

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:28,536

2

00:00:28,536 --> 00:00:31,390

I'll take the opportunity
with vacuum cleaner.

3

00:00:31,390 --> 00:00:32,610

Oh, why it's just--

4

00:00:32,610 --> 00:00:34,780

Oh it's a couple
of times that we've

5

00:00:34,780 --> 00:00:37,458

knocked the pepper container
over, there's pepper under--.

6

00:00:37,458 --> 00:00:39,450

[LAUGHTER]

7

00:00:39,450 --> 00:01:14,210

8

00:01:14,210 --> 00:01:14,710

Yeah.

9

00:01:14,710 --> 00:01:17,490

And then, in 10 seconds,
we can start it up

10

00:01:17,490 --> 00:01:20,860

and if you'll answer your
question, Emily, any time.

11

00:01:20,860 --> 00:01:22,960

So my question
was the difference

12

00:01:22,960 --> 00:01:27,310

in perceptions and experiences

between you as a 14-year-old

13

00:01:27,310 --> 00:01:30,970
and the oldest people in Sosua?

14

00:01:30,970 --> 00:01:32,380
At the time when we lived there?

15

00:01:32,380 --> 00:01:35,093
Right, and when you went
to the reunion, whoever

16

00:01:35,093 --> 00:01:37,510
were the oldest people who
were able to be at the reunion?

17

00:01:37,510 --> 00:01:41,500

18

00:01:41,500 --> 00:01:45,310
Well, the older people, the
young couples at the time

19

00:01:45,310 --> 00:01:50,830
we were there, most of them
couldn't get out of there

20

00:01:50,830 --> 00:01:51,600
fast enough.

21

00:01:51,600 --> 00:01:55,230

22

00:01:55,230 --> 00:01:58,043
Because they
realized they wanted

23

00:01:58,043 --> 00:01:59,460
to go on with their
lives and they

24

00:01:59,460 --> 00:02:02,970

knew that this
wasn't a place where

25
00:02:02,970 --> 00:02:06,810
they were going to settle,
especially the young married

26
00:02:06,810 --> 00:02:07,440
couples.

27
00:02:07,440 --> 00:02:10,889
Unless, as I said
before, they decided

28
00:02:10,889 --> 00:02:16,180
to stay there permanently.

29
00:02:16,180 --> 00:02:20,950
And my sister may have better
figures on how many people

30
00:02:20,950 --> 00:02:22,030
actually stayed.

31
00:02:22,030 --> 00:02:25,030

32
00:02:25,030 --> 00:02:29,680
We were shown a list
when we were there,

33
00:02:29,680 --> 00:02:36,430
and I think there were
approximately 75 individuals,

34
00:02:36,430 --> 00:02:40,220
not families but
individuals, on the list.

35
00:02:40,220 --> 00:02:41,920
So it's not very many.

36

00:02:41,920 --> 00:02:44,710

37

00:02:44,710 --> 00:02:51,190

And from those, I think
those were the people that

38

00:02:51,190 --> 00:02:55,650

are members of the
cooperative, that have holdings

39

00:02:55,650 --> 00:02:57,670

in the cooperative,
and some of those

40

00:02:57,670 --> 00:03:04,060

don't live in the Dominican
Republic, they live elsewhere.

41

00:03:04,060 --> 00:03:06,790

They just come home
every once in a while.

42

00:03:06,790 --> 00:03:07,290

Yeah.

43

00:03:07,290 --> 00:03:11,300

44

00:03:11,300 --> 00:03:18,920

But in retrospect, all of
them have the same feeling

45

00:03:18,920 --> 00:03:24,350

in their hearts about the place
as I have, the older ones too.

46

00:03:24,350 --> 00:03:27,770

There are some people and--

47

00:03:27,770 --> 00:03:33,260

but not very many, that cut the
ties completely once they left.

48
00:03:33,260 --> 00:03:35,810
It was something that
they didn't-- that belongs

49
00:03:35,810 --> 00:03:38,060
to the past and they
didn't want to look at it,

50
00:03:38,060 --> 00:03:41,120
and they didn't want
to have any connection.

51
00:03:41,120 --> 00:03:45,890
But the majority has this very
strong feeling of connection.

52
00:03:45,890 --> 00:03:48,890

53
00:03:48,890 --> 00:03:54,440
For me personally, it has
been difficult to understand

54
00:03:54,440 --> 00:03:58,610
those people that didn't
want to come to meetings

55
00:03:58,610 --> 00:04:01,940
and have any of the connection.

56
00:04:01,940 --> 00:04:04,490
But, everybody's different.

57
00:04:04,490 --> 00:04:08,810
But the majority
of the people did.

58
00:04:08,810 --> 00:04:18,350
At the reunion there were people
in their mid and late 70s,

59

00:04:18,350 --> 00:04:25,220
and maybe even
early 80s that came.

60
00:04:25,220 --> 00:04:35,540
And one very dear friend of mine
came with her three children

61
00:04:35,540 --> 00:04:40,310
and her granddaughter, yeah.

62
00:04:40,310 --> 00:04:43,940

63
00:04:43,940 --> 00:04:46,160
Could you explain
a little bit more

64
00:04:46,160 --> 00:04:52,290
about why you were allowed
to leave Gurs was it--

65
00:04:52,290 --> 00:04:53,000
Gurs.

66
00:04:53,000 --> 00:04:53,900
Yes.

67
00:04:53,900 --> 00:04:56,270
Who was it that let
your family leave,

68
00:04:56,270 --> 00:04:58,446
and what was the
philosophy at the time?

69
00:04:58,446 --> 00:05:01,710

70
00:05:01,710 --> 00:05:03,950
France.

71

00:05:03,950 --> 00:05:11,870

The patrons of France
collaborated with the Germans,

72

00:05:11,870 --> 00:05:16,670

but they themselves were
not interested in really

73

00:05:16,670 --> 00:05:17,390

keeping us.

74

00:05:17,390 --> 00:05:20,975

They were doing, at that
point, the Germans a favor.

75

00:05:20,975 --> 00:05:23,690

76

00:05:23,690 --> 00:05:28,040

The German camps
were not ready yet,

77

00:05:28,040 --> 00:05:31,180

and apparently, the French
had some facilities.

78

00:05:31,180 --> 00:05:35,080

79

00:05:35,080 --> 00:05:40,230

But they weren't necessarily
interested as long as--

80

00:05:40,230 --> 00:05:44,820

Generally in France, in those
early days in 1940 and early

81

00:05:44,820 --> 00:05:51,870

'41, if people had papers
to leave Europe and France,

82

00:05:51,870 --> 00:05:52,530

they could.

83
00:05:52,530 --> 00:05:58,980
And that was the same at
the camp, as we had to--

84
00:05:58,980 --> 00:06:02,290
it had to go through, as I
said earlier, through the--

85
00:06:02,290 --> 00:06:04,800
through the commandant
of the camp,

86
00:06:04,800 --> 00:06:09,990
through the administration,
the camp administration

87
00:06:09,990 --> 00:06:14,340
and whatever stamps that they
had to put on the papers.

88
00:06:14,340 --> 00:06:19,110
And once we-- that was
accomplished, that was fine,

89
00:06:19,110 --> 00:06:20,580
we could leave.

90
00:06:20,580 --> 00:06:25,740
It was not-- they had no
interest in and keeping us

91
00:06:25,740 --> 00:06:26,490
at that point.

92
00:06:26,490 --> 00:06:36,850

93
00:06:36,850 --> 00:06:40,270
What was the reaction
in Sosua soon as people

94

00:06:40,270 --> 00:06:44,520
started to learn about the
murders and other atrocities

95
00:06:44,520 --> 00:06:45,520
that had been committed?

96
00:06:45,520 --> 00:06:48,160
And how and when did you learn?

97
00:06:48,160 --> 00:06:51,100
No, I think I blocked
most of them out.

98
00:06:51,100 --> 00:06:53,620
I don't have a very
clear recollection.

99
00:06:53,620 --> 00:07:00,010

100
00:07:00,010 --> 00:07:04,230
It had to be disbelief,
like for everyone else,

101
00:07:04,230 --> 00:07:06,570
and we had radios.

102
00:07:06,570 --> 00:07:08,400
We personally
didn't have a radio,

103
00:07:08,400 --> 00:07:14,430
but that was some of the
things that were scarce there.

104
00:07:14,430 --> 00:07:17,070
But people found
out, no different

105
00:07:17,070 --> 00:07:28,380
than the rest of the world,
I'm sure, except that we

106
00:07:28,380 --> 00:07:30,675
realized that our family that--

107
00:07:30,675 --> 00:07:34,920

108
00:07:34,920 --> 00:07:37,590
that they were gone.

109
00:07:37,590 --> 00:07:40,620
At what point that
was, I don't remember,

110
00:07:40,620 --> 00:07:42,530
I must have blocked it.

111
00:07:42,530 --> 00:07:47,240

112
00:07:47,240 --> 00:07:53,440
I do remember getting the
news about the atomic bomb.

113
00:07:53,440 --> 00:07:58,850
And those things I
remember very clearly.

114
00:07:58,850 --> 00:08:04,030
I remember my father's
immediate reaction being,

115
00:08:04,030 --> 00:08:06,670
this is the end
of all wars, there

116
00:08:06,670 --> 00:08:08,140
aren't going to be any more.

117
00:08:08,140 --> 00:08:10,020
He thought that was fantastic.

118

00:08:10,020 --> 00:08:17,350

119

00:08:17,350 --> 00:08:23,740

And after that, I personally
only had one thing in mind,

120

00:08:23,740 --> 00:08:25,415

to get to America.

121

00:08:25,415 --> 00:08:27,790

[LAUGHTER]

122

00:08:27,790 --> 00:08:29,275

And really start my life.

123

00:08:29,275 --> 00:08:33,220

124

00:08:33,220 --> 00:08:35,559

Well would you like
to make a summary

125

00:08:35,559 --> 00:08:38,350

of all those things you'd
like everyone to come away

126

00:08:38,350 --> 00:08:39,816

with from listening?

127

00:08:39,816 --> 00:08:42,549

128

00:08:42,549 --> 00:08:43,049

Well--

129

00:08:43,049 --> 00:08:46,310

Or just a statement,
or anything you'd like.

130

00:08:46,310 --> 00:08:57,980

Well, I feel that all of these things need to go on record,

131
00:08:57,980 --> 00:08:59,950
I feel very strongly about it.

132
00:08:59,950 --> 00:09:03,080

133
00:09:03,080 --> 00:09:09,740
Sometimes, I still
can't believe how

134
00:09:09,740 --> 00:09:14,630
we escaped because our
family, particularly,

135
00:09:14,630 --> 00:09:16,700
was our personal story.

136
00:09:16,700 --> 00:09:19,460
More so than some of the
other people in the Dominican

137
00:09:19,460 --> 00:09:22,390
Republic, because
we were singled out.

138
00:09:22,390 --> 00:09:24,170
The only reason
we were there was

139
00:09:24,170 --> 00:09:30,230
because of my cousin having
had that job by coincidence.

140
00:09:30,230 --> 00:09:33,350
It's really like a
needle in a haystack.

141
00:09:33,350 --> 00:09:42,230
And I know that as a very
young child, I had immediately,

142
00:09:42,230 --> 00:09:45,440
after the war, I had
terrible feelings of guilt

143
00:09:45,440 --> 00:09:47,600
about that consciously.

144
00:09:47,600 --> 00:09:51,725
And before that ever
became a popular--

145
00:09:51,725 --> 00:09:55,880

146
00:09:55,880 --> 00:10:00,440
what are you trying
to think of the word--

147
00:10:00,440 --> 00:10:04,250
Yeah, a symptom, exactly.

148
00:10:04,250 --> 00:10:05,660
I was aware of that.

149
00:10:05,660 --> 00:10:11,210
I remember very clearly in the
Dominican Republic thinking,

150
00:10:11,210 --> 00:10:13,280
you're not supposed to be here.

151
00:10:13,280 --> 00:10:20,150
Maybe that was the reaction
that I had when I found out.

152
00:10:20,150 --> 00:10:23,120
You're supposed to be there
with the rest of them.

153
00:10:23,120 --> 00:10:26,630

154
00:10:26,630 --> 00:10:31,100
And it was interesting
for me to find out later

155
00:10:31,100 --> 00:10:36,545
that this is a very
common symptom for people.

156
00:10:36,545 --> 00:10:41,380

157
00:10:41,380 --> 00:10:46,570
I think all the
people may have dealt

158
00:10:46,570 --> 00:10:47,890
with it in a different way.

159
00:10:47,890 --> 00:10:51,700
Because I know my
sister and I have

160
00:10:51,700 --> 00:10:59,710
talked often that the
early letters that we have,

161
00:10:59,710 --> 00:11:07,270
correspondence between our
family and my uncles in Germany

162
00:11:07,270 --> 00:11:08,530
it was so close.

163
00:11:08,530 --> 00:11:10,780
It was a very,
very close family.

164
00:11:10,780 --> 00:11:17,500
And that our early letters,
my dad and my mother

165

00:11:17,500 --> 00:11:20,260
were writing things
like, oh every time

166
00:11:20,260 --> 00:11:24,700
we look at a strange fruit
that we hadn't known even ever

167
00:11:24,700 --> 00:11:26,530
existed.

168
00:11:26,530 --> 00:11:28,240
We're thinking of
you, how we would

169
00:11:28,240 --> 00:11:31,000
love to share this with you.

170
00:11:31,000 --> 00:11:35,310
And yet after the war, they
never spoke about them,

171
00:11:35,310 --> 00:11:37,220
never spoke about them.

172
00:11:37,220 --> 00:11:40,870
And I think it must
have been just too

173
00:11:40,870 --> 00:11:45,560
difficult to look at for them.

174
00:11:45,560 --> 00:11:46,220
Did you ever--

175
00:11:46,220 --> 00:11:53,630
And my dad's business in New
York was restitution, he--

176
00:11:53,630 --> 00:11:57,530
that might be another
interesting thing to--

177

00:11:57,530 --> 00:12:03,750

even though he was a
merchant in Germany.

178

00:12:03,750 --> 00:12:06,380

He was a very, very
intelligent man

179

00:12:06,380 --> 00:12:13,580

and had the mind and the
knowledge of a lawyer and all

180

00:12:13,580 --> 00:12:16,500

during the war he already,
and as a matter of fact,

181

00:12:16,500 --> 00:12:20,840

already corresponded with
some people in England

182

00:12:20,840 --> 00:12:25,760

about that the Germans will
have to pay reparations

183

00:12:25,760 --> 00:12:26,810

after the war.

184

00:12:26,810 --> 00:12:29,900

Something is going to have to
be done, he had no idea what,

185

00:12:29,900 --> 00:12:33,980

but he already started- he had
such a creative mind- started

186

00:12:33,980 --> 00:12:37,670

to think about things that
actually then happened.

187

00:12:37,670 --> 00:12:47,898

And after we were in New York,
shortly after we were in--

188

00:12:47,898 --> 00:12:50,430

189

00:12:50,430 --> 00:12:54,040

my parents were in New York,
my father had a heart attack.

190

00:12:54,040 --> 00:13:00,650

He had a very difficult time
adjusting to American life

191

00:13:00,650 --> 00:13:02,730

at first and he never
learned English.

192

00:13:02,730 --> 00:13:06,990

193

00:13:06,990 --> 00:13:12,180

But then after he
got a little better,

194

00:13:12,180 --> 00:13:17,880

he first started to do his
own restitution doing--

195

00:13:17,880 --> 00:13:20,880

filling out his own papers
and his own correspondence.

196

00:13:20,880 --> 00:13:24,900

And then he started doing it for
other people and it mushroomed,

197

00:13:24,900 --> 00:13:27,780

and it got bigger and bigger.

198

00:13:27,780 --> 00:13:35,010

And he had eventually built
up a very successful business,

199

00:13:35,010 --> 00:13:38,010

and he was--

200

00:13:38,010 --> 00:13:47,490
the American Bar Association
tried to push him out

201

00:13:47,490 --> 00:13:53,550
because they were jealous
of anything successful.

202

00:13:53,550 --> 00:13:55,830
Even though they had
never had the knowledge,

203

00:13:55,830 --> 00:13:59,670
they had no idea
how to do it, but he

204

00:13:59,670 --> 00:14:02,730
used to get a big kick out of--

205

00:14:02,730 --> 00:14:10,320
Germany actually accepted
him as a representative

206

00:14:10,320 --> 00:14:13,410
and they used to
send him letters.

207

00:14:13,410 --> 00:14:18,840
A German lawyer has a
doctorate, and his--

208

00:14:18,840 --> 00:14:22,980
the correspondence he used
to come with a title for him

209

00:14:22,980 --> 00:14:24,900
and he always thought that--

210

00:14:24,900 --> 00:14:28,980
he got big kick out of that.

211

00:14:28,980 --> 00:14:32,670

And he was-- that
way, he never needed

212

00:14:32,670 --> 00:14:38,190

to speak English because all
of his customers were German.

213

00:14:38,190 --> 00:14:43,650

And also, he eventually
had an apartment

214

00:14:43,650 --> 00:14:46,080

in the building that we--

215

00:14:46,080 --> 00:14:51,960

my parents lived
in, so he didn't--

216

00:14:51,960 --> 00:14:54,570

he didn't have to go out,
even go out of the house.

217

00:14:54,570 --> 00:14:59,400

And he was not well, he was
he was really a sick man,

218

00:14:59,400 --> 00:15:07,380

but he worked seven days a week
and probably 15 hours a day.

219

00:15:07,380 --> 00:15:14,890

And today it's unthinkable.

220

00:15:14,890 --> 00:15:17,620

221

00:15:17,620 --> 00:15:20,350

I think he was, in those
days, taking something

222

00:15:20,350 --> 00:15:24,610

like three or five percent,
so he really was just

223
00:15:24,610 --> 00:15:29,380
paid for his work mainly.

224
00:15:29,380 --> 00:15:34,780
And that was his satisfaction
is to help the people, lots

225
00:15:34,780 --> 00:15:40,000
of people who were
actually permanently--

226
00:15:40,000 --> 00:15:43,180
with permanent damage
from concentration

227
00:15:43,180 --> 00:15:51,700
camps, physical damage that he
helped to get good pensions.

228
00:15:51,700 --> 00:15:56,950
So it was a lot of
satisfaction for him.

229
00:15:56,950 --> 00:15:59,800
He went at first,
the first few years,

230
00:15:59,800 --> 00:16:05,110
through very deep
depression because he had

231
00:16:05,110 --> 00:16:12,070
been a successful businessman.

232
00:16:12,070 --> 00:16:14,290
And, as I had said
earlier to you,

233
00:16:14,290 --> 00:16:19,930
really the caretaker

in the family,

234

00:16:19,930 --> 00:16:24,190
and then all of a sudden he
was dependent on my mother

235

00:16:24,190 --> 00:16:25,810
and my sister and myself.

236

00:16:25,810 --> 00:16:30,610
And it was very
difficult for him.

237

00:16:30,610 --> 00:16:35,320
And then he had a heart attack,
and he couldn't do anything.

238

00:16:35,320 --> 00:16:37,870
And he pulled himself
up after that,

239

00:16:37,870 --> 00:16:46,540
and he got so much satisfaction
out of doing this for people

240

00:16:46,540 --> 00:16:51,670
that he would get phone
calls in the middle of dinner

241

00:16:51,670 --> 00:16:54,820
and he would get up
and talk to people.

242

00:16:54,820 --> 00:16:59,080
It was like calling a doctor
as far as they were concerned.

243

00:16:59,080 --> 00:17:01,690
They did not pay
attention to office hours

244

00:17:01,690 --> 00:17:06,609
and it was a 24 hour

a day job for my dad.

245

00:17:06,609 --> 00:17:15,040

And he retired only maybe--

246

00:17:15,040 --> 00:17:17,079

never really retired.

247

00:17:17,079 --> 00:17:25,520

He only stopped maybe six months
or so before he died at 79.

248

00:17:25,520 --> 00:17:28,700

Well we are out of time
now, but it seems to me

249

00:17:28,700 --> 00:17:34,010

that there is so much
more rich history here.

250

00:17:34,010 --> 00:17:36,950

And also that you didn't even
finish your final statement,

251

00:17:36,950 --> 00:17:37,450

so--

252

00:17:37,450 --> 00:17:39,020

Right, I keep running off.

253

00:17:39,020 --> 00:17:42,440

Make it shorter.

254

00:17:42,440 --> 00:17:45,490

But--

255

00:17:45,490 --> 00:19:44,406