camp. They were arrested before that, they had concentra--eh, an extermination camp. They were both sent to *Organisation Todt*, which was the labor bureau, forced labor.

MS: What is that name again?

WG: *Organisation Todt*. It was run by this gentleman by the name of Todt, and they were sent to separate labor camps. And all through the war, Himmler, who ran, through the S.S., ran the extermination camps, never had access to Jews who were in a forced labor camp. So, my uncle and my aunt both survived the war, and got together again after the war, in Berlin, where they have since both passed away. But, they, my uncle spent the war years building railroads and my aunt spent the war years loading artillery shells.

MS: And they remained in Berlin after the war?

WG: They remained in Berlin after the war and they passed away in the late '50's. But, other than that, cousins, numerous cousins just disappeared.

MS: Perished.

WG: Perished. Some that had gotten out, some to Israel, some to Shanghai, they survived of course. Several that went to Holland did not. They did not get to Israel and they did not survive.

MS: Tell me about your parents. How, what happened to them? Did they come to the United States as well?

WG: They eventually came. See, I was born in Berlin, so I was German quota. And right after the war German quota was quite available because Germans were not admitted. If you had a German passport you could not come to the U.S. because you were still an enemy until the peace treaty was signed many years later. So that there was a window of opportunity, I came in as a German quota, non-German. The part of Germany where my father was born was given to Poland after WWI, and when the U.S. immigration laws were set, they were set so that he became Polish quota, because it depended on where, what nationality--not what nationality you were, but what country owned the place where you were born. And as, when the U.S. law came in, that was part of Poland, he was Polish quota. And Polish quota was not worked after WWII, because Poland was considered Communist. So no one from the Polish quota could come in. So my parents couldn't come to the U.S. when I came. However, my sister was a war bride, and when she became a citizen in 1949--it took just three years for a war bride to become a citizen--then, they could come as parents' preference, because they were parents of an American citizen. And they came in '49, when my sister became a citizen. My aunt and grandmother remained in Shanghai till after the Communists took over Shanghai. Then they expelled all the whites--the Chinese Communists did--and they didn't have a visa to get to the States. They couldn't come, so the U.N. sent them back to a refugee camp, a D.P. camp in Europe, until my father could bring them over and could send for them. He got a job here in a hospital in Maryland.

He got a job and brought my aunt and my grandmother over. My uncle and my grandfather both had died in Shanghai and were buried in Shanghai. When we went back, I tried to look up their graves, but during the cultural revolution all cemeteries were destroyed. So there...

MS: No evidence.

WG: There is no evidence there at all. They are now, I understand, trying to resurrect come of the cemeteries or, I don't know what they're doing. But I went to the Sephardic cemetery and the British Christian cemetery. They'd all disappeared during the cultural revolution and built over. They're gone.

MS: So how did your parents acclimate themselves to life in the United States? I'm sure you did very well.

WG: Well, I came here and went to school, you know, and finally got a degree, got another degree and another degree. Went to...

MS: What type of work do you do?

WG: I was a chemical engineer and, if they hadn't thrown me out, I would probably still be in school, because I enjoy the academic life a lot. But when they took my fellowship away and said, you know, "You've had it long enough. It's time you wrote up your thesis and got your degree and got out of here." "No, you can't do that!" They said, "Yes, we sure can." So I left, and got, went to work.

MS: [chuckling]

WG: But, yeah, you know what, the eight years of undergraduate life made me really enjoy academic life, so I added on six more in graduate school.

MS: Perpetual student.

WG: I, I would easily have been a perpetual student if it weren't for this eating business. You like to [chuckling], also by that time I was married and had a kid, and, you know, so, you have to go to work some time. So I went to work. But, that wasn't till 1956. But my father, he got a job. See, the AMA, American Medical Association, has peculiar rules, that you can't practice medicine without a license, and they make it very difficult to get one, except for the fact that you, they find that no one who has a license wants to work in state hospitals, because they don't pay anything. So there is, or was, I don't know if it still is--at least there was in the '50's when my parents came here--a rule that you didn't need a legal license to practice medicine in a state hospital.

MS: Well how would a pediatrician fit into this?

WG: My father got a job at the Cranswell State Hospital for the Colored Insane.

MS: Oh God.

WG: Which is not one of their prime appointments that AMA licensed physicians like to take. In fact, the entire staff was made up of Jewish refugees who had come over at--my father, he came over in 1949. He was 58 years old and going to med school was not what he had in mind.