

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:01:20,420

2

00:01:20,420 --> 00:01:28,430

OK when we left off we were
talking about what evaluation

3

00:01:28,430 --> 00:01:31,320

you had made about your
participation in the OSS,

4

00:01:31,320 --> 00:01:33,530

and you had said
that you thought

5

00:01:33,530 --> 00:01:37,400

it was one of the highlights
for you in your life.

6

00:01:37,400 --> 00:01:38,610

You mean the experience.

7

00:01:38,610 --> 00:01:39,410

Yes.

8

00:01:39,410 --> 00:01:42,020

And I wonder if you could
amplify on that a little bit.

9

00:01:42,020 --> 00:01:48,760

10

00:01:48,760 --> 00:01:57,610

Well, something is a tragedy
when it turns out badly

11

00:01:57,610 --> 00:02:01,810

and a great experience
when it turns out well.

12

00:02:01,810 --> 00:02:05,320

And this, since it
turned out so well,

13
00:02:05,320 --> 00:02:10,330
you could only view it as a
wonderful experience because

14
00:02:10,330 --> 00:02:15,340
of using France primarily.

15
00:02:15,340 --> 00:02:19,690
Because of the people
we met, the things

16
00:02:19,690 --> 00:02:23,830
we did, the companionship
of my friends

17
00:02:23,830 --> 00:02:28,210
that I had this experience
with-- unfortunately,

18
00:02:28,210 --> 00:02:32,410
really none of which I do
I still have contact with.

19
00:02:32,410 --> 00:02:33,850
Did you for a while?

20
00:02:33,850 --> 00:02:34,810
With some, yeah.

21
00:02:34,810 --> 00:02:38,410
Somehow they dispersed.

22
00:02:38,410 --> 00:02:42,340
We had very little in common,
a lot of the people and myself.

23
00:02:42,340 --> 00:02:45,890
Some were in different
parts of the country

24

00:02:45,890 --> 00:02:50,320

and so forth so
that there was not.

25

00:02:50,320 --> 00:02:51,560

But there were--

26

00:02:51,560 --> 00:02:54,190

Are you sorry that you haven't
been able to keep in contact?

27

00:02:54,190 --> 00:02:55,000

Yes.

28

00:02:55,000 --> 00:02:55,600

Yes.

29

00:02:55,600 --> 00:02:57,580

Some of them have died.

30

00:02:57,580 --> 00:03:00,250

One of my close friends
died soon after the war.

31

00:03:00,250 --> 00:03:03,430

I don't know why or how.

32

00:03:03,430 --> 00:03:04,960

People got on with their lives.

33

00:03:04,960 --> 00:03:07,780

And none of them
lived near enough so

34

00:03:07,780 --> 00:03:11,270

that we had close physical
contact or anything like that.

35

00:03:11,270 --> 00:03:13,600

So it just kind of petered out.

36

00:03:13,600 --> 00:03:16,060
Late in life--

37
00:03:16,060 --> 00:03:17,710
I just thought of his last name.

38
00:03:17,710 --> 00:03:20,500
The medic's name
was Phil Hardinger.

39
00:03:20,500 --> 00:03:23,710
He was a Midwest fellow.

40
00:03:23,710 --> 00:03:28,900
And he went to France
the year after I did

41
00:03:28,900 --> 00:03:31,870
and he met the
dentist, and so forth.

42
00:03:31,870 --> 00:03:35,420
And he was told by them about
my being there the year before.

43
00:03:35,420 --> 00:03:37,930
So he was much more
into this kind of thing

44
00:03:37,930 --> 00:03:41,020
than I was and had done a lot
more research before he went

45
00:03:41,020 --> 00:03:42,165
and did it very thoroughly.

46
00:03:42,165 --> 00:03:43,540
So he came back
and couldn't wait

47
00:03:43,540 --> 00:03:46,600
to get on the phone to talk
to me after all those years

48
00:03:46,600 --> 00:03:49,450
because he had found that
I was there, and so forth.

49
00:03:49,450 --> 00:03:55,180
And he told me about
the Veterans of the OSS,

50
00:03:55,180 --> 00:03:57,880
which is an
organization which I had

51
00:03:57,880 --> 00:04:00,820
no interest in joining when
it was first formed soon

52
00:04:00,820 --> 00:04:01,970
after the war.

53
00:04:01,970 --> 00:04:05,080
But he said he had joined it,
why don't I join it for \$25?

54
00:04:05,080 --> 00:04:06,340
So I did.

55
00:04:06,340 --> 00:04:10,240
And unfortunately,
learned two years later

56
00:04:10,240 --> 00:04:14,890
through their bulletin
that Phil had died.

57
00:04:14,890 --> 00:04:18,190
But I knew practically
nobody in the book.

58
00:04:18,190 --> 00:04:25,090
My commanding officer of our
group and maybe one or two

59

00:04:25,090 --> 00:04:26,470
other people.

60

00:04:26,470 --> 00:04:30,100
And I just never
bothered to contact them.

61

00:04:30,100 --> 00:04:33,640
But that was drifting away
from your question again.

62

00:04:33,640 --> 00:04:34,870
The experience?

63

00:04:34,870 --> 00:04:38,740
I mean, being in France,
observing the resistance,

64

00:04:38,740 --> 00:04:45,420
being part of a kind of an
important part of the war

65

00:04:45,420 --> 00:04:46,150
was great.

66

00:04:46,150 --> 00:04:52,020
I mean, I got a love for France
that I still have to this day.

67

00:04:52,020 --> 00:04:54,040
What did you feel
about the French people

68

00:04:54,040 --> 00:04:55,610
when you were
there at that time?

69

00:04:55,610 --> 00:04:58,540
Well, at least people
were a wonderful group.

70

00:04:58,540 --> 00:05:01,150

They were so grateful
for everything

71
00:05:01,150 --> 00:05:03,100
we were doing for them
that they were just

72
00:05:03,100 --> 00:05:08,740
good, warm, hardworking,
brave people who were really

73
00:05:08,740 --> 00:05:10,030
doing a wonderful job.

74
00:05:10,030 --> 00:05:13,260

75
00:05:13,260 --> 00:05:16,110
Yeah, those experiences
like the chateau and things

76
00:05:16,110 --> 00:05:18,780
like that they're great.

77
00:05:18,780 --> 00:05:20,820
It was a great experience.

78
00:05:20,820 --> 00:05:22,330
And China, too, of course.

79
00:05:22,330 --> 00:05:26,670
It was a wonderful opportunity
to observe another culture

80
00:05:26,670 --> 00:05:30,600
which possibly I might never
have gotten the opportunity

81
00:05:30,600 --> 00:05:33,000
to do had it not been for that.

82
00:05:33,000 --> 00:05:37,030

83
00:05:37,030 --> 00:05:38,890
Have you been back
to France many times?

84
00:05:38,890 --> 00:05:39,520
Yes.

85
00:05:39,520 --> 00:05:42,800
Do you find yourself wanting to
go back to that part of France?

86
00:05:42,800 --> 00:05:43,960
We've done it once.

87
00:05:43,960 --> 00:05:44,550
Just once.

88
00:05:44,550 --> 00:05:47,260
We did it once as I
mentioned with my first wife.

89
00:05:47,260 --> 00:05:53,080
And I'm planning to do it
again with my wife, Judith.

90
00:05:53,080 --> 00:05:56,950
And probably on our
next trip to France

91
00:05:56,950 --> 00:06:00,050
we will do a similar trip.

92
00:06:00,050 --> 00:06:02,320
You're going to give her
the tour where you were?

93
00:06:02,320 --> 00:06:02,860
Sure.

94
00:06:02,860 --> 00:06:06,720

Yeah, sure.

95

00:06:06,720 --> 00:06:08,550

Have you been back to China?

96

00:06:08,550 --> 00:06:10,200

No.

97

00:06:10,200 --> 00:06:12,910

I haven't been back to China.

98

00:06:12,910 --> 00:06:16,500

I hope to go, but there are
so many places we want to go

99

00:06:16,500 --> 00:06:19,500

and it's on the
list but if it ever

100

00:06:19,500 --> 00:06:22,200

reaches the top of the
list, that'll be great.

101

00:06:22,200 --> 00:06:25,430

I've been to Hong Kong once,
but that's not really China.

102

00:06:25,430 --> 00:06:30,610

103

00:06:30,610 --> 00:06:37,300

When you got out of the service,
what kind of work did you do?

104

00:06:37,300 --> 00:06:39,040

Went right back to my old job.

105

00:06:39,040 --> 00:06:41,890

Remember I told
you about the \$75.

106

00:06:41,890 --> 00:06:49,120

Went back to my old job
and progressed well.

107
00:06:49,120 --> 00:06:53,870
I still had serious
problems with my mother.

108
00:06:53,870 --> 00:07:00,760
I got married about a year
later, married in July of 1947.

109
00:07:00,760 --> 00:07:03,370
Had three children.

110
00:07:03,370 --> 00:07:12,130
And the problems with my mother
in those days were quite--

111
00:07:12,130 --> 00:07:15,106

112
00:07:15,106 --> 00:07:20,140
They had quite an
impact on my life,

113
00:07:20,140 --> 00:07:22,150
even to the extent
of making a marriage

114
00:07:22,150 --> 00:07:29,740
or rocky at times because
my wife had nothing

115
00:07:29,740 --> 00:07:31,450
in her experience
to teach her how

116
00:07:31,450 --> 00:07:32,830
to cope with these problems.

117
00:07:32,830 --> 00:07:37,870
And they were her problems
too much of the time,

118
00:07:37,870 --> 00:07:40,240
so I was a little bit rough.

119
00:07:40,240 --> 00:07:48,070
But my mother lived until
she was about 82 or 83.

120
00:07:48,070 --> 00:07:50,860
She died about 1983.

121
00:07:50,860 --> 00:07:53,230
She was born in 1899.

122
00:07:53,230 --> 00:07:56,030
And her later years
were much better,

123
00:07:56,030 --> 00:07:57,910
but it was a rough period.

124
00:07:57,910 --> 00:08:00,800
But we had a good life.

125
00:08:00,800 --> 00:08:04,270
We moved to the suburbs
to one of the houses

126
00:08:04,270 --> 00:08:06,970
that Mr. Levitt
built on Long Island.

127
00:08:06,970 --> 00:08:10,030
Brought up three
children in that area.

128
00:08:10,030 --> 00:08:12,460
Moved twice.

129
00:08:12,460 --> 00:08:17,320
And the business progressed
as I indicated back

130
00:08:17,320 --> 00:08:21,880
in the early part about
the two companies.

131
00:08:21,880 --> 00:08:24,160
While we lived in
our first, house

132
00:08:24,160 --> 00:08:28,210
I was running both
of those companies,

133
00:08:28,210 --> 00:08:33,716
or began to run both of them,
and then ultimately dropped one

134
00:08:33,716 --> 00:08:34,299
for the other.

135
00:08:34,299 --> 00:08:37,750
But we had a reasonably
comfortable life.

136
00:08:37,750 --> 00:08:42,610
And kids had a nice upbringing,
nice suburban atmosphere

137
00:08:42,610 --> 00:08:43,669
and so forth.

138
00:08:43,669 --> 00:08:46,810
So that part of my life was
pretty good at that stage.

139
00:08:46,810 --> 00:08:50,140
Do you know why your
mother's illness

140
00:08:50,140 --> 00:08:52,420
lessened as she get older?

141

00:08:52,420 --> 00:08:54,460

Had they discovered any
of the new medications?

142

00:08:54,460 --> 00:08:55,730

I think that was part of it.

143

00:08:55,730 --> 00:08:58,462

Yes, definitely.

144

00:08:58,462 --> 00:08:59,920

I don't remember
the names anymore,

145

00:08:59,920 --> 00:09:01,600

but that was
definitely part of it.

146

00:09:01,600 --> 00:09:10,540

And I know, maybe with
the later years or--

147

00:09:10,540 --> 00:09:15,530

Whatever it was,
in the later years

148

00:09:15,530 --> 00:09:18,445

it wasn't quite as extreme.

149

00:09:18,445 --> 00:09:24,080

150

00:09:24,080 --> 00:09:29,450

And how long did you did you
stay married that first time?

151

00:09:29,450 --> 00:09:31,730

For 43 years.

152

00:09:31,730 --> 00:09:33,310

Quite a while, until
a few years ago.

153

00:09:33,310 --> 00:09:37,030

154

00:09:37,030 --> 00:09:38,920

Were you out here then?

155

00:09:38,920 --> 00:09:41,220

No.

156

00:09:41,220 --> 00:09:43,320

Was that part of the
reason for your coming

157

00:09:43,320 --> 00:09:45,310

out here, the end
of that marriage?

158

00:09:45,310 --> 00:09:45,810

Yes.

159

00:09:45,810 --> 00:09:49,880

160

00:09:49,880 --> 00:09:52,130

What's that been like for you?

161

00:09:52,130 --> 00:09:56,470

Well, it was a stage in my
life as far as moving out here

162

00:09:56,470 --> 00:10:01,360

was concerned that I was
retiring from my business

163

00:10:01,360 --> 00:10:06,100

and had always known
San Francisco well

164

00:10:06,100 --> 00:10:14,230

and spent many very pleasant
times here, maybe 40 or 50

165

00:10:14,230 --> 00:10:15,490
times over the years.

166

00:10:15,490 --> 00:10:20,950
And coming here on business
once sometimes many more times

167

00:10:20,950 --> 00:10:23,470
than once, so I knew it
well and always liked

168

00:10:23,470 --> 00:10:27,190
it and would have liked
to have moved out here

169

00:10:27,190 --> 00:10:28,480
many years before.

170

00:10:28,480 --> 00:10:32,770
But the business and
family situations, it

171

00:10:32,770 --> 00:10:34,330
was just not a practical thing.

172

00:10:34,330 --> 00:10:38,230
But at that stage of my life it
became practical and possible.

173

00:10:38,230 --> 00:10:43,030
And the woman that
I met and married

174

00:10:43,030 --> 00:10:45,310
had been living out here
for a number of years,

175

00:10:45,310 --> 00:10:47,500
so it was great to
be able to do it.

176

00:10:47,500 --> 00:10:50,140

And we're very happy
living in this area

177
00:10:50,140 --> 00:10:51,790
although I do go back
quite frequently.

178
00:10:51,790 --> 00:10:54,940
My children and grandchildren
are all back east

179
00:10:54,940 --> 00:10:57,370
and I try to get back
as often as I can.

180
00:10:57,370 --> 00:10:58,690
Still on Long Island?

181
00:10:58,690 --> 00:11:00,430
No.

182
00:11:00,430 --> 00:11:02,230
In chronological
order, my daughter

183
00:11:02,230 --> 00:11:04,840
lives in northern New Jersey.

184
00:11:04,840 --> 00:11:11,320
She has two children, one 21
and one 14, approximately.

185
00:11:11,320 --> 00:11:14,990
They live in a suburban of
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

186
00:11:14,990 --> 00:11:19,900
My next child, Jim, a son,
lives in New York City.

187
00:11:19,900 --> 00:11:24,370
He has two children, one from
an early marriage who's 19 now,

188
00:11:24,370 --> 00:11:26,450
I guess, maybe almost 20.

189
00:11:26,450 --> 00:11:31,240
And a young baby of two
from his second marriage.

190
00:11:31,240 --> 00:11:33,760
And then my third
child lives in Boston

191
00:11:33,760 --> 00:11:37,360
and has two children
about 9 and 6.

192
00:11:37,360 --> 00:11:41,790
So I have three
wonderful families.

193
00:11:41,790 --> 00:11:43,640
That's a reason to go back.

194
00:11:43,640 --> 00:11:45,200
That's a big reason to go back.

195
00:11:45,200 --> 00:11:48,590

196
00:11:48,590 --> 00:11:50,000
Are you retired?

197
00:11:50,000 --> 00:11:51,860
Yes, I'm fully retired.

198
00:11:51,860 --> 00:11:54,000
How do you spend your time?

199
00:11:54,000 --> 00:11:58,730
Well, I recently became a
docent at the San Francisco

200

00:11:58,730 --> 00:12:01,310

Museum of Modern Art.

201

00:12:01,310 --> 00:12:06,230

I go into a middle school one
day a week as a volunteer.

202

00:12:06,230 --> 00:12:09,590

203

00:12:09,590 --> 00:12:13,880

Play a little golf
and tennis not much.

204

00:12:13,880 --> 00:12:15,290

I'm interested in photography.

205

00:12:15,290 --> 00:12:18,980

I just came back from a
week's photography workshop

206

00:12:18,980 --> 00:12:23,400

in Zion National Park,
which was quite exciting

207

00:12:23,400 --> 00:12:24,500

and a lot of fun.

208

00:12:24,500 --> 00:12:25,970

And we travel quite a bit.

209

00:12:25,970 --> 00:12:31,950

We try to take at least
one major trip a year.

210

00:12:31,950 --> 00:12:34,480

So we have a nice life.

211

00:12:34,480 --> 00:12:35,480

Seems very busy.

212

00:12:35,480 --> 00:12:37,820

Busier than I
thought it would be.

213

00:12:37,820 --> 00:12:40,690

Probably left out a few other
activities I'm involved in.

214

00:12:40,690 --> 00:12:44,500

215

00:12:44,500 --> 00:12:47,780

I'd like to go back if
you can bear it and just

216

00:12:47,780 --> 00:12:49,470

fill in a few details.

217

00:12:49,470 --> 00:12:52,320

The first one is your
mother's maiden name.

218

00:12:52,320 --> 00:12:57,080

Levin, L-E-V-I-N.

219

00:12:57,080 --> 00:12:59,460

And then I wanted
to find out when

220

00:12:59,460 --> 00:13:02,790

you stopped living at home with
your grandmother and mother

221

00:13:02,790 --> 00:13:05,190

and brother.

222

00:13:05,190 --> 00:13:07,960

When I got married.

223

00:13:07,960 --> 00:13:10,110

So you went back after
the war and lived there

224
00:13:10,110 --> 00:13:13,020
for another year or two?

225
00:13:13,020 --> 00:13:14,700
Right.

226
00:13:14,700 --> 00:13:17,790
And I wondered how
your family managed

227
00:13:17,790 --> 00:13:19,470
while you were in the service.

228
00:13:19,470 --> 00:13:24,060
I'm assuming they weren't
paying you a princely sum.

229
00:13:24,060 --> 00:13:25,650
Were they totally
dependent on you

230
00:13:25,650 --> 00:13:27,180
for an income at that point?

231
00:13:27,180 --> 00:13:29,550
No, my mother was working.

232
00:13:29,550 --> 00:13:31,500
You'll recall that
I mentioned that she

233
00:13:31,500 --> 00:13:35,940
worked for the same firm, the
Tobias firm that I worked for.

234
00:13:35,940 --> 00:13:39,290
And she worked there
through the war.

235
00:13:39,290 --> 00:13:40,950
So she was bringing in a salary.

236

00:13:40,950 --> 00:13:44,460

Then the government
has some sort

237

00:13:44,460 --> 00:13:48,420

of an allocation that they
make to dependents out

238

00:13:48,420 --> 00:13:50,500

of your salary which
they supplemented.

239

00:13:50,500 --> 00:13:54,360

So there was some sort of
a check coming in from me

240

00:13:54,360 --> 00:13:58,790

every month, so she managed.

241

00:13:58,790 --> 00:14:01,190

And then I would
like you to tell us

242

00:14:01,190 --> 00:14:04,550

what your family and friends
knew about your activities

243

00:14:04,550 --> 00:14:05,630

during the war.

244

00:14:05,630 --> 00:14:08,390

Were they aware of
the danger and what

245

00:14:08,390 --> 00:14:09,820

it was you were involved in?

246

00:14:09,820 --> 00:14:14,370

247

00:14:14,370 --> 00:14:20,070

I guess after--

248
00:14:20,070 --> 00:14:23,080
Up until the time that
I went into France,

249
00:14:23,080 --> 00:14:24,240
the answer would be no.

250
00:14:24,240 --> 00:14:28,080

251
00:14:28,080 --> 00:14:36,990
We were very rigorously
advised against any type

252
00:14:36,990 --> 00:14:40,710
of revelation whatsoever.

253
00:14:40,710 --> 00:14:45,150
OSS, people used to say,
stands for Oh So Secret.

254
00:14:45,150 --> 00:14:48,510
And so no, I don't
think anybody,

255
00:14:48,510 --> 00:14:52,140
even my mother knew
exactly what we

256
00:14:52,140 --> 00:14:55,680
were doing or about the
parachuting or anything else.

257
00:14:55,680 --> 00:14:57,967
Although we did walk
around in jump boots,

258
00:14:57,967 --> 00:14:59,550
so there may have
been some suspicion.

259

00:14:59,550 --> 00:15:03,060

But I don't believe
I even told that.

260

00:15:03,060 --> 00:15:13,650

At two points in my
career in this period

261

00:15:13,650 --> 00:15:19,050

I revealed a certain amount
of information in one instance

262

00:15:19,050 --> 00:15:23,430

to a cousin, a first cousin
who was a Naval officer.

263

00:15:23,430 --> 00:15:25,620

And I told him
quite a bit, which

264

00:15:25,620 --> 00:15:28,470

I knew would be kept secret.

265

00:15:28,470 --> 00:15:33,780

And another instance I
met a close friend of mine

266

00:15:33,780 --> 00:15:37,530

in Algiers who was in the Army
and was stationed in Algiers.

267

00:15:37,530 --> 00:15:40,230

And we saw each
other a few times.

268

00:15:40,230 --> 00:15:42,840

And this was just before
I was going into France

269

00:15:42,840 --> 00:15:46,300

so I told him quite a bit.

270

00:15:46,300 --> 00:15:49,860

And then managed to see him
again when I got to Italy

271
00:15:49,860 --> 00:15:53,310
and told him what happened.

272
00:15:53,310 --> 00:15:54,810
So except for those
two people who

273
00:15:54,810 --> 00:15:58,890
I told just so
somebody knew, nobody

274
00:15:58,890 --> 00:16:00,335
knew until after the war.

275
00:16:00,335 --> 00:16:01,710
In fact, I mentioned
a little bit

276
00:16:01,710 --> 00:16:06,960
before about coming back when I
was in training in Washington.

277
00:16:06,960 --> 00:16:10,140
And coming back to New
York quite frequently

278
00:16:10,140 --> 00:16:14,670
for the weekends and dressed
in some military uniforms that

279
00:16:14,670 --> 00:16:16,320
were a little exotic
for their time

280
00:16:16,320 --> 00:16:21,060
because our troops were given
some very advanced clothes

281
00:16:21,060 --> 00:16:22,290
to wear and so forth.

282
00:16:22,290 --> 00:16:27,240
And I would meet at
our favorite haunts

283
00:16:27,240 --> 00:16:29,970
whatever friends were home
and the women that were still

284
00:16:29,970 --> 00:16:30,672
there.

285
00:16:30,672 --> 00:16:32,880
And I'd come home and they'd
say, what are you doing?

286
00:16:32,880 --> 00:16:34,440
Well, I'm working in Washington.

287
00:16:34,440 --> 00:16:35,850
I can't tell you what I'm doing.

288
00:16:35,850 --> 00:16:38,760
And that would go on for weeks
and actually literally months

289
00:16:38,760 --> 00:16:40,860
because from the
time I started being

290
00:16:40,860 --> 00:16:44,190
able to come up in the
fall until we actually

291
00:16:44,190 --> 00:16:48,210
left in the winter, I
was home frequently.

292
00:16:48,210 --> 00:16:51,930
And I learned later that a
lot of people felt at the time

293

00:16:51,930 --> 00:16:53,880
that I was probably
a bit of a phony,

294
00:16:53,880 --> 00:16:55,740
that I had some kind
of a job in Washington

295
00:16:55,740 --> 00:16:58,170
and wanted to make
it sound important.

296
00:16:58,170 --> 00:17:01,620
So no, nobody really knew
except for those two people.

297
00:17:01,620 --> 00:17:04,980
And after the war did you
learn that these people who

298
00:17:04,980 --> 00:17:07,800
thought you were a phony found
out that it was all true?

299
00:17:07,800 --> 00:17:09,390
Oh, sure.

300
00:17:09,390 --> 00:17:10,950
And how did that feel?

301
00:17:10,950 --> 00:17:11,490
It was fun.

302
00:17:11,490 --> 00:17:14,190

303
00:17:14,190 --> 00:17:17,970
So your training in Bethesda
was probably top secret then.

304
00:17:17,970 --> 00:17:20,069
Oh, yeah.

305

00:17:20,069 --> 00:17:23,140

I wanted to ask you
and obvious question.

306

00:17:23,140 --> 00:17:26,569

When you were learning to jump
those very first few times,

307

00:17:26,569 --> 00:17:29,730

were you scared?

308

00:17:29,730 --> 00:17:33,690

I told you we did four jumps
and we did them all in one day.

309

00:17:33,690 --> 00:17:37,980

So the first we went up, we
jumped, trucks picked us up.

310

00:17:37,980 --> 00:17:40,290

Took us back to the
field which was close by.

311

00:17:40,290 --> 00:17:42,540

Jumped 3 times in the morning.

312

00:17:42,540 --> 00:17:44,980

And they said, OK, we'll
break for two hours for lunch

313

00:17:44,980 --> 00:17:46,223

and then we'll go back.

314

00:17:46,223 --> 00:17:47,640

And that's when
we all got scared,

315

00:17:47,640 --> 00:17:48,940

because now we were waiting.

316

00:17:48,940 --> 00:17:50,190

So those two hours, oh my God.

317
00:17:50,190 --> 00:17:52,440
We're going to have
to do this again.

318
00:17:52,440 --> 00:17:52,940
That was--

319
00:17:52,940 --> 00:17:53,890
You had time to think.

320
00:17:53,890 --> 00:17:54,390
Yeah.

321
00:17:54,390 --> 00:17:57,630
Before that we were too
stupid to be scared.

322
00:17:57,630 --> 00:18:00,320
You know you get built
up to we're gonna jump.

323
00:18:00,320 --> 00:18:01,740
It was great.

324
00:18:01,740 --> 00:18:05,910
Were you the only
Jew in your group?

325
00:18:05,910 --> 00:18:06,480
Group?

326
00:18:06,480 --> 00:18:07,500
Well, in the 15--

327
00:18:07,500 --> 00:18:13,635

328
00:18:13,635 --> 00:18:14,135
Cosmo?

329

00:18:14,135 --> 00:18:20,310

330

00:18:20,310 --> 00:18:24,650

Yep, in that group of
15 I was the only Jew.

331

00:18:24,650 --> 00:18:27,150

There was another fellow that
was in one of the other groups

332

00:18:27,150 --> 00:18:30,048

that I was quite friendly
with named Moses Levine.

333

00:18:30,048 --> 00:18:31,965

So I have a feeling he
might have been Jewish.

334

00:18:31,965 --> 00:18:36,030

335

00:18:36,030 --> 00:18:37,020

Then there were others.

336

00:18:37,020 --> 00:18:42,840

But in my 15 I was the only one.

337

00:18:42,840 --> 00:18:45,450

I wondered at what
point you learned

338

00:18:45,450 --> 00:18:47,340

of the horrors of the Holocaust.

339

00:18:47,340 --> 00:18:52,730

340

00:18:52,730 --> 00:18:55,380

I wonder how other people
answer that question.

341

00:18:55,380 --> 00:18:56,960

I'm sure you ask
it all the time.

342

00:18:56,960 --> 00:19:03,240

343

00:19:03,240 --> 00:19:05,180
I don't know.

344

00:19:05,180 --> 00:19:10,970
Probably later than
a lot of other people

345

00:19:10,970 --> 00:19:15,530
because the eyewitness
stories and the dramatic entry

346

00:19:15,530 --> 00:19:22,610
to the camps and so forth
took place in April and May.

347

00:19:22,610 --> 00:19:27,590
And much of that time I was
on a ship crossing the Pacific

348

00:19:27,590 --> 00:19:29,450
Ocean.

349

00:19:29,450 --> 00:19:31,160
We crossed the Pacific Ocean.

350

00:19:31,160 --> 00:19:34,370
We had to go all around
the bottom of Australia

351

00:19:34,370 --> 00:19:36,710
and back up to get to Calcutta.

352

00:19:36,710 --> 00:19:43,040
And just as a little aside,
we stopped in Melbourne

353

00:19:43,040 --> 00:19:47,405

and we docked, but nobody
was allowed off the ship.

354

00:19:47,405 --> 00:19:49,770

It was a Navy troop ship.

355

00:19:49,770 --> 00:19:55,160

So we stayed on board that
ship for about 24 hours or so.

356

00:19:55,160 --> 00:20:01,520

And in the morning, the Navy
expression for attention

357

00:20:01,520 --> 00:20:03,140

is now hear this.

358

00:20:03,140 --> 00:20:05,360

And on the loudspeakers
throughout the ship

359

00:20:05,360 --> 00:20:08,600

the first announcement
came over, now hear this.

360

00:20:08,600 --> 00:20:10,370

President Roosevelt died today.

361

00:20:10,370 --> 00:20:12,920

That was like April
12th, I believe.

362

00:20:12,920 --> 00:20:18,320

Then later that day there
was another announcement

363

00:20:18,320 --> 00:20:19,820

now hear this.

364

00:20:19,820 --> 00:20:22,610

All Jewish personnel on

board will please report

365
00:20:22,610 --> 00:20:24,705
to such and such a room.

366
00:20:24,705 --> 00:20:27,350

367
00:20:27,350 --> 00:20:30,790
In retrospect, I
think I thought, well,

368
00:20:30,790 --> 00:20:33,290
what are they gonna do, round
us all up now that Roosevelt's

369
00:20:33,290 --> 00:20:34,670
dead?

370
00:20:34,670 --> 00:20:39,110
Anyhow, we go down to this
room, and there were a dozen--

371
00:20:39,110 --> 00:20:41,690
well, there were other troops
on the ship besides us.

372
00:20:41,690 --> 00:20:44,690
And we get down there and
there were 2 or 3 very nice

373
00:20:44,690 --> 00:20:47,850
Australian gentlemen in civilian
clothes with yarmulkes on.

374
00:20:47,850 --> 00:20:50,000
They said, well,
today is Passover

375
00:20:50,000 --> 00:20:56,030
and we thought we would give
you a little matzohs and stuff.

376

00:20:56,030 --> 00:20:58,340

So that was your only
experience like that.

377

00:20:58,340 --> 00:21:00,270

That was my only
experience like that.

378

00:21:00,270 --> 00:21:01,850

That was the only
experience where

379

00:21:01,850 --> 00:21:06,560

my heritage came into
play during my career,

380

00:21:06,560 --> 00:21:07,700

at least as I can recall.

381

00:21:07,700 --> 00:21:11,030

382

00:21:11,030 --> 00:21:13,450

Now that it's all
over and behind you,

383

00:21:13,450 --> 00:21:17,090

are you drawn to
watching movies about it

384

00:21:17,090 --> 00:21:20,280

and reading about that period?

385

00:21:20,280 --> 00:21:20,780

Yeah.

386

00:21:20,780 --> 00:21:23,720

387

00:21:23,720 --> 00:21:27,080

I've read quite a few books of
various kinds over the years.

388
00:21:27,080 --> 00:21:29,550
Yes, I would say I am.

389
00:21:29,550 --> 00:21:30,050
Yeah.

390
00:21:30,050 --> 00:21:34,700
I would think it
would be irresistible.

391
00:21:34,700 --> 00:21:37,140
I'd say definitely yes.

392
00:21:37,140 --> 00:21:39,380
Anything specific?

393
00:21:39,380 --> 00:21:43,940
Well of course, Schindler's List
of course would come to the top

394
00:21:43,940 --> 00:21:45,860
as far as I'm concerned.

395
00:21:45,860 --> 00:21:48,275
I mentioned 23 Rue
Madeleine, which

396
00:21:48,275 --> 00:21:52,130
is an experience of
somebody similar to mine.

397
00:21:52,130 --> 00:21:56,960
And I read a few
books on the OSS, some

398
00:21:56,960 --> 00:21:59,180
of the non-fiction reports.

399
00:21:59,180 --> 00:22:03,860
A couple of them do make some
mention of our operation.

400
00:22:03,860 --> 00:22:05,300
Yeah, sure.

401
00:22:05,300 --> 00:22:06,980
When you read about
it, does it sound

402
00:22:06,980 --> 00:22:10,440
like the experience you had?

403
00:22:10,440 --> 00:22:12,810
Yeah, it's pretty
accurate, yeah.

404
00:22:12,810 --> 00:22:16,190
What I knew about.

405
00:22:16,190 --> 00:22:21,110
Do you think that your Jewish
heritage played any part

406
00:22:21,110 --> 00:22:25,940
in your view of the war against
Germany and why you were there?

407
00:22:25,940 --> 00:22:28,670

408
00:22:28,670 --> 00:22:29,330
Oh, yes.

409
00:22:29,330 --> 00:22:30,535
I mean, I think that--

410
00:22:30,535 --> 00:22:36,400

411
00:22:36,400 --> 00:22:40,660
I felt that I had
a greater reason

412

00:22:40,660 --> 00:22:45,370

for being involved than
somebody who wasn't Jewish.

413

00:22:45,370 --> 00:22:46,850

I can put it that way.

414

00:22:46,850 --> 00:22:51,340

I mean really, it
was not difficult

415

00:22:51,340 --> 00:22:57,940

for I guess any Jewish person
who was involved in the war

416

00:22:57,940 --> 00:23:02,230

to have a very clear
reason for being there

417

00:23:02,230 --> 00:23:07,150

other than the strategic ones
or the patriotic ones that might

418

00:23:07,150 --> 00:23:08,680

have impelled other people.

419

00:23:08,680 --> 00:23:12,370

So you knew enough to know
that this was a good fight even

420

00:23:12,370 --> 00:23:13,840

if you didn't know the details.

421

00:23:13,840 --> 00:23:14,670

Yeah.

422

00:23:14,670 --> 00:23:16,270

Well you certainly
know that the Jews

423

00:23:16,270 --> 00:23:19,735

had been horribly persecuted

and driven out of Germany

424

00:23:19,735 --> 00:23:20,860
and all that kind of thing.

425

00:23:20,860 --> 00:23:25,600
As I said earlier, we
had had enough experience

426

00:23:25,600 --> 00:23:30,720
with personal experiences
with people to know that.

427

00:23:30,720 --> 00:23:32,560
I mean, we didn't know--

428

00:23:32,560 --> 00:23:37,730
You even knew, I'm sure, you
knew about concentration camps,

429

00:23:37,730 --> 00:23:38,260
I guess.

430

00:23:38,260 --> 00:23:41,215
When did we first know about
concentration camps, '41?

431

00:23:41,215 --> 00:23:43,780

432

00:23:43,780 --> 00:23:46,825
The idea that Roosevelt
refused to bomb,

433

00:23:46,825 --> 00:23:49,210
or whoever made the
decision refused

434

00:23:49,210 --> 00:23:53,500
to bomb those train yards and
so forth, those things you

435

00:23:53,500 --> 00:23:55,720
didn't hear about
until after the war.

436
00:23:55,720 --> 00:23:59,390
Or obviously the extent
of what was going on.

437
00:23:59,390 --> 00:24:00,040
But we knew.

438
00:24:00,040 --> 00:24:04,190
Did you know there were
actually death camps?

439
00:24:04,190 --> 00:24:05,080
I think I did.

440
00:24:05,080 --> 00:24:06,520
I think I did.

441
00:24:06,520 --> 00:24:09,350
I think I did.

442
00:24:09,350 --> 00:24:11,420
That could make someone
jump out of an airplane.

443
00:24:11,420 --> 00:24:13,840
Yeah.

444
00:24:13,840 --> 00:24:15,860
Yeah.

445
00:24:15,860 --> 00:24:20,430
I felt I had extra
reasons, yeah.

446
00:24:20,430 --> 00:24:25,460
Did they give much information
while you were in the OSS?

447

00:24:25,460 --> 00:24:26,780
About what?

448
00:24:26,780 --> 00:24:28,846
About what was
happening in Europe.

449
00:24:28,846 --> 00:24:34,040

450
00:24:34,040 --> 00:24:37,520
Were you able to get any more
information and be part of that

451
00:24:37,520 --> 00:24:39,170
than you knew before?

452
00:24:39,170 --> 00:24:40,920
No.

453
00:24:40,920 --> 00:24:43,100
No.

454
00:24:43,100 --> 00:24:46,010
I'm sure at much higher
levels of the OSS.

455
00:24:46,010 --> 00:24:47,090
We were soldiers.

456
00:24:47,090 --> 00:24:55,950
We were not among the what you
might call elite of the OSS.

457
00:24:55,950 --> 00:24:59,390

458
00:24:59,390 --> 00:25:03,012
What do you think in terms
of a future Holocaust?

459
00:25:03,012 --> 00:25:04,220

You think there could be one?

460
00:25:04,220 --> 00:25:09,250

461
00:25:09,250 --> 00:25:11,880
Yeah.

462
00:25:11,880 --> 00:25:15,600
When you think of what
happened in Bosnia this year

463
00:25:15,600 --> 00:25:19,530
and in that area, it
certainly brought out the fact

464
00:25:19,530 --> 00:25:23,730
that ethnic
cleansing, if you can

465
00:25:23,730 --> 00:25:28,260
use that horrible expression,
is still possible.

466
00:25:28,260 --> 00:25:31,320
You can't deny it just
happened and it's perhaps

467
00:25:31,320 --> 00:25:32,620
still happening over there.

468
00:25:32,620 --> 00:25:36,840
So whether it's a
Holocaust that involves

469
00:25:36,840 --> 00:25:40,210
the Jews or some
other group, I mean,

470
00:25:40,210 --> 00:25:43,160
there seems to be no end to it.

471

00:25:43,160 --> 00:25:49,320

Or you have to think about
Africa and places like that.

472

00:25:49,320 --> 00:25:51,870

We're not over those
instincts yet, I guess.

473

00:25:51,870 --> 00:25:54,720

474

00:25:54,720 --> 00:25:57,570

How does that affect
your view of the world?

475

00:25:57,570 --> 00:26:00,370

476

00:26:00,370 --> 00:26:01,380

Oh, I don't know.

477

00:26:01,380 --> 00:26:04,470

478

00:26:04,470 --> 00:26:07,273

I don't dwell on it that much.

479

00:26:07,273 --> 00:26:12,580

480

00:26:12,580 --> 00:26:15,610

I feel the usual
emotions when you

481

00:26:15,610 --> 00:26:18,100

see what's happening
to Rwanda or something

482

00:26:18,100 --> 00:26:21,980

that is disturbing and
sickening and so forth.

483

00:26:21,980 --> 00:26:25,770
But my overall view of the
world is pretty optimistic.

484
00:26:25,770 --> 00:26:32,680
So I guess there's always going
to be bad things happening

485
00:26:32,680 --> 00:26:33,400
along with good.

486
00:26:33,400 --> 00:26:41,420

487
00:26:41,420 --> 00:26:44,170
It's interesting
given the suddenness

488
00:26:44,170 --> 00:26:49,330
of your father's death and the
onset of your mother's illness

489
00:26:49,330 --> 00:26:50,900
which lasted so long.

490
00:26:50,900 --> 00:26:55,000

491
00:26:55,000 --> 00:26:57,720
From whence does this
optimism come do you think?

492
00:26:57,720 --> 00:27:00,760

493
00:27:00,760 --> 00:27:01,400
I don't know.

494
00:27:01,400 --> 00:27:03,910

495
00:27:03,910 --> 00:27:05,960

Life has been
reasonably good to me.

496
00:27:05,960 --> 00:27:12,250

497
00:27:12,250 --> 00:27:13,890
I'm optimistic
about our country.

498
00:27:13,890 --> 00:27:19,340

499
00:27:19,340 --> 00:27:27,440
The world is growing
and technology

500
00:27:27,440 --> 00:27:28,850
and abilities and everything.

501
00:27:28,850 --> 00:27:31,670
There's a great future,
so to look at it that way.

502
00:27:31,670 --> 00:27:38,720

503
00:27:38,720 --> 00:27:41,840
Paul, on behalf of the
Holocaust Oral History Project,

504
00:27:41,840 --> 00:27:43,440
I'd like to thank you.

505
00:27:43,440 --> 00:27:45,290
It's been my pleasure.

506
00:27:45,290 --> 00:27:48,620
I really enjoyed
doing the interview

507
00:27:48,620 --> 00:27:53,210

and to listen to you
describe your experiences.

508
00:27:53,210 --> 00:27:57,290
And we really appreciate your
participation in this project.

509
00:27:57,290 --> 00:27:58,290
Thank you very much.

510
00:27:58,290 --> 00:28:01,300
I'm very happy to have done it.

511
00:28:01,300 --> 00:30:03,392