

Running. It's a little hard to see those numbers in there.

OK. All right. Let's pick up. We're in 1956 and you're in the army. And you're in Germany. That was the year of the Hungarian uprising.

Exactly.

Which was that? Was that?

That's very impressive that you know that. And the other ones below it. Because it did involve. It had a reaction in the military, which nobody knows here, I think. Nobody has mentioned it. I'm trying to think.

Ann was already in there so it must have been late '56. I don't remember exactly the month. But she was suddenly mobilized. And suddenly, you had to switch from a regular captain's uniform to, you know, a field uniform, and you had to assemble.

At the same time, they were devising an evacuation route for the family through France. This was called off within 24 hours, that the United States apparently had decided that it will not intervene. And that was the answer to that.

How did you find your experience in Germany?

I found for many, many reasons a very, very pleasant time. Clearly, I mentioned to you before, I replaced a regular army officer as a pediatrician. And the nurses that I dealt with clearly were regular army nurses, easily considerably older than myself.

And you know, I came out of this high-powered institution at Stanford, you know, where you're chief resident and had a whole bunch of residents under you. And here, clearly, you are low man on the totem pole in terms of rank. And they were all captains, much longer than I had been a captain.

And so it was somewhat difficult to establish a relationship. Because in long run, I thought that if you don't get to see eye to eye, you know, who's going to suffer it probably will be the kids.

So we got together, and I made it quite clear that they certainly outrank me, and if I meet them outside, I will have to salute first. But in the hospital, in the department, I am in charge, and what I say goes. And they are certainly entitled to question me and see why the reasons or convince me something should be done, but the one who is in charge is I. It worked like a charm.

Did it?

It worked like a charm. Believe it or not, the so-called battle axes were perfectly willing then. I mean, it took some convincing in terms of that you knew what you were doing, I guess.

Your medical skill?

Pardon me?

Your medical skill.

I presume so. And we became, actually, the closest of friends. So when Labor Day came and I had three or four days of vacation, I decided, before my wife came, I'll take the train to Paris, which isn't that far away from the border there, and see what Paris is like. Never been there.

And I came back and there was called-- as a little vignette now, this I'm telling you-- called to the colonel, and said,

have you been some places? Said, yes, I've been in Paris. Did you have a good time? A wonderful time. He says, do you realize you're in the military and you're not just permitted to take off? You have to sign out, and we have to know where you are. I mean, you are employed by the military. I said, nobody ever told me.

Anyway, I mean it was clearly the awakening. I mean, it ultimately was amusing, that kind of thing. And I learned my lesson and it was fine. As I said, it was, from the medical point of view, very enjoyable.

It was difficult only in the sense that they also lost the pediatrician in the general hospital in the community, which was in Kaiserslautern, which was south of me. And I was only in a field hospital. So very sick children, I had to keep on in a hospital that was not equipped for it. And the nurses certainly wasn't. And I felt I couldn't deal with it 24 hours a day.

Whereas by right, they should be sent to a general hospital. And there were some obvious problems that occurred. And sort of, you know, serious kidney failures, and meningitis, and so on. It happens with American personnel, too. The kids were all military personnel kids at the time.

Anyway, so that was a bit of a dilemma. On the other hand, I became very close with three Germans of the city who were sufficiently older than myself.

One lovely couple, used to be the finance minister in the olden days before Hitler, lived there and retired there. The second one was a painter, a wonderful painter. And the third one was a musician and a conductor.

And another little vignette, if I may. And so he invited me to play with the Wiesbaden Symphony Orchestra that was concertizing in Bad Kreuznach. Yes, piano, the fifth Feinberg concerto, which isn't hard. I mean, it was fun.

Produced a great problem because at that time, you weren't permitted to really fraternize with Germans. You know, it was with the military for three months yes, for three months no. But the general said it was OK if you, if there's captain of the medical corps, and that kind of thing. So it went off very well.

How'd you meet them, these people?

The preceding physician before me, also coincidentally somebody from San Francisco, was an internist. And for some reason, he had met the first people I mentioned, where he was the finance minister. And through him, the other two. It was really delightful, very, very educational.

I had much more serious discussions with their friends, with whom I didn't agree very often. But it permitted you an entree into a situation where you wanted to explore. And that was my idea about the exploration, about the thinking processes in the 50s. And because I could speak the language.

And what kind of exploration?

Exploration as to what went on during the war years, how come they survived, what was their role with the parties kind of thing. And these kinds of things. In a diplomatic way, I've told you before. I'm not a provocative kind of person who sets up an argument.

Did they ask you to be open?

Yes, yes, I think so. To be frankly obvious about one situation, my wife was very reluctant to go to Germany. And ultimately, I think she ended up having a good time.

I'm divorced now. But she has the ability being of several-generation San Franciscan, in the background of San Francisco. To merely become friends with the general's wife. You know, I mean, your duty in an officer's club with it.

And merely asked to be the vice president of the officer's club, which she didn't accept because she doesn't like that kind of thing. Which is unheard of for somebody who's going to be in the service only two years and not being a regular

military person.

So she really had a good time, though initially she was very concerned about going there. And I did the translations, you know, with people. But many of them spoke-- the conductor didn't speak English. But the people from the finance ministry spoke beautiful English.

They knew you were Jewish?

Oh, there was no question. I made it quite clear.

And they felt comfortable enough to speak frankly about what had happened during the war? Or what?

We didn't discuss it that much because I think the ones that was particularly close with was this elderly couple. I think they felt-- they had no children-- that it was a very painful period. Now, they were well into their late 70s in the '50s. And they felt it was a very painful period. And there was almost no point of going into it too much. But anybody who was younger, that was a little different situation.

Yeah. Now, at some point in your two years over there, you went to Vienna?

Oh, yeah, we made-- I went to Vienna, actually, that's true, for a few days. Look around. In the '50s, it was still pretty much a post-war thing. It wasn't what it's now.

How did you approach going there? What did you feel about the visit?

Actually, I wanted, really, in an objective way, see what the city was like. I was appalled that it was much better off than I wanted it to be. I know it sounds strange, but that's the way it was. I went to the opera with my wife.

You had hoped that the city had suffered more during the war?

Well, yes. At the post-war effects, which show a little bit more, for all sorts of emotional reasons. Purely, it's a very subjective thing. It came to a head when we went to the opera. And the opera in Vienna, of course, very important. The opera had opened up a few months before and been rebuilt. Completely, magnificently rebuilt. I don't know where they got the money from, but they managed.

The amount of-- this was not a tourist time of the year. It was late in the year. It was cold, it was snowing. And this wasn't a time when many people in Europe traveled. So most of them, clearly, I think, were Austrians.

I was appalled by the amount of jewelry, fur coats. They had put the fur coats in the garderobe, and then they took the fur stole on. I was absolutely appalled, and so was my wife, and so was a couple of doctor and his wife that had come with us also, who were stationed where I was stationed.

And it came home to me. How dare they? Why aren't you suffering? Well, I mean, that was a reaction to it. Of course, I thought for us Americans, things were very reasonably priced. Perhaps they couldn't afford everything, whereas we could afford going into the better restaurants, and so forth. OK. Contrast there.

Did you go back to where you had lived?

I went, passed by there. I didn't go inside. I told you, I confronted the accountant-- for some reason or other, I found his address-- who did nothing but tell me he couldn't help himself, and he was under pressure, and all that kind of thing. I said, I don't want to hear more about it, left.

Was the synagogue still standing?

I know it was completely burned down.

It was completely burned down.

The one next to our house? Yeah. Well, none of the synagogues had been rebuilt by that time. I don't-- I'm trying to think, have we? I don't even know in Germany whether it was rebuilt. Unless a synagogue happened to be standing.

There was a synagogue in Vienna that's still the only real, true functioning, quotes, "Ashkenazi" synagogue is the one they sort of built into a building, rather than being out, an obvious synagogue standing clearly there. I mean, the way you would see the synagogue in Rome, the temple, or temple in Florence. I mean, that is a clear-cut separate unit you didn't see.

So the one that was built into a house there?

I think that was pretty well preserved. I'm sure not well preserved. And I don't know whether it got bombed. I don't know. But I know it's a functioning synagogue now.

Did you go back to the school?

Not then.

Not then.

No.

Later?

Yes, much later. I passed by there. And did I? Trying to think. We had a, quotes, "villa" that look like a castle close by the Danube just outside of Vienna. And I'm trying to think whether I went there that time. I don't think I did. I don't think I did because when I was stationed in Germany, I didn't go. I went to Vienna only for three days or so.

So how would you summarize your first visit? How did that feel?

The main sort of feeling I had-- I see what it's like, I'm glad I don't live there anymore, I'm much better off. In passing, I was thinking to myself, if nothing would have happened, at that age, what would I be doing at this point, had I stayed on in Vienna? You know, and everything would have been OK. I mean, these thoughts went through my mind.

Were there any tugs, emotional tugs about Austria for you?

No.

You felt separated from it.

None at that time, emotionally, completely separated. I also was with my wife there, you know, so it isn't that I walked alone around, pondering my own thoughts. You know, I mean, that's also a different situation.

So tell me when you went back.

I'm trying to think. Did I see? I forgot to mention one thing. There were people there who I did not know, but they were indirect relatives, but not blood relatives. They were-- she was the sister of my aunt, who is not a blood relative of mine.

One of my uncles was a pharmacist, his wife was the one who, basically, he and she ran the pharmacy. But her sister, who of course, knew the family, and after all, had been living in Vienna throughout the war. And it's a bit of a long story. She sort of survived.

She was Jewish or not?

She was Jewish, yes. The story, to make it really short, is that her mother had remarried a non-Jew. And thusly, her mother survived, also, Vienna. Never left the house or something of that sort.

However, that daughter, that so-called aunt of mine, the sister, was a very beautiful, pure blonde, blue-eyed girl, who was said where her father then said that she is his, quote, "bastard child." That he had fathered her long before and all that kind of situation in his past.

And the father, actually, was in an administrative military role in Austria. So both his wife and his so-called daughter survived.

Now, they were clearly-- he had died then. But when I came to Vienna, being stationed in Germany, this so-called aunt and her mother were living. And her and the lady had gotten back the pharmacy. After all, she was her sister, and so her father had owned the pharmacy. Got in the pharmacy back. And that was, after all, in the '50s.

Yeah. You visited them.

Oh, sure. Right, right.

So then when did you go back again?

Well, I've been back several times. Well, we did a fair amount of trips when I was stationed in Germany. Clearly, my wife and I. And we had a daughter. And we had a maid. A full-time maid at that time in Austria-- in, sorry, Germany was \$25 a month. We had only three days a week. Paid the same tremendous amount. A wonderful, wonderful lady.

And who knew? I invariably, whereby and whether I was in school or whatever, made it quite clear I was Jewish. Make something of it. Clearly, I was Jewish. So the maid certainly knew I was Jewish.

And she was-- I mean, I grant you, at that time, I was 29, 28 to 29. And she was also older at the time. But there was really never any question of did you feel whether they tolerated.

It's hard to describe the situation at this particular point. But the question of being Jewish and the murderer of Jesus just wasn't a question that was raised. If there was any dislike or disgust, one would have as we, not they.

And in this much, I didn't really have it, except for anybody who was really older, when I didn't know what did they do during the war. Didn't really feel great antagonism or anything of that sort.

So were your visits back to Vienna any different than the first one?

By the time I returned to Vienna I'm trying to think-- I didn't go. Well, when I came back from Germany, then, in '58, you know, I had the one child. And the other child was going to be born within a month that I got back. And I had no money.

And you know, I had to hustle. And so we stayed for a short time with my wife's aunt. And then I found a job in a multi-specialty clinic, the Sally Field Medical Clinic, as a pediatrician on a salary basis. You know, I really probably wanted stayed in San Francisco. But you know, I couldn't afford to open up a practice or join someone. But I was quite happy to move the peninsula.

And you know, then the hustle, and sort of the years went by. And I had the kids. And then had the kids very close after the last-- oh, my son after two girls were born in '59, '60, and '61. So they were pretty close together. So you couldn't do much. And so the next time I went back was in '69 with the kids and the wife on the sabbatical.

On sabbatical?

Yeah. We went to Europe for 2 and 1/2 months.

What was that visit like?

What was it like?

Well, it was really wonderful, number one, seeing things through kids' eyes, which is wonderful. You know, you landed in Copenhagen, so you went to Tivoli Gardens. And you know, went to Europe a bit, visited a cousin in Holland, and so forth.

Went all the way to Italy. And the Italians, of course, as you probably know, are wonderful with children. Absolutely wonderful with children. And then had a car. And then we drove up to Vienna, which they didn't like. But they weren't that interested in buildings, and museums, and history. And the Austrians are not very nice to kids in the first place.

I didn't know that.

Well, Austrians and Germans-- you know, kids had to be seen and not heard, certainly at that time. And you really don't see kids in the inner city, other than possibly going to school. So they didn't particularly enjoy it. Particularly not after Italy.

So from my point of view, I was a little disappointed to show them, you know, where I was born, and raised, and so forth. Couldn't have cared less. You know, kind of thing. So that was the next time I'd come back.

Did you maintain contact all those years with the aunt?

By that time, of course, the daughter had grown up, and had become a pharmacist herself, and had gotten married. And so basically, they considered me their cousin because they had no family. And because I was a first one, who number one could all speak the language. Come from a very, very large family.

First one that they counted is the cousin. And sort of more or less, we became very close. And we are still very, very close. And they are wonderful people.

They're still in Vienna?

They're in their 50s, early 50s, actually. Yeah, and the old aunt is now 91.

Still going.

Plays bridge all over, the typical cafe. And still going strong. And still thinks she knows everything. And you know, I mean it's great. Obviously, she likes me to come and tell her about the old times.

Have someone to talk to about the old times.

That's right, right. Well, but the stories I know is from my mother, clearly. So it's in that sense.

Do you feel any attachment to Austria at all? Let me put it this way, I still think that-- there was a very stupid poster in Austria that I just saw because actually, I just came back.

I haven't touched another aspect of my life. Where there was a poster all over. You can take the Viennese out of Vienna, but you can never take Vienna out of the Viennese. I mean, there was some propaganda kind of story.

In some aspect, it's true. In fact, the introduction to that book I had referenced to you before by Berkeley, this business about Vienna, the Jews. In its introduction, mentions the reason he was inspired to write a book about Vienna was that

he had met a Viennese lady in New York and spoke to her about Vienna. And she is probably a woman, at this point, easily my age.

She was waxing enthusiastic about Vienna. And he questioned her, he says, how can you? I mean, what they've done to you, what you have experienced. How can you have this attachment?

And that made him realize, there seems to be some emotional attachment, historically, psychologically, whatever it is, to that particular city. Which probably, historically, I know, has a lot to be the Kaiser, who ruled, after all, some 60 years.

Who was actually very good for the Jews, good with the Jews. That the Jews were enthusiastic about the Kaiser. The Jews-- that's the problem about the assimilation factor-- were so strongly assimilated until Hitler came to Austria that it's very difficult to get this out of their system.

And it came home to me by a friend of mine who was born in Vienna, who was, that particular person, went to they call the Beaux-Arts, whose parents emigrated from Romania and that part of Poland that used to be part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire into Vienna.

And consider themselves, including that boy who was born in Vienna, as second-rate citizens. On the basis that the Viennese put a real separation between themselves as being the true Viennese Jew, as opposed to the others. Because their Jewishness was sort of carried on their shoulders, considering the pogroms and all the kind of thing they have to go on through.

Whereas the Viennese Jews, at least of the era of my parents, did not have to experience these kinds of aspects. And I hadn't realized until two or three years ago, he told me this in New York.

I had no idea about this because I was never confronted by this. But he tells me he was continuously. So talking about the relationship with Vienna, probably, he has none. He born and raised in Vienna, my age, has absolutely no intentions of ever going there. And he's going to eclectic places like Vietnam, he's been to China, and all this kind of thing. And I haven't.

Now, is this the guy who wrote the book?

No. No he's this friend of mine, who's a clothing, suit designer. Was sent to they called it Beaux-Arts, you know, from Shanghai also. And there are certain aspects I hear, you know, which is interesting. Probably quite true. And it is true, there's no doubt about it.

I would like to go back, if we could, to Shanghai for a little bit.

Sure.

First to ask you, was it difficult for you when your father died? You were only about 18. It was difficult in the sense it was expected. For one thing is because you could do nothing for him. You know, he died of terminal pneumonia, which was a cause of death of many chronic diseases. He had been bleeding. There was no way of getting him a blood transfusion. He had-- weighed what, 85 pounds.

I was alone when he died because he was obviously heavily breathing for weeks with this pneumonia. But it was suddenly very quiet in the room. And it was very, very difficult in that sense that one part that was so integral in this one room where we all slept was then gone. It's going to be quiet. You don't hear that kind of breathing.

That was somewhat traumatic. And the expectation that he would die, and that you could not live like this. And there was a continuous deterioration of his health was very obvious. So it isn't like suddenly, from one week to the next.

How did your mother weather that?

Initially, for her was, again, a bit of a survivor situation. She knew she had to worry about it. The entire cooking-- was it? No, it never improved until we left. The entire cooking situation that occurred was on a hibachi stove. You know what a hibachi stove is? And that means everything. Warming up, boiling water, heating water to shave with or wash yourself with.

I mean, you know the coals-- what you call them? The charcoal things, you know, burn. And we spent-- every day, you spend time knocking off the gray ashes. And there's always some black stuff in the center. And then with wetness, you've hit new cold.

That was her life, kind of a situation all the way through. And you know, I mean, it's amazing, amazing. And we didn't complain. And there were always people around. Bartered a little bit this or that. And there were talks, and jokes, and music always. Throughout all this time.

Pardon me?

Throughout all this time. Don't forget, I mean, we weren't in danger that the Nazis would suddenly come and kill us or do things like that. There was no such thing. We didn't know anything about this. So you didn't have the fear of death hanging over you.

Did you have any encounters at all with the Japanese while you were there?

Only getting the pass. My father had a serious encounter with this infamous Japanese Goya. That was his name. Because a friend of his was a piano teacher, went out to teach.

Was told she wouldn't get a pass from there if she brings a guarantor. So she brought my father as a guarantor. And that man gave my father a horrible, horrible time. Removed his pass for about a week or so before he got it back. That was the only encounter.

The fear was being thrown into jail for some reason or other because disease was rampant in the jail. So only in that sense. But I would say that really, I saw much more mistreatment of Chinese at that time as a kid.

What would you see?

Being beaten, didn't bow deep enough in front of Japanese soldiers who were crossing the bridge towards the Bund, this kind of thing. And yet, I don't remember anybody telling me or personal experience.

You mean, you didn't actually see it?

I have not to see it. I happened to see it with Chinese, but not with anybody like myself, or any whatever you wish to call them, Caucasians or whatever.

Yeah. Did you have any dealings with Chinese people there?

Very, very little. There was really no contact. That's the reason why, you know, I could speak a little bit of Shanghai dialect. But I mean, you didn't need it. There was very little contact. Except one episode, in which I played piano for a Chinese opera. It sounds weird, but I mean, that's it.

How did you do that?

It was a quiet, emotional thing, a play, something from [? Verity, ?] where somebody is dying, or things of that sort. You know, it was in one of those theaters. And there was a big discussion. I mean, actually, we spoke French. For some reason or other.

Nice-looking guy. And he wasn't my university. But for some reason or other, he must have gone to French school. It

was obviously in that sense. It may have been after the war. It wasn't during the war when I went to the other school. So it was when I went to the French university.

Did your mother adapt to America?

Actually, extremely well. Actually, it's very obvious after Shanghai that everybody adapted extremely well. she, I must frankly say that most of her friends were clearly Europeans, except for her sister-in-law. So obviously, Americans. And she was wonderful with all my American schoolmates. You know, there was a very typical kind of Viennese hospitality, the desserts and all that kind of stuff. And they liked to come.

Was she speaking English?

She was speaking English, everybody understood her. But she didn't use much grammar. What's embarrassing to me was she sometimes spoke to the black lady who came once a week in Pidgin English. Now, in China, you spoke Pidgin English because, you know, you used one noun after next noun with the verb being in its infinitive state. And that's the way she spoke to a black lady, in Pidgin English.

I said, what are you doing? She may not understand what I'm saying. Said, you know, she speaks 100 times better English than you do. Would you please try to make an effort of speaking English as well as you can with her? Because of that whole concept, you know, somebody's a maid in the house kind of thing. But that wasn't arrogance or anything of that sort. It was a sort of instinct.

And you know, she sent me out once to give a wonderful party for family, all the uncles, you know, big glass, big shots, aunts and so forth. You know, real old Viennese traditional style. A dozen people, table beautifully set. Wanted me to distribute the napkins, which I couldn't find. Typical thing of a mother, you never find something that's in front of your nose.

And so she went and gave them to me. I said, you can't use those napkins. She said, why not? Said, they're sanitary napkins. So she said, well, it means sanitary. I want especially clean ones for the party. I said, OK, I'll go and get some.

You know, that's the English, in answer to your question, that we're dealing with.

How has America been for you? Is this your country?

Absolutely. Absolutely. I think I've been successful, clearly. I actually have been successful ever since I've been in the States in the sense of getting to what I want to do. You know, college, medical school, or other profession. Patients. I've been able to retire at the age of 65, without ever having had a lawsuit, you know, which is remarkable.

55, did you say?

Pardon me?

55?

65.

65.

Right, I'm 71 now. And I work a little part time at Kaiser at Redwood City. I worked last night. In the evenings. So things have turned out really very, very well. I was divorced some 20 years ago. Personality difference after kids grew up. And we are better off, both my wife and I.

I have three kids. Grew up in good kids, in spite of being raised in times when raising kids in the peninsula wasn't very easy, considering the drug problems and all this. And never had to be really concerned about that. And all three happily

married.

My youngest is 39, who in quotes is happily married, but unfortunately, met a Swedish girl. And has been living in Sweden for the last 15 years. Has three Swedish children, who are my grandchildren, clearly. And that what also forced me to go to Europe, which I like to do, clearly.

So things have turned out very, very well. And I really, truly would be grateful and very nationalistic if anybody says anything. Because I can speak-- I can speak Italian now, too, because I took some immersion courses in Italy. If anybody attacks America, they have a hard time getting away with it when I travel in Europe, clearly.

You're really ready to defend it.

Which isn't difficult, I think. Because I know something about Europe, too. And obviously, I know the negative kind of things that happen in Europe. I indicated a few hours ago that the whole educational system, business about deciding what should happen to kids early on in life, is the greatest mistake, when you thinking about the educational system here with the junior colleges that permits kids to mature.

I used to be the consultant for the educational handicapped for the Centerville School District. Which is the high school district. So I am well aware as to what's been happening. So I can argue along these terms also.

Has medicine been everything you wanted it to be?

Yes, medicine in general. Yes, pediatrics, I would say. The most gratifying thing, when people ask me, or people are medical students. Pediatrics is where you have to learn to deal not just with the patient, but the family.

The most wonderful thing I experience now is to see kids grow up, achieving things, becoming something despite difficulties along the line. You know, I mean patients of mine are now in their early 40s. And it's so gratifying to see doctors, lawyers, wonderful people, parents themselves.

That's your story.

Pardon me?

That's your story.

Well, yes, in that sense. So it's really delightful. Perhaps I should have spent more time, which I do now, in foreign affairs, and languages, and cultural things, things like that. But I'm catching up.

How about Judaism? What kind of place does that have in your life? Or does it?

Actually, none. I would say that, in order to find this further, which I think perhaps would be important, religion has never been an important aspect in my life. Philosophy or philosophical point of views, yes.

I really don't believe in God. I would say I can't even consider myself, as I did some years ago, an agnostic. Probably much more of an atheist. With, however, the aspect that I admire people who can be very religious. I find, probably, life is easier for them.

In my being basically raised in a Catholic-type of education, which I consider how anybody-- friends of mine are very strict Catholics-- how anybody can believe that so strongly, educated, intellectual, evolution theories, all this, how can they do it? I mean, I sit there and admire it how anybody can be so blind. But I respect it.

But otherwise, clearly, they wouldn't be some of my closest friends. So one of my close friends was a Calvinist, where I played at his wedding. Where Calvinism doesn't permit anyone, even good works, unless you're a Calvinist, to be permitted to go into heaven. I don't know how much is known about the Calvinist religion.

But to me, that always has been intriguing point of views. And a very close friends of mine. So to me, it's really the more philosophical aspect and the respect.

I was not bar mitzvahed. My father was not. My son is not. I must frankly say, my daughters, too, none of my three children are married to Jews.

I requested, strangely enough, that if they could find a rabbi who marries the girls, because they are. If they would be married to Jews, I wouldn't have cared. But to non-Jews, perhaps I felt, perhaps, that they could find a rabbi.

Which was very difficult for my oldest daughter because even though I knew some rabbis, because of circumcisions they had to do, wouldn't do it. But she found someone. And then my younger daughter, it's easier in Los Angeles. A Reform temple apparently permits that. I don't know if your rabbi does here. But also was married.

But clearly, with a bit of a Jewish ceremony, with the glass, and all that kind of stuff. And very nicely presented to the non-Jewish family members the idea as to what all these things mean. The food was always a lot better than it is in my friends' Christian marriages, being, after all, a Jewish father. So in that sense, strangely enough.

And my son's son is not circumcised. He lives in Sweden, it's a Lutheran country of 99%. My daughter-in-law is a doctor and a PhD. And you know, I can't argue much about it. And then, from the medical point of view, to be absolutely frank, it's not terribly important.

So in answer to your short question, this is my feeling about Judaism. So I do come here. I don't know what kind of a temple this is. But I admire. I mean, it's beautiful to drive up here, you know, and see it. It gives me a certain warm feeling, there's no question about it.

And I don't belong to any temple and actually never have. And so perhaps that's a horrible admission in my life. I don't know. And now, I almost think it's too late.

Yeah. What do you think about the Holocaust? Could we have another one?

If you mean by Holocaust what has happened-- because I belong to the group of people who consider nothing a Holocaust except the Holocaust. I mean, I don't consider the Palestinian situation this, you know, the way some people would like to think about. Not even the Armenian situation like that. Because I know a little bit about the historical background of the Armenian problem.

That is so unique, and so horrible, and so inconceivable, it has also turned me from being an agnostic to an atheist. That things like this could happen under the auspices of a God, of a so-called just God.

It's to me so, so horrible, so inconceivable, particularly as it involves children as you see these things. How any human person can do this. I mean, it's fine to be nasty to each other, steal from each other.

But that kind of a situation is so beyond any kind of belief and expectation that to that extent, I think only in that era, let's say. In almost what I feel-- what's his name, Gold? The one who's within the--

Goldenhangen?

Goldhagen?

Pardon me? Goldhagen said, this cultural antisemitism is literally, to that extent, was possible only in central Europe. I mean, that doesn't mean antisemitism doesn't exist in France and England. But the cultural thing of it, as he says, hasn't just happened. This is just a culmination.

And therefore, I don't think a Holocaust like this would happen, along those kind of line, or political. And really, look

upon a Jew like an inferior kind of person. So the only thing that comes like it is perhaps Cambodia, Africa, what's happened in terms of really, truly genocide in that kind of sense.

Has it done anything about your view of man that things like this have happened?

Only, well, in the sense-- no, I'm basically an optimist, in that kind of sense. And I mean, people are not necessarily evil or anything along those lines. I think that in spite of everything that has happened with Shanghai, and so forth.

I would say that I think the people in my educational situation-- I mean in this Catholic school-- were very good to me. And they didn't have to be. I think friends I've had don't absolutely have to be.

My reaction towards a person who has, let's say, done something to me unkind or something is to totally ignore them. I mean, they suddenly don't exist. And there is, if I may mention, one more vignette.

About, I would say, 10 years ago, I had a letter from someone whose signature, from Australia, somebody I didn't really recognize. And in this lengthy letter, he indicated to me was a classmate of mine at Saint Xavier's College. And he has something to tell me. And he-- would it be possible to meet me? I don't remember how he found my address.

And I was, I think, going out of town. I wrote him back, you know, the only possibility is that I meet him at the airport. Because I had to go someplace. That would be fine. How are we going to recognize each other? Where? And so forth. We discussed this.

So we met. And I just didn't recognize him. I didn't even recognize his name. And you know, I thought, in conversation, you know, you suddenly begin to recognize people. Or you know where you have something in common.

And so I said, well, you know, it's nice to see you. I understand we were in the same class together. But tell me a little bit more. What is it that you wanted to see me about? Then he told me the story.

And apparently, somewhere along the line, he called me in class-- and we must have been 14 at the time, judging-- a bloody Jew. And as he got older-- he was not a Jew, obviously-- he somehow felt so guilty about it, I mean, that he even does that kind of a thing, that he over the years, and years, and years, he felt he needed to search me out to apologize.

I make a long story short. I couldn't remember anything about it. I can't remember him, I can't remember his name, or anything along the line. And what appalled me subsequently, I said, well, listen, the times go by, I'm sure I've called people names. You know, that kind of thing.

We made it good and perhaps we'll see each other again, and so forth. And that was the end of that conversation. And to this day, I don't remember the episode. And yet, it was bothering him so immensely.

And then I came to the conclusion, really, that's what happens to me. If somebody does something, it's gone. It's gone through my mind. And that was an interesting case. Because at the time, when I thought about this-- how could this possibly happen I've forgotten? I don't know. You as a psychologist can make something out of it.

The good things, they don't go, too?

No, no, no, no. It's only a situation that really, really must have cut me really to the quick and upset me. And I'm not a fighter. I mean, somebody else might, who knows, and smash him to the ground. And my, obviously, reaction is to totally ignore this. Anyway, he got punished.

But you know, when you went to Vienna, you found yourself having feelings.

Oh, yes, no question about it. But they are not really negative feelings. I mean, they are not negative feelings. It came up the other day when, again, these friends asked me. Well, you see these people. I mean, does it bother you what they were doing, you know, to you and to everybody else, and killing people?

The only thing that reminds me is this following story. There are a lot of foreigners now in Vienna, as you probably know. Lots of people are speaking with accents. I really speak a Viennese dialect, so nobody knows that I'm not as Viennese as they are. And this business about looking Jewish or not looking Jewish is a question in the eyes of the beholder.

So you see an elderly couple, you know, in the type, Austrian uniform kind of thing, reacting very strongly to the lively noise of these people from Yugoslavia, from Turkey, or so forth. And giving them ugly looks.

That bothers me. And why does it bother me? It's because these are the kinds of people who probably were really anti-Jews. Because they still overreact to something which is relatively natural, you should overlook, or think to yourself, I don't like that noise. But what the heck?

It's a cultural thing?

Heavily. This is what I react to. I mean, I don't tell them. But I would say that these are the kinds of people who would also have done things like that. It may sound strange to you, but this overreaction on their part bothers me. And I see this.

And I'm sure there was a lot of anti-foreign feeling in Vienna--

There is.

--before the war because many people had come from the east. And they were looked down upon.

Well, I didn't notice that. But it wasn't as noticeable. The Jewishness is a much more self-confident Jewishness. Now, when I go to Vienna-- I mean, this has nothing to do with the questions you're asking me.

But from my point of view, they are more self-confident. They wear yarmulkes if they are relatively orthodox, they're really like yeshiva people. You don't see this I want to blend in, necessarily, attitude. I mean, there are very few Jews like myself who have returned.

But you know, when I asked for my birth certificate, in order to get my social security benefits from Austria a few years ago, you had to go to the Jewish community area. And said, would you possibly have my birth certificate?

When were you born? 1927. Well, I'm sure we'll find it. So she goes into another big room and brings out a big archives of 1927. And do I want to copy? Yes, I need several copies. OK.

I said, how come you have this? I mean, things were destroyed. He says, all the Jewish archives are available because that's how the German Nazis found out who is a Jew and who may have some money, or art, or whatever. So they are perfectly intact.

So I said, may I look at it? There's this beautiful handwriting with my name, and which hospital I was born in, and what time, and all the perfect statement. You know, that kind of thing.

But this lady, who is clearly Jewish, you know what she said to me? She says, aren't you going to move back to Vienna? I was still in practice at that time. I said, no, why do you think I should? Well, we need more Jews like you around here, you know, who are born and raised in Vienna.

And this was somebody is Jewish who said that. And that to me-- I mean, I didn't pick up on it, it's not my style. But you clearly know what she meant. And you know, right in a place like this. Took me, surprised me.

Prejudice seems to exist on all levels.

It certainly exists among Jews like anyone else. Well, it's a natural feeling. I mean, anybody who tries to get rid of your prejudice or so, it's ridiculous. You never can. You want to intellectualize it a little bit and try and control it. But that's as far, I think, as anybody can go.

On behalf of the Holocaust Oral History Project, I want to thank you tremendously for this interview.

Well, thank you for letting me be here. You're going to edit this anyway, aren't you? I presume, I hope.

Right.

Actually, we keep the whole tape as it is.

I see.

Could be used for other purposes later.

All right. OK. And is there any way somewhere along the line that I can see it sometime? Or can I go to?

We can certainly send you a copy.

Well, you don't have to do this, I can see it someplace.

No, no, no.

No, no.

We'll send it to you.

OK. The documents is something that you mentioned. This is a-- OK. This is a picture of the first Jewish school in Shanghai, China, which was sponsored and financed by Sir Horace Kadoorie in the first year.

This is a professor Epstein. I myself am over here. And a number of these are very close friends of mine, who you subsequently can see in the second picture. This would have been 1939.

And the middle one is taken probably, if I may turn this around for a moment-- yes. In 1940. Sorry. In 1947. And depicts the boys club called Tikva. Boys of the Tikva club with Charles Jordan, who was a representative of the Joint Distribution Committee, who had been sent from the United States to Shanghai.

And this is Mrs. Hardwick, who was the director basically of the whole school. But this is a group of the boys who belong to this particular club and obviously, were considerably older than-- eight years older than they were in '39. And many of the boys are the same ones here as they were there.

This picture is myself and my brother in Nanking, in front of Sun Yat Sen's memorial, when my brother was working for the United States Army in 1948. And I came to visit him. Actually, it's the first and only place I ever visited in China outside of Shanghai.

I have one more question for you. And that is what made you want to give your history now? What made you come in today?

Two situations. A friend of mine, apparently, had given a history some time ago. And she thought it would be worthwhile for me to do it. And I mostly ignored this.

And then I thought to myself, perhaps if I had some record of it, my children somewhere along the line might show a greater interest in it. And if it is not them, maybe the grandchildren. If I had something interactive. Before something

happens to me.

I mean, I could dictate something into a machine. But I thought that would obviate the main need to do that. And that was probably the most convincing reason in my mind.

Have you talked much to your children about your experiences?

No. I mean, talking, you can't just sit somebody down. You have to show some interest. I would say this. I can't totally fault the kids. There hasn't been that much opportunity. I've been so wrapped up in the practice. My wife wasn't at all interested in it, either.

And you know, you can't very easily take children, and just sit them down, and just tell them, let me tell you something about my life. Unless you get more of a stimulus from their part.

Well, thank you again--

Sure.

--very much.