

INTERVIEW WITH MAX ERLICHMAN

HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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Today is January 6th, 1994. The Holocaust Oral History Project, doing a second interview with Max Erlichman. My name is Tami Benou and John Grant is videotaping.

Q. MAX, YOU WERE JUST STARTING TO SAY SOMETHING HAPPENED AFTER OUR LAST INTERVIEW?

A. Our interview was the middle of December and it was on a Thursday or Friday. No, it was on a Friday. It was Friday. That's right.

In all these years, as I indicated earlier, we knew what had happened to our mother. We knew the date she was picked up but, in fact, I don't remember. And subsequently, after the war, through the Red Cross, very quickly, I think, the end of '45. If not the end of '45 then early '46, my Dad was advised that his wife, my mother, had died on the 21st.

However, there was no information on my older brother who was 16 at that time in 1942. I also indicated that when we arrived in Westerburg and I also stated I did not know or remember the date we got to Westerburg. I knew it was in November. I knew it was after my birthday and I guessed mid-November.

And when my father was looking, the day we arrived, what happened to his wife and his son he determined that my mother had already been deported to Auschwitz. But no information of my older brother, but for the fact that he had been deported one day earlier and that is where my Dad said if we had come a day earlier, he thought she would have been alive. But I didn't know the date.

In February of last year, February of '93, I wrote a letter to Dutch Red Cross asking them whether they had any information in their files about the year after the war regarding my older brother. So when I left the interview on Friday, December 10th, on Saturday, the very next day, I had a letter from the Red Cross in which they apologized for the delay, regarding my request of February of '93.

They determined from information they had in the files that my older brother; which they did not know the day he was picked up by the Germans; that he was deported from Westerburg, November 20th. Which, of course, now I know what day of the week -- the 20th -- he died in Auschwitz on February 28th, 1943. So at least now I know.

Q. IT WAS AN ODD COINCIDENCE?

A. Yes, also because they apologized. From November, they could have gone through the files. If you look under "E" they would have found his name and that's it but bureaucracy, as they are, this is what happened. But, at least I know.

Q. YOU HAD NEVER WRITTEN TO THEM REQUESTING --?

A. No. Oddly enough, I have tried to analyze the fact why. If I wanted to, I would have known about it within two days, maybe three days. I would have known what happened to my brother and for one reason or another, I didn't. I decided I'm not interested or don't want to know.

But I don't want to go into any psychology and self-analysis. I think it has

something to do with the open gap that exists in the mother/son relationship. Because that was something that doesn't close. It's an open book. It remains open. You never get to say, "bye-bye Mom" or whatever. So had I not had the time and inclination and opportunity to cope with my mother, I might not have wanted to know anything about my brother because that would have been -- I don't know -- I don't want to say too much. You know, one thing at a time.

So I never tried to and apparently I think last year I decided, "Wait a minute. I'm not 28 anymore." Though I say I'm 39, people don't believe it. I decided it's about time, let's find out. I don't remember the state of mind I was in when I did write the letter. Then you get into, you start thinking, he was 16 and on his own. And help, of course, who took care of him.

I'm a father of seven children and I'm a Yiddish mother there are very few like me. And even my kids claim I'm overprotective, which I'm not, but it's a perception they have.

So I think of my older brother at

the age of 16 on his own. Nobody to tell him. Nobody to watch. Nobody to guide. No support. It must have been terrible. So I hope that some adult at that time probably, hopefully, watched over him.

And then the same thing applies to my mother but, of course, that was only five days. But he was there from the end of November, December, January, February -- three and a half months -- something like this.

I know that I indicated that when we were picked up the 21st, it was midnight. So we were picked up the 21st of November. The city theater in Namshow was used as a collecting point and then, from there, the people that were collected then were taken that night or day, they were taken to the city Holdensberg. And 6:00 a.m., I think last time I said by truck, it was, of course, not a truck, it was a streetcar. At 6:00 a.m., a street car, because there was still a curfew, and they took us to the railroad station. From there everybody went to Westerborg unless they went to one of the other camps.

And subsequently, after the war, they never reopened or rebuilt the theater. It

stood there and, in fact, we lived a block away from it so we passed it daily. And apparently, I don't know, five or six or three years ago, they decided to make -- how should I say -- not a memorial. They decided to dedicate that building to the purpose it was used for by the city and Jewish community, I don't know. I was in Holland so I never did go to see it. Then, last Thursday, I read a paper and there is an article in which after modifications it has reopened. And obviously, blah, blah, blah, and the phone number and so I called. Let's take a look at what it is.

My daughter, Sylvia and I, we went there on the first of January. We flew back on the 2nd. And I don't know what it looked prior to the final work they put into it but the courtyard and the atrium; it's still there. There is a pillar. It's a pillar dedicated to the open yard and as you come in, they have a Vietnam Memorial. After the Vietnam Memorial there are copies like this, I think. Today everybody makes the same. As you come in on the left side there is a wall with all the names (indicating) of family names. People that went through and never did return. By

"family names" I mean if there were 48 or 88 families by the name "Thompson" the name "Thompson" only appears once. Otherwise, probably the wall is not big enough or the letters would be too small.

So our family name was on there and I, of course, phoned earlier and asked what it was and they explained what it was prior to visiting there. They have a record room where you can go and find a copy of the records and I said it was January 1st, no December 31st. December 31st, there was, of course, no time for him. He offered to make and he made a photocopy of that particular page and he mailed it to my daughter and she faxed it to me yesterday. So they have a record where you can go and you find basically the same information. On my mother and older brother.

Q. DID YOU FIND YOUR NAME?

A. No, only those that did not return. Only those that did not return. So Yanowitz, the family that my Dad got to go with us, their name doesn't appear because the whole family came back. The Rabbi Robnowitz is on there because he and his son came back but his wife died. So if a member of a family and --

Erlichman's, we are the only Erlichman's, anyway. But if they were Robnowitz's,, there might have been eight, the name only appears once.

Then you go into particulars. First name and date of birth; which was incorrect for my mother but I'll send them a fax today or tomorrow and see whether or not -- It's very difficult. If people see it on paper it's like in marble.

Even if I come with my birthday of my mother was not May. Wait a minute, what does it say? 15th of May, 1904, is wrong. My mother was born April 19th, because my father's birthday was April 15th. Her's was April 19th and it was their wedding day. So then she was born in Kiev. That is a mistake. Also, I don't think she was born in 1904. I think she was born in 1905. She was 26 when I was born so I have to mathematically go back and see when I was born, so it must have been 1905.

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY GOT THESE DATES?

A. No, no. But people are status quo. It's there, so I come and I say, "Look that's wrong."

"Sorry, that is the way it is."

"Look, it's a mistake."

"I don't care. We don't care."

"Where did you get your
information?"

"Oh, it's from a proper source."

"Yes, but it's wrong."

You need two sticks of dynamite in
order to get people to accept the fact that
what's there written is wrong.

So I'll basically give them the
information, tell them that I doubt whether the
bureaucratic system will allow them to correct
something that somebody put there. It's not a
world-shocking event if they leave it as it is,
but if you do it, you might as well do it
properly; so please correct it. I have not --
I don't care -- because I wonder where they got
that information. I don't know. I don't
know.

Q. FINDING OUT THIS INFORMATION ABOUT
YOUR BROTHER AND SEEING THIS MEMORIAL, DOES
THAT GIVE YOU SOME SENSE OF COMPLETION?

A. No. No. No. The memorial is a
number of names. No. My older brother, you
know, it's a period; like the period at the end

of the sentence. I mean that he didn't survive. But when? And if I do want to burn a candle, at least I have a date. So it's basically a day that does that. That was it.

Q. SHALL WE GO BACK TO, YOU HAD JUST FINISHED DESCRIBING THE WONDERFUL FEELING YOU AND YOUR BROTHER HAD AS YOU JUMPED INTO THE FEATHER BEDS IN ONE OF THE HOMES IN THE TOWN?

A. Yeah, the white sheets.

Q. WHAT HAPPENED AFTER YOU STAYED IN THOSE HOMES?

A. I think we stayed there about a week and then the U.S. Army started repatriating the prisoners so we were put on a truck and driven to Wurzburg and I remember that ride. I know we took some mountain roads. The freeways or autobahns were basically gone so there was not a lot of traffic. So you had to go by highways and roads. And we took corners on two wheels. And driving with one hand and a cigarette. It was funny. We enjoyed that, you know, because you could look, it was an open truck. You could stick your elbow out the window. And his cigarette; if he's holding that cigarette, hopefully he has the other hand on the steering wheel.

So we got to Versburg and that is a general collecting area for Dutch, Belgium and French prisoners. And the collecting area was German army barracks on top of a hill, I remember, that was not bombed. Probably decided not to bomb it they could use it once they came in. And then we met some of the people that were taken earlier from our camp and marched back and they were subsequently liberated. So we met the Yanowitz's again. We met some other people and I think we stayed there also about a week. Then we were put on a train.

Q. NOW, ARE YOU BEING GIVEN THE FOOD YOU NEED?

A. Yeah, that was under -- not British -- I think it was American. No, it was still in the American occupied territory. The British were further up north and the French had a section in the south. Yeah, we were fed and then the paper work and you know names and dates and pieces of paper.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY SPECIFIC CONVERSATIONS WITH ANY OF THE SOLDIERS?

A. No.

Q. OR HOW THEY TREATED YOU?

A. No. After we were liberated in Weissenburg, yes, I mentioned that they set up antiaircraft battery outside of a camp and there were a crew. I don't know, six, and there was one I used to sit practically all day, daily. As long as we still were in Weissenburg. And we chatted.

I knew he came from Chicago, I knew the name. I asked him the name and we talked and talked and talked. And I had a name. He was from Chicago and, yes, there was nothing else to do. There was not a lot of coming and going. They were basically sitting there and we were basically waiting to see what happened to us.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER HIS NAME?

A. No. No. That's a pity. When we got back to Chicago I said, "God!" Then going through channels to find out what antiaircraft battery he was stationed there at that point in time and et cetera. I just got married so there were other priorities. That was not uppermost in my mind. Like when the general's were found, that was Army press and records, so that should also be in the archives.

So it is basically taking the time

and the effort and then what? It doesn't change. I would have looked him up if I remembered his name. By that time it was in the '50s. His name was on a little piece of paper that I kept in a wallet. By the time you open it up you can't read it anymore. And I was 13 anyway, so -- no we chatted, I don't know, three days, all day. Also because it allowed me to improve and refresh my English and he was nice. I remember that.

So, no, in Weissenburg it was basically hectic movement and coming and going and trucks and people being brought in and people being assigned and trucks leaving to the train station. They were taken back to France and Holland and Belgium. I think we were there one week. And then they put us on a train back to Holland and we were also on freight cars. And that's also when my Dad cooked when we stopped. I remember my Dad making lunch for me.

The bridges were bombed so we went over bailey bridges so it was just the width of the rail, the tracks, so if you looked over you didn't see anything but water. So I always hoped it would still be there, the next piece,

would still be there because you couldn't tell.

I don't remember whether Amsterdam was liberated or not. I know that they took us to a city in Holland, Tilburg, southern Holland, because they couldn't take us to Amsterdam yet. I don't know why. Whether organization-wise they were not ready or the Germans were still there. I don't know. I know that we stayed for a while. I think maybe two weeks. Two weeks we stayed there and then, "You're leaving tomorrow. No. No. It's too late. Day after tomorrow."

I think three times we were advised that we would be taken to Amsterdam and then finally by the river, by river traffic. They had a big barge, freight barge and they took us to Amsterdam. To the railroad station because the river Rhine and it must so you can go by river to Amsterdam or Rotterdam.

Then they had daily busses. The bus would then drop off people at given addresses, whether it was their address or a relatives address. I don't know.

We were the last one and they took us to what used to be a Jewish hospital, a

Portuguese-Israeli Hospital, because as I told you, Holland had a large percentage of Portuguese, or what the Dutch would call Portuguese Jews. And that was empty so there we were dropped off and then it was basically a matter of finding an apartment.

Q. NOW, WAS THERE AN ORGANIZATION THERE?

A. In that building that was a cook. It wasn't full. There might have been 25 people, 30, something like this. So we were two to a room. Me and a kid my own age. So we turned out to be friends for quite a number of years. We had breakfast and lunch and dinner and that was it. And then of course it was a matter of finding a place to live.

Q. DID THEY HELP YOU WITH THAT?

A. I think they did, yes. But what do they say? If you don't have fingers, you can't make a fist. There was nothing.

Q. WAS THERE A NAME? WAS THERE A SPECIFIC ORGANIZATION THERE?

A. No, I think it was basically the city. I don't know. My Dad handled it. I don't know. But, of course, there were not any apartments. In the latter part of the war, the

end of '45, I told you Holland suffered very much. And at the end they were eating tulip bulbs and birch trees, the bark.

March or April the Americans requested the two-day armistice so they could drop food with DC3's to the west of Amsterdam. And the German general, of course, they knew they had lost, so he agreed to that and they dropped food. So it was very bad.

Then the winter, the last winters were very cold. No coal. No wood. So what they did is they stripped the empty houses that Jewish people had lived in. The door, door frames, window frames, any piece of wood so the whole house subsequently collapsed when the planks were gone and door frames, windows. The railroad, the street car, I remember the tracks. It was paved or asphalt until the rails and then between the rails they had wooden blocks; two inches by two inches by three inches; between the two tracks. I think basically because the fact that it would allow them for maintenance easier or for expansion and dilation of the metal track. Those were all gone. Those were all gone. That's the way they tried to heat themselves.

So an apartment; no. It took quite a while. In fact in Holland, even today, suppose you marry. You may have to wait three years or two and a half to get an apartment.

Right after the war, Holland promoted immigration. Go to Canada, go to South Africa and Australia. We'll pay you, just get out. Just get out. Overcrowded. That is why they did not support any, or assist or allow any, building of houses. People were married for four years and living with in-laws and then out of misery they would immigrate. Canada and Australia. And then the Australian and the Canadian government they're under populated anyway and they would contribute taxes and a lot of farmers went. A lot of people went, basically, because it was a Dutch policy, government policy, to make it easier for people to immigrate.

That goes today. You cross the border in Belgium you have the same problem in another format. In Belgium there are no government restrictions. The problem there is you look at six apartments, you don't know which one to take. You can rent three if you want to pay and one mile across, you wait three

years. I mean, even today you can't get an apartment. You have to register and they look at you and say, "Okay, one person, we'll let you know." No, it's still the only country in the world where they still have this.

Q. SO HOW LONG DID YOU STAY AT THIS--

A. I don't know. I don't know. I'd say about six months, six or seven months. And then we still didn't have an apartment but in the meantime by Dad became friendly with a Russian family a couple and very good friends. He wanted to return to the States to see what happened to his parents and he couldn't take Joe and me along so -- .

Q. DID YOU HAVE ANY COMMUNICATION WITH THEM? BROTHERS?

A. No. He may have had letters but then of course it didn't mean anything because my grandfather had already died in '44 and my grandmother was still alive but had, I don't know what it would be, Alzheimer's. I mean, when he finally got there she didn't recognize him. She didn't know who he was. And in view of the fact they only had three kids anyway; my uncle, a brother and his sister; she didn't recognize him. And I think she died in '47,

also in her 90's.

So he may have written but then where do they live? Do they still live where they lived in 1940? So writing is one thing my Dad -- no, no, no. He said, "I do it personally and then I get it done."

The only thing, of course, was getting to the U.S. All the ships were used to take back the G.I.'s home, so there was no United Airlines, no Air France, no Pan Am that you booked a flight on. There was no passenger area transportation, period. It was by ship and they used every available ship; Queen Elizabeth. All the ships were used for bringing back. But my father, being my father, he got a cabin on a freighter. That's why he did make it back.

Q. AND WHO DID HE LEAVE YOU AND YOUR BROTHER WITH?

A. That couple said, "Okay, have them move in with us." So we lived with them for about two years.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER THEIR NAMES?

A. Oh, yeah, Hortinof.

Q. WHAT WAS IT?

A. Hortinof. A Russian couple. He

died.

Q. DID YOU GET BACK INTO SCHOOL?

A. Yeah, then I got back into school and that had, of course, it's angles. You see, whatever you heard about Germany is true. They are precise and they go by the book. And that's it. Somebody told you that's the book, that's it. The rules were made by people for people and through people doesn't play any role whatsoever. It's written and that's it. The Dutch have the same route. They're also Germanic which is strange. Also the Danes and the Swedes, but they are different.

Okay, so what happened when we got back, my Dad had a friend whose son went to, let us say, let's take the reputation of Stanford University, not statewide, not countrywide, but in this area. Let's say it's the most prestigious university in this area. In Amsterdam there was a gymnasium high school which was called the Amsterdam Museum and it had the same reputation, which means the Mayor's son went there. The Minister of Interiors kids went there. Assuming the American Ambassadors had kids, then they would go there. It was for the creme de la creme.

So a plain little old -- no way would he or she be admitted.

But what happened is due to the friendship and acquaintances, my Dad wanted to have somebody determine at what level had I progressed in the last camp. And I remember his friend approached two teachers at that school where his son went and they tested me on, I don't know, two days, something like this. And they said that I had reached -- in the schools there the classes are different -- six years elementary and five years middle school. High school is not four but five. Or if you went to vocational then you went to a three year. But to go to an university or college, you had to finish a five year and my level was third. With the exception, of course, of Dutch and national history. And Dutch is a language in style; they have grammar and style. It's not one language class, it's got two language classes that, of course, I didn't know. I was way behind but everything else I was way ahead.

I don't know, but one day I'm told, "Okay, start tomorrow. You go to school." Fine. Great. There were no public

transportation. None. You had to walk and lunch was from 12:00 to 2:00. School was 8:45 to 12:00 and 2:00 to 4:15. Everybody went home for lunch but I had to walk something like, I don't know, I wanted to do it.

I've been kidding with my sons because they have a bike and they want to be dropped off and when I say, "When I was your age --" "Yeah, yeah, you walked in the snow uphill both ways." I wanted to determine what the mileage or kilometers was from that building the temporary residence to school because I had to do it four times. And then homework. Homework. Not only the normal courses but I had to especially concentrate on the makeup, the catch-up.

My father being one of those old-type dictators, had to be -- how old was I? 14? -- I had to be in bed by 7:30. School is out quarter after four. By the time I am back, it is 5:00. You have 20 minutes to fool around, then dinner. I had 50 minutes to do my homework and go to bed. After a while I said that's not going to work. So very magnanimously you go to bed at 8:00. He gave me another half hour.

So it took me about five months and then I caught up. It took a lot of work. It was the same thing like in a camp. My Dad paid for it with food for me to learn. I'm not going to deny; 20-20 hindsight; that he might have done this also to create the future. So nothing about death. You learn. You got to learn because later. So he may have done this for psychological reasons as well, but it doesn't make any difference. He paid for it and gave them bread so I had to study.

Q. DID YOUR BROTHER GO BACK TO SCHOOL?

A. Yes, he went to elementary school.

Q. DID YOUR FATHER HAVE ANY WORK?

A. No. My Dad had a factory. What could he do? He couldn't get a job. His Dutch was not any better than it was.

Q. SO HOW DID YOU HAVE MONEY FOR CLOTHES?

A. Okay. First of all, there was a reparation. First he had insurance; prewar insurance on the factory; fire, theft, etc. And that they had to pay. And he had it insured for-- in 1940-- \$10,000 guildens or dollars. I don't know what today's equivalent would be. Then subsequently he established a factory;

shirts. But basically for the major stores; made to order. So not off the rack but made to order. Just until I finished school so that we could return to the States. So it was basically temporary.

Q. AND THIS WAS BEFORE HE WENT BACK TO THE STATES ON HIS OWN?

A. No, after he came back. No the first thing he went back.

Q. AND HE WAS GONE FOR HOW LONG?

A. Quite a while.

Q. TWO YEARS?

A. No, no. He wasn't gone for two years.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER?

A. We lived with them for two years but no, he was gone for six months. He bought some property in Chicago and he was there about six months. I may be off a month, here or there. No, that is when he came back and I was at school. He wanted me to finish school rather than switch, so finish that and then we'll take it from there. As I was already out of it anyway for my age. Then, by the time I get back I'll have to adjust and if I had fiddle around with English and you'll be the same age

group or even a year younger.

Q. WHAT WAS THE RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE IN HOLLAND AFTER YOU WERE LIBERATED? WAS THERE ANY ANTI-SEMITISM STILL THERE OR DID THEY MAKE COMMENTS ABOUT IT?

A. Factors, of course, that even the people that had anti-Semitic tendencies, after the war were very careful. Because just like the Germans created the National Socialistic Movement, N.S.B., during the war, the underground immediately after the war turned into what they called the Belons Escrothen; the Interior Forces. They wore blue uniforms, coveralls, overalls. Blue overalls. Blue prewar Dutch Army helmets and they went after the collaborators and stuff like this.

So even though I was older then by a number of years I'd been away, I might have been maybe more sensitive to anti-Semitism afterwards than before the war. I've never forgotten the years of the war, forgotten what happened to me. Up until today, either they ran away or they avoided it or they were afraid. I never had any, not behind the back or even openly. Maybe once. Maybe once I have friends who have come up and I don't know. I

don't know. I never had the unfortunate experience of being involved in any of these clashes. Not in my professional career. Not working in Germany in the high levels. And even if I worked with an old assessor who knew I was Jewish, they all knew I was Jewish, then from a certain age, if they had a certain age I kept an arm's distance. I have friends my age or younger in Germany, very good friends, as dear as anybody but from a certain age and up, no.

Q. BECAUSE?

A. I don't know what they did. I didn't want to have anything to do with them. And when they got too smart as I worked and I was contacted by the board. The board, not by personnel, by the board, because I was not German and I was Jewish and it was a board director's decision. Out of nine, two were against it. I found afterwards, not so much because of the fact that I was Jewish, but the fact that I would be the only foreigner in an engineering department of 3,300 people and the only foreigner and in addition to which I'm Jewish, and they were afraid that staff or personnel would get into conflicts with me. So

they voted and seven to two and then I got offer and I went to work.

So if I dealt with somebody of that age and you might have been a Russian front guy. You might even have been a Mauthausen or Sobibor, the name of the camps. I don't know. So since I don't know, I don't want to have anything to do with you.

And as my contract was signed way, way, way upstairs which everybody knew. If anybody got smart-alecky you've never seen the bull dogs run over somebody. With this staff I would kind of cut them in little pieces. They couldn't do anything.

So not because of anti-Semitism but professionally, if they did something wrong and I said, "Please correct it". They said, "No, no, it's fine." "No, I'm telling you it's wrong. Get it done by tomorrow." Then it was done by the next day. That happened once or twice. In general, no, I cannot say that I had any encounters.

I worked in 12 countries. I lived there for two years, four years, six years--I don't know. None. Never. I climbed the career ladder, irrespective, faster than

anybody else with non-Jewish companies. Now with Jewish companies I might not have made it. That I accept. I am too blunt. But I'm proud that I inherited it from my Dad and some other things. No. No.

The problem that I had is when we came back and I went to Ansomelusane (phonetic). I just caught up and I'm telling you, it was tough. The language, I mean, I spoke better Russian and better French and better German and English than I spoke Dutch. And then I have to catch-up school Dutch and tests and essays. God, I didn't even know the language. And national history, we had an Admiral, 17th century, who beat the wars into you. The 80 Year War and 100 Year War and who wanted history in Europe at that time? All you did were years and the 80 Year War, the War Between the Roses, World War 1. I didn't want to learn about prior wars. I had enough with the last one. So all you did, you had to remember the dates and a piece of this and the war of this and the war from that to that. So I was not too crazy about national history anyway, but I had to.

Botany. Plants. I didn't do. I

didn't do Hebrew in grade school. I didn't do botany in high school. Plants, who cares? The name of a flower is not going to do me any good and I don't know much about flowers. I know a rose from a tulip. I know a chestnut tree because it has six leaves. That's about it. I wouldn't recognize an oak. A birch, yes. So when I finally caught up and I said, "I made it. Now I'm up to par." Now you have to consider I was by two years the youngest in the class and the smallest by height, one of the smallest. The other fact that doomed it was that the school was situated on both sides of the street with an overhead passage way so basically the teacher went from class to class, with the exception of physics, he went to physics class. And the lab work. And there I met the Dean. And he sees my class 3B and here I am and he says, "Come here. Who are you?" I said, "I'm me." "No, I mean -- " "Oh, my name is Max Erlichman in 3B." "Okay, fine. Thank you."

The next day my Dad gets called in and his friend. I get called in. We get called and I had to wait in the anteroom and I was told to grab my bags and get out. Get

out.

Q. WHY?

A. His explanation was that I had entered school without his knowledge. And that really burned me up. That burned me up.

Because, in addition to which, we lived in Chicago. We moved to San Francisco. Then we moved to Sunnyvale and my girls, I would take them to school whether it was April or September or January, I took them the next day to school and that was it.

In Holland you couldn't. You had to wait until September. So if anybody would have moved to Holland with children, let's say, in the month of October, you couldn't put your kids in school. You had to wait until next year, September, for them to enter school because that was the school year. September 1st to July 30th. Six weeks was summer holiday. So people avoided moving, except on occasion, because the kids would be running in the street. And they didn't have a truancy police. You're suppose to be in school below the age of 16 but you couldn't go to school because it wasn't September. So this was going back and forth. This is typically Dutch. The

left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing. Later on they improved.

So there I was. When did I get to school? It must have been six months. So we came back in May, so in February out. You have to wait until September. My Dad tried to get me into school. He went to the Department of Education. They said, I'm sorry. That's it. So he says walk around the street.

And then I got angry. I'm not aware of it then; I'm aware of it now. I mean through all of these past experiences in history, to run into something like this that was a little too much. I mean, you know, the rules that are chiseled in marble and that's what makes me a rebel. I don't take that. Not for my kids and I've never taken it. And then, heck with it. I don't want it anymore. And then I didn't do anything. I didn't do anything for a while.

They established a Jewish high school so then I went to the Jewish high school. I decided to go to the Jewish high school. I was admitted and that did not last very long because then they merged. Then the Dutch government finally established what they

called the Community Courses for children and camp children. And they were high school. The only thing, in one year you did two school years which meant you have to pick up. Really stoke the fire and get going.

And I left the Jewish high school because I got into trouble with the teachers. I got in trouble with the teachers to the extent -- it got to the point where Dr. Jacobs -- he had half reading glasses -- he'd say, "Come in. Oh, not you again? Come on, what is it this time?" That's the way it was.

I ran into conflicts with the teachers. Laws. Rules. Don't come with me about rules. Not now. Not after what I went through. I don't want your stupid rules. I'm not talking about rules we have to abide by. I set rules for my kids but if they are moronic then I don't accept it. I don't accept stupidity. Not from staff. Not from teachers. And that's what got me into the conflicts. That's why I was repeatedly sent. I was never punished. Never penalized for it. My Dad never went to school. I could kiss him. They would ask my Dad, "Would you please come. We want to discuss your son Max." He

never did that because I was right. He was old enough, he was in his 50's. He was old enough to know that I was right. I knew that I was right and I knew that he knew I was right. So he never argued that she's older you don't do it in class. When do you want me to do it? After class?

I will give you one example. Social Studies. The British debt after the war was \$15,000,000,000 that's what she teaches. I read quite a bit and I know what goes on. I know that according to the British paper the after-war debt was \$24,000,000,000; something like this. She says 15. When she says 15, I know it's incorrect because I had read three days earlier in the paper. So I said -- let's not use her name -- I said, "I don't know, but it may be correct, but I think that the current debt is really \$23,000,000,000." And she says, "What do you mean?" I say, "Just exactly what I said." She said, "How would you know?" I said, "I read it." She said, "So you read it and that's the thing you know?" Like this, insulting and condescending. And then I got angry and I said, no. "Wait a minute. By your age, you ought to be a lot more intelligent."

Because nothing you know today you got out of the books that you read, written by other people. Why would what you read be correct and what I read incorrect?"

She stands in front of a class of 28 people. Maybe, don't talk to me. She says, "Out! Out! " Okay, fine. Out. And then I went upstairs and so what was he going to do with me? I'm right. I remember he said, "Yes, but you should have waited until after class." This is wrong. If she doesn't know, she should become dishwasher. I don't care, let her go. But let her not teach something that is incorrect and I'm not going to wait. I'm going to tell her there. He says, "Wait outside 'till class is over." Stuff like this that won't get me up the stairs, back and forth, back and forth.

Q. SO DID YOU FINISH THAT PROGRAM THERE?

A. The community college or community school for where I would do a whole school year in six months and then I switched from there. I had established a chess team at school and a soccer team. I was asked to do that.

That was the time I was told to come

and see Dr. Jacobs. Wait a minute. I didn't do anything. I mean, if I have done something, but I didn't do anything. So I went very slowly up the stairs. Why does he want to see me? I don't know. P.E. Teachers I told him he was an idiot and a stupid son-of-a-gun, but that was settled. So and I waited. I knocked on the door and I went in. My heart is beating because I know I'm going to get in a row with him because I didn't do anything. And he was too nice a fellow to get into an argument. I didn't want to get into an argument with a wonderful individual. He said our Jewish High School needs a soccer team and a chess team and we want you to start one and I said, "Sure." And that's what we did. Then they established /SKAOE /KOL but /SKAOE come only lasted, in fact, /HAOE /KOL already /KPH*ES had /OPL I don't know about it. So I never did finish high school.

Q. DID YOU EVER TALK ABOUT YOUR WAR EXPERIENCES WITH THE OTHER CLASSMATES THERE WHO OBVIOUSLY WERE IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES? DID YOU EVER TALK ABOUT IT WITH THEM?

A. I've been asked this in the past but it was never a subject. I mean, we had other

things to discuss. Girlfriends. All of a sudden you started noticing girls, so we talked about girls. Do you like her? I like her too. This was important. There was a whole school, a lot of them were hidden during the war. A lot of them were in camps so there was nothing to discuss. I mean, it's not that I was the only one. You know like you take a 3-day excursion to Hawaii and they pick you up and they take you there and they feed you, you know? Everybody had gone through the war, one way or the other. Even the high school, the courses or the school set up to speed up. Also these were from Indonesia. They were imprisoned by the Japanese. There was a lot from Indonesia which was called the Dutch East Indies at that time.

So we all had something that was -- I don't want to know your story. It was not a subject. We were talking about the inter-collegiate chess center once a year and the soccer and the school and the girls and the friends. No. I do not recall that it was ever, ever any subject. Which doesn't mean I might have been asked, "Where were you?" "I was in several." "Which one?" "Okay, fine. I

will name you some you won't even know." And they would say, "Oh, okay, fine." But that would be as far as it goes.

I mean if you formed a group that would have gone through the same identical experiences, what good would it have do to share experiences? Three years and eight months and I was, three years and 4 months. Or that you were in Sobibor. I know what Stockburg was like. Why would I have to? What kids did, I don't think it was on purpose, I think basically it was enough. The war was enough and it was history and past and now let's go ahead.

And this is why my Dad had me learn and go take classes in the camp this and he would stay so he would verbalize it. When I said, No, no. Just sit. Fine. But there is a tomorrow, so go on. Okay. Fine. I'll do it. There's a tomorrow so I don't --

A lot of people get stuck and today they're still there. I have met them. I have met them six, eight weeks ago. The first time I attended a group of what they call "hidden children" even though I was not hidden, my first wife was.

And as I never made an issue and never belonged to any group. Yes, soccer. Boxing, yes. Chess, yes. I coached chess here. But no political, no. So I was asked, "Would you like to come?" I said, "Why not?" At least I could see some other people who had gone through this. At this stage of my life not when I was 14 or 15 and it was a matter of curiosity. I like people, period. I study people, yes. Yes, I will go. And I went there. And I encountered that in 1993. Yes, there were people that have one leg still there. And they started crying because of something. What can you do? I mean, how do you rationalize it and say, "Come on." It's like I would take one of my children when they fell, "Get up. Let's go."

So, no, I did not. This is why the last time when you asked questions, I really have to delve because a lot of people in their dreams learn and they'll answer every single bit. No, I really have to go shovel and go back deep, deep. What happened there and then I remember things that I don't think about.

For instance, the /KWA0*EUF in Westerberg. It was one of the most important

things during my life, that was it. This was something tremendous and I forgot about it.

So, no, we didn't talk about it as kids and I think basically because it's not because we sat down and said, "Come on let's not talk about it. I don't want to hear your story." No, it was basically, it was not a subject, period. It was not.

Q. WHEN DID YOU BEGIN TALKING ABOUT IT?

A. I never did because it was never -- how do you talk about it? I mean, how would it come up?

Let's say at work I have six managers in engineering, construction, drafting, accounting. Your friends. I don't think there's any occasion, "hey, wait a minute. Do you know I was --" First of all, what for? What for? You won't know I had been in a camp. It was not that I hid it or made a secret of it. I never made an issue out of it or subject of discussion.

Q. WHAT ABOUT WITH YOUR FAMILY?

A. Oh yeah, they want to know. Yes, of course, they would and like now I would tell them a story and I was there and it was like this. No, they all know. They all know. The

only thing they might /WAOS it would come up piecemeal and they wanted piecemeal with a they disliked because /-PL listening to one little piece they would forget.

But on the street, no. It's mine. It's not yours. It's not anybody. It's mine. It's mine. I paid for it, so it belongs to me. You want it, make your own experiences. I never made an issue of it. And again, can I say I did not hide it? Nobody would know, so there was no reason for them to and if I wouldn't bring it up, even less reason.

Q. HOW DO YOU THINK THESE EXPERIENCES EFFECTED YOUR LIFE AFTERWARDS, CHANGED IT?

A. I thought about it last night or the night before last. I don't know. I can only explain it in the following manner: My kids would have their ups and downs in school. They would fall and get up and they would be sad they would flunk a class or something like this. Or they did something and they lost out. And I would, from the age that they were old enough to understand. Not at the age of two, but when they were older, I would ask them, "How do they make steel?" This was years ago. I go to Japan quite often. In fact, I'll

be going there next week. I made a movie, way back, 'How To Make A Samurai Sword'.

Do you know how they make that? They take a piece of metal. They heat it to white and then they fold it. They heat it and fold it. And they do it, like, eight times so what happens the molecules are shaped in such a way, you can cut a piece of iron with it. It goes through iron like butter but it's heated.

It was an eight millimeter movie. Then I converted it to 16 millimeter movie.

That is the way. You get beaten and beaten. You get beaten. That's what you go through; what is required to make steel out of you. You make steel by beating and that's what they all have been told from day one. Because you can only draw pictures when you can bring it to the child in a visual manner or the equivalent. What is this? How do you explain to a six-year-old or eight-year-old the law of relativity? I mean, if you can talk with an adult, okay, you're in a capsule in space and there's no point of light around you. It's all glass. You see nothing. Are you moving? Are you standing still or are you not moving? And then you see the eight-year-old, she says she

doesn't know. So I don't do that with a child. At that age I would say, "David, now imagine that you sit on a stove, a burning stove, a hot stove, for five minutes." You say, "Would that seem to you like an hour?" "But you sit with Diane in a park for an hour, it seems to you like five minutes. Now do you understand what I'm trying to tell you?" Yeah? Okay, fine. That is the relativity.

So the same thing with what the camp did to me. Probably what it did to me. I was -- I don't know -- I went into the camps already with something, I don't know what. And it only developed during the years. I don't know; hate or revenge. And I teach my kids hate will only eat yourself, so don't hate. Revenge what?

Basically what the camp did it allowed me to know human beliefs. I'm a very good psychologist, even if I say so myself. Human interaction, I know. When I'm right, like 100 percent, not 99 percent, when I'm a hundred percent, that's it. I don't care who you are.

That's another thing that I do with my kids, too. The power of your convictions

that you have. Dad, I want to play football. Mark is 15 and weighs 120 pounds. You play football? You're out of your mind. And he won't quite for six months, three times a week. "Look, would it be worth it to have a broken collar bone or an arm and then wind up losing school for a year? It's not worth it." And he kept at it, kept at it. And one day I said, "Okay why?" What is this? When I tell you once, twice, no. This is it. If I told him twice no, it's no. And he kept at it. "Okay, now convince me that I should let you go." Which he convinced me. Which he finally did. In the meantime, I tried it out for eight, nine months. David was like that and by the age of 14 he went to this.

(Indicating height)

And the second spurt at 17. So David, from a little tiny like this, he now is an eight and a half and a nine and he weighs a hundred and God knows what. So I /TKPWRAPBLD it out so the powers of convictions this is what and that's what. They do and they know how to do it. And everything I mentioned had the only one that doesn't know the /HRAOEUPBL David /EULSZ be 99 percent we'll be wrong one

percent and we'll act as though. I don't know. With the war, it was a school. And I don't know whether the school was one subject. It was an overall. How people believe. What people are and if you study them it's fun.

Q. HOW DID IT EFFECT YOUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS?

A. That came up, I don't know when. That came up not too long ago. My religious beliefs, I mentioned it. When I took David to the rabbi. I have none. Whatever I have is between me and who is up there. Now, as I don't believe there's somebody up there sitting on a chair and looking down. Now, I don't believe that.

But if there's something within me or within every individual, single, human being what he expects to be some higher power. It's something within myself. That's it. I have no further explanation.

I think when people go to the synagogue to pray, they don't do it to somebody up there, they do it to themselves. Because I think that synagogues exist within every individual. I think, by law, you don't need a synagogue, we don't have churches. Every home,

wherever you are.

There are two subjects that I avoid: Communism and religion, as a subject, period. Because very plainly, people have a conscience and when they did something wrong they go to church or to a synagogue and they pray to the Almighty to forgive them. I don't know who they are talking to. I think they are talking to their own conscience and if it benefits them. I don't think you have to spend eight million dollars for a building and ask me for contributions. This is none of your business.

Q. SO YOU DON'T THINK YOUR EXPERIENCE DURING THE WAR EFFECTED YOU?

A. No, because then -- let's keep it at that, because it would be more negative than positive. So let's keep it at that.

Q. AT ONE POINT YOU SAID THAT THE CAMPS MADE YOU A COMEDIENNE?

A. What I meant is, I must have been a coward before the war, to some extent. Some of the things I did and I did them from that point of view. The camps you see it's a perception. Two people can look at the same thing and see two completely different things. My daughter,

Sylvia, she was down with my grandson and I said, "Why do you look at the shadow side?" There is a sunny side and a shadow side. Why not move over? And she said, " Well, you can." And I said, " Wait a minute. Why can I?"

You can look at things any way you want them. You can see the misery, you can see the drama, you can see anything you want to. And they go to bed and don't had sleep and wake up with nightmares. That's one way you can look at it.

But the same event you can look at it and you will find if you see it, if you want to see it, a lot of people don't want to see it. They are too happy -- I'm not saying they're masochistic -- but they are happy seeing the negative. I mean, it doesn't cost any more to look at the positive. There's something in it that's funny in the overall scope of things; I don't know how you call it. There are funny things. You see a German sergeant who ran with a German cart and with a garbage can and now he's an older sergeant. But then you don't have to be anyone, because you can see it anywhere. The minute someone puts on a uniform, here or in Holland or in

Belgium. I made an appointment with the Post, P.T.T., the Post and Telegraph; the telephone company; with the director from here. I go to the gate. I said he has to open the door. I want to see Mr. Whatever-his-name. What is it about? I look at him, I said, "What do you mean, it's about? First of all, it's none of your business. And then if Mr. Peterson thinks you need to know, he'll tell you." He has a uniform and he's asking me the subject I want to discuss to the gentleman; the director of the Post? It's funny. It's a joke. It really is funny. How a blue piece of material and some gold braid, all of a sudden, make you something. He goes home and he gets beaten by his wife and doesn't dare to open his mouth.

Go to the German Autobahn. Have you been in Germany? My kids went when we went on vacation and we went through Germany. There's no speed limit in Germany. So you have those BMW's and Mercedes and they do 120 miles an hour. And I had a Ford Dorado still 3300 pounds and they go by you like -- my car goes like this (indicating). That was funny.

The first time, when we got out of Belgium, that's where it started. And the

three kids, they're 7 and 13 and 15 and they don't believe it. What's this? From then on all the way from the border to Switzerland they sat and watched the cars come. They timed it as it went by us. They would yell," Geronimo. " When we came back, Mark was in 4th grade. And he had to tell in front of the class where he was and what they had done and what left the greatest impress. He talked about the German Autobahn. We went through so many experiences in those four weeks and all he remembered was the Autobahn.

I can go into a discussion why because it has nothing to do with the way the French man drives or the Italian. There are completely different reasons and if you study, if you know the German mentality then you know why and it's funny. It's really a joke.

So, this is what the camps basically taught you. If you didn't want to learn, you came out as dumb as you came in. As I say, I read a lot which is a matter of curiosity. I'm still learning.

Q. DID YOU EVER GO BACK TO TRY TO FIND YOUR HOME THAT YOU LIVED IN BEFORE THE WAR?

A. Immediately after the war. I think

the day after we got back. Did I go alone or did I take my brother? The day after we went back. Of course there was no public transportation. We walked there and, of course, someone else was living there. So we rang the bell and I said, "I used to live here before the war. Would you mind if I came in?" He said sure. I remember Joe was with me.

Q. WAS YOUR FATHER WITH YOU?

A. No. He probably had to work. But as I say, my Dad, we just got back and he had a lot of things to do. We divided. He took care of us and I took care of myself. I don't know what he did.

I know that I went and I remember the nostalgic trip. This is why we went through Germany to show David that this is where you lived in '83 and that's where we lived and I took Frank to Antwerp and that is where you were born. We went up to a penthouse. We had a penthouse when he was born. Then, as soon as the kids were old enough, we had a house with a yard. Then we had that house. David when he was born in Spain and that's where he went to school.

Yes, I did that. And I would love

my kids to do that. I mean, I took them there. I went to see the high school that I was at. But, limited, I mean I didn't really go and follow all the steps.

Q. WHEN YOU WENT INTO YOUR HOME DID YOU SEE ANYTHING?

A. No. No. That became German property or whoever. And who cares? The only thing that we care, would be the photographs. Some of our silver, but otherwise, it was material things, chairs, furniture. What is it?

(Knocks on wood.)

It means nothing. If you had your father, brother and mother, who cares about the physical items or assets. What is a painting on a wall? No. Why look for it? Even if I had seen it, I wouldn't have wanted it. Do I need it to remember? No, I don't need that. That was it.

Q. WHEN DID YOU AND YOUR FATHER AND YOUR BROTHER FINALLY COME TO AMERICA?

A. He came, my father and my brother came first, because I got married in the meantime. So they came in 1949 or '50; something like that.

I married Ruth. Her mother and sister and brother-in-law, they lived in Israel. As my Dad and brother had left for the States, I said, we go. Then she says, no, I want to stay. Because I had not met the family, I did not know how lucky I was. Like they say friendship you choose. I said, not now, we just got married.

I studied electrical. There were no scholarships. They needed labor. So I went as an apprentice in the summer school. I went to a furniture maker, because my Dad forced me to. During summer you spend six months here and six weeks with an electrical contractor. He said you learn. So I know very little about vacations. I've had some, but very few and I don't miss it either. I never did miss it.

So, by that time, I was working. I knew enough to work as an electrician. So I wanted to go to Chicago. No, I want to see my family. I said, why now? With the money we have, let's go and get settled and then in two years we'll visit your family. So I said, no. I'm not going. Well, you know who wears the pants? Because she was very clever. She knew me well enough, if I say no, it's no. So what

she would do, fine, I'll go alone. That's the way Ruth managed to go, knowing that I would not let her go alone and she would have gone alone.

Expect to bring a whole grocery store because at that time in Israel there was nothing. Nothing. People survived on what people sent them. By the time we go out and back with food, we're broke. One month and that's it. Besides, she was pregnant.

So we got to Israel and I met the in-laws and I said, let's go. We don't have to stay here a month, two weeks is enough. No, we stayed there a month and then they talked her into staying. I said, why would you want to stay? I have to admit that she was a scientist, 65 percent. She was still -- because she was hidden, she had not lived with the experiences in the camps that I had. Where I learned to know people, humanity, let's say the human being and the various human beings from various groups. She was idealistic.

So the whole family forced her to stay. I just want to get out of there, no, now. So I run up against a brick wall. Wait until the baby is born. I said, fine. Can't

he be born in Chicago? The family said, don't take away my daughter. I said, she's not your daughter, she's my wife. She said, she's my daughter and I said, not anymore. She's my wife. So Ruth got in the middle. Whatever she would do, would be wrong. So in these cases, people tend to choose to do nothing. I mean to make a decision not to do anything. And as I saw this I said, fine, okay, we'll stay. But the minute you find out that this is enough and we'll be gone two days later.

So I had to go back to Europe and then get the furniture, because we went there as a tourist with a suitcase. So we stayed there and after six months, Bella was born. Ruth says, I have enough. I'm getting sick. Let's get out of here.

The back-stabbing with the eastern Jews and the Jews from Egypt. A continuation from the camps which you did not see in our countries like in Holland, Denmark, Sweden, United States, France, but you saw it in Israel.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN A CONTINUATION OF THE CAMP?

A. The interaction between people. In

the camps, people would steal a piece of bread from somebody else's pillow because he was hungry. There were some people that would go and whisper if they could get a ration. What is integrity in a camp? There were very few people that had backbone and integrity. I couldn't be bought. My Dad, as well.

The interaction between human beings under the worst of circumstances sometimes brings out the worst in a human being, as well as the best. Unfortunately, the majority, 98 percent, it is always the worst. And then like a diamond, you see a human gesture that makes up for all the misery that you witnessed the past two weeks. That one little gesture and I would keep this with me. And I would not forget these things. See, there are still people that can be good. And that attitude, that fight for survival. They would climb over bodies in the camps, which is Westerberg, yes. In the last camp, no, that didn't work.

And when you saw the same thing in Israel, only worse. You didn't see it here. Let's say the Jews that came out of the camps, that came straight to the United States or Holland or Belgium or France or Denmark. The

Danish Jews went over to Sweden in one night, anyway. No, you didn't see that attitude. You saw it in Israel. And when people would ask me why and Ruth asked me why, I said, very simple -- and a lot of people don't like it but the truth is painful and people don't want to hear it -- in Holland the Jewish survivor behaves more or less acceptable because they form part of the community. It was not an island. So you behaved. Israel, there were no goyim. There were no Christians, so who had to be ashamed? There was nothing to be ashamed of because they were all Jews and that is what Israel lacked in these years. 40 percent Christian population and they would have behaved like human beings.

What she saw as a scientist a week out. And it took her maybe three months to see it because you could close your eyes and not see it and then the guts. Max, that's enough, let's go. So it took six months. And then it took us six months to get out.

I needed an exit visa. They won't give me an exit visa. I went to the army headquarters in Jerusalem. I went and saw the commanding general. I broke two windows. I

drove my motorcycle into the hall. I said, now. I really raised my voice. They drafted me for the army. The army? What are you talking about? And then, of course, as an electrician -- they had dentists and doctors and lawyers -- but technical people? There weren't any. A Jewish engineer? There weren't any. Jewish electricians. That was one of the reasons.

They managed to stop me for six months. Anybody else would cave in. The last thing they did was draft me. Two pair of pants, two pair of underwear. Drafted? No. I must not. I went to the Venezuelan Embassy in Israel the nearest one was in Rome. So I went to Jerusalem headquarters and I brought that little piece of paper. I want to see the general and I really raised hell, H-E-L-L, until I got in a big office. It's like the prime minister, so that must be him. I told him I'm not going. I'm not an Israeli citizen. I came here for vacation. You've prevented me for four months. Forget it.

First of all, I'm not an Israeli. I signed a document that -- there's an Israeli law that anybody, any Jew upon entering Israel,

you became an Israeli. Nobody knew that law existed. They didn't publicize that. I knew, nobody else knew. When I mentioned it in Holland, what do you mean?

Before we went there, Ruth and I went to Israeli Consulate. Asked for a form and they said there is no such form. I said, please don't play games with me and I want it in triplicate. If you don't give it to me I will make a scandal and break down the door. Then they found it. Ruth and I both signed,

"I hereby declare that upon entering Israel I want to maintain my present nationality." And I gave them one and I kept two. No, you make a photocopy, I keep two. One goes in a safe and one I take with me and nobody knew that that law existed. So we kept it with us. Then we paid for the trip as a tourist. When we wanted to get out, I had to proof that they didn't pay for my trip. I said, "No, no, you prove that you did pay for my trip." I can't? Oh, yes I can.

So by that time I was as mad as I've ever been in my life. I was so angry, my anger could have moved mountains and every step you made two steps ahead and three steps

backwards. They did everything to prevent you from leaving. The more obstacles, the angrier I got. At the end, my fuze was like my Dad's; a quarter of an inch, like my Dad. I'm aware of it and I count to ten. Why should I count to ten? Long enough. I have to go in the army? Who the hell are you to tell me to go in the army? I'm leaving, if I have to swim, I'm leaving.

I said, "Besides which, if I join Israel army, I lose my Venezuelan citizenship." You see here and he says, "May I see it?" And I say, "Yes, because I have another copy." Now he doesn't know what to do. He has an aide come and the aide goes away and comes back in five minutes. And then the general tells me, "No, the Israeli law only tells that if you volunteer for service in a foreign army." What? Where did you get this idea? Look, you're going to teach me Venezuelan law? I don't know where you got that idea, but forget it. Don't teach me the law. I want out.

I think something like next week, Monday or Tuesday, I had to report in /SKWRA /TPA. "I want you to know the following." There were six people in their office. "You

all understand English well enough. I am suppose to report to /SKWRA /TPA. I'm not going to be there, I'll be home. You can rest assured. So you can give orders to a Jeep with four MP's and you can drag me out of the house. The minute you drag me out of the house, a telegram will be sent to the Venezuelan Embassy that you're holding me against my will. Go ahead."

By that time it was already December. And I left. And I went home and I stayed home that day. Nobody came. No MP's. No Jeep. And then December 29th, I get a letter I have ten days to leave the country. Ten days. Now they give you a deadline. Fortunately, one of the ships, so we got out.

Ruth was so relieved and we started breathing and it took me about two months to -- The camps, when I was liberated and the feeding and the driver with his one arm out of the window and all that, that was fun. I did not carry anything over that I had to discharge. But getting out of Israel, it took me two months to get rid of that and it left a very poor taste in my life.

I've been back. I've done

purchasing in Israel for millions of dollars. You were talking about religion? Don't ask me or my Dad about religion or religiousness. I've contributed to Care and the Salvation Army. Those are the only two. The Salvation Army, because they are the only one that 94 cents is used. Only six cents is used in administration and other, once they pay themselves salaries. United Way, they have \$188,000 dollar salaries. Salvation Army, they don't care what you are. They give it to you. They only use six cents for administrative care.

In 1945, not too long after we got back to Holland, maybe July or August, we get a post card, "You're hereby requested to come such-and-such a date to pick up your care package. The Jewish Community." So my father throws it away. He doesn't want to have anything to do with it. "Dad, at least go." So we went. We both went there. I'll never forget it in my life. Impossible to forget.

We walk into the office. Up the stairs there is a large room with shelves full of care packages. Half a package per person. Which means we get one and a half. I go there

with trepidation knowing my Dad and also I had not been to Israel yet.

So we stand there, me, my Dad and four feet to his left is one of the religious Jews. There are two ladies and a gentlemen behind the counter. So they take a package and half a package and then this gentlemen has half a package in front of them. What I didn't know was that there were different kinds of care packages. So my Dad stands there. It's unavoidable. He looks over and he sees sugar and meat and this butter and we have milk powder and green beans.

So my father says, "Excuse me. Is there a difference?" So they say, yes. "May I know what is the difference?" He's Russian. He's Orthodox and he didn't eat meat during the war. We had rutabagas for a year and a half.

So he takes the package and hits that shelf and he takes the other half-one and he says, "Shove it down your throat. You mean, my kids eat meat during the war, so I'm suppose to go religious?" And we walked out.

So the input from my Dad, his experience undoubtedly left it's mark. I'm sure. You have to understand, he's Orthodox.

He didn't eat meat during the war. That was not in Israel and then I go to a cement plant while I was in Israel --

(Tape is not working.)

(Sound is now on.)

Q. TELL US WHO THESE PEOPLE ARE AND THE YEAR IT WAS TAKEN.

A. Those are my paternal grandparents. I think the picture was taken in 1920 in Chicago.

Q. AND THEIR NAMES?

A. Their name is Isaac and Della. Isaac Erlichman and Bella Erlichman. My grandfather died in 1943 or '44. My grandmother died in 1946 or '47. This must have been taken in 1920.

Q. OKAY.

A. This is Joe, my younger brother. This was taken in Amsterdam. It must have been in 1938 or '39. He must have been three years old. 1938. And with his curls and he kept those until he had to go to kindergarten and then my Dad considered it was about time that everyone knew he was a boy. And he had to have his curls removed. So after a big battle, my mother caved-in and she picked them up.

I remember when we were picked up by the Germans, my father went through the drawers and I remember these curls in a napkin, still in the drawer.

This is a family picture taken in April of 1940. My Dad had booked passage for May 18th, back to the States. This picture was taken -- he took these pictures in order to send them to his parents. This particular photograph, when we were picked up, my Dad took it. And as you can tell, it went with him throughout the war years. After he died I found this picture in his wallet.

That is my Dad, next to him, my older brother, then my mother and my kid brother and then on the left, that's myself.

Q. SO THIS IS THE SAME PHOTOGRAPH?

A. This is the same photograph but it was taken after we went to a photographer and he had still kept the negatives, so we managed to get some pictures redone like this one. My mother and my older brother, the two members of our family who did not return from the war and both died in Auschwitz. Bella Erlichman and Tobias Erlichman.

This is my younger brother, Joe.

This photo was taken in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1945, December, at which time he must have been ten, nine or ten. This is the same period, the same sitting. At least we had one good looking boy in the family.

This is Ruth and myself two days after our wedding in Amsterdam in a square in front of the Royal Palace. Ruth Cohen and Max Erlichman. She was a hidden child, all during the war.

My four daughters. Ruth and her four daughters. Let's go, Bella, on the right. She's the oldest. She was March 10th, 1953, in Israel. On the other side, on the left is my second daughter, Sylvia. Born March 23rd, 1955, born in Chicago. Next to me, Tanya, my third. Born November 10th, 1959 in San Jose, California. And the little one is Myrna. Born November 25, 1961 in Amsterdam, Holland and myself.

This is a picture taken in 1965 in Weissenburg, Germany in a village next to Weillesburg camp. We spent the last year and a half. That's myself on the left, my Dad on the right and in the middle, Mr. Nathan Millstein. He was one of the prisoners who, after the war,

apparently he came from Eastern Germany. He didn't know where to go apparently he remained and stayed in Weissenburg. And that is when my Dad came over from Europe and we decided to take a look at the camp; which is a girl's vocational school now.

Ruth died of leukemia and I subsequently married Ingbor, who I had three sons. In the middle, the center one, the oldest is Frank. Frank was born in Antwerp, November 4th, 1966. Under my chin is Mark, the middle one, who was born March 28th, 1969. And David was born in Spain, December 25th, 1974.

At this point in time the only one living at home with me is David, who just turned 19. I divorced Ingbor in 1980. She had all the riches and I kept custody of the three children. This is the oldest son, Frank. The picture was taken in 1986. This is Mark, the second son, also taken at the same sitting. He is now doing his master's at Fresno State in psychology. He has a baby girl, five months old. This is the youngest, David Daniel. Same sitting, same period in 1986.

And that is a family photograph of the four of us at the same setting outside in

Sunnyvale, California. Frank, Mark and David
and yourself truly.

End of tape