

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,020

2
00:00:01,020 --> 00:00:01,520
is up.

3
00:00:01,520 --> 00:00:02,560
Slate four is up.

4
00:00:02,560 --> 00:00:19,290

5
00:00:19,290 --> 00:00:23,550
Can you talk a little
bit about how difficult

6
00:00:23,550 --> 00:00:27,720
it would have been for
an American commander

7
00:00:27,720 --> 00:00:31,770
to understand the special
problems that Jewish displaced

8
00:00:31,770 --> 00:00:35,290
persons faced or American
commanders in general?

9
00:00:35,290 --> 00:00:37,500
I don't mean just
General Eisenhower, who

10
00:00:37,500 --> 00:00:39,900
I think had a
unique vision, but I

11
00:00:39,900 --> 00:00:44,650
mean how difficult
it was to understand

12
00:00:44,650 --> 00:00:48,280

what those problems
of repatriation were.

13
00:00:48,280 --> 00:00:54,430

14
00:00:54,430 --> 00:01:03,550
Each DP camp had a
military officer in charge

15
00:01:03,550 --> 00:01:09,710
together with a UNRRA team
and one or more people

16
00:01:09,710 --> 00:01:18,020
sent by the JDC, the Joint
Distribution Committee.

17
00:01:18,020 --> 00:01:22,450
These officers frequently
and their superiors,

18
00:01:22,450 --> 00:01:28,220
that is, captains and
majors above them,

19
00:01:28,220 --> 00:01:34,890
had little knowledge
about what had transpired

20
00:01:34,890 --> 00:01:41,160
during the years of the
war and particularly

21
00:01:41,160 --> 00:01:44,190
no knowledge whatsoever as to
what had happened to the Jews

22
00:01:44,190 --> 00:01:46,440
during the war.

23
00:01:46,440 --> 00:01:49,410
For the most part,

very few of them

24
00:01:49,410 --> 00:01:56,590
knew anything at all about
the treatment accorded Jews

25
00:01:56,590 --> 00:01:57,370
by the Nazis.

26
00:01:57,370 --> 00:02:00,460

27
00:02:00,460 --> 00:02:04,960
I'm sorry to say
that some of them

28
00:02:04,960 --> 00:02:09,970
had a little bit of
antisemitism, which

29
00:02:09,970 --> 00:02:15,480
was to have been expected
because members of the American

30
00:02:15,480 --> 00:02:19,730
Army were a broad cross-section
of the American people.

31
00:02:19,730 --> 00:02:22,830

32
00:02:22,830 --> 00:02:31,960
I think that in 1941, the
year that war was declared

33
00:02:31,960 --> 00:02:35,850
in the United States, in
December of that year,

34
00:02:35,850 --> 00:02:41,320
there was far more antisemitism
in the United States then

35

00:02:41,320 --> 00:02:45,690
there is in 1995.

36

00:02:45,690 --> 00:02:53,950
There had been antisemitic
preachers and speakers

37

00:02:53,950 --> 00:02:55,390
on the radio--

38

00:02:55,390 --> 00:02:58,950
there was no television
then, but on the radio--

39

00:02:58,950 --> 00:03:04,770
week in and week out like Father
Coughlin, Gerald LK Smith,

40

00:03:04,770 --> 00:03:05,550
and others.

41

00:03:05,550 --> 00:03:08,170

42

00:03:08,170 --> 00:03:12,940
And I'm sure that their words,
spoken week in and week out,

43

00:03:12,940 --> 00:03:15,770
had an effect.

44

00:03:15,770 --> 00:03:18,520
So to come back to
the subject, there

45

00:03:18,520 --> 00:03:22,750
was antisemitism
on the part of some

46

00:03:22,750 --> 00:03:30,320
if not all of American military
officers, and even more,

47

00:03:30,320 --> 00:03:34,600
there was little
knowledge on their part.

48

00:03:34,600 --> 00:03:39,200
In some cases, they were doing
a job that they didn't like

49

00:03:39,200 --> 00:03:43,250
doing, that they didn't want to
do because it wasn't, strictly

50

00:03:43,250 --> 00:03:47,660
speaking, a military
position something that they

51

00:03:47,660 --> 00:03:55,000
had expected when they entered
the army so very often,

52

00:03:55,000 --> 00:03:58,750
the military men placed
in charge of camps

53

00:03:58,750 --> 00:04:00,980
provided problems.

54

00:04:00,980 --> 00:04:05,240
Mind you, some of them
were good-hearted people,

55

00:04:05,240 --> 00:04:11,130
and they tried to do what
they thought was best.

56

00:04:11,130 --> 00:04:15,240
But they were young men.

57

00:04:15,240 --> 00:04:18,660
They were dealing with people
who not only had suffered

58

00:04:18,660 --> 00:04:27,190

greatly under the Germans
during World War II but who,

59

00:04:27,190 --> 00:04:28,510

before the war--

60

00:04:28,510 --> 00:04:32,950

many of these survivors
had been prominent people

61

00:04:32,950 --> 00:04:34,900

in their home cities.

62

00:04:34,900 --> 00:04:38,690

They were older, mature
people, and yet they

63

00:04:38,690 --> 00:04:42,260

were lorded over by
perhaps a young lieutenant

64

00:04:42,260 --> 00:04:47,420

in his early 20s
who thought that he

65

00:04:47,420 --> 00:04:49,340

knew what was best for them.

66

00:04:49,340 --> 00:04:52,950

67

00:04:52,950 --> 00:05:00,120

In addition to this, I must
say that the orders that

68

00:05:00,120 --> 00:05:03,630

emanated from General
Eisenhower's headquarters

69

00:05:03,630 --> 00:05:07,360

in Frankfurt were

not always translated

70
00:05:07,360 --> 00:05:11,800
into action in the
field, and that was

71
00:05:11,800 --> 00:05:14,715
the source of many problems.

72
00:05:14,715 --> 00:05:23,110

73
00:05:23,110 --> 00:05:30,898
Do you think that the Americans
accomplished something, though,

74
00:05:30,898 --> 00:05:33,010
in the running of the DP camps?

75
00:05:33,010 --> 00:05:36,090
Were there some
people who ran those

76
00:05:36,090 --> 00:05:41,010
who bent rules, and did help,
and did accomplish something?

77
00:05:41,010 --> 00:05:46,350
There were many Americans,
many military Americans,

78
00:05:46,350 --> 00:05:53,280
who are of great help, and
that should be underscored.

79
00:05:53,280 --> 00:05:59,780
There were many Americans who
overlooked military regulations

80
00:05:59,780 --> 00:06:04,500
in order to help the survivors.

81

00:06:04,500 --> 00:06:10,810
In addition, the divisions
that first liberated

82
00:06:10,810 --> 00:06:17,620
the camps did everything
that they possibly

83
00:06:17,620 --> 00:06:22,530
could to help the
stricken men, and women,

84
00:06:22,530 --> 00:06:28,020
and even some children whom
they found in the concentration

85
00:06:28,020 --> 00:06:31,020
camps that they had liberated.

86
00:06:31,020 --> 00:06:38,950
I know that American Army
medical men and women

87
00:06:38,950 --> 00:06:44,020
worked around the
clock to help save

88
00:06:44,020 --> 00:06:51,230
the lives of the survivors
in the concentration camps.

89
00:06:51,230 --> 00:06:54,080
Many of them they
could not save.

90
00:06:54,080 --> 00:06:58,880
They were too far gone,
and they died in the hands

91
00:06:58,880 --> 00:07:02,480
of their American rescuers.

92
00:07:02,480 --> 00:07:10,610

But doctors, surgeons,
nurses worked 24 hours a day

93
00:07:10,610 --> 00:07:15,680
after their unit had captured
a concentration camp in order

94
00:07:15,680 --> 00:07:24,220
to help save the Jews whom
they could possibly save.

95
00:07:24,220 --> 00:07:31,690
And so all praise to them and
to the many other American

96
00:07:31,690 --> 00:07:36,160
military people who
helped save the lives

97
00:07:36,160 --> 00:07:38,920
of many Jewish survivors.

98
00:07:38,920 --> 00:07:44,190
May I give you just one
interesting example?

99
00:07:44,190 --> 00:07:50,060
In Austria, in
Salzburg, I called

100
00:07:50,060 --> 00:07:54,800
upon the G5, the officer in
charge of civilian government

101
00:07:54,800 --> 00:08:00,270
in occupied countries,
the G5, for Austria,

102
00:08:00,270 --> 00:08:09,760
who was General Hume, and
he was of extraordinary help

103
00:08:09,760 --> 00:08:15,460

in helping the Jewish survivors
in the liberated concentration

104
00:08:15,460 --> 00:08:19,290
camps of Austria.

105
00:08:19,290 --> 00:08:20,610
But there were many like him.

106
00:08:20,610 --> 00:08:25,190

107
00:08:25,190 --> 00:08:29,820
So they actually bent the
rules in order to help?

108
00:08:29,820 --> 00:08:34,404
They were operating from within
a bureaucracy, in a sense,

109
00:08:34,404 --> 00:08:39,980
and they weren't dealing
with pushing paper around?

110
00:08:39,980 --> 00:08:41,120
No, they were not.

111
00:08:41,120 --> 00:08:45,260
And if I go back a little
bit, when I was still

112
00:08:45,260 --> 00:08:54,410
stationed in Paris,
the Jewish underground

113
00:08:54,410 --> 00:09:02,000
that had just begun to operate
in conquered Europe and in

114
00:09:02,000 --> 00:09:04,950
liberated Europe--

115

00:09:04,950 --> 00:09:06,990
one of their leaders
came to see me

116
00:09:06,990 --> 00:09:13,590
to say that there were
about some 600 Jews who

117
00:09:13,590 --> 00:09:20,290
were to be moved across
the still-fluid borders

118
00:09:20,290 --> 00:09:26,200
from Germany into to France
and down to Marseilles

119
00:09:26,200 --> 00:09:31,870
where they were to be put aboard
a so-called "illegal" ship that

120
00:09:31,870 --> 00:09:36,790
was to try to run the
British blockade to land

121
00:09:36,790 --> 00:09:42,050
these people, these
survivors in Palestine.

122
00:09:42,050 --> 00:09:47,140
He came to see me
because he lacked food

123
00:09:47,140 --> 00:09:51,610
for the people who were to
be aboard ship for who knows,

124
00:09:51,610 --> 00:09:55,270
a week, 10 days, two weeks.

125
00:09:55,270 --> 00:10:00,790
It had come to my attention
that there were American Army

126

00:10:00,790 --> 00:10:09,470
warehouses in Paris full
of survivor food kits that

127
00:10:09,470 --> 00:10:11,930
had been dispatched to
Paris for forwarding

128
00:10:11,930 --> 00:10:19,070
through Switzerland to American
prisoners of war in Germany.

129
00:10:19,070 --> 00:10:22,440
The war in Europe was now over.

130
00:10:22,440 --> 00:10:27,830
These prisoner-of-war packages
were no longer needed.

131
00:10:27,830 --> 00:10:29,930
American military
prisoners of war

132
00:10:29,930 --> 00:10:35,560
were sent home at once as
soon as they were liberated.

133
00:10:35,560 --> 00:10:40,720
These food packages were
being stolen regularly,

134
00:10:40,720 --> 00:10:45,440
and they were appearing on
the French black market.

135
00:10:45,440 --> 00:10:49,910
I went to the American
quartermaster general in Paris,

136
00:10:49,910 --> 00:10:57,720
asked him if I could remove
these prisoner-of-war packages

137

00:10:57,720 --> 00:11:02,970
from these several
warehouses because a number

138
00:11:02,970 --> 00:11:06,060
of Jewish survivors are
being moved from one

139
00:11:06,060 --> 00:11:07,570
place to another.

140
00:11:07,570 --> 00:11:12,130
He didn't ask me for
specific answers.

141
00:11:12,130 --> 00:11:14,940
He quickly signed the order.

142
00:11:14,940 --> 00:11:20,130
He understood what I
was asking him for.

143
00:11:20,130 --> 00:11:21,090
Take five.

144
00:11:21,090 --> 00:11:26,370

145
00:11:26,370 --> 00:11:27,150
OK.

146
00:11:27,150 --> 00:11:31,220
Why don't you just
re-summarize that last point?

147
00:11:31,220 --> 00:11:35,120

148
00:11:35,120 --> 00:11:40,910
I had gotten a request from the
Jewish Agency representative

149

00:11:40,910 --> 00:11:52,750
in Paris to try to get some food
for a shipment of people who

150

00:11:52,750 --> 00:11:57,380
were being brought across
the still-fluid borders

151

00:11:57,380 --> 00:12:01,490
from Germany into France down
to Marseilles, where there were

152

00:12:01,490 --> 00:12:06,740
to board so-called
"illegal" ships to try

153

00:12:06,740 --> 00:12:10,890
to run the blockade
put up by the British

154

00:12:10,890 --> 00:12:16,790
and to get the survivors
into Palestine.

155

00:12:16,790 --> 00:12:21,920
I had learned that there
were American prisoner-of-war

156

00:12:21,920 --> 00:12:27,540
packages in several American
military warehouses in Paris,

157

00:12:27,540 --> 00:12:30,200
which were no longer needed
because our prisoners of war

158

00:12:30,200 --> 00:12:33,970
had already been sent back home.

159

00:12:33,970 --> 00:12:39,330
I went to the quartermaster
general headquarters in Paris.

160

00:12:39,330 --> 00:12:44,370

I told him that
a group of Jews--

161

00:12:44,370 --> 00:12:46,050

they were survivors,
I explained--

162

00:12:46,050 --> 00:12:51,510

had to be moved from one place
to another, that they required

163

00:12:51,510 --> 00:12:55,700

food for the journey,
that there were

164

00:12:55,700 --> 00:13:00,630

these warehouses of
American military war

165

00:13:00,630 --> 00:13:05,730

packages in our warehouses in
Paris, packages that would no

166

00:13:05,730 --> 00:13:10,910

longer be needed, that
were already being stolen,

167

00:13:10,910 --> 00:13:15,240

that were already appearing
on the French black market.

168

00:13:15,240 --> 00:13:22,030

I asked him would he not
grant permission for all

169

00:13:22,030 --> 00:13:25,240

of those military
prisoner-of-war packages

170

00:13:25,240 --> 00:13:29,350

to be removed from the
warehouses for this purpose,

171
00:13:29,350 --> 00:13:34,280
of feeding hundreds of
Jews on this journey.

172
00:13:34,280 --> 00:13:37,130

173
00:13:37,130 --> 00:13:43,670
He did not ask me any questions
about where they were coming

174
00:13:43,670 --> 00:13:46,100
from or where they were going.

175
00:13:46,100 --> 00:13:49,140

176
00:13:49,140 --> 00:13:53,920
He understood that he had
better not ask the questions.

177
00:13:53,920 --> 00:13:59,750
He didn't want information
that might bother him.

178
00:13:59,750 --> 00:14:05,250
So he bent the rules and
quickly signed the order,

179
00:14:05,250 --> 00:14:09,560
and for the next
several days, the trucks

180
00:14:09,560 --> 00:14:15,290
hired by the Jewish Agency
representative in Paris

181
00:14:15,290 --> 00:14:19,670
were busy transporting the
prisoner-of-war packages out

182
00:14:19,670 --> 00:14:24,080

of the American
military warehouses

183
00:14:24,080 --> 00:14:28,270
to be used for the purpose
I indicated at the outset.

184
00:14:28,270 --> 00:14:31,650

185
00:14:31,650 --> 00:14:37,600
And were there lots of
instances of bending the rules?

186
00:14:37,600 --> 00:14:40,780
There were a number
of instances.

187
00:14:40,780 --> 00:14:44,800
I know that other Jewish
chaplains of the American

188
00:14:44,800 --> 00:14:52,410
Army who had been asked to
help in the same project I just

189
00:14:52,410 --> 00:15:02,220
mentioned got medical
supplies and even ammunition,

190
00:15:02,220 --> 00:15:11,130
and these were all obtained from
American military officers who

191
00:15:11,130 --> 00:15:16,140
gave them voluntarily,
knowing the purpose for which

192
00:15:16,140 --> 00:15:18,480
these supplies were to be used.

193
00:15:18,480 --> 00:15:22,450

194
00:15:22,450 --> 00:15:23,080
OK.

195
00:15:23,080 --> 00:15:29,360
Now let's talk about the problem
for the survivors of finding

196
00:15:29,360 --> 00:15:30,310
families?

197
00:15:30,310 --> 00:15:32,900
What were some of the ways
they went about looking--

198
00:15:32,900 --> 00:15:41,280
One of the first desires on
the part of liberated survivors

199
00:15:41,280 --> 00:15:45,285
was to try to find
members of their families.

200
00:15:45,285 --> 00:15:48,990

201
00:15:48,990 --> 00:15:53,770
In some cases, they
had left families

202
00:15:53,770 --> 00:15:56,950
behind in their native
cities and towns.

203
00:15:56,950 --> 00:16:00,520

204
00:16:00,520 --> 00:16:04,470
They went back, some
of them, to look

205
00:16:04,470 --> 00:16:08,150

for a members of their families.

206

00:16:08,150 --> 00:16:14,790

In most cases, they returned
without having found any.

207

00:16:14,790 --> 00:16:20,740

In one particular case, that
of Dr. Solomon Greenberg, who

208

00:16:20,740 --> 00:16:25,370

was head of the St.
Ottilien DP camp,

209

00:16:25,370 --> 00:16:28,580

which was really a hospital.

210

00:16:28,580 --> 00:16:35,390

He had left his little son with
a Christian neighbor in Vilna,

211

00:16:35,390 --> 00:16:42,150

in Lithuania, and he went back.

212

00:16:42,150 --> 00:16:47,570

He found the child and brought
the child back with him

213

00:16:47,570 --> 00:16:50,750

to St. Ottilien.

214

00:16:50,750 --> 00:16:58,630

Then these survivors wanted
to get in touch with members

215

00:16:58,630 --> 00:17:04,060

of their families who
lived in the United States,

216

00:17:04,060 --> 00:17:07,380

and I tried to be
of help to them.

217

00:17:07,380 --> 00:17:10,720

218

00:17:10,720 --> 00:17:15,220

In France, the survivors came
to see me at Army headquarters,

219

00:17:15,220 --> 00:17:19,890

French Jewish survivors,
and I sent their letters

220

00:17:19,890 --> 00:17:26,800

to the addresses of families
in America that they still had.

221

00:17:26,800 --> 00:17:30,000

When I received
the letters back,

222

00:17:30,000 --> 00:17:34,200

I gave them to the French Jews.

223

00:17:34,200 --> 00:17:38,550

Remember, there was still no
regular email for civilians.

224

00:17:38,550 --> 00:17:41,430

225

00:17:41,430 --> 00:17:47,210

In Germany, one of
the first things

226

00:17:47,210 --> 00:17:53,000

that was done by the Central
Committee of the Liberated Jews

227

00:17:53,000 --> 00:17:55,060

of Bavaria--

228

00:17:55,060 --> 00:18:01,200

these were Jewish leaders

who had been liberated

229

00:18:01,200 --> 00:18:04,260
from the concentration camps
and who were living, at first,

230

00:18:04,260 --> 00:18:06,150
in DP camps.

231

00:18:06,150 --> 00:18:10,640
They had been leaders of Jewish
communities in Eastern Europe.

232

00:18:10,640 --> 00:18:16,300
They knew what
leadership entailed.

233

00:18:16,300 --> 00:18:21,720
They quickly created
a committee in Munich,

234

00:18:21,720 --> 00:18:23,850
and one of the first
things that committee did

235

00:18:23,850 --> 00:18:30,480
was to try to get a
roster of the names of all

236

00:18:30,480 --> 00:18:32,835
of the survivors in the
American zone of Germany.

237

00:18:32,835 --> 00:18:35,920

238

00:18:35,920 --> 00:18:41,530
And they tried to forward
mail from these people

239

00:18:41,530 --> 00:18:45,600
to their relatives
in America through

240
00:18:45,600 --> 00:18:48,570
American Jewish chaplains.

241
00:18:48,570 --> 00:18:51,670

242
00:18:51,670 --> 00:18:57,420
Many of them brought
letters to me in Frankfurt

243
00:18:57,420 --> 00:19:02,010
to forward to their relatives
in the United States,

244
00:19:02,010 --> 00:19:08,460
and soon my daily mail
included many letters

245
00:19:08,460 --> 00:19:14,730
from people in the United States
writing to their surviving

246
00:19:14,730 --> 00:19:18,850
family members in
the DP camps, which

247
00:19:18,850 --> 00:19:23,740
I forwarded to the UNRRA team
or the GDC people working

248
00:19:23,740 --> 00:19:30,750
in the camps to be distributed
to the proper people.

249
00:19:30,750 --> 00:19:33,330
And indeed that was
one of the first things

250
00:19:33,330 --> 00:19:37,390
that liberated survivors
wanted to accomplish,

251
00:19:37,390 --> 00:19:38,640
to get in touch with families.

252
00:19:38,640 --> 00:19:41,240

253
00:19:41,240 --> 00:19:42,370
What about in Europe?

254
00:19:42,370 --> 00:19:44,870
What kinds of things
did they do there?

255
00:19:44,870 --> 00:19:48,930
Did they put lists everywhere?

256
00:19:48,930 --> 00:19:50,340
Did you see any of that?

257
00:19:50,340 --> 00:19:52,380
Did you see any
reunions that were--

258
00:19:52,380 --> 00:19:53,520
I didn't see lists.

259
00:19:53,520 --> 00:19:56,340
There weren't lists
posted in the DP camps.

260
00:19:56,340 --> 00:20:00,390
But within each DP camp,
there was a committee elected

261
00:20:00,390 --> 00:20:05,130
by the survivors,
and this committee

262
00:20:05,130 --> 00:20:08,520
would gather the names of all
of the people in the camp.

263

00:20:08,520 --> 00:20:10,770

They would forward the list
to the Central Committee

264

00:20:10,770 --> 00:20:16,320

of Liberated Jews in
Munich, and that committee

265

00:20:16,320 --> 00:20:19,860

would then try to get
in touch with relatives

266

00:20:19,860 --> 00:20:23,570

in other countries.

267

00:20:23,570 --> 00:20:26,250

And also within Germany,
and also within--

268

00:20:26,250 --> 00:20:29,158

Oh, yes, within Germany
itself, of course.

269

00:20:29,158 --> 00:20:30,700

That was one of the
first things they

270

00:20:30,700 --> 00:20:35,840

did was to look at the list and
see if they could find wives,

271

00:20:35,840 --> 00:20:41,230

husbands, brothers,
sisters who had survived

272

00:20:41,230 --> 00:20:45,040

the war in other concentration
camps in Germany or Austria.

273

00:20:45,040 --> 00:20:50,900

274

00:20:50,900 --> 00:20:54,210
Tell me about the
visit of Ben-Gurion

275
00:20:54,210 --> 00:20:59,090
and what it meant not
just to you but also

276
00:20:59,090 --> 00:21:00,485
the people in the camps.

277
00:21:00,485 --> 00:21:05,710

278
00:21:05,710 --> 00:21:12,390
Ben-Gurion had sent
a request from Paris,

279
00:21:12,390 --> 00:21:19,030
where he was visiting,
to General Eisenhower

280
00:21:19,030 --> 00:21:21,460
and to General Montgomery
asking for permission

281
00:21:21,460 --> 00:21:28,180
to enter the American zone and
the British zone, respectively.

282
00:21:28,180 --> 00:21:33,060
And I was called by someone in
General Eisenhower's office,

283
00:21:33,060 --> 00:21:35,370
and I was asked if I
knew who this man was

284
00:21:35,370 --> 00:21:38,510
who wanted to visit.

285
00:21:38,510 --> 00:21:40,670
I told the person,

yes, I knew who

286

00:21:40,670 --> 00:21:49,720
he was, that he was the head of
the Jews of Palestine, roughly,

287

00:21:49,720 --> 00:21:52,250
a rough description.

288

00:21:52,250 --> 00:21:54,530
I was asked whether
I thought it was

289

00:21:54,530 --> 00:21:58,670
advisable to permit him to enter
the American zone of Germany.

290

00:21:58,670 --> 00:22:00,950
I answered, it would
be most advisable

291

00:22:00,950 --> 00:22:05,420
because his very
arrival would lift

292

00:22:05,420 --> 00:22:10,230
the morale of the
survivors in the DP camps.

293

00:22:10,230 --> 00:22:13,640
So permission was sent to him.

294

00:22:13,640 --> 00:22:17,490
Can we just--

295

00:22:17,490 --> 00:22:19,030
Go to camera roll six.

296

00:22:19,030 --> 00:22:20,100
Slate six is up.

297

00:22:20,100 --> 00:22:35,940

298
00:22:35,940 --> 00:22:36,480
OK.

299
00:22:36,480 --> 00:22:39,560
Now we're continuing with--

300
00:22:39,560 --> 00:22:46,500
It so happened that I was to
proceed to Paris for a day

301
00:22:46,500 --> 00:22:50,710
to receive the Croix de
Guerre from General De Gaulle,

302
00:22:50,710 --> 00:22:53,380
and when I arrived
in Paris, I called

303
00:22:53,380 --> 00:22:57,500
the office of the Jewish Agency
and learned that Ben-Gurion

304
00:22:57,500 --> 00:23:02,710
was in Paris the Claridge
Hotel and he would very much

305
00:23:02,710 --> 00:23:05,210
like to see me.

306
00:23:05,210 --> 00:23:07,730
After the Croix de
Guerre ceremonies,

307
00:23:07,730 --> 00:23:11,540
I went to the hotel,
met Ben-Gurion,

308
00:23:11,540 --> 00:23:16,670
and he asked me generally
about the conditions

309

00:23:16,670 --> 00:23:18,140
of the survivors.

310

00:23:18,140 --> 00:23:22,520
And then I told him I would
meet him that very night

311

00:23:22,520 --> 00:23:27,110
on the railroad platform for
the American military train that

312

00:23:27,110 --> 00:23:31,500
ran between Paris and Frankfurt.

313

00:23:31,500 --> 00:23:35,550
I got there early at
the railroad station,

314

00:23:35,550 --> 00:23:41,930
and I saw the American captain
in charge of the train.

315

00:23:41,930 --> 00:23:47,420
He gave me a ticket
for the train,

316

00:23:47,420 --> 00:23:49,340
my quarters on the train.

317

00:23:49,340 --> 00:23:52,820
My accommodation was to
be half of a bedroom.

318

00:23:52,820 --> 00:23:59,290
I was to share it with
another American Army major.

319

00:23:59,290 --> 00:24:04,750
When Ben-Gurion came, I was
standing on the platform

320

00:24:04,750 --> 00:24:07,250

waiting for him.

321

00:24:07,250 --> 00:24:11,620

I asked him to wait, and I went
to the captain of the train

322

00:24:11,620 --> 00:24:18,420

and asked him where was
this gentleman to be seated.

323

00:24:18,420 --> 00:24:19,920

He asked me for his name.

324

00:24:19,920 --> 00:24:22,150

I gave it to him.

325

00:24:22,150 --> 00:24:26,800

He said, well, he was
to sit in the coach.

326

00:24:26,800 --> 00:24:31,030

I told the captain
that this gentleman was

327

00:24:31,030 --> 00:24:36,140

a distinguished visitor who is
coming to General Eisenhower's

328

00:24:36,140 --> 00:24:40,180

headquarters, and
it was not proper

329

00:24:40,180 --> 00:24:45,840

for him to sit up
all night in a coach.

330

00:24:45,840 --> 00:24:50,590

The captain asked me what
I thought he should do.

331

00:24:50,590 --> 00:24:55,570

I said, I think you should tell
the major sharing that bedroom

332
00:24:55,570 --> 00:25:00,130
with me that, unfortunately,
distinguished guests of General

333
00:25:00,130 --> 00:25:07,280
Eisenhower had arrived to
take the train for Frankfurt

334
00:25:07,280 --> 00:25:10,070
and that the major would
have to leave the bedroom

335
00:25:10,070 --> 00:25:13,770
and take a seat in the coach.

336
00:25:13,770 --> 00:25:15,120
That's what happened.

337
00:25:15,120 --> 00:25:19,410
And so Ben-Gurion go on
and I occupied the bedroom

338
00:25:19,410 --> 00:25:25,390
on the train, and we
talked until about 2:00.

339
00:25:25,390 --> 00:25:29,260
As the train was
riding, well, Ben-Gurion

340
00:25:29,260 --> 00:25:32,365
plied me with questions
about the displaced persons.

341
00:25:32,365 --> 00:25:35,020

342
00:25:35,020 --> 00:25:39,070
We arrived in the
morning at Frankfurt.

343

00:25:39,070 --> 00:25:43,250

I took him to headquarters
I introduced him

344

00:25:43,250 --> 00:25:48,740

to general Walter Bedell
Smith, chief of staff.

345

00:25:48,740 --> 00:25:54,390

General Eisenhower was away on
one of his many field trips,

346

00:25:54,390 --> 00:25:59,100

and then I took him to
his first concentration--

347

00:25:59,100 --> 00:26:04,650

to his first displaced persons
camp, his first DP camp.

348

00:26:04,650 --> 00:26:08,220

The camp was called
Zeilsheim near HÄ¶chst,

349

00:26:08,220 --> 00:26:13,490

not too long a ride
from Frankfurt.

350

00:26:13,490 --> 00:26:18,090

I'd requisitioned a
reconnaissance car.

351

00:26:18,090 --> 00:26:23,560

We arrived at Zeilsheim,
drove into the camp.

352

00:26:23,560 --> 00:26:25,840

I told the driver to wait.

353

00:26:25,840 --> 00:26:33,910

I stepped out of the car, and
a number of the people living

354

00:26:33,910 --> 00:26:35,690
in the DP camp came up to me.

355
00:26:35,690 --> 00:26:36,790
They knew who I was.

356
00:26:36,790 --> 00:26:38,950
I'd been there often before.

357
00:26:38,950 --> 00:26:41,230
We chatted a while, and
suddenly one of them

358
00:26:41,230 --> 00:26:43,540
went over to the car,
and looked inside,

359
00:26:43,540 --> 00:26:49,120
and saw this man sitting
in the back seat.

360
00:26:49,120 --> 00:26:52,340
He couldn't believe his eyes.

361
00:26:52,340 --> 00:26:57,970
He looked, and then he
screamed, Ben-Gurion.

362
00:26:57,970 --> 00:27:01,660
And the others came
running to look,

363
00:27:01,660 --> 00:27:06,630
and they too began screaming
at this familiar face.

364
00:27:06,630 --> 00:27:11,110
To them, it was unbelievable
that this man who

365
00:27:11,110 --> 00:27:15,940
was the head of the Jewish
Agency for Palestine,

366
00:27:15,940 --> 00:27:24,850
the head of the
government of the Jews,

367
00:27:24,850 --> 00:27:29,830
the substitute for a government
was there in Zeilsheim,

368
00:27:29,830 --> 00:27:32,730
in their DP camp.

369
00:27:32,730 --> 00:27:36,330
And other Jews came
running, and I was afraid

370
00:27:36,330 --> 00:27:38,980
that a riot might ensue.

371
00:27:38,980 --> 00:27:44,010
So I quickly called them
together, and I said to them,

372
00:27:44,010 --> 00:27:47,940
I want you to show Mr.
Ben-Gurion the discipline

373
00:27:47,940 --> 00:27:50,130
of which you are capable.

374
00:27:50,130 --> 00:27:55,080
He is going to speak to
all the people in the camp

375
00:27:55,080 --> 00:27:56,760
at the assembly hall.

376
00:27:56,760 --> 00:27:59,970
Now, you people run
around the camp.

377
00:27:59,970 --> 00:28:03,480

Tell the people to get
together in the assembly hall,

378
00:28:03,480 --> 00:28:07,980
and they will hear Mr.
David Ben-Gurion speak.

379
00:28:07,980 --> 00:28:09,450
They did that.

380
00:28:09,450 --> 00:28:14,570
I drove with Mr. Ben-Gurion
to the assembly hall,

381
00:28:14,570 --> 00:28:19,940
and we waited there
for the people to come.

382
00:28:19,940 --> 00:28:24,170
Very soon, they pack
the entire hall,

383
00:28:24,170 --> 00:28:28,700
and those who didn't get in
stood outside the open windows

384
00:28:28,700 --> 00:28:33,930
and doors, straining to
listen to what would happen.

385
00:28:33,930 --> 00:28:38,950
And when the place was as
jammed as it could possibly get,

386
00:28:38,950 --> 00:28:44,650
I escorted Mr. Ben-Gurion
out on the stage,

387
00:28:44,650 --> 00:28:51,670
and as soon as he appeared,
the people rose to their feet.

388
00:28:51,670 --> 00:28:56,100

And they began to
sing "Hatikva,"

389
00:28:56,100 --> 00:29:01,960
"The Hope," the national
anthem of the Jews living

390
00:29:01,960 --> 00:29:05,450
in what was then Palestine.

391
00:29:05,450 --> 00:29:11,750
And as they sang, they
broke down into tears,

392
00:29:11,750 --> 00:29:16,750
and Mr. Ben-Gurion
did, and I did.

393
00:29:16,750 --> 00:29:22,370
And eventually, when they
could get back to it,

394
00:29:22,370 --> 00:29:29,280
they finished singing,
and for the first time,

395
00:29:29,280 --> 00:29:31,740
for the first time,
these people who

396
00:29:31,740 --> 00:29:40,860
had gone through years of
hell knew that they were free.

397
00:29:40,860 --> 00:29:46,590
Most of them had cherished
the hope all through the years

398
00:29:46,590 --> 00:29:50,610
of their suffering
that maybe someday they

399
00:29:50,610 --> 00:29:56,960

could get to Palestine,
and here Palestine

400
00:29:56,960 --> 00:30:01,860
had come to them in the form
of the leader of the Jews

401
00:30:01,860 --> 00:30:06,220
of Palestine, David Ben-Gurion.

402
00:30:06,220 --> 00:30:12,450
And throughout his talk,
there were sobbing.

403
00:30:12,450 --> 00:30:19,780
There were tears, and at the
conclusion, there were cheers.

404
00:30:19,780 --> 00:30:24,930
It was a scene that
I shall never forget,

405
00:30:24,930 --> 00:30:30,440
and I'm sure that no one who
was there will ever forget it.

406
00:30:30,440 --> 00:30:37,310
And when I met Mr. Ben-Gurion in
the following years in Israel,

407
00:30:37,310 --> 00:30:43,790
he and I would often speak
about that historic event

408
00:30:43,790 --> 00:30:47,390
and the assembly hall of
the Zeilsheim DP camp.

409
00:30:47,390 --> 00:30:52,220

410
00:30:52,220 --> 00:30:59,050
I then took Mr. Ben-Gurion back

to American Army headquarters,

411

00:30:59,050 --> 00:31:04,470

and he very much wanted
to visit the DP camps.

412

00:31:04,470 --> 00:31:07,720

That was his reason for coming.

413

00:31:07,720 --> 00:31:13,940

And general Walter Bedell Smith
speaking for General Eisenhower

414

00:31:13,940 --> 00:31:20,660

asked Mr. Ben-Gurion if he
would visit the DP camps

415

00:31:20,660 --> 00:31:25,650

and bring back a report
to General Eisenhower

416

00:31:25,650 --> 00:31:29,710

together with recommendations.

417

00:31:29,710 --> 00:31:33,740

That night, Mr.
Ben-Gurion and I met

418

00:31:33,740 --> 00:31:40,310

with the committee of the Jewish
leaders of the Zeilsheim camp

419

00:31:40,310 --> 00:31:44,780

that we had visited
earlier in the day.

420

00:31:44,780 --> 00:31:50,130

Mr. Ben-Gurion fired
questions at them,

421

00:31:50,130 --> 00:31:54,090

trying to test their mettle
to see what they were made of,

422
00:31:54,090 --> 00:31:57,150
what did they really want.

423
00:31:57,150 --> 00:32:01,830
And I remember he asked
them a question that I knew

424
00:32:01,830 --> 00:32:04,590
was not a real
question, but he wanted

425
00:32:04,590 --> 00:32:06,560
to see how they would react.

426
00:32:06,560 --> 00:32:10,780
He asked them, if the
Jewish Agency were

427
00:32:10,780 --> 00:32:15,190
to give orders for all
the Jews of the DP camps

428
00:32:15,190 --> 00:32:19,330
in Germany to walk
out of their camps

429
00:32:19,330 --> 00:32:21,790
and to keep walking
until they crossed

430
00:32:21,790 --> 00:32:26,030
the borders to
Italy and to France

431
00:32:26,030 --> 00:32:30,460
and to go to the southern
coast of Italy and France

432
00:32:30,460 --> 00:32:36,290
and board ships for
Palestine, would you go,

433

00:32:36,290 --> 00:32:42,490
would you follow those orders
despite the danger involved?

434

00:32:42,490 --> 00:32:44,660
You might be shot at.

435

00:32:44,660 --> 00:32:46,040
You might be beaten.

436

00:32:46,040 --> 00:32:48,880
Would you go?

437

00:32:48,880 --> 00:32:50,920
And they gave the answer
that he had hoped for.

438

00:32:50,920 --> 00:32:54,390
They said, yes, we would go.

439

00:32:54,390 --> 00:32:57,630
We would follow your orders.

440

00:32:57,630 --> 00:33:02,290
And so he got the
answer he had hoped for.

441

00:33:02,290 --> 00:33:04,600
Unfortunately, I could
not accompany Mr.

442

00:33:04,600 --> 00:33:09,290
Ben-Gurion on his trip
to all the other DP camps

443

00:33:09,290 --> 00:33:16,540
because at that very same time
a civilian advisor to General

444

00:33:16,540 --> 00:33:24,740
Eisenhower, whose coming he
had suggested as a possibility

445

00:33:24,740 --> 00:33:29,750

in his first cable back to
Secretary of War Stimson--

446

00:33:29,750 --> 00:33:34,360

that gentleman was to
arrive that same night,

447

00:33:34,360 --> 00:33:36,790

and I was, of
course, to meet him

448

00:33:36,790 --> 00:33:40,060

and to bring him to
General Eisenhower.

449

00:33:40,060 --> 00:33:44,340

That gentleman was
Judge Simon H. Rifkind.