

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:01:53,840

2

00:01:53,840 --> 00:01:55,683

--10 seconds for
all the equipment,

3

00:01:55,683 --> 00:01:59,390

but we are recording now.

4

00:01:59,390 --> 00:02:00,890

I'll let you know
when we can start.

5

00:02:00,890 --> 00:02:05,774

6

00:02:05,774 --> 00:02:07,890

OK, anytime.

7

00:02:07,890 --> 00:02:10,676

Today is Monday, June 13, 1994.

8

00:02:10,676 --> 00:02:13,860

I'm Judith Antelman with
the Holocaust Oral History

9

00:02:13,860 --> 00:02:16,080

Project in San
Francisco, and I'm

10

00:02:16,080 --> 00:02:18,300

interviewing Helene Steinlauf.

11

00:02:18,300 --> 00:02:20,522

And producing is John Grant.

12

00:02:20,522 --> 00:02:24,940

Helene, can you tell us
where and when you were born?

13

00:02:24,940 --> 00:02:35,460

I was born in Antwerp,
Belgium on December 6, 1942.

14

00:02:35,460 --> 00:02:39,540

And what is your full
name, if it's been changed?

15

00:02:39,540 --> 00:02:44,400

My full name is Helene
Chaya Steinlauf.

16

00:02:44,400 --> 00:02:46,840

And what are your
parents' names?

17

00:02:46,840 --> 00:02:50,610

My mother's name is
Rachel Steinlauf.

18

00:02:50,610 --> 00:02:54,000

My father is Jacob.

19

00:02:54,000 --> 00:02:56,700

And if you have any siblings,
what are their names?

20

00:02:56,700 --> 00:02:57,610

I have a sister.

21

00:02:57,610 --> 00:03:00,870

Her name is Ann Steinlauf.

22

00:03:00,870 --> 00:03:03,090

OK, I'd like to start
with a few questions

23

00:03:03,090 --> 00:03:04,560

about your childhood--

24

00:03:04,560 --> 00:03:09,690

what your family life was like,

school, friends, what Antwerp

25

00:03:09,690 --> 00:03:14,892

was like, if you were
brought up religiously.

26

00:03:14,892 --> 00:03:17,790

We can start off by
talking about the school

27

00:03:17,790 --> 00:03:19,765

that you went to, if it
was a religious school,

28

00:03:19,765 --> 00:03:22,170

or was it a mixed?

29

00:03:22,170 --> 00:03:29,970

I went to Tachkemoni, which
was a Jewish school in Antwerp.

30

00:03:29,970 --> 00:03:38,610

And we had both Hebrew
subjects and regular subjects.

31

00:03:38,610 --> 00:03:41,770

And it was a school that
started from kindergarten

32

00:03:41,770 --> 00:03:43,770

and went through 12th grade.

33

00:03:43,770 --> 00:03:46,410

And I went there
from kindergarten.

34

00:03:46,410 --> 00:03:48,390

I started when I
was five years old,

35

00:03:48,390 --> 00:03:54,270

and I went there till I
was 12, at which point

36

00:03:54,270 --> 00:03:57,270
we came to the United States.

37

00:03:57,270 --> 00:03:59,970
And what was your neighborhood,
what was Antwerp like,

38

00:03:59,970 --> 00:04:01,950
or the neighborhood in Antwerp?

39

00:04:01,950 --> 00:04:03,685
Was it mostly a
Jewish neighborhood,

40

00:04:03,685 --> 00:04:05,370
or was it a mixed neighborhood?

41

00:04:05,370 --> 00:04:09,450
And did you have a lot of
friends in the neighborhood?

42

00:04:09,450 --> 00:04:14,880
It was-- well,
where we lived, it

43

00:04:14,880 --> 00:04:16,619
was predominantly non-Jewish.

44

00:04:16,619 --> 00:04:19,470

45

00:04:19,470 --> 00:04:23,760
And I think the kids who went to
the Jewish school where I went

46

00:04:23,760 --> 00:04:25,150
lived all over Antwerp.

47

00:04:25,150 --> 00:04:29,020
So although there was
a Jewish neighborhood,

48
00:04:29,020 --> 00:04:32,460
but I think the Jewish
neighborhood was predominantly

49
00:04:32,460 --> 00:04:33,480
very orthodox.

50
00:04:33,480 --> 00:04:35,100
And they lived closer together.

51
00:04:35,100 --> 00:04:39,690
But the Jews who
were less religious

52
00:04:39,690 --> 00:04:43,530
lived all over Antwerp.

53
00:04:43,530 --> 00:04:47,190
And what was your family,
your home life like?

54
00:04:47,190 --> 00:04:48,570
Were you brought up religiously?

55
00:04:48,570 --> 00:04:49,920
Did you go to Hebrew school?

56
00:04:49,920 --> 00:04:54,360
Did your family celebrate
the Jewish holidays?

57
00:04:54,360 --> 00:04:59,370
My parents-- well,
we weren't religious,

58
00:04:59,370 --> 00:05:03,160
although I think my parents
were brought up religious.

59
00:05:03,160 --> 00:05:05,730
I think their parents

were religious.

60

00:05:05,730 --> 00:05:10,170

But no, we weren't
very religious,

61

00:05:10,170 --> 00:05:15,615

although we went to temple
during the holidays,

62

00:05:15,615 --> 00:05:18,630

you know, New Years
and Yom Kippur.

63

00:05:18,630 --> 00:05:22,410

And we celebrated Passover.

64

00:05:22,410 --> 00:05:26,280

And Shabbat was-- my
father would occasionally

65

00:05:26,280 --> 00:05:30,910

go to temple on Shabbat
morning, and he would come home.

66

00:05:30,910 --> 00:05:35,850

And my mother didn't go, but
she would prepare some food.

67

00:05:35,850 --> 00:05:40,530

Usually, she would
call [INAUDIBLE]..

68

00:05:40,530 --> 00:05:44,610

And it was usually
chopped eggs and onions.

69

00:05:44,610 --> 00:05:46,650

And we'd have some challah.

70

00:05:46,650 --> 00:05:53,240

And so Shabbat was a little bit
more special because of that.

71
00:05:53,240 --> 00:05:59,190
But we didn't eat kosher
food at home, particularly.

72
00:05:59,190 --> 00:06:05,310
But we never ate pork, but
it wasn't very strict, as far

73
00:06:05,310 --> 00:06:07,830
as mixing meat and milk.

74
00:06:07,830 --> 00:06:14,610
But I don't remember ever really
having milk with meat meals.

75
00:06:14,610 --> 00:06:19,350
So it wasn't real orthodox.

76
00:06:19,350 --> 00:06:21,130
And then I went to
a Jewish school.

77
00:06:21,130 --> 00:06:27,450
So at the school, I
learned Hebrew right away,

78
00:06:27,450 --> 00:06:28,380
in kindergarten.

79
00:06:28,380 --> 00:06:35,040
In first grade, we would have
Jewish lessons the first two

80
00:06:35,040 --> 00:06:36,780
hours, usually.

81
00:06:36,780 --> 00:06:39,690
From 8 to 10 was
Jewish studies, which

82
00:06:39,690 --> 00:06:52,140

included Hebrew and Bible
study and Israeli geography.

83
00:06:52,140 --> 00:06:58,290
Some Israelis, but not--
it wasn't religious.

84
00:06:58,290 --> 00:06:59,760
None of it was religious.

85
00:06:59,760 --> 00:07:05,670
We didn't learn Jewish religion.

86
00:07:05,670 --> 00:07:10,470
But we did get a lot
of Jewish background.

87
00:07:10,470 --> 00:07:13,410
And I got my Jewish--

88
00:07:13,410 --> 00:07:15,990
I started learning
about Jewish religion

89
00:07:15,990 --> 00:07:20,860
when I joined a religious
organization called

90
00:07:20,860 --> 00:07:25,770
Bnei Akiva, which was an
Orthodox Labor Zionist

91
00:07:25,770 --> 00:07:26,580
movement.

92
00:07:26,580 --> 00:07:30,520
And I was 10 years old.

93
00:07:30,520 --> 00:07:32,410
And I spent a lot of time there.

94
00:07:32,410 --> 00:07:36,560

Usually, it was Friday
night, Saturday afternoon,

95
00:07:36,560 --> 00:07:39,010
Saturday evenings,
always Sundays.

96
00:07:39,010 --> 00:07:43,870
I spent a lot of time there
from age 10 till we left,

97
00:07:43,870 --> 00:07:46,460
when I was 12.

98
00:07:46,460 --> 00:07:50,080
So you started school
when you were five or six?

99
00:07:50,080 --> 00:07:50,680
Five.

100
00:07:50,680 --> 00:07:50,995
Five.

101
00:07:50,995 --> 00:07:51,495
Right.

102
00:07:51,495 --> 00:07:54,130
That was '47, then.

103
00:07:54,130 --> 00:07:54,880
Right.

104
00:07:54,880 --> 00:07:57,640
Yeah, that was '47.

105
00:07:57,640 --> 00:08:00,430
So obviously, those
first two years,

106
00:08:00,430 --> 00:08:06,220
what do you remember between '42

and '47 in regards to the war?

107

00:08:06,220 --> 00:08:09,270

And what was your family like?

108

00:08:09,270 --> 00:08:13,822

Did anything happen to
your family in [INAUDIBLE]??

109

00:08:13,822 --> 00:08:17,050

What was happening in Antwerp?

110

00:08:17,050 --> 00:08:22,910

Well, in '42, I was too
young to really remember.

111

00:08:22,910 --> 00:08:27,070

So what I remember is more
when my parents told me.

112

00:08:27,070 --> 00:08:32,860

And well, I know from history
that Belgium was invaded

113

00:08:32,860 --> 00:08:35,754

by the Germans in early '42.

114

00:08:35,754 --> 00:08:38,679

115

00:08:38,679 --> 00:08:41,350

And I'm not even sure that--
and I was going to research it,

116

00:08:41,350 --> 00:08:43,870

and I didn't get
around to doing it.

117

00:08:43,870 --> 00:08:50,860

But by December '42,
when I was born,

118

00:08:50,860 --> 00:08:54,430
my mother was living in a house.

119
00:08:54,430 --> 00:09:00,520
And I guess Jews were not
allowed at that point any--

120
00:09:00,520 --> 00:09:04,390
or it wasn't safe anymore
to go to hospitals.

121
00:09:04,390 --> 00:09:09,190
So I was born in the house
where my mother was living.

122
00:09:09,190 --> 00:09:12,010
And she was renting, I believe.

123
00:09:12,010 --> 00:09:14,080
I'm not really clear.

124
00:09:14,080 --> 00:09:20,830
And my father, for some
reason, was not there.

125
00:09:20,830 --> 00:09:26,290
He had left and gone to
Switzerland prior to this time,

126
00:09:26,290 --> 00:09:27,910
sometime.

127
00:09:27,910 --> 00:09:31,090
And I don't know
exactly why he left.

128
00:09:31,090 --> 00:09:36,070
I think that maybe
he went to see--

129
00:09:36,070 --> 00:09:40,510
he went to Switzerland to
see what the conditions were.

130

00:09:40,510 --> 00:09:43,540

And maybe it was too
difficult for my mother

131

00:09:43,540 --> 00:09:45,580

to travel because
she was pregnant.

132

00:09:45,580 --> 00:09:47,900

I don't know exactly.

133

00:09:47,900 --> 00:09:50,590

But I know that I was
born in this house,

134

00:09:50,590 --> 00:09:56,170

and that the landlady
was my mother's midwife,

135

00:09:56,170 --> 00:09:58,510

that she helped my mother.

136

00:09:58,510 --> 00:10:06,020

And the landlady had two sons
who were maybe teenagers.

137

00:10:06,020 --> 00:10:11,420

They were maybe 13, 14,
something like that.

138

00:10:11,420 --> 00:10:15,040

And they were very excited that
I was being born on December 6,

139

00:10:15,040 --> 00:10:19,600

because December 6 was called
Saint Nicholas Day, which

140

00:10:19,600 --> 00:10:23,740

is equivalent to Christmas
here, Saint Nicholas

141
00:10:23,740 --> 00:10:25,410
being Santa Claus.

142
00:10:25,410 --> 00:10:30,120

143
00:10:30,120 --> 00:10:38,520
But then from what I gather from
things my parents would say,

144
00:10:38,520 --> 00:10:41,410
a few months or soon
after I was born,

145
00:10:41,410 --> 00:10:45,510
and I think maybe a
few months after that,

146
00:10:45,510 --> 00:10:51,330
my landlady told my mom
that there was a rumor

147
00:10:51,330 --> 00:10:55,740
that the Gestapo was
coming to the neighborhood

148
00:10:55,740 --> 00:10:59,130
to search the houses, and that
it would no longer be safe

149
00:10:59,130 --> 00:11:03,700
for her to stay there.

150
00:11:03,700 --> 00:11:09,250
And so I think there
was a lot of question

151
00:11:09,250 --> 00:11:15,280
in my parents' talking later
whether the Gestapo, in fact,

152
00:11:15,280 --> 00:11:20,920

did come, or if my landlady was
starting to feel uncomfortable

153
00:11:20,920 --> 00:11:23,870
and wanted us to leave.

154
00:11:23,870 --> 00:11:33,370
And so my mother left with me.

155
00:11:33,370 --> 00:11:39,800
And the stories I
heard were that she--

156
00:11:39,800 --> 00:11:42,375
well, eventually she
ended up in Switzerland.

157
00:11:42,375 --> 00:11:45,460

158
00:11:45,460 --> 00:11:49,390
And I never have been
clear what route she

159
00:11:49,390 --> 00:11:56,230
took getting to Switzerland,
but I would hear stories

160
00:11:56,230 --> 00:12:02,530
about that she was walking.

161
00:12:02,530 --> 00:12:06,530

162
00:12:06,530 --> 00:12:07,620
Could you stop the camera?

163
00:12:07,620 --> 00:12:39,100

164
00:12:39,100 --> 00:12:41,710
OK.

165
00:12:41,710 --> 00:12:47,590
Well, as I was saying,
my mom then left.

166
00:12:47,590 --> 00:12:55,330
And she would talk about how
she was walking in the city,

167
00:12:55,330 --> 00:13:02,410
and didn't know what
to do or where to go.

168
00:13:02,410 --> 00:13:06,100
And she got to a bridge,
and there was a river.

169
00:13:06,100 --> 00:13:11,080
And she would talk
about how she thought

170
00:13:11,080 --> 00:13:13,180
about jumping in the
river because she just

171
00:13:13,180 --> 00:13:15,790
didn't know what to do.

172
00:13:15,790 --> 00:13:21,160
But a man came up to her, and
it turned out to be a priest.

173
00:13:21,160 --> 00:13:27,220
And she told him
what was going on,

174
00:13:27,220 --> 00:13:30,340
and he took her to a cloister.

175
00:13:30,340 --> 00:13:37,240
And so we stayed there.

176

00:13:37,240 --> 00:13:44,660

And she wore a nun's
outfit, and the nuns

177

00:13:44,660 --> 00:13:47,240

took us in and took
care of us for a while.

178

00:13:47,240 --> 00:13:51,800

And I was baptized there, too.

179

00:13:51,800 --> 00:14:00,560

And so I've always been grateful
to the Catholics for that,

180

00:14:00,560 --> 00:14:02,210

for doing that.

181

00:14:02,210 --> 00:14:08,990

And I always joked that if--

182

00:14:08,990 --> 00:14:10,880

I could always boast
of being Catholic.

183

00:14:10,880 --> 00:14:14,720

If I had to go to heaven, I
could say, well, I'm Catholic,

184

00:14:14,720 --> 00:14:16,250

too, you know?

185

00:14:16,250 --> 00:14:23,800

And I don't know how
long we stayed there,

186

00:14:23,800 --> 00:14:26,620

and I don't know why, at
some point, we had to leave,

187

00:14:26,620 --> 00:14:30,400

if it was unsafe or why.

188

00:14:30,400 --> 00:14:32,440

But at some point,
we had to leave.

189

00:14:32,440 --> 00:14:38,680

And then the next story
that I always hear

190

00:14:38,680 --> 00:14:46,150

is that my mother and I
were in a Belgian prison.

191

00:14:46,150 --> 00:14:49,870

And not as prisoners,
but hiding.

192

00:14:49,870 --> 00:14:54,610

And the prison guards
would help my mother.

193

00:14:54,610 --> 00:14:59,290

And they would help her with
my diapers, and washing them

194

00:14:59,290 --> 00:15:01,860

and drying them.

195

00:15:01,860 --> 00:15:05,440

And we stayed
there a while, too.

196

00:15:05,440 --> 00:15:07,600

And I don't know how long.

197

00:15:07,600 --> 00:15:15,610

And then I guess my mother's
plan was to get to Switzerland.

198

00:15:15,610 --> 00:15:20,050

And so when she
got to the border,

199

00:15:20,050 --> 00:15:25,030
she gave me sleeping pills so
I wouldn't wake up and cry.

200
00:15:25,030 --> 00:15:32,250
And then she crossed the border.

201
00:15:32,250 --> 00:15:35,260
And I don't have details,
unfortunately, on any of this.

202
00:15:35,260 --> 00:15:36,330
And I wish I did.

203
00:15:36,330 --> 00:15:39,310

204
00:15:39,310 --> 00:15:41,560
And it took a long
time for me to wake up.

205
00:15:41,560 --> 00:15:44,980
And she was very concerned
that it took me so long.

206
00:15:44,980 --> 00:15:47,230
And she was worried she had
given me too many sleeping

207
00:15:47,230 --> 00:15:49,030
pills.

208
00:15:49,030 --> 00:15:51,790
But it all worked out, you know.

209
00:15:51,790 --> 00:15:58,030
And so we got to
Switzerland, and somehow, she

210
00:15:58,030 --> 00:16:00,490
met up with my father.

211

00:16:00,490 --> 00:16:07,880

And we stayed in a Swiss
farm with Swiss farmers.

212

00:16:07,880 --> 00:16:13,640

And I have pictures
in Switzerland

213

00:16:13,640 --> 00:16:16,160

of me and my parents.

214

00:16:16,160 --> 00:16:19,190

And they're all in different
cities, all over Switzerland.

215

00:16:19,190 --> 00:16:23,990

And I have sort of
traced the route.

216

00:16:23,990 --> 00:16:26,000

And I should have
brought that information.

217

00:16:26,000 --> 00:16:29,240

I didn't do it.

218

00:16:29,240 --> 00:16:36,420

But anyway, they did
finally end up on this farm,

219

00:16:36,420 --> 00:16:42,210

and with these farmers who
were about my parents' age.

220

00:16:42,210 --> 00:16:47,100

And they also had their
first child, who was my age.

221

00:16:47,100 --> 00:16:54,700

And they were
prejudiced against Jews.

222

00:16:54,700 --> 00:16:59,670

They took my parents in, and
my parents worked on the farm.

223

00:16:59,670 --> 00:17:04,349

But after the war and later,
when Israel was established

224

00:17:04,349 --> 00:17:08,369

and became a state, they
wrote to my parents a letter,

225

00:17:08,369 --> 00:17:11,579

and said how much
respect they now

226

00:17:11,579 --> 00:17:14,760

have for Jews because they
have their own country.

227

00:17:14,760 --> 00:17:22,550

And they eventually
had seven children.

228

00:17:22,550 --> 00:17:25,980

And there was some
correspondence for a while.

229

00:17:25,980 --> 00:17:29,570

But then when my parents
came to the United States,

230

00:17:29,570 --> 00:17:31,700

I guess they stopped writing.

231

00:17:31,700 --> 00:17:33,620

And you know how it
is, you lose contact.

232

00:17:33,620 --> 00:17:37,090

233

00:17:37,090 --> 00:17:41,480

And I've often wanted to go

back and visit these people,

234

00:17:41,480 --> 00:17:41,980
you know?

235

00:17:41,980 --> 00:17:46,030
But I don't really know
how to find them exactly.

236

00:17:46,030 --> 00:17:49,480
So that's basically my story.

237

00:17:49,480 --> 00:17:57,880
After the war, my parents went
back to Belgium, to Antwerp.

238

00:17:57,880 --> 00:17:59,110
In '45?

239

00:17:59,110 --> 00:18:00,340
In '45.

240

00:18:00,340 --> 00:18:09,520
And they went back to the house
where I was born, the landlady.

241

00:18:09,520 --> 00:18:13,030
And because my parents
had to leave everything,

242

00:18:13,030 --> 00:18:16,510
because my mother, when
she left, she was on foot,

243

00:18:16,510 --> 00:18:20,560
and so they had
furniture and things.

244

00:18:20,560 --> 00:18:24,850
But the landlady said that they
didn't have any of these things

245

00:18:24,850 --> 00:18:30,760
anymore, that the Gestapo
had taken everything

246
00:18:30,760 --> 00:18:36,040
or they had to sell things
to pay for the cost of--

247
00:18:36,040 --> 00:18:38,410
they couldn't keep these things.

248
00:18:38,410 --> 00:18:40,850
So there was nothing left.

249
00:18:40,850 --> 00:18:46,810
And my parents were
very upset because there

250
00:18:46,810 --> 00:18:49,000
were a lot of valuable things.

251
00:18:49,000 --> 00:18:52,390
And I think that
they were justified,

252
00:18:52,390 --> 00:18:55,060
or the cost wasn't such that--

253
00:18:55,060 --> 00:18:59,020
I mean, my parents had
paid them or something,

254
00:18:59,020 --> 00:19:01,130
you know, but there
was nothing left.

255
00:19:01,130 --> 00:19:04,750
So there was a lot of
bitterness on my parents' side

256
00:19:04,750 --> 00:19:08,350
about these things.

257

00:19:08,350 --> 00:19:14,230

So after that, my
parents decided

258

00:19:14,230 --> 00:19:16,240

they didn't want
to stay in Europe,

259

00:19:16,240 --> 00:19:20,860

and they started to
get papers to leave.

260

00:19:20,860 --> 00:19:27,070

And a lot of Jews left.

261

00:19:27,070 --> 00:19:28,930

Well, I can't talk
for a lot of Jews,

262

00:19:28,930 --> 00:19:33,190

but all of my parents'
family left Antwerp.

263

00:19:33,190 --> 00:19:37,030

None of them wanted
to stay in Europe.

264

00:19:37,030 --> 00:19:42,850

And some went to
Israel, some went to--

265

00:19:42,850 --> 00:19:45,610

one aunt went to Argentina.

266

00:19:45,610 --> 00:19:48,460

She and her husband
ended up there.

267

00:19:48,460 --> 00:19:52,660

And one aunt went to Canada.

268

00:19:52,660 --> 00:19:53,920

One went to New York.

269
00:19:53,920 --> 00:19:58,510
And my parents started to get--

270
00:19:58,510 --> 00:20:00,400
it took a long
time to get papers

271
00:20:00,400 --> 00:20:02,950
and to find sponsors to
come to the United States.

272
00:20:02,950 --> 00:20:10,240
So they did get sponsored
to come to San Francisco.

273
00:20:10,240 --> 00:20:12,350
And it took about five years.

274
00:20:12,350 --> 00:20:17,320
So I don't know if
they started, but we

275
00:20:17,320 --> 00:20:20,770
didn't leave Belgium till 1955.

276
00:20:20,770 --> 00:20:25,090
So maybe it took
them a few years

277
00:20:25,090 --> 00:20:27,700
until they decided what to do.

278
00:20:27,700 --> 00:20:39,070
And so in 1955, we left
and came to San Francisco.

279
00:20:39,070 --> 00:20:42,100
And we came by boat to New York.

280
00:20:42,100 --> 00:20:46,600

And then we stopped
and visited relatives.

281
00:20:46,600 --> 00:20:50,500
And my parents thought maybe
they would stay in New York,

282
00:20:50,500 --> 00:20:52,870
because we did have
a lot of relatives.

283
00:20:52,870 --> 00:20:55,880
But after being in New
York for a few days,

284
00:20:55,880 --> 00:20:58,400
they decided they really
didn't like it at all.

285
00:20:58,400 --> 00:21:02,080
So we took a train and
came to San Francisco.

286
00:21:02,080 --> 00:21:06,570

287
00:21:06,570 --> 00:21:12,024
I'd like to ask you, back
in 1945 when the war ended--

288
00:21:12,024 --> 00:21:13,356
so you were three--

289
00:21:13,356 --> 00:21:18,000
I guess your first real clear
memories about being in Europe,

290
00:21:18,000 --> 00:21:22,710
being in Belgium,
how old were you?

291
00:21:22,710 --> 00:21:25,410
I guess it must have

been in kindergarten.

292

00:21:25,410 --> 00:21:29,590

I don't remember anything,
really, in Switzerland.

293

00:21:29,590 --> 00:21:33,060

I have a vague memory of--

294

00:21:33,060 --> 00:21:36,390

well, these farmers
had a cattle--

295

00:21:36,390 --> 00:21:39,150

it was a dairy or
a cattle ranch,

296

00:21:39,150 --> 00:21:43,650

and I have a memory of
watching a calf being born.

297

00:21:43,650 --> 00:21:45,720

But I don't know how old I was.

298

00:21:45,720 --> 00:21:47,160

Probably two.

299

00:21:47,160 --> 00:21:50,870

Oh, and I did learn Swiss
German while I was there.

300

00:21:50,870 --> 00:21:55,770

My parents said that my
first language, that I did

301

00:21:55,770 --> 00:21:58,920

speak Swiss German, although my
parents spoke Yiddish at home.

302

00:21:58,920 --> 00:22:01,920

We spoke Yiddish.

303

00:22:01,920 --> 00:22:06,750

But when we came
back to Belgium,

304

00:22:06,750 --> 00:22:12,300

I remember going to
kindergarten at Tachkemoni.

305

00:22:12,300 --> 00:22:18,120

And it was a Jewish school, so
they were all Jewish children.

306

00:22:18,120 --> 00:22:22,860

307

00:22:22,860 --> 00:22:28,320

And I remember all the grades,
going up through the grades.

308

00:22:28,320 --> 00:22:32,760

But nobody ever talked
about the Holocaust.

309

00:22:32,760 --> 00:22:34,710

There was no
discussion about that.

310

00:22:34,710 --> 00:22:38,700

And all these children
had to have lived

311

00:22:38,700 --> 00:22:42,460

through it, one way or another.

312

00:22:42,460 --> 00:22:47,310

And it's not until
recently that I actually

313

00:22:47,310 --> 00:22:53,160

thought, wondered how they
lived, what their life was like

314

00:22:53,160 --> 00:22:55,740

and what their experience was.

315

00:22:55,740 --> 00:23:02,700

And nobody ever talked about
it, not kids between each other,

316

00:23:02,700 --> 00:23:08,610

or nor did the
teachers talk about it.

317

00:23:08,610 --> 00:23:11,040

The non-Jewish teachers
never talked about it,

318

00:23:11,040 --> 00:23:13,020

or the Jewish teachers.

319

00:23:13,020 --> 00:23:16,440

It was never addressed
in any form or shape.

320

00:23:16,440 --> 00:23:21,870

And of course, now, I understand
that it takes many years

321

00:23:21,870 --> 00:23:23,220

before you can talk about--

322

00:23:23,220 --> 00:23:32,740

I mean, and I just recently met
a German woman who is my age,

323

00:23:32,740 --> 00:23:36,460

and was born in Germany
and raised in Germany.

324

00:23:36,460 --> 00:23:40,960

And she said that when she
was 15, so she was probably

325

00:23:40,960 --> 00:23:46,450

in 10th grade, they
started addressing

326
00:23:46,450 --> 00:23:48,170
the Holocaust in the schools.

327
00:23:48,170 --> 00:23:52,240
So I think maybe
then they might have,

328
00:23:52,240 --> 00:23:55,540
in my school, started
talking about.

329
00:23:55,540 --> 00:24:00,700
But when I left at 12, nobody
talked about it, you know?

330
00:24:00,700 --> 00:24:04,270
So and my parents only
talked about it in reference

331
00:24:04,270 --> 00:24:13,530
to what happened to
them and, you know,

332
00:24:13,530 --> 00:24:15,150
the incidents that happened.

333
00:24:15,150 --> 00:24:22,080
But never the feelings
that they had.

334
00:24:22,080 --> 00:24:25,140
Did they ever tell
you any more detail

335
00:24:25,140 --> 00:24:28,540
about what happened about either
their journeys to Switzerland

336
00:24:28,540 --> 00:24:33,480
or living on the farm or
coming back to Antwerp?

337

00:24:33,480 --> 00:24:36,720

Or did they speak
about Liberation Day?

338

00:24:36,720 --> 00:24:38,930

No, no, they never
talked about it.

339

00:24:38,930 --> 00:24:40,730

They never talked
about those things.

340

00:24:40,730 --> 00:24:45,580

Or if they did,
I don't remember.

341

00:24:45,580 --> 00:24:49,520

I do remember my father
talking about his journey

342

00:24:49,520 --> 00:24:51,170

to Switzerland a bit.

343

00:24:51,170 --> 00:24:57,680

And I guess he went
with a group of men.

344

00:24:57,680 --> 00:25:05,790

And again, I don't
know exactly where,

345

00:25:05,790 --> 00:25:11,700

but that they came
to a place, and they

346

00:25:11,700 --> 00:25:14,310

didn't know if they
should-- which road to take,

347

00:25:14,310 --> 00:25:19,260

if they should go right or left,
and that it was a mountain.

348

00:25:19,260 --> 00:25:24,540

And so the group
divided up in two,

349

00:25:24,540 --> 00:25:27,120

and one group went one
way, and the other group

350

00:25:27,120 --> 00:25:27,960

went the other way.

351

00:25:27,960 --> 00:25:34,930

And that after they separated,
my father went to the right.

352

00:25:34,930 --> 00:25:39,310

And the other group,
they heard gunshots.

353

00:25:39,310 --> 00:25:42,510

And they never saw
those men again.

354

00:25:42,510 --> 00:25:50,650

And so he felt very lucky that
they did get to Switzerland.

355

00:25:50,650 --> 00:25:55,000

This group did make
it to Switzerland.

356

00:25:55,000 --> 00:26:01,720

Also, when he got
to Switzerland,

357

00:26:01,720 --> 00:26:04,340

the men came to a
place where they--

358

00:26:04,340 --> 00:26:07,210

they called it a work camp.

359

00:26:07,210 --> 00:26:08,890
And I don't know
very much about it,

360
00:26:08,890 --> 00:26:15,040
but I guess they had places
where Jews would come

361
00:26:15,040 --> 00:26:17,680
in and work in Switzerland.

362
00:26:17,680 --> 00:26:21,040
And that's where he was
until he met with my mom.

363
00:26:21,040 --> 00:26:24,200

364
00:26:24,200 --> 00:26:28,040
Have they ever told you any
more stories about that, about

365
00:26:28,040 --> 00:26:30,080
their time in
Switzerland [INAUDIBLE]

366
00:26:30,080 --> 00:26:33,860
like recently or years later?

367
00:26:33,860 --> 00:26:38,120
Yeah, no, not a lot, just sort
of the things that I heard.

368
00:26:38,120 --> 00:26:41,360
And later, when I
would ask questions,

369
00:26:41,360 --> 00:26:45,930
they wouldn't talk about it.

370
00:26:45,930 --> 00:26:50,830
And so I don't know
very much about it.

371
00:26:50,830 --> 00:26:53,630

372
00:26:53,630 --> 00:26:58,120
I do know that both my
parents had large families.

373
00:26:58,120 --> 00:27:04,390
And they all survived,
except for my mother--

374
00:27:04,390 --> 00:27:09,020
my mother, there were seven
children in the family.

375
00:27:09,020 --> 00:27:11,920
There were six
girls and one boy.

376
00:27:11,920 --> 00:27:16,630
And the boy did
disappear, and nobody

377
00:27:16,630 --> 00:27:19,400
knows about his whereabouts.

378
00:27:19,400 --> 00:27:22,060
So there is always a
lot of sadness about him

379
00:27:22,060 --> 00:27:25,150
because he was the baby
in the family, too.

380
00:27:25,150 --> 00:27:28,270
And my father, there
were four children,

381
00:27:28,270 --> 00:27:34,780
and only two
survived of the four.

382

00:27:34,780 --> 00:27:39,170

So two brothers did
disappear or die.

383

00:27:39,170 --> 00:27:43,360

And I don't know
very much about them.

384

00:27:43,360 --> 00:27:49,872

I brought a picture of my
mother's brother, which is--

385

00:27:49,872 --> 00:27:53,150

386

00:27:53,150 --> 00:27:54,620

I'd like to put this on video.

387

00:27:54,620 --> 00:27:57,406

We have to do the
interview [BOTH TALKING]..

388

00:27:57,406 --> 00:28:00,280

Oh, all right.

389

00:28:00,280 --> 00:28:05,380

And the other thing I have
of the time in Switzerland

390

00:28:05,380 --> 00:28:07,420

is this thing.

391

00:28:07,420 --> 00:28:09,430

--close up--

392

00:28:09,430 --> 00:28:10,990

Do this later?

393

00:28:10,990 --> 00:28:12,580

OK.

394

00:28:12,580 --> 00:28:13,910
Well, it's a little pendant.

395
00:28:13,910 --> 00:28:16,592

396
00:28:16,592 --> 00:28:18,500
Anyway, I'll read it
later if you want.

397
00:28:18,500 --> 00:28:19,000
OK.

398
00:28:19,000 --> 00:28:22,300

399
00:28:22,300 --> 00:28:24,350
So I know you were so young.

400
00:28:24,350 --> 00:28:25,310
You were three.

401
00:28:25,310 --> 00:28:27,370
But do you remember
anything of your journey

402
00:28:27,370 --> 00:28:29,680
back from Switzerland
to Antwerp?

403
00:28:29,680 --> 00:28:31,330
I have no memory of that.

404
00:28:31,330 --> 00:28:34,540
I just really don't.

405
00:28:34,540 --> 00:28:38,200
How did you feel when
you started kindergarten?

406
00:28:38,200 --> 00:28:40,360
You were five.

407

00:28:40,360 --> 00:28:43,720

Was there any post-war
talk with you?

408

00:28:43,720 --> 00:28:45,660

While you were going
through school,

409

00:28:45,660 --> 00:28:48,130

was anything brought
up about World War II?

410

00:28:48,130 --> 00:28:48,980

Absolutely not.

411

00:28:48,980 --> 00:28:49,780

Nothing at all.

412

00:28:49,780 --> 00:28:52,730

I have no memory of that at all.

413

00:28:52,730 --> 00:28:54,610

Nothing.

414

00:28:54,610 --> 00:28:59,170

Until I joined the Bnei Akiva,
which was the Labor Zionist

415

00:28:59,170 --> 00:29:01,030

movement, there was a lot of--

416

00:29:01,030 --> 00:29:09,740

and I was probably 10, maybe
towards the end of being nine.

417

00:29:09,740 --> 00:29:12,290

But I think I was about 10.

418

00:29:12,290 --> 00:29:14,020

And there was a lot
of talk about Israel

419

00:29:14,020 --> 00:29:18,700
and why was it important to have
a country because of the war

420

00:29:18,700 --> 00:29:19,490
and what happened.

421

00:29:19,490 --> 00:29:25,630
And that it's important to have
our own country and a home.

422

00:29:25,630 --> 00:29:28,180
It's not until
then that I really

423

00:29:28,180 --> 00:29:32,230
started understanding what had
happened, that there was a war

424

00:29:32,230 --> 00:29:36,970
and that it was
a horrible thing.

425

00:29:36,970 --> 00:29:39,925
And I started hearing
about the camps.

426

00:29:39,925 --> 00:29:44,090

427

00:29:44,090 --> 00:29:51,260
And that's what I also started
experiencing anti-Semitism,

428

00:29:51,260 --> 00:29:53,065
when I started to
get a little older.

429

00:29:53,065 --> 00:29:55,190
And I don't know if you
want me to talk about that.

430

00:29:55,190 --> 00:29:56,001

Yes.

431

00:29:56,001 --> 00:29:56,501

yes.

432

00:29:56,501 --> 00:29:59,980

If you can tell me your
experiences in the group

433

00:29:59,980 --> 00:30:05,110

and discuss your experiences
with anti-Semitism.

434

00:30:05,110 --> 00:30:08,410

What was that like?

435

00:30:08,410 --> 00:30:09,880

Well, the house we lived in--

436

00:30:09,880 --> 00:30:12,700

437

00:30:12,700 --> 00:30:15,100

the first house
I remember living

438

00:30:15,100 --> 00:30:19,760

in when we came back
from Switzerland,

439

00:30:19,760 --> 00:30:21,590

it was an apartment house.

440

00:30:21,590 --> 00:30:25,420

And we lived on
the second floor.

441

00:30:25,420 --> 00:30:31,120

And below us lived the
owners of the house.

442

00:30:31,120 --> 00:30:34,360

And they were not Jewish.

443

00:30:34,360 --> 00:30:35,770

They had a lot of children.

444

00:30:35,770 --> 00:30:37,150

And there was also a store.

445

00:30:37,150 --> 00:30:40,300

They had a store, like a
little grocery mom-and-pop kind

446

00:30:40,300 --> 00:30:42,910

of store.

447

00:30:42,910 --> 00:30:50,740

They were pretty nice to us, but
I guess my parents had a lot--

448

00:30:50,740 --> 00:30:53,260

there was always talk at
home about who was Jewish

449

00:30:53,260 --> 00:30:56,080

and who wasn't Jewish,
and they're goys

450

00:30:56,080 --> 00:30:58,540

and we don't want to
talk to them too much.

451

00:30:58,540 --> 00:31:02,590

And you got to be careful
about what you say.

452

00:31:02,590 --> 00:31:08,080

A lot of distance, a lot
of fear, and a lot of--

453

00:31:08,080 --> 00:31:10,750

so I very early

learned that there

454

00:31:10,750 --> 00:31:12,520
were people you didn't
talk to, and there

455

00:31:12,520 --> 00:31:13,810
were people that were OK.

456

00:31:13,810 --> 00:31:17,940

457

00:31:17,940 --> 00:31:22,620
In fact, we spoke
Yiddish at home.

458

00:31:22,620 --> 00:31:25,920
So that was really the
only language I knew.

459

00:31:25,920 --> 00:31:34,980
And when we went out in public,
especially on street cars,

460

00:31:34,980 --> 00:31:37,170
my parents would
tell me not to talk

461

00:31:37,170 --> 00:31:40,650
to them because they didn't want
anyone to know we were Jewish.

462

00:31:40,650 --> 00:31:42,540
And because I could
only speak Jewish,

463

00:31:42,540 --> 00:31:44,040
they didn't want me to talk.

464

00:31:44,040 --> 00:31:55,610

465

00:31:55,610 --> 00:31:58,790

Well, anyway, so I remember
some incidents on the street

466

00:31:58,790 --> 00:32:02,810

where people would
walk by and look at us

467

00:32:02,810 --> 00:32:06,740

and call us dirty
Jews and spit at us.

468

00:32:06,740 --> 00:32:09,005

I don't know how they
knew we were Jewish.

469

00:32:09,005 --> 00:32:12,620

I mean, I look a
little bit Jewish, but.

470

00:32:12,620 --> 00:32:13,915

Anyway, they knew that.

471

00:32:13,915 --> 00:32:18,110

472

00:32:18,110 --> 00:32:24,020

I remember later an incident
when I was a little older,

473

00:32:24,020 --> 00:32:28,610

walking with my
friends on the street,

474

00:32:28,610 --> 00:32:33,650

and some non-Jews walking
by and telling us to get off

475

00:32:33,650 --> 00:32:36,707

the street, that they
wanted to walk by

476

00:32:36,707 --> 00:32:38,165

and we had to get
off the sidewalk.

477
00:32:38,165 --> 00:32:42,500

478
00:32:42,500 --> 00:32:46,280
So there were some incidents
like that on the street.

479
00:32:46,280 --> 00:32:51,370
But anyway, I was getting
back to where we were living,

480
00:32:51,370 --> 00:32:52,550
the house we were living.

481
00:32:52,550 --> 00:32:57,220

482
00:32:57,220 --> 00:32:59,290
There was another
apartment above us.

483
00:32:59,290 --> 00:33:02,380

484
00:33:02,380 --> 00:33:04,780
I guess the people
who lived there moved

485
00:33:04,780 --> 00:33:07,090
and then new tenants moved in.

486
00:33:07,090 --> 00:33:09,850
And they were very anti-Semitic.

487
00:33:09,850 --> 00:33:12,220
And they really
didn't like us at all.

488
00:33:12,220 --> 00:33:16,810

And it got very
uncomfortable to live there.

489
00:33:16,810 --> 00:33:19,840
My parents didn't
move, but there

490
00:33:19,840 --> 00:33:21,940
were a couple of incidents
when my mother opened

491
00:33:21,940 --> 00:33:24,910
the window and
the woman upstairs

492
00:33:24,910 --> 00:33:27,790
threw hot milk down on her.

493
00:33:27,790 --> 00:33:32,890

494
00:33:32,890 --> 00:33:38,500
And then we had coal cellars.

495
00:33:38,500 --> 00:33:44,740
Because the heating was with
coal, we had a coal stove.

496
00:33:44,740 --> 00:33:49,990
So you had to go downstairs
to get coal and bring it up

497
00:33:49,990 --> 00:33:50,800
in buckets.

498
00:33:50,800 --> 00:33:56,890
And one time, coming up, this
other woman threatened my mom.

499
00:33:56,890 --> 00:33:58,360
So we had to move.

500

00:33:58,360 --> 00:34:00,790
It just got too uncomfortable.

501
00:34:00,790 --> 00:34:03,880
I think that they put
pressure on the landlady

502
00:34:03,880 --> 00:34:05,410
to get us to move, too.

503
00:34:05,410 --> 00:34:08,860
So we did move.

504
00:34:08,860 --> 00:34:10,960
And there definitely was--

505
00:34:10,960 --> 00:34:13,989
I felt a lot of
separateness between us

506
00:34:13,989 --> 00:34:18,610
and even the children,
the landlady's children.

507
00:34:18,610 --> 00:34:23,290
There was separation
and fear, which

508
00:34:23,290 --> 00:34:26,110
is kind of surprising after
the war and all that stuff.

509
00:34:26,110 --> 00:34:28,150
But it was there.

510
00:34:28,150 --> 00:34:30,310
And I think these things
were the things that

511
00:34:30,310 --> 00:34:32,020
made my parents decide to move.

512

00:34:32,020 --> 00:34:34,810

513

00:34:34,810 --> 00:34:37,270

So anyway.

514

00:34:37,270 --> 00:34:40,320

I just thought that--

515

00:34:40,320 --> 00:34:42,120

I'm wondering during
this time that you

516

00:34:42,120 --> 00:34:44,610

were experiencing anti-Semitism
on the streets, what

517

00:34:44,610 --> 00:34:46,670

was it like in school?

518

00:34:46,670 --> 00:34:50,440

Did you feel any of that there?

519

00:34:50,440 --> 00:34:51,510

No.

520

00:34:51,510 --> 00:34:57,750

Not at all, because
everybody was Jewish,

521

00:34:57,750 --> 00:34:59,085

and the teachers were Jewish.

522

00:34:59,085 --> 00:35:01,830

523

00:35:01,830 --> 00:35:08,730

However, the secular studies,
the non-Jewish studies,

524

00:35:08,730 --> 00:35:12,300

the teachers were

non-Jewish teachers.

525

00:35:12,300 --> 00:35:19,510

And I personally
remember clearly

526

00:35:19,510 --> 00:35:21,850

because they were not
Jewish, I felt not

527

00:35:21,850 --> 00:35:25,430

quite as comfortable with
them because of the way

528

00:35:25,430 --> 00:35:26,920

my parents brought me up.

529

00:35:26,920 --> 00:35:30,880

530

00:35:30,880 --> 00:35:33,395

And the principal
was not Jewish also.

531

00:35:33,395 --> 00:35:38,150

532

00:35:38,150 --> 00:35:40,370

So I always felt a
little uncomfortable

533

00:35:40,370 --> 00:35:46,820

with these non-Jewish teachers,
not that they gave ever

534

00:35:46,820 --> 00:35:49,910

any indication of
being anti-Semitic

535

00:35:49,910 --> 00:35:51,240

or anything like that.

536

00:35:51,240 --> 00:35:56,472

But I think I always felt
that they were a little bit.

537

00:35:56,472 --> 00:35:58,430

And I don't know if they
were, in fact, or not.

538

00:35:58,430 --> 00:36:02,180

539

00:36:02,180 --> 00:36:05,840

So that's my
experience at school.

540

00:36:05,840 --> 00:36:09,180

And can you talk more about the
Zionist group that you were in?

541

00:36:09,180 --> 00:36:11,000

Bnei Akiva?

542

00:36:11,000 --> 00:36:12,675

Labor Zionist--

543

00:36:12,675 --> 00:36:14,300

You said that's where
you first started

544

00:36:14,300 --> 00:36:17,990

talking about the Holocaust
a little or Israel.

545

00:36:17,990 --> 00:36:20,140

Right.

546

00:36:20,140 --> 00:36:22,100

So that was a social--

547

00:36:22,100 --> 00:36:24,740

It was a social group.

548

00:36:24,740 --> 00:36:26,560
Yeah, it was a social group.

549
00:36:26,560 --> 00:36:31,040

550
00:36:31,040 --> 00:36:32,640
We had uniforms.

551
00:36:32,640 --> 00:36:36,540
We had a uniform and a bandana.

552
00:36:36,540 --> 00:36:43,820
We learned a lot of Hebrew
songs, a lot of Zionist songs,

553
00:36:43,820 --> 00:36:45,680
so we did a lot of singing.

554
00:36:45,680 --> 00:36:50,750
And we learned the hora
and Israeli dances,

555
00:36:50,750 --> 00:36:52,250
and we did a lot of dancing.

556
00:36:52,250 --> 00:36:55,280

557
00:36:55,280 --> 00:37:00,240
And we played a lot of
games, the kind of games

558
00:37:00,240 --> 00:37:03,400
a 10-year-old would like--
dividing up in two teams

559
00:37:03,400 --> 00:37:08,890
and having questions, and a
lot of competition like that.

560
00:37:08,890 --> 00:37:17,620

And there was a lot of
storytelling, mostly kind of--

561
00:37:17,620 --> 00:37:18,760
oh, what kind of stories?

562
00:37:18,760 --> 00:37:21,700

563
00:37:21,700 --> 00:37:29,690
Jewish stories, [YIDDISH]
type of stories about Poland

564
00:37:29,690 --> 00:37:38,420
and maybe life in shtetl, and
humorous little anecdotal kind

565
00:37:38,420 --> 00:37:38,920
of stories.

566
00:37:38,920 --> 00:37:43,000

567
00:37:43,000 --> 00:37:45,520
And then we went on
hikes on Sundays.

568
00:37:45,520 --> 00:37:48,620
And this was a
religious organization,

569
00:37:48,620 --> 00:37:56,920
so we weren't allowed to turn
on lights or use electricity

570
00:37:56,920 --> 00:38:03,700
or take streetcars
or things like that.

571
00:38:03,700 --> 00:38:07,615
And so that's where I
learned about being kosher.

572

00:38:07,615 --> 00:38:12,910

573

00:38:12,910 --> 00:38:15,100

And then on Sundays
we would take hikes.

574

00:38:15,100 --> 00:38:18,220

We would go hiking in parks.

575

00:38:18,220 --> 00:38:21,820

In the summer, we
would go camping.

576

00:38:21,820 --> 00:38:23,230

And so there was a lot of fun.

577

00:38:23,230 --> 00:38:25,120

But there was also
a lot of education.

578

00:38:25,120 --> 00:38:31,330

And a lot of the
education was about labor,

579

00:38:31,330 --> 00:38:36,700

about the importance
of physical work, which

580

00:38:36,700 --> 00:38:40,090

was the whole idea
about the kibbutz

581

00:38:40,090 --> 00:38:47,500

and about the importance of
building up Israel and having

582

00:38:47,500 --> 00:38:51,920

a homeland, and
that kind of stuff.

583

00:38:51,920 --> 00:38:59,290

And so I became very,
very, very zionistic.

584
00:38:59,290 --> 00:39:00,740
Yeah, that's the word.

585
00:39:00,740 --> 00:39:01,720
Zionistic, yeah.

586
00:39:01,720 --> 00:39:05,470

587
00:39:05,470 --> 00:39:10,175
And that's all I wanted to do,
is go to Israel at that point

588
00:39:10,175 --> 00:39:10,675
on.

589
00:39:10,675 --> 00:39:14,170

590
00:39:14,170 --> 00:39:19,570
In fact, when my parents decided
to come to the United States,

591
00:39:19,570 --> 00:39:21,550
I really felt
embarrassed a little bit

592
00:39:21,550 --> 00:39:23,680
that we were coming
to the United States

593
00:39:23,680 --> 00:39:28,180
and not going to
Israel, because America

594
00:39:28,180 --> 00:39:32,170
had kind of a reputation for
being very materialistic--

595

00:39:32,170 --> 00:39:33,985
Hollywood and easy life.

596
00:39:33,985 --> 00:39:37,810

597
00:39:37,810 --> 00:39:42,100
So there was some embarrassment,
because when people did leave,

598
00:39:42,100 --> 00:39:45,430
most people went to Israel
and not to the United States.

599
00:39:45,430 --> 00:39:51,710

600
00:39:51,710 --> 00:39:54,150
In the Zionist
group, did you have

601
00:39:54,150 --> 00:39:57,950
any discussions about the
war, about the Holocaust?

602
00:39:57,950 --> 00:40:01,010
Did anybody share
their experiences

603
00:40:01,010 --> 00:40:04,700
or were there questions?

604
00:40:04,700 --> 00:40:08,890
No, there was never any
specific talk about that.

605
00:40:08,890 --> 00:40:12,560

606
00:40:12,560 --> 00:40:14,530
It just wasn't.

607

00:40:14,530 --> 00:40:19,860

There was general talk
about how would it--

608

00:40:19,860 --> 00:40:24,782

like I said, I know
that there was--

609

00:40:24,782 --> 00:40:27,200

I do remember one girl.

610

00:40:27,200 --> 00:40:31,180

And she was a little
bit older than me.

611

00:40:31,180 --> 00:40:35,200

Maybe she was 14 or
something, 14 or 15.

612

00:40:35,200 --> 00:40:40,150

And she was very
beautiful, but I also

613

00:40:40,150 --> 00:40:47,620

remember she was very sad, kind
of a very solemnness about her,

614

00:40:47,620 --> 00:40:51,490

a very sad look about her,
very skinny or something.

615

00:40:51,490 --> 00:40:53,780

Maybe a little bit unhealthy.

616

00:40:53,780 --> 00:41:00,710

And I remember at camp
one night she sang a song.

617

00:41:00,710 --> 00:41:03,280

And, god, we just
all started to cry.

618

00:41:03,280 --> 00:41:05,660

It just so heartrending.

619
00:41:05,660 --> 00:41:12,120

620
00:41:12,120 --> 00:41:13,140
Yeah, she did.

621
00:41:13,140 --> 00:41:26,700
She sang-- sorry.

622
00:41:26,700 --> 00:41:45,045
[SNIFFLES] I remember the
song she sang was in Yiddish.

623
00:41:45,045 --> 00:41:48,420

624
00:41:48,420 --> 00:41:49,980
It was so sad.

625
00:41:49,980 --> 00:41:51,030
Everybody was crying.

626
00:41:51,030 --> 00:41:54,450

627
00:41:54,450 --> 00:41:58,590
Later, I found out
that she was maybe

628
00:41:58,590 --> 00:42:01,740
in a concentration
camp or something,

629
00:42:01,740 --> 00:42:06,060
and that she had
lost her parents,

630
00:42:06,060 --> 00:42:08,430
and that it was
very sad for her,

631
00:42:08,430 --> 00:42:11,160
that she had a very sad story.

632
00:42:11,160 --> 00:42:15,630
But I don't think at
that point I really

633
00:42:15,630 --> 00:42:22,658
knew what a concentration
camp was, or really exactly.

634
00:42:22,658 --> 00:42:25,560
I think I was maybe too
young to really understand.

635
00:42:25,560 --> 00:42:32,080

636
00:42:32,080 --> 00:42:36,100
I think maybe that was
the first time I really

637
00:42:36,100 --> 00:42:40,420
had an experience like
that on a feeling level,

638
00:42:40,420 --> 00:42:47,560
that I got in touch with the
sadness, the real sadness

639
00:42:47,560 --> 00:42:53,160
and horribleness of the war,
although there was discussion

640
00:42:53,160 --> 00:42:58,530
about it on a more theoretical
or intellectual level.

641
00:42:58,530 --> 00:43:15,088

642

00:43:15,088 --> 00:43:18,826
Were there any other
experiences in that group

643
00:43:18,826 --> 00:43:20,360
that you want to talk about?

644
00:43:20,360 --> 00:43:31,160

645
00:43:31,160 --> 00:43:35,030
I don't really think there
was too much in regards

646
00:43:35,030 --> 00:43:35,890
to the Holocaust.

647
00:43:35,890 --> 00:43:38,870

648
00:43:38,870 --> 00:43:43,815
All the kids were very healthy,
were all pretty normal kids,

649
00:43:43,815 --> 00:43:44,315
I think.

650
00:43:44,315 --> 00:43:50,770

651
00:43:50,770 --> 00:43:51,650
I don't know.

652
00:43:51,650 --> 00:43:56,360

653
00:43:56,360 --> 00:44:01,964
We just didn't deal with
it or talk about it.

654
00:44:01,964 --> 00:44:07,360
If I may, can I ask you

what the song was about?

655

00:44:07,360 --> 00:44:12,420

I think the song was

[SPEAKING YIDDISH]..

656

00:44:12,420 --> 00:44:16,570

657

00:44:16,570 --> 00:44:18,790

It's an old Yiddish song.

658

00:44:18,790 --> 00:44:26,710

And it's about-- well, the
translation exactly, I don't--

659

00:44:26,710 --> 00:44:29,290

660

00:44:29,290 --> 00:44:32,650

somewhere burns a
fire, and the rabbi

661

00:44:32,650 --> 00:44:37,840

sits around with his students,
teaching them the alphabet.

662

00:44:37,840 --> 00:44:41,800

But it's a very solemn,
kind of sad song.

663

00:44:41,800 --> 00:44:43,120

I think that's the song.

664

00:44:43,120 --> 00:44:46,160

I don't remember exactly, but
I know it was a Yiddish song.

665

00:44:46,160 --> 00:44:47,650

It was a very sad one.

666

00:44:47,650 --> 00:44:50,710

667

00:44:50,710 --> 00:44:52,485

Was your sister born yet?

668

00:44:52,485 --> 00:44:56,290

Because she was-- when
was your sister born?

669

00:44:56,290 --> 00:44:57,950

My sister was born
after the war.

670

00:44:57,950 --> 00:45:04,070

She was born in 1946 in Antwerp.

671

00:45:04,070 --> 00:45:08,030

And she started going
to the same school,

672

00:45:08,030 --> 00:45:11,480

but she was transferred
to another school,

673

00:45:11,480 --> 00:45:14,870

to a non-Jewish school.

674

00:45:14,870 --> 00:45:17,690

So her upbringing really was
very different from mine.

675

00:45:17,690 --> 00:45:20,570

She didn't have the
experiences I had.

676

00:45:20,570 --> 00:45:26,990

And she never
really got involved

677

00:45:26,990 --> 00:45:30,260

in the Zionist movement.

678

00:45:30,260 --> 00:45:33,870

Nor did she get a
Jewish education.

679

00:45:33,870 --> 00:45:37,610

So she really had a
different experience than me.

680

00:45:37,610 --> 00:45:39,860

Was there a specific
reason why she

681

00:45:39,860 --> 00:45:42,020

went to a non-Jewish school?

682

00:45:42,020 --> 00:45:47,530

683

00:45:47,530 --> 00:45:48,740

I'll explain it.

684

00:45:48,740 --> 00:45:51,560

685

00:45:51,560 --> 00:45:54,485

Well, Belgium speaks
French and Flemish.

686

00:45:54,485 --> 00:46:00,290

687

00:46:00,290 --> 00:46:06,600

Antwerp was predominantly
a Flemish-speaking city,

688

00:46:06,600 --> 00:46:09,110

but the school that
I went to-- and I

689

00:46:09,110 --> 00:46:11,090

think the Jews
liked French better,

690

00:46:11,090 --> 00:46:14,520

so it was the more
favored language.

691

00:46:14,520 --> 00:46:18,350

But I think the school had to
have a certain number of people

692

00:46:18,350 --> 00:46:20,801

in the Flemish classes.

693

00:46:20,801 --> 00:46:23,070

They had to have a quota.

694

00:46:23,070 --> 00:46:26,750

And I was put in
a Flemish class,

695

00:46:26,750 --> 00:46:31,070

so all my studies
were in Flemish.

696

00:46:31,070 --> 00:46:37,790

And then we had French as an
elective, the Flemish classes.

697

00:46:37,790 --> 00:46:42,230

And then the French classes
had Flemish as an elective.

698

00:46:42,230 --> 00:46:44,300

But the language
in the school that

699

00:46:44,300 --> 00:46:46,760

was spoken amongst the
students-- this school--

700

00:46:46,760 --> 00:46:47,390

was French.

701

00:46:47,390 --> 00:46:52,880

702
00:46:52,880 --> 00:46:55,370
So I spoke French
more than Flemish,

703
00:46:55,370 --> 00:46:58,340
although I learned
Flemish really well.

704
00:46:58,340 --> 00:47:03,230
But when my sister
started to go to school,

705
00:47:03,230 --> 00:47:07,040
my parents wanted her to
be in the French classes.

706
00:47:07,040 --> 00:47:10,460
And the logic of the
school administration

707
00:47:10,460 --> 00:47:12,560
was that because I was already--

708
00:47:12,560 --> 00:47:14,840
her sister was in
a Flemish class,

709
00:47:14,840 --> 00:47:17,030
they wanted to put my
sister in a Flemish class.

710
00:47:17,030 --> 00:47:19,460
My parents became
very unhappy about it,

711
00:47:19,460 --> 00:47:22,850
took her out, and
put her in a school

712
00:47:22,850 --> 00:47:24,890
that was predominantly French.

713
00:47:24,890 --> 00:47:27,230
[LAUGHS] So that was the story.

714
00:47:27,230 --> 00:47:30,930

715
00:47:30,930 --> 00:47:33,020
And the Flemish
classes in my school

716
00:47:33,020 --> 00:47:39,230
were a lot smaller than
the French classes.

717
00:47:39,230 --> 00:47:41,510
But anyway, I did end up
learning to speak French

718
00:47:41,510 --> 00:47:43,100
because everybody spoke French.

719
00:47:43,100 --> 00:47:49,100
And French was spoken
in the Zionist movement,

720
00:47:49,100 --> 00:47:51,940
so I did get to
learn French, too.

721
00:47:51,940 --> 00:47:55,632

722
00:47:55,632 --> 00:47:57,625
How long were you in
the Zionist group?

723
00:47:57,625 --> 00:47:59,750
How many years were you in it?

724
00:47:59,750 --> 00:48:06,640
I was there from when I was

10 till I left, which was--

725

00:48:06,640 --> 00:48:08,170

well, I was almost 13.

726

00:48:08,170 --> 00:48:11,830

I was 12, almost 13.

727

00:48:11,830 --> 00:48:16,255

And I was in it for that

whole period of time.

728

00:48:16,255 --> 00:48:18,220

Were you bat mitzvahed?

729

00:48:18,220 --> 00:48:19,960

No, I wasn't bat mitzvahed.

730

00:48:19,960 --> 00:48:21,640

Nobody was.

731

00:48:21,640 --> 00:48:23,650

Well, I mean, at that time.

732

00:48:23,650 --> 00:48:25,450

And in Europe, girls

didn't do that.

733

00:48:25,450 --> 00:48:28,390

734

00:48:28,390 --> 00:48:33,610

Were there any discussions

at home regarding

735

00:48:33,610 --> 00:48:37,150

leaving Belgium and going

to America or Israel?

736

00:48:37,150 --> 00:48:40,742

Or were your parents

set on going to America?

737
00:48:40,742 --> 00:48:43,250

738
00:48:43,250 --> 00:48:45,530
Early on, I think
there was discussion

739
00:48:45,530 --> 00:48:52,790
about going to Israel,
because all my four

740
00:48:52,790 --> 00:48:56,510
grandparents were in Israel.

741
00:48:56,510 --> 00:49:00,200
All four of my grandparents
were in Israel,

742
00:49:00,200 --> 00:49:07,925
and two of my mother's sisters
and one of my father's sisters.

743
00:49:07,925 --> 00:49:12,300

744
00:49:12,300 --> 00:49:14,060
So I think there was
a lot of discussion

745
00:49:14,060 --> 00:49:15,035
about going to Israel.

746
00:49:15,035 --> 00:49:19,310

747
00:49:19,310 --> 00:49:21,200
And I think what
I seem to remember

748
00:49:21,200 --> 00:49:26,150
hearing was that life in Israel

was very difficult, that people

749

00:49:26,150 --> 00:49:28,610

worked very hard.

750

00:49:28,610 --> 00:49:30,650

And we were always
sending little packages

751

00:49:30,650 --> 00:49:39,080

to my grandparents,
oranges and food, coffee.

752

00:49:39,080 --> 00:49:41,090

That's what I remember
my parents always doing,

753

00:49:41,090 --> 00:49:43,910

is making up little packages.

754

00:49:43,910 --> 00:49:45,950

And I know really well
how to make packages,

755

00:49:45,950 --> 00:49:48,545

because I learned early
how to make packages.

756

00:49:48,545 --> 00:49:52,040

757

00:49:52,040 --> 00:49:55,610

So I think my parents
decided at some point that--

758

00:49:55,610 --> 00:49:58,970

and they'd heard America was--

759

00:49:58,970 --> 00:50:00,310

there were a lot of jobs.

760

00:50:00,310 --> 00:50:02,870

Life was easier.

761
00:50:02,870 --> 00:50:05,240
And California,
my gosh, that was

762
00:50:05,240 --> 00:50:07,310
like the ultimate decadence.

763
00:50:07,310 --> 00:50:12,440

764
00:50:12,440 --> 00:50:13,520
And San Francisco.

765
00:50:13,520 --> 00:50:18,350

766
00:50:18,350 --> 00:50:21,110
The streets in America
were lined with gold.

767
00:50:21,110 --> 00:50:22,670
Literally, in
California, of course,

768
00:50:22,670 --> 00:50:24,460
there was gold all
over the place.

769
00:50:24,460 --> 00:50:29,060
So when my parents
got sponsors here,

770
00:50:29,060 --> 00:50:30,680
this is where they
decided to come.

771
00:50:30,680 --> 00:50:35,550

772
00:50:35,550 --> 00:50:41,790

So there didn't seem to be a
lot of question about that,

773
00:50:41,790 --> 00:50:43,710
about coming here.

774
00:50:43,710 --> 00:50:48,660
Were there any discussions
within your extended family

775
00:50:48,660 --> 00:50:50,580
regarding the
Holocaust or the war,

776
00:50:50,580 --> 00:50:54,230
or any of their experiences?

777
00:50:54,230 --> 00:50:55,930
I know you mentioned
there really

778
00:50:55,930 --> 00:50:56,990
wasn't much talk at home.

779
00:50:56,990 --> 00:51:03,010

780
00:51:03,010 --> 00:51:04,030
I don't remember.

781
00:51:04,030 --> 00:51:08,155
I think the whole family, after
the war, was scattered already.

782
00:51:08,155 --> 00:51:11,980

783
00:51:11,980 --> 00:51:16,930
I think my grandparents must
have been in Antwerp briefly

784
00:51:16,930 --> 00:51:22,660

because I have pictures
of them and me in Antwerp.

785
00:51:22,660 --> 00:51:25,060
But I don't remember.

786
00:51:25,060 --> 00:51:26,180
Well, no that's not true.

787
00:51:26,180 --> 00:51:31,690
I remember visiting my father's
grandparents a couple of times.

788
00:51:31,690 --> 00:51:35,290

789
00:51:35,290 --> 00:51:37,010
But, no, there
was no discussion.

790
00:51:37,010 --> 00:51:39,460
And if there was, I
didn't hear about it.

791
00:51:39,460 --> 00:51:46,630

792
00:51:46,630 --> 00:51:51,680
One of my mother's sisters
was living in Antwerp also.

793
00:51:51,680 --> 00:51:53,270
She was married and
had two children.

794
00:51:53,270 --> 00:51:57,030

795
00:51:57,030 --> 00:52:02,280
But I didn't hear much
talk about the war.

796

00:52:02,280 --> 00:52:09,480

797

00:52:09,480 --> 00:52:10,350

I can't remember.

798

00:52:10,350 --> 00:52:14,520

I'm not sure who left first,
but this other sister,

799

00:52:14,520 --> 00:52:16,905

aunt of mine, left for Canada.

800

00:52:16,905 --> 00:52:19,480

801

00:52:19,480 --> 00:52:22,770

So there must have been
discussion about leaving,

802

00:52:22,770 --> 00:52:25,860

and where to go, and what to do.

803

00:52:25,860 --> 00:52:30,870

But clearly they didn't
want to stay in Europe.

804

00:52:30,870 --> 00:52:35,700

What were your thoughts as
a 10, 11, 12-year-old girl,

805

00:52:35,700 --> 00:52:38,220

your thoughts in regard
to some of the talk

806

00:52:38,220 --> 00:52:40,350

you might have
heard about the war?

807

00:52:40,350 --> 00:52:43,740

I know you mentioned
this girl in camp.

808

00:52:43,740 --> 00:52:49,440

Your personal feelings about
what was going on and about

809

00:52:49,440 --> 00:52:53,320

the move, both of your
parents' move to America?

810

00:52:53,320 --> 00:52:55,030

Did you have any
rebellious feelings,

811

00:52:55,030 --> 00:52:57,670

that you were going
to go to Israel alone?

812

00:52:57,670 --> 00:52:59,860

[LAUGHS] I think I did.

813

00:52:59,860 --> 00:53:01,310

I think I did have that.

814

00:53:01,310 --> 00:53:07,390

815

00:53:07,390 --> 00:53:09,280

I don't think, at
that time in my life,

816

00:53:09,280 --> 00:53:13,150

I thought I had
much choice about--

817

00:53:13,150 --> 00:53:18,760

and I don't think I was the
kind of child to be rebellious,

818

00:53:18,760 --> 00:53:21,070

or to make a decision
for myself and say,

819

00:53:21,070 --> 00:53:22,957

I'm not going to go to America.

820

00:53:22,957 --> 00:53:24,040

I'm going to go to Israel.

821

00:53:24,040 --> 00:53:30,100

822

00:53:30,100 --> 00:53:33,610

I think I was a very typical
obedient kind of child.

823

00:53:33,610 --> 00:53:38,905

But I think I remember wishing
that they were going to Israel.

824

00:53:38,905 --> 00:53:41,860

825

00:53:41,860 --> 00:53:45,610

But as far as leaving
Belgium, I remember

826

00:53:45,610 --> 00:53:47,200

being very happy
that we were leaving.

827

00:53:47,200 --> 00:53:48,490

I didn't want to stay there.

828

00:53:48,490 --> 00:53:55,000

I felt very claustrophobic.

829

00:53:55,000 --> 00:53:56,920

I didn't feel happy in my life.

830

00:53:56,920 --> 00:53:59,950

I didn't feel happy at school.

831

00:53:59,950 --> 00:54:02,770

I didn't even feel happy
in the Zionist movement,

832
00:54:02,770 --> 00:54:05,590
in the group that I was in,
although I liked it a lot

833
00:54:05,590 --> 00:54:08,410
and I really
enjoyed going there.

834
00:54:08,410 --> 00:54:09,325
I wasn't happy.

835
00:54:09,325 --> 00:54:13,720

836
00:54:13,720 --> 00:54:15,150
I was excited about leaving.

837
00:54:15,150 --> 00:54:19,560
I was excited about the change,
about going to a new place,

838
00:54:19,560 --> 00:54:20,610
about escaping.

839
00:54:20,610 --> 00:54:24,390
It felt like just getting
away from this place.

840
00:54:24,390 --> 00:54:28,200
I hated being there.

841
00:54:28,200 --> 00:54:29,610
I had to walk to school.

842
00:54:29,610 --> 00:54:32,430
I had to walk a long ways
from my house to school,

843
00:54:32,430 --> 00:54:34,070
and I hated the walk.

844

00:54:34,070 --> 00:54:37,330

845

00:54:37,330 --> 00:54:40,390

So I was very happy
about leaving.

846

00:54:40,390 --> 00:54:43,531

I was very, very happy to leave.

847

00:54:43,531 --> 00:54:45,430

And you were 13?

848

00:54:45,430 --> 00:54:49,840

I was 13 when we came
here to San Francisco.

849

00:54:49,840 --> 00:54:55,000

Can you describe those last
months leading up to the move?

850

00:54:55,000 --> 00:54:56,290

Did your parents--

851

00:54:56,290 --> 00:54:58,840

I guess there was a waiting
process for the papers.

852

00:54:58,840 --> 00:55:01,413

853

00:55:01,413 --> 00:55:04,083

Did they discuss it
with you, that they

854

00:55:04,083 --> 00:55:05,250

were waiting for the papers?

855

00:55:05,250 --> 00:55:07,720

Or was there a lot of
discussion at the time?

856

00:55:07,720 --> 00:55:09,760

There was discussion,
because we had

857

00:55:09,760 --> 00:55:15,400

to go downtown to some official
building, government building,

858

00:55:15,400 --> 00:55:20,950

and take a lot of pictures
for our passports,

859

00:55:20,950 --> 00:55:26,642

and fingerprints, and
a lot of paperwork.

860

00:55:26,642 --> 00:55:27,850

There was a lot of paperwork.

861

00:55:27,850 --> 00:55:34,640

So there were a lot of trips
to this office building.

862

00:55:34,640 --> 00:55:40,060

And there was also packing,
a lot of packing of things.

863

00:55:40,060 --> 00:55:46,870

We didn't take a lot, but
we did take some things.

864

00:55:46,870 --> 00:55:49,045

So I do remember that.

865

00:55:49,045 --> 00:55:51,616

866

00:55:51,616 --> 00:55:53,690

Those last few days,
how were you feeling?

867

00:55:53,690 --> 00:55:54,740

It was pretty exciting.

868

00:55:54,740 --> 00:55:56,045

I was pretty excited.

869

00:55:56,045 --> 00:55:56,920

I mean, I don't know.

870

00:55:56,920 --> 00:55:59,800

I think maybe it was just a
typical kid's reaction to going

871

00:55:59,800 --> 00:56:04,540

to a new place and big change.

872

00:56:04,540 --> 00:56:07,870

So I was pretty happy about it.

873

00:56:07,870 --> 00:56:12,630

When your friends both in
school and in your Zionist group

874

00:56:12,630 --> 00:56:15,870

found out that you were leaving,
did their treatment of you

875

00:56:15,870 --> 00:56:16,530

change?

876

00:56:16,530 --> 00:56:21,346

Were they resentful or
jealous, or happy for you?

877

00:56:21,346 --> 00:56:23,910

Was that ever an issue?

878

00:56:23,910 --> 00:56:25,470

They were happy.

879

00:56:25,470 --> 00:56:26,685

I think they were happy.

880

00:56:26,685 --> 00:56:28,185

And they gave me a
going away party.

881

00:56:28,185 --> 00:56:31,740

882

00:56:31,740 --> 00:56:34,740

I took people's addresses.

883

00:56:34,740 --> 00:56:35,805

We took pictures.

884

00:56:35,805 --> 00:56:40,550

885

00:56:40,550 --> 00:56:47,282

There was a lot of
well-wishing and a lot of wish

886

00:56:47,282 --> 00:56:48,740

I was going with
you kind of stuff.

887

00:56:48,740 --> 00:56:51,980

888

00:56:51,980 --> 00:56:56,750

Maybe a little bit of envy,
but also a little judgment

889

00:56:56,750 --> 00:56:59,000

about the choice of
going to the United

890

00:56:59,000 --> 00:57:01,490

States versus going to Israel.

891

00:57:01,490 --> 00:57:06,680

But on the whole, it
was a pretty happy time.

892

00:57:06,680 --> 00:57:11,270

And I remember there was
another boy in my class.

893

00:57:11,270 --> 00:57:12,650

His name was Charlie.

894

00:57:12,650 --> 00:57:15,410

895

00:57:15,410 --> 00:57:17,250

Gosh, I forget his name.

896

00:57:17,250 --> 00:57:19,520

Anyway, Charlie.

897

00:57:19,520 --> 00:57:20,480

I can't think of it.

898

00:57:20,480 --> 00:57:22,040

And he was going to New York.

899

00:57:22,040 --> 00:57:25,070

900

00:57:25,070 --> 00:57:29,720

So I always hoped I'd
run into him somewhere.

901

00:57:29,720 --> 00:57:30,920

Charlie Eichhorn.

902

00:57:30,920 --> 00:57:31,760

That was his name.

903

00:57:31,760 --> 00:57:34,640

904

00:57:34,640 --> 00:57:36,290

We shared desks.

905

00:57:36,290 --> 00:57:40,580

People sat in twos
at a desk, so.

906

00:57:40,580 --> 00:57:42,020

Did you ever find him?

907

00:57:42,020 --> 00:57:43,310

No, I didn't.

908

00:57:43,310 --> 00:57:44,000

I didn't.

909

00:57:44,000 --> 00:57:46,790

910

00:57:46,790 --> 00:57:49,610

Can you describe as
much as you remember

911

00:57:49,610 --> 00:57:53,990

of your journey, the boat
trip from Antwerp to New York?

912

00:57:53,990 --> 00:57:55,290

I was seasick the whole time.

913

00:57:55,290 --> 00:57:57,725

[LAUGHS] I really was.

914

00:57:57,725 --> 00:58:01,070

915

00:58:01,070 --> 00:58:02,510

We took the boat in Holland.

916

00:58:02,510 --> 00:58:07,790

917

00:58:07,790 --> 00:58:13,340

I believe we took a train

to Holland, to Rotterdam,

918
00:58:13,340 --> 00:58:18,200
and then came to New York.

919
00:58:18,200 --> 00:58:19,340
The boat came to New York.

920
00:58:19,340 --> 00:58:22,910

921
00:58:22,910 --> 00:58:28,070
I think we went by England,
and I remember seeing England

922
00:58:28,070 --> 00:58:29,930
at night, the lights.

923
00:58:29,930 --> 00:58:32,580
And it was very beautiful.

924
00:58:32,580 --> 00:58:34,310
And then arriving in New York.

925
00:58:34,310 --> 00:58:36,440
And the boat ride--
like I said, I really

926
00:58:36,440 --> 00:58:38,510
was seasick the whole time.

927
00:58:38,510 --> 00:58:42,200
I don't think I ate for 10 days.

928
00:58:42,200 --> 00:58:45,020
They kept all the food
in a lot of vinegar,

929
00:58:45,020 --> 00:58:47,140
and I was throwing
up the whole time.

930

00:58:47,140 --> 00:58:57,880

931

00:58:57,880 --> 00:59:02,920

And it was in October, so
the ocean was a little rough.

932

00:59:02,920 --> 00:59:06,515

It was already kind
of rough ocean.

933

00:59:06,515 --> 00:59:09,940

934

00:59:09,940 --> 00:59:12,130

But it was a normal
passenger boat.

935

00:59:12,130 --> 00:59:18,040

It wasn't a refugee boat
or anything by 1955.

936

00:59:18,040 --> 00:59:20,060

It was pretty comfortable
and everything.

937

00:59:20,060 --> 00:59:21,580

We had our own little room.

938

00:59:21,580 --> 00:59:24,160

939

00:59:24,160 --> 00:59:31,490

And then arriving in
New York, I remember

940

00:59:31,490 --> 00:59:33,860

having to wait a long
time for our luggage.

941

00:59:33,860 --> 00:59:39,740

And relatives came

to pick us up.

942

00:59:39,740 --> 00:59:42,140

They took us to their house.

943

00:59:42,140 --> 00:59:46,310

And we stayed for with
them for about a day.

944

00:59:46,310 --> 00:59:51,410

I think we only stayed in
New York for three days,

945

00:59:51,410 --> 00:59:55,460

and then we visited
with other relatives.

946

00:59:55,460 --> 01:00:01,910

947

01:00:01,910 --> 01:00:04,250

The second set of
relatives I remember

948

01:00:04,250 --> 01:00:07,370

treated us with a
lot of compassion.

949

01:00:07,370 --> 01:00:13,400

I remember them being
very sympathetic to us.

950

01:00:13,400 --> 01:00:16,580

They were very sweet and
very nice, and loving,

951

01:00:16,580 --> 01:00:20,340

and very kind, and
wanted us to stay.

952

01:00:20,340 --> 01:00:21,770

They lived in Brooklyn.

953

01:00:21,770 --> 01:00:23,040

And they wanted us to stay.

954

01:00:23,040 --> 01:00:28,877

But the other relatives
weren't quite as pleasant.

955

01:00:28,877 --> 01:00:29,710

There was something.

956

01:00:29,710 --> 01:00:30,760

I don't know.

957

01:00:30,760 --> 01:00:34,720

But my parents decided to
come to San Francisco, so.

958

01:00:34,720 --> 01:00:38,212

959

01:00:38,212 --> 01:00:40,840

When you docked in the New
York harbor on the way,

960

01:00:40,840 --> 01:00:43,204

did you pass the
Statue of Liberty?

961

01:00:43,204 --> 01:00:44,785

No, I slept through it.

962

01:00:44,785 --> 01:00:46,160

It was very early
in the morning.

963

01:00:46,160 --> 01:00:47,680

I'm really pissed about that.

964

01:00:47,680 --> 01:00:51,580

I remember it was like
5:00 in the morning.

965

01:00:51,580 --> 01:00:53,640

I was looking
forward to seeing it

966

01:00:53,640 --> 01:00:55,660

and very excited that
I was going to see it.

967

01:00:55,660 --> 01:00:59,350

968

01:00:59,350 --> 01:01:01,770

And I was very upset that
I didn't get to see it.

969

01:01:01,770 --> 01:01:05,240

I missed it by
just a little bit.

970

01:01:05,240 --> 01:01:05,740

Right.

971

01:01:05,740 --> 01:01:06,420

That's right.

972

01:01:06,420 --> 01:01:08,650

[INAUDIBLE] memories
[INAUDIBLE]..

973

01:01:08,650 --> 01:01:10,370

Yeah, you do remember that.

974

01:01:10,370 --> 01:01:13,180

975

01:01:13,180 --> 01:01:15,746

When you did finally
dock in the harbor,

976

01:01:15,746 --> 01:01:20,500

do you remember any
of your feelings

977
01:01:20,500 --> 01:01:23,320
about being in New York
or being in America?

978
01:01:23,320 --> 01:01:25,180
I think I remember the bigness.

979
01:01:25,180 --> 01:01:29,200
Everything was exaggerated.

980
01:01:29,200 --> 01:01:39,040
Humongous buildings, streets
that seemed to me as big as--

981
01:01:39,040 --> 01:01:46,630
inconceivably incredible
streets, even crossing them.

982
01:01:46,630 --> 01:01:48,720
Very, very big.

983
01:01:48,720 --> 01:01:52,850
A little overwhelming, yeah.

984
01:01:52,850 --> 01:01:56,080
And so you were in New York
for three days with relatives.

985
01:01:56,080 --> 01:01:57,550
Did you just visit relatives?

986
01:01:57,550 --> 01:02:00,520
Did you go out?

987
01:02:00,520 --> 01:02:03,040
No, we didn't do any
of that, I don't think.

988
01:02:03,040 --> 01:02:05,030
I don't remember doing that.

989

01:02:05,030 --> 01:02:08,215

No, we didn't.

990

01:02:08,215 --> 01:02:11,089

I meant to ask you this
earlier [INAUDIBLE]..

991

01:02:11,089 --> 01:02:13,210

What are your
parents' occupations?

992

01:02:13,210 --> 01:02:16,830

What did they do in Belgium?

993

01:02:16,830 --> 01:02:19,680

My father was, in Belgium--

994

01:02:19,680 --> 01:02:22,920

well, Antwerp is a
big diamond center.

995

01:02:22,920 --> 01:02:25,230

And he worked in the
diamond industry.

996

01:02:25,230 --> 01:02:29,490

He was a diamond cutter.

997

01:02:29,490 --> 01:02:31,290

And that's what he did.

998

01:02:31,290 --> 01:02:33,240

He worked in a factory.

999

01:02:33,240 --> 01:02:37,620

But I guess while he
was in Switzerland--

1000

01:02:37,620 --> 01:02:39,900

or I'm not sure if it
was while he was in--

1001

01:02:39,900 --> 01:02:43,440

or before the war, he
studied watchmaking.

1002

01:02:43,440 --> 01:02:47,700

So he was a watchmaker
by profession.

1003

01:02:47,700 --> 01:02:49,170

And your mom?

1004

01:02:49,170 --> 01:02:51,510

She was a housekeeper.

1005

01:02:51,510 --> 01:02:54,710

I mean she was a house person.

1006

01:02:54,710 --> 01:02:56,250

[LAUGHS] Housewife.

1007

01:02:56,250 --> 01:02:57,270

That's the word.

1008

01:02:57,270 --> 01:02:58,710

She was a housewife.

1009

01:02:58,710 --> 01:03:02,130

1010

01:03:02,130 --> 01:03:05,140

You said you took the
train to San Francisco?

1011

01:03:05,140 --> 01:03:05,640

Right.

1012

01:03:05,640 --> 01:03:08,550

We took the train from
New York to Oakland.

1013

01:03:08,550 --> 01:03:11,400

And we were picked
up in Oakland.

1014
01:03:11,400 --> 01:03:12,150
How was that ride?

1015
01:03:12,150 --> 01:03:13,770
Do you remember that?

1016
01:03:13,770 --> 01:03:15,960
I do remember that.

1017
01:03:15,960 --> 01:03:21,600
I remember I thought we
were going to see Indians.

1018
01:03:21,600 --> 01:03:22,350
I was sure.

1019
01:03:22,350 --> 01:03:23,340
I don't know why.

1020
01:03:23,340 --> 01:03:32,442
I'd read a lot of comic
books and seen movies.

1021
01:03:32,442 --> 01:03:34,710
And I was absolutely
sure that when

1022
01:03:34,710 --> 01:03:38,820
we got to New
Mexico or Arizona--

1023
01:03:38,820 --> 01:03:40,470
I'm not sure exactly where--

1024
01:03:40,470 --> 01:03:43,270
that everything was
going to change,

1025
01:03:43,270 --> 01:03:49,450

that all the passengers were
going to have to get off

1026
01:03:49,450 --> 01:03:50,050
or something.

1027
01:03:50,050 --> 01:03:52,330
Or that the conductor
was going to get off,

1028
01:03:52,330 --> 01:03:54,550
that it was going to be
taken over by Indians.

1029
01:03:54,550 --> 01:03:57,250
And it never happened.

1030
01:03:57,250 --> 01:04:00,220

1031
01:04:00,220 --> 01:04:02,860
And I kept looking out
the window to see Indians.

1032
01:04:02,860 --> 01:04:09,240
And I was waiting for
the Indians to take over.

1033
01:04:09,240 --> 01:04:13,460

1034
01:04:13,460 --> 01:04:16,520
Other than that,
it was just kind

1035
01:04:16,520 --> 01:04:22,100
of a long, long ride, three days
and two nights or something.

1036
01:04:22,100 --> 01:04:26,630

1037

01:04:26,630 --> 01:04:29,850
Where in San Francisco did
your relatives take you?

1038
01:04:29,850 --> 01:04:30,740
Did you stay--

1039
01:04:30,740 --> 01:04:33,050
We didn't have relatives
in San Francisco.

1040
01:04:33,050 --> 01:04:35,720
We had sponsors.

1041
01:04:35,720 --> 01:04:38,570
And they're the ones who
picked us up in Oakland

1042
01:04:38,570 --> 01:04:41,670
and drove us to San Francisco.

1043
01:04:41,670 --> 01:04:47,240
And it was one of the first
times I'd been in a car,

1044
01:04:47,240 --> 01:04:50,090
so it was kind of
a big deal for me.

1045
01:04:50,090 --> 01:04:52,820

1046
01:04:52,820 --> 01:04:59,090
They took us to a
hotel on Venice Avenue.

1047
01:04:59,090 --> 01:05:03,850
And there was an earthquake
that night, if you will.

1048
01:05:03,850 --> 01:05:04,490
[BOTH TALKING]

1049

01:05:04,490 --> 01:05:04,990

Yeah.

1050

01:05:04,990 --> 01:05:08,330

1051

01:05:08,330 --> 01:05:13,440

My dad ran outside in his
pajamas to see what's going on.

1052

01:05:13,440 --> 01:05:18,860

It wasn't a big one, but it
was definitely an earthquake.

1053

01:05:18,860 --> 01:05:20,460

Did they have second thoughts?

1054

01:05:20,460 --> 01:05:21,425

[LAUGHS] Yes.

1055

01:05:21,425 --> 01:05:27,350

1056

01:05:27,350 --> 01:05:29,480

I think we only stayed
there one or two nights,

1057

01:05:29,480 --> 01:05:33,950

and then our sponsors found us--

1058

01:05:33,950 --> 01:05:35,390

and I should tell
you their name.

1059

01:05:35,390 --> 01:05:35,990

Darn it.

1060

01:05:35,990 --> 01:05:40,070

1061

01:05:40,070 --> 01:05:41,070

Well, if I think of it.

1062

01:05:41,070 --> 01:05:42,490

I'll tell you.

1063

01:05:42,490 --> 01:05:42,990

OK.

1064

01:05:42,990 --> 01:05:46,810

1065

01:05:46,810 --> 01:05:52,690

They found us an apartment
on Ellis near Venice.

1066

01:05:52,690 --> 01:05:59,200

And we stayed there for maybe a
month or so, maybe two months.

1067

01:05:59,200 --> 01:06:02,530

1068

01:06:02,530 --> 01:06:03,750

And it had a refrigerator.

1069

01:06:03,750 --> 01:06:05,820

And we had not
had a refrigerator

1070

01:06:05,820 --> 01:06:08,070

before that in Belgium.

1071

01:06:08,070 --> 01:06:14,980

1072

01:06:14,980 --> 01:06:20,800

And then I had problems
because I was still feeling--

1073

01:06:20,800 --> 01:06:27,800

well, I was still religious
from my Zionist movement,

1074
01:06:27,800 --> 01:06:29,800
but my parents
were not religious.

1075
01:06:29,800 --> 01:06:33,160
So we had conflict over that.

1076
01:06:33,160 --> 01:06:37,510
I didn't want to use
the refrigerator.

1077
01:06:37,510 --> 01:06:42,550
But after a few years, I
just stopped being religious.

1078
01:06:42,550 --> 01:06:46,090

1079
01:06:46,090 --> 01:06:48,510
I don't know what you want me
to talk about at this point.

1080
01:06:48,510 --> 01:06:56,560

1081
01:06:56,560 --> 01:06:59,020
So how long did
you live in Ellis?

1082
01:06:59,020 --> 01:07:00,780
You said about a month?

1083
01:07:00,780 --> 01:07:01,280
Probably.

1084
01:07:01,280 --> 01:07:02,160
I think two months.

1085
01:07:02,160 --> 01:07:05,440

1086

01:07:05,440 --> 01:07:09,510

Was the sponsor,
was it a family?

1087

01:07:09,510 --> 01:07:10,862

It was a family.

1088

01:07:10,862 --> 01:07:11,820

Was it a Jewish family?

1089

01:07:11,820 --> 01:07:12,487

A Jewish family.

1090

01:07:12,487 --> 01:07:16,905

1091

01:07:16,905 --> 01:07:24,120

They tried to help my
dad find a job, and then

1092

01:07:24,120 --> 01:07:29,010

a regular apartment, and also to
put my sister and I in schools,

1093

01:07:29,010 --> 01:07:34,080

and to get us to learn English,
to go to learn English.

1094

01:07:34,080 --> 01:07:39,580

Although I had already had one
year of English in Belgium,

1095

01:07:39,580 --> 01:07:43,530

so I spoke some English.

1096

01:07:43,530 --> 01:07:45,180

But I was the only
one in my family

1097

01:07:45,180 --> 01:07:48,810

who spoke English, so
I was the interpreter.

1098
01:07:48,810 --> 01:07:51,000
Kind of to help
get them all out.

1099
01:07:51,000 --> 01:07:52,440
Yeah.

1100
01:07:52,440 --> 01:07:54,990
Did your father continue
working as a watchmaker?

1101
01:07:54,990 --> 01:08:03,520

1102
01:08:03,520 --> 01:08:04,540
No, he didn't.

1103
01:08:04,540 --> 01:08:09,220
He got a job working
for a company

1104
01:08:09,220 --> 01:08:14,020
called Victor Equipment,
actually probably somewhere

1105
01:08:14,020 --> 01:08:16,230
around here, Brannan
or somewhere downtown.

1106
01:08:16,230 --> 01:08:19,180

1107
01:08:19,180 --> 01:08:23,319
And they made fine
mechanical equipment,

1108
01:08:23,319 --> 01:08:27,550
some kind of very fine
things, because he was used

1109
01:08:27,550 --> 01:08:29,400

to working with small things.

1110
01:08:29,400 --> 01:08:34,390

1111
01:08:34,390 --> 01:08:38,319
I think he looked for
work as a watchmaker,

1112
01:08:38,319 --> 01:08:41,740
but I don't think he found
anything that he liked.

1113
01:08:41,740 --> 01:08:43,390
I think he was
offered some jobs,

1114
01:08:43,390 --> 01:08:47,050
but I don't know why
he didn't go into that.

1115
01:08:47,050 --> 01:08:50,140
But he always worked
on watches at home.

1116
01:08:50,140 --> 01:08:54,460
He had brought from
Europe some tools.

1117
01:08:54,460 --> 01:08:55,720
I still have those tools.

1118
01:08:55,720 --> 01:08:59,109

1119
01:08:59,109 --> 01:09:02,859
So he fixed everybody's
watches, all the people at work,

1120
01:09:02,859 --> 01:09:04,992
and all our friends
and neighbors.

1121

01:09:04,992 --> 01:09:06,534

He was always at
home fixing watches.

1122

01:09:06,534 --> 01:09:14,319

1123

01:09:14,319 --> 01:09:18,970

And my mother did get a job
when she came to the States,

1124

01:09:18,970 --> 01:09:22,029

although she never
worked in Europe.

1125

01:09:22,029 --> 01:09:24,640

She worked as a
housekeeper briefly.

1126

01:09:24,640 --> 01:09:30,939

And then later, she got
a job in a print shop.

1127

01:09:30,939 --> 01:09:36,069

And then she worked for the
telephone company as a cashier.

1128

01:09:36,069 --> 01:09:42,220

1129

01:09:42,220 --> 01:09:44,560

How easy was it for
you and your family

1130

01:09:44,560 --> 01:09:48,819

to acclimate to San
Francisco, to America--

1131

01:09:48,819 --> 01:09:52,850

new language, culture, people?

1132

01:09:52,850 --> 01:09:54,890

Well, let's see.

1133
01:09:54,890 --> 01:09:57,800
I'll talk about
my parents first.

1134
01:09:57,800 --> 01:10:04,664

1135
01:10:04,664 --> 01:10:08,840
I think my parents
were homesick a lot,

1136
01:10:08,840 --> 01:10:10,340
although it wasn't so great.

1137
01:10:10,340 --> 01:10:12,320
But they still missed a lot of--

1138
01:10:12,320 --> 01:10:13,800
and I think, as
the years went by,

1139
01:10:13,800 --> 01:10:15,410
they seemed to miss it more.

1140
01:10:15,410 --> 01:10:18,080
You know how you
kind of do that.

1141
01:10:18,080 --> 01:10:24,080
But they found a lot of
people in San Francisco

1142
01:10:24,080 --> 01:10:27,990
who had gone through
the Holocaust in Europe.

1143
01:10:27,990 --> 01:10:30,365
And those became their friends.

1144
01:10:30,365 --> 01:10:36,420

1145
01:10:36,420 --> 01:10:40,260
In Belgium, I didn't see my
parents having any friends.

1146
01:10:40,260 --> 01:10:43,020
But once we came
here, suddenly they

1147
01:10:43,020 --> 01:10:45,510
had a large group of friends.

1148
01:10:45,510 --> 01:10:49,680
And actually it was very joyful.

1149
01:10:49,680 --> 01:10:52,290
They were always partying, going
over to each other's houses

1150
01:10:52,290 --> 01:10:54,540
and having dinners.

1151
01:10:54,540 --> 01:10:55,710
There were lots of people.

1152
01:10:55,710 --> 01:10:58,380
I mean, there would
be 20, 25, 30 people.

1153
01:10:58,380 --> 01:11:01,650

1154
01:11:01,650 --> 01:11:05,850
They got together regularly,
all the time, all the time.

1155
01:11:05,850 --> 01:11:08,940
Big, huge dinners, tons of food.

1156
01:11:08,940 --> 01:11:10,260
And everybody got fat.

1157
01:11:10,260 --> 01:11:12,750
Everybody just
immediately got fat.

1158
01:11:12,750 --> 01:11:16,140
Everybody was heavy, because
we just ate too much.

1159
01:11:16,140 --> 01:11:18,810

1160
01:11:18,810 --> 01:11:23,130
And I got heavy because
I was eating Mars candy

1161
01:11:23,130 --> 01:11:24,330
bars all the time.

1162
01:11:24,330 --> 01:11:26,070
After school I always--

1163
01:11:26,070 --> 01:11:27,240
it was just terrible.

1164
01:11:27,240 --> 01:11:29,400
I got really heavy.

1165
01:11:29,400 --> 01:11:31,740
It's very embarrassing
when I look at my pictures

1166
01:11:31,740 --> 01:11:32,580
from that time.

1167
01:11:32,580 --> 01:11:39,120

1168
01:11:39,120 --> 01:11:43,578
So I think it was a happy
time for my parents.

1169

01:11:43,578 --> 01:11:46,865

And they call each other
[YIDDISH],, the green ones,

1170

01:11:46,865 --> 01:11:47,865

because they were green.

1171

01:11:47,865 --> 01:11:57,000

1172

01:11:57,000 --> 01:12:00,150

My parents learned
English pretty good.

1173

01:12:00,150 --> 01:12:06,510

They went to night school
to get their citizenship.

1174

01:12:06,510 --> 01:12:08,670

They never got great at English.

1175

01:12:08,670 --> 01:12:11,880

My father a little better
than my mother maybe,

1176

01:12:11,880 --> 01:12:16,110

but enough to get by.

1177

01:12:16,110 --> 01:12:21,720

They both worked, so they
learned enough English.

1178

01:12:21,720 --> 01:12:23,940

But when they got together
with their friends,

1179

01:12:23,940 --> 01:12:29,340

they spoke Yiddish, [INAUDIBLE],,
English, and a little Polish,

1180

01:12:29,340 --> 01:12:30,750

and a little this-and-that.

1181
01:12:30,750 --> 01:12:36,015

1182
01:12:36,015 --> 01:12:39,990
They started to go to temple,
for social reasons more

1183
01:12:39,990 --> 01:12:40,655
than anything.

1184
01:12:40,655 --> 01:12:43,650

1185
01:12:43,650 --> 01:12:47,070
So I think it was very
good for my parents here.

1186
01:12:47,070 --> 01:12:49,230
Within five years
after they were here

1187
01:12:49,230 --> 01:12:51,540
they bought a house in Sunset.

1188
01:12:51,540 --> 01:12:55,310

1189
01:12:55,310 --> 01:12:57,320
So you could say they thrived.

1190
01:12:57,320 --> 01:12:59,000
And I think they
were pretty happy.

1191
01:12:59,000 --> 01:13:04,142

1192
01:13:04,142 --> 01:13:07,000
What about you and your sister?

1193

01:13:07,000 --> 01:13:09,250
Me and my sister.

1194
01:13:09,250 --> 01:13:11,530
I'll talk about my sister.

1195
01:13:11,530 --> 01:13:13,660
She was nine when she came here.

1196
01:13:13,660 --> 01:13:20,240
And she went to Madison
Elementary School.

1197
01:13:20,240 --> 01:13:21,430
Oh, we lived in--

1198
01:13:21,430 --> 01:13:24,195

1199
01:13:24,195 --> 01:13:25,570
I don't know if
it's still called

1200
01:13:25,570 --> 01:13:32,260
Laurel Village, at
Locust and Sacramento,

1201
01:13:32,260 --> 01:13:33,730
which was all residential.

1202
01:13:33,730 --> 01:13:35,185
Now it's completely changed.

1203
01:13:35,185 --> 01:13:39,430

1204
01:13:39,430 --> 01:13:42,430
And my sister, it seemed like
she learned English overnight.

1205
01:13:42,430 --> 01:13:48,220
It was like one day she spoke

French, and the next day--

1206
01:13:48,220 --> 01:13:50,860
which is not uncommon.

1207
01:13:50,860 --> 01:13:52,720
She just made a
transition very easily.

1208
01:13:52,720 --> 01:13:56,140

1209
01:13:56,140 --> 01:13:57,370
She just fit in right away.

1210
01:13:57,370 --> 01:14:08,460
She had friends, and she
became a typical American kid.

1211
01:14:08,460 --> 01:14:12,870
I think I had a little
more trouble than her,

1212
01:14:12,870 --> 01:14:13,890
because I was older.

1213
01:14:13,890 --> 01:14:16,560

1214
01:14:16,560 --> 01:14:20,370
And I went to Roosevelt
Junior High School, which

1215
01:14:20,370 --> 01:14:22,560
was on Arguello and Geary.

1216
01:14:22,560 --> 01:14:27,330

1217
01:14:27,330 --> 01:14:30,120
Because I didn't
speak English so well,

1218
01:14:30,120 --> 01:14:32,040
I was allowed to
sit in a classroom

1219
01:14:32,040 --> 01:14:36,420
and listened for two
years, which was wonderful,

1220
01:14:36,420 --> 01:14:38,370
because I didn't mind.

1221
01:14:38,370 --> 01:14:51,160
[LAUGHS] Although I
think I pretty much

1222
01:14:51,160 --> 01:14:54,850
had command of the language
a lot sooner than two years.

1223
01:14:54,850 --> 01:14:59,530

1224
01:14:59,530 --> 01:15:00,070
Let's see.

1225
01:15:00,070 --> 01:15:03,520
As far as friends,
I didn't feel--

1226
01:15:03,520 --> 01:15:06,820
I was very critical
of American children.

1227
01:15:06,820 --> 01:15:12,340
I just found them very
superficial and very

1228
01:15:12,340 --> 01:15:14,230
materialistic, very
concerned about

1229

01:15:14,230 --> 01:15:19,000
looks and how they were dressed,
whereas I don't remember ever

1230
01:15:19,000 --> 01:15:22,120
talking or discussing
that in Belgium.

1231
01:15:22,120 --> 01:15:25,420
I mean, they would look at
how your bobby socks were,

1232
01:15:25,420 --> 01:15:27,800
if they were crooked.

1233
01:15:27,800 --> 01:15:29,260
It didn't happen in Europe.

1234
01:15:29,260 --> 01:15:31,810

1235
01:15:31,810 --> 01:15:34,210
So I felt very alienated
from those kids.

1236
01:15:34,210 --> 01:15:40,250

1237
01:15:40,250 --> 01:15:43,070
And I looked for Jewish
kids because that's

1238
01:15:43,070 --> 01:15:44,380
what I felt comfortable with.

1239
01:15:44,380 --> 01:15:51,765

1240
01:15:51,765 --> 01:15:54,930
I joined B'nai B'rith, but
I didn't like it at all

1241

01:15:54,930 --> 01:15:57,420
because, although
it was Jewish, it

1242
01:15:57,420 --> 01:16:00,990
was just still materialistic,
just like all the other kids.

1243
01:16:00,990 --> 01:16:09,360
So I eventually found a
group, Habonim Labor Zionists.

1244
01:16:09,360 --> 01:16:11,430
And I finally felt
like I fit in.

1245
01:16:11,430 --> 01:16:19,340

1246
01:16:19,340 --> 01:16:23,280
So that was about
the late '50s now?

1247
01:16:23,280 --> 01:16:24,670
Right.

1248
01:16:24,670 --> 01:16:27,040
'57.

1249
01:16:27,040 --> 01:16:29,930
Yeah.

1250
01:16:29,930 --> 01:16:30,680
I'm curious.

1251
01:16:30,680 --> 01:16:39,650
At what point, if any, did you
think about or was discussion,

1252
01:16:39,650 --> 01:16:42,470
whether it was about
the Holocaust or about

1253

01:16:42,470 --> 01:16:45,410

what happened to
Europe, about the war?

1254

01:16:45,410 --> 01:16:49,730

Was there any point that,
all of a sudden, all of that

1255

01:16:49,730 --> 01:16:57,324

became more louder, or clearer,
or just discussed, if any?

1256

01:16:57,324 --> 01:17:00,240

1257

01:17:00,240 --> 01:17:00,740

Yeah.

1258

01:17:00,740 --> 01:17:06,150

In fact, it just happened
just a few months ago.

1259

01:17:06,150 --> 01:17:10,290

That's why I'm here,
actually, talking about this.

1260

01:17:10,290 --> 01:17:13,547

Do you just want me to start and
go on and on and talk about it?

1261

01:17:13,547 --> 01:17:14,047

Exactly.

1262

01:17:14,047 --> 01:17:16,320

I want you to tell
me everything.

1263

01:17:16,320 --> 01:17:18,030

OK.

1264

01:17:18,030 --> 01:17:19,320

I guess we have lots of time.

1265
01:17:19,320 --> 01:17:20,278
We have plenty of time.

1266
01:17:20,278 --> 01:17:21,330
Details.

1267
01:17:21,330 --> 01:17:21,830
OK.

1268
01:17:21,830 --> 01:17:28,440

1269
01:17:28,440 --> 01:17:29,385
Well, let's see.

1270
01:17:29,385 --> 01:17:33,700

1271
01:17:33,700 --> 01:17:40,010
This last December, I
started to have problems

1272
01:17:40,010 --> 01:17:41,060
between family members.

1273
01:17:41,060 --> 01:17:47,090

1274
01:17:47,090 --> 01:17:50,240
I just felt like I needed
some advice or help,

1275
01:17:50,240 --> 01:18:02,710
and I went to see a therapist
to deal with the specific issue

1276
01:18:02,710 --> 01:18:06,670
of the family.

1277
01:18:06,670 --> 01:18:09,670

Your kids or your parents, or?

1278

01:18:09,670 --> 01:18:18,400

No, my in-laws, my
sister-in-law and her husband.

1279

01:18:18,400 --> 01:18:20,890

Well, actually, I'm
not married to Bruce,

1280

01:18:20,890 --> 01:18:26,050

but it's like a family.

1281

01:18:26,050 --> 01:18:30,670

So I'll just call them
my sister-in-law and--

1282

01:18:30,670 --> 01:18:33,820

I was starting to have
problems relating with her.

1283

01:18:33,820 --> 01:18:35,330

Very serious problems.

1284

01:18:35,330 --> 01:18:40,690

And I just needed some help,
so I went to see a therapist.

1285

01:18:40,690 --> 01:18:44,500

1286

01:18:44,500 --> 01:18:45,700

My therapist listened.

1287

01:18:45,700 --> 01:18:48,610

And then, like
therapists do, she

1288

01:18:48,610 --> 01:18:50,620

wanted to know
about my childhood.

1289

01:18:50,620 --> 01:18:53,350

And I told her I really
didn't feel that was relevant.

1290

01:18:53,350 --> 01:18:56,950

I didn't want to go back
and delve into my childhood.

1291

01:18:56,950 --> 01:19:00,160

I wanted to deal with
my problems today.

1292

01:19:00,160 --> 01:19:05,950

And she really thought
it was important to talk

1293

01:19:05,950 --> 01:19:10,770

about my childhood,
to understand

1294

01:19:10,770 --> 01:19:13,660

what my early childhood was
like and what my family life was

1295

01:19:13,660 --> 01:19:19,640

like to understand why these
things were happening today.

1296

01:19:19,640 --> 01:19:21,910

So eventually I
gave in and started

1297

01:19:21,910 --> 01:19:25,180

talking about my
childhood, which

1298

01:19:25,180 --> 01:19:29,830

led me to talk about the
Holocaust, and my birth,

1299

01:19:29,830 --> 01:19:32,860

and my very early experiences.

1300

01:19:32,860 --> 01:19:41,550

1301

01:19:41,550 --> 01:19:42,240

Let's see.

1302

01:19:42,240 --> 01:19:43,890

How am I going to
talk about this?

1303

01:19:43,890 --> 01:19:48,660

1304

01:19:48,660 --> 01:19:50,940

Maybe I need to kind
of sidetrack here.

1305

01:19:50,940 --> 01:19:53,250

OK, whatever you need.

1306

01:19:53,250 --> 01:19:55,350

You can go all over the map.

1307

01:19:55,350 --> 01:19:58,020

Don't worry about chronology.

1308

01:19:58,020 --> 01:20:00,810

Just however it's comfortable.

1309

01:20:00,810 --> 01:20:01,490

All right.

1310

01:20:01,490 --> 01:20:07,230

1311

01:20:07,230 --> 01:20:09,840

I'm going back.

1312

01:20:09,840 --> 01:20:18,350

When I was about early
30s, maybe 32, 33,

1313

01:20:18,350 --> 01:20:26,860

I started having very serious
psychological problems.

1314

01:20:26,860 --> 01:20:30,670

1315

01:20:30,670 --> 01:20:40,357

I started having anxiety attacks
and a lot of fear, a just

1316

01:20:40,357 --> 01:20:41,440

tremendous amount of fear.

1317

01:20:41,440 --> 01:20:45,020

1318

01:20:45,020 --> 01:20:47,930

I didn't understand why
this was happening to me.

1319

01:20:47,930 --> 01:20:54,910

1320

01:20:54,910 --> 01:20:57,320

Eventually it started
getting worse and worse.

1321

01:20:57,320 --> 01:21:02,350

And I was not able to
drive at one point.

1322

01:21:02,350 --> 01:21:03,580

I had been driving.

1323

01:21:03,580 --> 01:21:05,230

I drove all over the place.

1324

01:21:05,230 --> 01:21:10,365

And developing
tremendous anxiety.

1325

01:21:10,365 --> 01:21:13,510

1326

01:21:13,510 --> 01:21:16,830

And I now know that
it's called agoraphobia.

1327

01:21:16,830 --> 01:21:24,240

And I started becoming
fearful of going

1328

01:21:24,240 --> 01:21:34,480

in crowds, crowded places, open
places, down hills, in tunnels,

1329

01:21:34,480 --> 01:21:38,275

elevators, escalators,
movie theaters.

1330

01:21:38,275 --> 01:21:45,010

1331

01:21:45,010 --> 01:21:46,850

It was an awful time for me.

1332

01:21:46,850 --> 01:21:56,490

1333

01:21:56,490 --> 01:21:58,020

It gradually wore off.

1334

01:21:58,020 --> 01:22:02,260

Gradually I started to--

1335

01:22:02,260 --> 01:22:06,190

but anyway, the period it
lasted was probably 10 years

1336

01:22:06,190 --> 01:22:11,920

that it took from the
onset to when it started.

1337

01:22:11,920 --> 01:22:13,600

I started to get better.

1338

01:22:13,600 --> 01:22:18,070

Or I started to learn to deal
with it, some through therapy,

1339

01:22:18,070 --> 01:22:23,470

and readings, and
just meditation

1340

01:22:23,470 --> 01:22:27,970

and learning how to
gradually wear off the fear

1341

01:22:27,970 --> 01:22:31,000

and understand the fear.

1342

01:22:31,000 --> 01:22:34,858

But it really affected my
life because there were things

1343

01:22:34,858 --> 01:22:35,650

that I couldn't do.

1344

01:22:35,650 --> 01:22:38,470

I couldn't drive on bridges.

1345

01:22:38,470 --> 01:22:43,853

And it really limited
my activities.

1346

01:22:43,853 --> 01:22:45,520

This is very embarrassing
to talk about.

1347

01:22:45,520 --> 01:22:47,950

I still have a lot of
embarrassment about that, but.

1348

01:22:47,950 --> 01:22:50,010

We appreciate it.

1349
01:22:50,010 --> 01:22:52,355
But I really want to be
honest about what happened.

1350
01:22:52,355 --> 01:23:04,140

1351
01:23:04,140 --> 01:23:04,640
Let's see.

1352
01:23:04,640 --> 01:23:09,420

1353
01:23:09,420 --> 01:23:10,620
Maybe I'll have this water.

1354
01:23:10,620 --> 01:23:11,518
Is this water?

1355
01:23:11,518 --> 01:23:12,060
That's water.

1356
01:23:12,060 --> 01:23:13,920
It's from a bubbler,
so it's good.

1357
01:23:13,920 --> 01:23:15,876
OK.

1358
01:23:15,876 --> 01:23:17,325
Take your time.

1359
01:23:17,325 --> 01:23:28,450

1360
01:23:28,450 --> 01:23:29,200
Let's see.

1361
01:23:29,200 --> 01:23:34,980

1362
01:23:34,980 --> 01:23:39,900
So getting back to therapy,
I was seeing this therapist.

1363
01:23:39,900 --> 01:23:41,615
By the way, her
name is Judith also.

1364
01:23:41,615 --> 01:23:53,320
[LAUGHS] When I was
telling her about this,

1365
01:23:53,320 --> 01:23:56,590
she was trying to place
when the anxiety started.

1366
01:23:56,590 --> 01:24:01,580

1367
01:24:01,580 --> 01:24:07,820
And I told her that all
I know is that I went

1368
01:24:07,820 --> 01:24:10,230
to visit my sister in Holland.

1369
01:24:10,230 --> 01:24:14,750
She had gone to live
there for a few years.

1370
01:24:14,750 --> 01:24:16,310
And I went to visit her.

1371
01:24:16,310 --> 01:24:19,400
And I was there for six weeks.

1372
01:24:19,400 --> 01:24:24,170
We drove through
Belgium and to Antwerp,

1373
01:24:24,170 --> 01:24:27,680

because I hadn't been to
back to Antwerp and I was--

1374
01:24:27,680 --> 01:24:31,232

1375
01:24:31,232 --> 01:24:32,960
well, I left when I was 13.

1376
01:24:32,960 --> 01:24:35,720
I was now 33, so it's 20 years.

1377
01:24:35,720 --> 01:24:38,180
So I was really anxious.

1378
01:24:38,180 --> 01:24:41,000
I wanted to go back
to where I was living.

1379
01:24:41,000 --> 01:24:45,170
And we went back to the school.

1380
01:24:45,170 --> 01:24:46,430
We visited the school.

1381
01:24:46,430 --> 01:24:50,610
And I saw one of my teachers,
my fourth grade teacher who

1382
01:24:50,610 --> 01:24:52,430
had become principal.

1383
01:24:52,430 --> 01:24:56,180
And I didn't feel like
spending a lot of time there,

1384
01:24:56,180 --> 01:24:58,550
but I did just go
and say hello to him.

1385
01:24:58,550 --> 01:25:00,440
And he remembered

who I was and we sat.

1386
01:25:00,440 --> 01:25:03,680

1387
01:25:03,680 --> 01:25:04,490
Then we went on.

1388
01:25:04,490 --> 01:25:05,570
We left Belgium.

1389
01:25:05,570 --> 01:25:06,740
Oh, and we walked.

1390
01:25:06,740 --> 01:25:10,610
We drove through Antwerp a bit.

1391
01:25:10,610 --> 01:25:13,070
It seemed like a very
small city compared to what

1392
01:25:13,070 --> 01:25:15,280
I remembered as a little child.

1393
01:25:15,280 --> 01:25:18,900

1394
01:25:18,900 --> 01:25:26,490
So when I came back from
this trip to San Francisco,

1395
01:25:26,490 --> 01:25:30,750
suddenly this anxiety started.

1396
01:25:30,750 --> 01:25:35,580
And I got very depressed.

1397
01:25:35,580 --> 01:25:40,620

1398
01:25:40,620 --> 01:25:45,210

I just never could understand
why that happened then.

1399
01:25:45,210 --> 01:25:48,690
But this therapist, as
I was talking to her

1400
01:25:48,690 --> 01:25:53,110
and telling her these events,
it just clicked in my head

1401
01:25:53,110 --> 01:25:55,210
that there was a connection.

1402
01:25:55,210 --> 01:25:58,140
And then she said,
you know, have you

1403
01:25:58,140 --> 01:26:01,860
ever heard of post-traumatic
stress syndrome?

1404
01:26:01,860 --> 01:26:04,770
And she explained that
when you go back to a place

1405
01:26:04,770 --> 01:26:11,070
where you experienced a lot
of fear or trauma or anxiety,

1406
01:26:11,070 --> 01:26:18,210
it can trigger reliving
the experience.

1407
01:26:18,210 --> 01:26:22,320
And because I was a child,
because I was a baby

1408
01:26:22,320 --> 01:26:24,330
and I didn't have words--

1409
01:26:24,330 --> 01:26:26,040
it was before I had language--

1410
01:26:26,040 --> 01:26:31,352

1411
01:26:31,352 --> 01:26:33,060
so it was hard to talk
about it because I

1412
01:26:33,060 --> 01:26:35,170
didn't have the words.

1413
01:26:35,170 --> 01:26:40,410
But the feelings were there,
and the fear that my mother had

1414
01:26:40,410 --> 01:26:46,290
and my father, and being
born to a woman who

1415
01:26:46,290 --> 01:26:50,280
was experiencing a
lot of fear and going

1416
01:26:50,280 --> 01:26:53,070
through a lot of fear.

1417
01:26:53,070 --> 01:26:57,020
The fear was that I experienced
the fear as a small child.

1418
01:26:57,020 --> 01:27:05,980

1419
01:27:05,980 --> 01:27:09,040
It makes sense to me.

1420
01:27:09,040 --> 01:27:15,580
I mean, this is why I
had these experiences.

1421
01:27:15,580 --> 01:27:21,600
And it suddenly became

extremely important for me.

1422
01:27:21,600 --> 01:27:25,472
[SOBS]

1423
01:27:25,472 --> 01:27:45,090

1424
01:27:45,090 --> 01:27:52,950
Well, I always knew that the
Holocaust had an effect on me,

1425
01:27:52,950 --> 01:27:55,710
because you could not
be affected by it.

1426
01:27:55,710 --> 01:27:59,130
But I guess I never realized
how much of an effect

1427
01:27:59,130 --> 01:28:01,980
and what an impact
it had on my life.

1428
01:28:01,980 --> 01:28:08,480

1429
01:28:08,480 --> 01:28:17,270
So I started to want to find
out more about the Holocaust.

1430
01:28:17,270 --> 01:28:24,830
And I started to go to the
Holocaust lecture series, which

1431
01:28:24,830 --> 01:28:28,340
are given in Sonoma State
in Rohnert Park, which

1432
01:28:28,340 --> 01:28:29,680
is very close to where I live.

1433

01:28:29,680 --> 01:28:35,030

1434

01:28:35,030 --> 01:28:44,450

And I met some wonderful people
there who directed me here

1435

01:28:44,450 --> 01:28:48,080

and told me about the
Oral History Project.

1436

01:28:48,080 --> 01:28:54,740

And I started to read
books and to talk to people

1437

01:28:54,740 --> 01:28:58,340

and make connections.

1438

01:28:58,340 --> 01:29:02,090

And that's why I'm here,
because I felt, although maybe

1439

01:29:02,090 --> 01:29:04,100

my story isn't as
horrible as people

1440

01:29:04,100 --> 01:29:08,330

who were in camps
and lost parents,

1441

01:29:08,330 --> 01:29:12,430

I thought my story is
worth telling, too.

1442

01:29:12,430 --> 01:29:16,410

And so that's why
I'm here, basically.

1443

01:29:16,410 --> 01:29:20,220

We really thank you for
bringing us all through this.

1444

01:29:20,220 --> 01:29:21,030

Yeah.

1445
01:29:21,030 --> 01:29:22,450
It just felt really important.

1446
01:29:22,450 --> 01:29:25,110
I really, really
wanted to do this.

1447
01:29:25,110 --> 01:29:27,150
I really want to do this.

1448
01:29:27,150 --> 01:29:28,496
[INAUDIBLE]

1449
01:29:28,496 --> 01:29:30,998
We really appreciate
that [INAUDIBLE]..

1450
01:29:30,998 --> 01:29:36,930

1451
01:29:36,930 --> 01:29:39,233
The period that you were
going through in your 30s,

1452
01:29:39,233 --> 01:29:44,910
did you discuss this with
any other family members?

1453
01:29:44,910 --> 01:29:48,150
When you realized that
this was connected

1454
01:29:48,150 --> 01:29:51,000
to your birth and
your childhood,

1455
01:29:51,000 --> 01:29:53,980
did you approach your
parents [INAUDIBLE]??

1456

01:29:53,980 --> 01:29:55,230

No, I didn't.

1457

01:29:55,230 --> 01:29:57,360

In fact, I was very
embarrassed about it.

1458

01:29:57,360 --> 01:30:00,450

1459

01:30:00,450 --> 01:30:02,085

I never mentioned
it to my parents.

1460

01:30:02,085 --> 01:30:05,990

1461

01:30:05,990 --> 01:30:12,620

I did mention it to my sister,
because she lived in Oakland

1462

01:30:12,620 --> 01:30:15,020

and my mother later
moved to Oakland,

1463

01:30:15,020 --> 01:30:20,390

and I couldn't drive
over the Richmond Bridge.

1464

01:30:20,390 --> 01:30:21,710

I just could not do it.

1465

01:30:21,710 --> 01:30:24,770

1466

01:30:24,770 --> 01:30:25,790

So I would drive around.

1467

01:30:25,790 --> 01:30:31,040

I would take 80 to get to
Oakland through Vallejo,

1468

01:30:31,040 --> 01:30:32,570
so my sister knew about it.

1469
01:30:32,570 --> 01:30:35,420

1470
01:30:35,420 --> 01:30:37,640
I had gradually gotten
myself used to driving

1471
01:30:37,640 --> 01:30:38,840
over the Richmond Bridge.

1472
01:30:38,840 --> 01:30:43,310
And I was able to
do it mostly always

1473
01:30:43,310 --> 01:30:45,740
with great anxiety
and tremendous fear,

1474
01:30:45,740 --> 01:30:48,440
but I was able to eventually.

1475
01:30:48,440 --> 01:30:53,450
And then one day I was visiting
a friend in San Francisco,

1476
01:30:53,450 --> 01:30:55,580
and I was headed to Oakland.

1477
01:30:55,580 --> 01:30:59,270
And I thought, well, I think
I'm ready to try the Bay Bridge.

1478
01:30:59,270 --> 01:31:01,040
And I tried to get over there.

1479
01:31:01,040 --> 01:31:03,470
And just before I
got on the bridge,

1480

01:31:03,470 --> 01:31:05,840

I realized just there was no
way I was going to get over

1481

01:31:05,840 --> 01:31:07,060

that bridge in one piece.

1482

01:31:07,060 --> 01:31:12,320

So I turned off and got off
the bridge just in the nick

1483

01:31:12,320 --> 01:31:14,422

of time, the last exit.

1484

01:31:14,422 --> 01:31:16,460

It was awful.

1485

01:31:16,460 --> 01:31:19,820

So my sister had to come get me.

1486

01:31:19,820 --> 01:31:23,470

And her boyfriend had to
drive my car to Oakland,

1487

01:31:23,470 --> 01:31:24,650

and she drove--

1488

01:31:24,650 --> 01:31:27,000

anyway, it was a big deal.

1489

01:31:27,000 --> 01:31:30,560

So I was very embarrassed.

1490

01:31:30,560 --> 01:31:32,570

So my sister did know about it.

1491

01:31:32,570 --> 01:31:35,570

1492

01:31:35,570 --> 01:31:43,080

She was somewhat sympathetic,
but not too terribly.

1493
01:31:43,080 --> 01:31:45,350
She thought, here's my
crazy sister, you know?

1494
01:31:45,350 --> 01:31:46,287
She's crazy.

1495
01:31:46,287 --> 01:31:47,370
That's all there is to it.

1496
01:31:47,370 --> 01:31:52,920

1497
01:31:52,920 --> 01:31:54,540
But nobody knew.

1498
01:31:54,540 --> 01:31:56,830
I mean, until just a
couple of months ago,

1499
01:31:56,830 --> 01:31:59,970
I really didn't know there
was a connection between that

1500
01:31:59,970 --> 01:32:02,975
and the Holocaust.

1501
01:32:02,975 --> 01:32:06,030
And I definitely
never told my parents.

1502
01:32:06,030 --> 01:32:09,870
I think I told them I didn't
like driving and things

1503
01:32:09,870 --> 01:32:14,690
like that, but I didn't say that
I wasn't capable of doing that.

1504
01:32:14,690 --> 01:32:18,920

1505
01:32:18,920 --> 01:32:21,540
And now you're driving?

1506
01:32:21,540 --> 01:32:22,950
I'm driving, pretty much.

1507
01:32:22,950 --> 01:32:25,980

1508
01:32:25,980 --> 01:32:28,630
I've learned a lot of
techniques to deal with it.

1509
01:32:28,630 --> 01:32:32,130

1510
01:32:32,130 --> 01:32:34,050
I still don't feel
very comfortable,

1511
01:32:34,050 --> 01:32:41,910
and I know that I can work
at it with the new knowledge

1512
01:32:41,910 --> 01:32:44,490
that these last few
months have brought to me.

1513
01:32:44,490 --> 01:32:48,210

1514
01:32:48,210 --> 01:32:51,801
I can learn desensitization.

1515
01:32:51,801 --> 01:32:56,070

1516
01:32:56,070 --> 01:32:58,600
I still don't like elevators.

1517

01:32:58,600 --> 01:33:01,200
I didn't go up
this elevator here.

1518
01:33:01,200 --> 01:33:04,530
This one looked
very intimidating.

1519
01:33:04,530 --> 01:33:06,600
Bruce took the elevator
up and opened the door,

1520
01:33:06,600 --> 01:33:09,060
and I walked up the stairs
[LAUGHS] and he let me in.

1521
01:33:09,060 --> 01:33:15,670

1522
01:33:15,670 --> 01:33:18,130
But I know I can get
over these things.

1523
01:33:18,130 --> 01:33:23,080
But a lot of fear is there.

1524
01:33:23,080 --> 01:33:26,500
I know a lot of it
is fear of fear.

1525
01:33:26,500 --> 01:33:30,250
But I think I understand
where a lot of it comes from,

1526
01:33:30,250 --> 01:33:34,170
and it was fear that was never
dealt with, ever talked about.

1527
01:33:34,170 --> 01:33:37,390

1528
01:33:37,390 --> 01:33:41,560
I feel very lucky that

I'm doing this work

1529
01:33:41,560 --> 01:33:44,010
and dealing with it now.

1530
01:33:44,010 --> 01:33:49,220

1531
01:33:49,220 --> 01:33:51,610
Have you been back
to Belgium again?

1532
01:33:51,610 --> 01:33:54,610
No, I have not.

1533
01:33:54,610 --> 01:33:55,300
I have not.

1534
01:33:55,300 --> 01:34:00,820

1535
01:34:00,820 --> 01:34:03,600
I would like to go
back to Belgium,

1536
01:34:03,600 --> 01:34:06,430
and I would like to go
back to Switzerland.

1537
01:34:06,430 --> 01:34:12,520
And I would like to find out
the route my parents took

1538
01:34:12,520 --> 01:34:15,820
to get to Switzerland.

1539
01:34:15,820 --> 01:34:18,719
I would like to find the
people in Switzerland.

1540
01:34:18,719 --> 01:34:23,410

1541
01:34:23,410 --> 01:34:24,940
The only person that--

1542
01:34:24,940 --> 01:34:27,910

1543
01:34:27,910 --> 01:34:31,840
I called my mother's sister,
the one who was in Antwerp.

1544
01:34:31,840 --> 01:34:37,700
I called her last week and
talked to her very briefly,

1545
01:34:37,700 --> 01:34:40,610
and was glad to find out
that her mind was clear

1546
01:34:40,610 --> 01:34:42,800
and that she's well.

1547
01:34:42,800 --> 01:34:45,650
And I intend to
call her and talk

1548
01:34:45,650 --> 01:34:49,410
to her because I think she might
have some of these answers.

1549
01:34:49,410 --> 01:34:53,120
And how was she involved in--

1550
01:34:53,120 --> 01:34:56,390
She lived in Antwerp
after the war,

1551
01:34:56,390 --> 01:34:59,600
so she had to have been
somewhere during the war.

1552
01:34:59,600 --> 01:35:05,030

She was somewhere, either
hiding in Belgium or--

1553
01:35:05,030 --> 01:35:07,250
and I don't know where she was.

1554
01:35:07,250 --> 01:35:09,080
And this was your mom's sister?

1555
01:35:09,080 --> 01:35:11,120
My mom's sister, right.

1556
01:35:11,120 --> 01:35:13,340
[INAUDIBLE]

1557
01:35:13,340 --> 01:35:15,830
Yeah.

1558
01:35:15,830 --> 01:35:17,420
If and when you ever--

1559
01:35:17,420 --> 01:35:20,930
did you ever ask your
parents, years later,

1560
01:35:20,930 --> 01:35:24,110
about their routes,
their journeys and what

1561
01:35:24,110 --> 01:35:27,390
their experiences were like?

1562
01:35:27,390 --> 01:35:30,310
I did, and they
wouldn't talk about it.

1563
01:35:30,310 --> 01:35:32,620
They just kind of
brushed it away.

1564
01:35:32,620 --> 01:35:36,390
Oh, we don't want to

talk about it, you know.

1565
01:35:36,390 --> 01:35:40,270
In fact, even last
year, I have a cousin

1566
01:35:40,270 --> 01:35:45,500
who lives in Albuquerque,
and I went to visit him.

1567
01:35:45,500 --> 01:35:46,850
And he's older than me.

1568
01:35:46,850 --> 01:35:49,150
He's 70.

1569
01:35:49,150 --> 01:35:55,030
And I went for that purpose,
to talk about family,

1570
01:35:55,030 --> 01:35:56,860
to find out more.

1571
01:35:56,860 --> 01:35:58,900
And he was very
reluctant to talk.

1572
01:35:58,900 --> 01:35:59,950
He did not want to talk.

1573
01:35:59,950 --> 01:36:01,992
And he said, oh, I don't
want to talk about this.

1574
01:36:01,992 --> 01:36:02,980
It's too depressing.

1575
01:36:02,980 --> 01:36:04,270
I don't want to get depressed.

1576
01:36:04,270 --> 01:36:05,330
I don't want to get sad.

1577
01:36:05,330 --> 01:36:06,700
Let's not talk about it.

1578
01:36:06,700 --> 01:36:07,720
Let's go out to lunch.

1579
01:36:07,720 --> 01:36:13,300
[LAUGHS] And I
wasn't very pushy.

1580
01:36:13,300 --> 01:36:14,710
I didn't push.

1581
01:36:14,710 --> 01:36:18,580
And they had pictures, and
I really wanted to see them.

1582
01:36:18,580 --> 01:36:25,270
But it was very hard to get
them down to talk about it.

1583
01:36:25,270 --> 01:36:29,050
I'm hoping to go back this
summer to talk to them again

1584
01:36:29,050 --> 01:36:30,550
and to bring Bruce.

1585
01:36:30,550 --> 01:36:33,490
And maybe it'll be easier.

1586
01:36:33,490 --> 01:36:37,720
But I really do want
to find out more.

1587
01:36:37,720 --> 01:36:43,450
Maybe the people in Europe,
like you said, the aunt.

1588
01:36:43,450 --> 01:36:45,610
Right, she's in Canada.

1589

01:36:45,610 --> 01:36:48,704

She lives in Montreal now.

1590

01:36:48,704 --> 01:36:52,814

Maybe somehow you can track
down the couple in Switzerland

1591

01:36:52,814 --> 01:36:55,580

on the farm.

1592

01:36:55,580 --> 01:36:59,200

Put some pieces together.

1593

01:36:59,200 --> 01:37:01,490

Did you ever visit Israel?

1594

01:37:01,490 --> 01:37:03,380

I did, yeah.

1595

01:37:03,380 --> 01:37:06,930

After high school I went
and lived a year in Israel

1596

01:37:06,930 --> 01:37:08,072

in kibbutz.

1597

01:37:08,072 --> 01:37:09,400

Can you talk about that?

1598

01:37:09,400 --> 01:37:10,640

Sure.

1599

01:37:10,640 --> 01:37:12,266

Yeah.

1600

01:37:12,266 --> 01:37:14,000

When you graduated here?

1601

01:37:14,000 --> 01:37:16,280

Graduated high school.

1602
01:37:16,280 --> 01:37:22,970
And right away I went to
what was called the Habonim

1603
01:37:22,970 --> 01:37:25,310
Workshop.

1604
01:37:25,310 --> 01:37:30,410
It was a program put together by
the Habonim Labor Zionist Youth

1605
01:37:30,410 --> 01:37:32,150
Movement.

1606
01:37:32,150 --> 01:37:33,710
I was there for a year.

1607
01:37:33,710 --> 01:37:37,310

1608
01:37:37,310 --> 01:37:39,740
We lived on Kibbutz
Gesher Haziv,

1609
01:37:39,740 --> 01:37:46,370
which is in the north
of Israel, in Galilee,

1610
01:37:46,370 --> 01:37:48,600
very close to the
coast, north of Haifa.

1611
01:37:48,600 --> 01:37:52,340

1612
01:37:52,340 --> 01:37:55,340
It's mostly an
English-speaking kibbutz

1613
01:37:55,340 --> 01:38:02,630
with mostly Americans and

English-speaking people

1614
01:38:02,630 --> 01:38:07,070
from England and Australia.

1615
01:38:07,070 --> 01:38:11,360
Some Hebrew speakers
and other people, too,

1616
01:38:11,360 --> 01:38:12,365
but mainly English.

1617
01:38:12,365 --> 01:38:17,550

1618
01:38:17,550 --> 01:38:20,910
We worked there.

1619
01:38:20,910 --> 01:38:24,210
I worked in the chicken house.

1620
01:38:24,210 --> 01:38:28,180
Because I spoke Hebrew and
I had gone to Hebrew school

1621
01:38:28,180 --> 01:38:32,730
all through high school,
in San Francisco also,

1622
01:38:32,730 --> 01:38:34,890
so my Hebrew was fairly good.

1623
01:38:34,890 --> 01:38:37,200
So I worked in the
children's house,

1624
01:38:37,200 --> 01:38:43,270
and chickens and bananas.

1625
01:38:43,270 --> 01:38:47,020
We worked in the banana
fields, and cotton fields,

1626
01:38:47,020 --> 01:38:50,425
and potato fields.

1627
01:38:50,425 --> 01:38:55,180

1628
01:38:55,180 --> 01:38:57,280
And then we studied.

1629
01:38:57,280 --> 01:39:00,910
The first six months, we
studied and worked half time.

1630
01:39:00,910 --> 01:39:06,640
And we studied history,
and Hebrew, and education.

1631
01:39:06,640 --> 01:39:10,530

1632
01:39:10,530 --> 01:39:13,000
And then we did a lot
of traveling in Israel.

1633
01:39:13,000 --> 01:39:17,220
We had free time, and I went
to visit my grandparents who

1634
01:39:17,220 --> 01:39:19,060
lived in Jerusalem.

1635
01:39:19,060 --> 01:39:21,040
They were very old at that time.

1636
01:39:21,040 --> 01:39:22,870
This was in 1960.

1637
01:39:22,870 --> 01:39:24,970
And they were in their 80s.

1638

01:39:24,970 --> 01:39:28,750
And my grandmother was blind.

1639
01:39:28,750 --> 01:39:33,950

1640
01:39:33,950 --> 01:39:45,470
My grand-- I really liked them.

1641
01:39:45,470 --> 01:39:50,030
I really liked my grandparents.

1642
01:39:50,030 --> 01:39:52,924
It's very sad to
think about them

1643
01:39:52,924 --> 01:39:55,190
because I didn't
know them very well.

1644
01:39:55,190 --> 01:40:02,510
I just met them when I was very
little and then when I was 18.

1645
01:40:02,510 --> 01:40:03,605
But they were very sweet.

1646
01:40:03,605 --> 01:40:10,010

1647
01:40:10,010 --> 01:40:11,540
I spent the night with them.

1648
01:40:11,540 --> 01:40:18,000

1649
01:40:18,000 --> 01:40:19,635
They lived in a small--

1650
01:40:19,635 --> 01:40:25,560

1651

01:40:25,560 --> 01:40:27,330
not even an apartment.

1652

01:40:27,330 --> 01:40:34,770
It was a room, a large room
below the ground floor.

1653

01:40:34,770 --> 01:40:36,000
I think they were very poor.

1654

01:40:36,000 --> 01:40:41,770

1655

01:40:41,770 --> 01:40:44,600
They died soon after I
left, within a couple years.

1656

01:40:44,600 --> 01:40:47,900
So I was glad I got to see them.

1657

01:40:47,900 --> 01:40:53,040

1658

01:40:53,040 --> 01:41:03,860
And I also met my
mother's parents,

1659

01:41:03,860 --> 01:41:06,350
who were very different
than my father's parents.

1660

01:41:06,350 --> 01:41:09,920
They were a lot
harsher kind of people.

1661

01:41:09,920 --> 01:41:11,255
They also were living in Israel.

1662

01:41:11,255 --> 01:41:15,560

1663

01:41:15,560 --> 01:41:23,480
And I met a lot of relatives,
some aunts and cousins.

1664
01:41:23,480 --> 01:41:27,560
It was a very
exciting time for me.

1665
01:41:27,560 --> 01:41:30,260
I loved being in Israel, and
I was just so happy there.

1666
01:41:30,260 --> 01:41:35,280

1667
01:41:35,280 --> 01:41:38,790
The plan was after the year to
come back to the United States,

1668
01:41:38,790 --> 01:41:41,200
go to college, and
then go back to Israel.

1669
01:41:41,200 --> 01:41:44,460
And I was sure I was going
to come back to Israel.

1670
01:41:44,460 --> 01:41:48,090
But I never did.

1671
01:41:48,090 --> 01:41:49,150
I didn't go back.

1672
01:41:49,150 --> 01:41:53,700
I went back for a visit
about seven years ago,

1673
01:41:53,700 --> 01:41:55,500
but I didn't go back to live.

1674
01:41:55,500 --> 01:42:03,870

1675

01:42:03,870 --> 01:42:06,360

I felt very fulfilled
to be there.

1676

01:42:06,360 --> 01:42:09,600

And I still, when I think
about it, it's hard for me

1677

01:42:09,600 --> 01:42:12,270

to believe that I didn't
go back to live in Israel,

1678

01:42:12,270 --> 01:42:15,325

because I have a very
strong connection to Israel.

1679

01:42:15,325 --> 01:42:22,190

1680

01:42:22,190 --> 01:42:24,380

Did you study there
at all that year?

1681

01:42:24,380 --> 01:42:27,670

1682

01:42:27,670 --> 01:42:37,090

Yeah, we studied Hebrew,
and a lot of education

1683

01:42:37,090 --> 01:42:39,258

because it was a leadership--

1684

01:42:39,258 --> 01:42:42,160

1685

01:42:42,160 --> 01:42:44,140

the Zionist movement.

1686

01:42:44,140 --> 01:42:46,830

So we were to come back
and become leaders.

1687
01:42:46,830 --> 01:42:51,440

1688
01:42:51,440 --> 01:43:01,250
So we learned history, not too
much Bible, Jewish history,

1689
01:43:01,250 --> 01:43:04,970
a lot of Zionist history, a
lot of Labor Zionist history.

1690
01:43:04,970 --> 01:43:10,802

1691
01:43:10,802 --> 01:43:12,010
And we had a lot of fun, too.

1692
01:43:12,010 --> 01:43:16,090
We did a lot of
hiking and singing.

1693
01:43:16,090 --> 01:43:18,700
We had a choir.

1694
01:43:18,700 --> 01:43:20,380
We did dancing.

1695
01:43:20,380 --> 01:43:25,360

1696
01:43:25,360 --> 01:43:28,480
Did you have the opportunity
to travel throughout Israel?

1697
01:43:28,480 --> 01:43:29,740
Yes, I did.

1698
01:43:29,740 --> 01:43:30,510
Absolutely.

1699

01:43:30,510 --> 01:43:37,870

1700

01:43:37,870 --> 01:43:41,640

We went to listen to the--

1701

01:43:41,640 --> 01:43:44,160

I guess it's called the
Philharmonic, the Tel Aviv

1702

01:43:44,160 --> 01:43:45,710

Philharmonic?

1703

01:43:45,710 --> 01:43:47,130

And we were special guests.

1704

01:43:47,130 --> 01:43:50,220

And we sat behind the stage.

1705

01:43:50,220 --> 01:43:55,602

And the mayor of Tel-- oh,
maybe it was in Jerusalem.

1706

01:43:55,602 --> 01:43:56,102

Oh, gosh.

1707

01:43:56,102 --> 01:43:57,460

I'm getting mixed up.

1708

01:43:57,460 --> 01:43:59,175

I know-- Ted Kollek.

1709

01:43:59,175 --> 01:44:00,210

We got to meet him.

1710

01:44:00,210 --> 01:44:01,340

It was in Jerusalem.

1711

01:44:01,340 --> 01:44:06,660

1712

01:44:06,660 --> 01:44:07,920
We went to the Negev.

1713
01:44:07,920 --> 01:44:09,030
We hiked there.

1714
01:44:09,030 --> 01:44:12,310
We spent a week in the
Negev, which I loved.

1715
01:44:12,310 --> 01:44:14,820
I loved the desert.

1716
01:44:14,820 --> 01:44:17,880
I know other kids had blisters,
and they were getting sick,

1717
01:44:17,880 --> 01:44:19,380
and they were fainting.

1718
01:44:19,380 --> 01:44:23,190
I was just-- I was blossoming.

1719
01:44:23,190 --> 01:44:24,670
The heat didn't bother me.

1720
01:44:24,670 --> 01:44:28,590

1721
01:44:28,590 --> 01:44:33,930
We did go to Yad
Vashem, but I think

1722
01:44:33,930 --> 01:44:37,990
we didn't want to
stay there too much.

1723
01:44:37,990 --> 01:44:41,430
I don't think I went inside.

1724
01:44:41,430 --> 01:44:47,670
We went there, but I

know I didn't go inside.

1725
01:44:47,670 --> 01:44:50,630
I decided it was too
depressing or something.

1726
01:44:50,630 --> 01:44:53,260

1727
01:44:53,260 --> 01:44:55,390
I don't know if other kids went.

1728
01:44:55,390 --> 01:44:56,740
Some went, some didn't.

1729
01:44:56,740 --> 01:45:05,720

1730
01:45:05,720 --> 01:45:06,710
We went all over.

1731
01:45:06,710 --> 01:45:07,670
We went to Haifa.

1732
01:45:07,670 --> 01:45:10,910
We went to Jerusalem.

1733
01:45:10,910 --> 01:45:13,700
We spent a week in
Jerusalem studying.

1734
01:45:13,700 --> 01:45:21,080
We had a week-long workshop
there on all kinds of subjects,

1735
01:45:21,080 --> 01:45:22,265
education and history.

1736
01:45:22,265 --> 01:45:25,990

1737

01:45:25,990 --> 01:45:32,170

Then there was a
special conference

1738

01:45:32,170 --> 01:45:37,510

we went to near Tel
Aviv, [INAUDIBLE],,

1739

01:45:37,510 --> 01:45:39,910

and I was one of the
three people chosen

1740

01:45:39,910 --> 01:45:42,310

to go from our group.

1741

01:45:42,310 --> 01:45:43,565

And that was very exciting.

1742

01:45:43,565 --> 01:45:47,290

1743

01:45:47,290 --> 01:45:54,790

It was some kind of World
Zionist meeting and we met--

1744

01:45:54,790 --> 01:45:59,980

1745

01:45:59,980 --> 01:46:05,050

there were thousands of kids
there from all over the world.

1746

01:46:05,050 --> 01:46:10,200

1747

01:46:10,200 --> 01:46:16,380

So we did a lot of traveling,
a lot of sightseeing,

1748

01:46:16,380 --> 01:46:24,000

and social sorts of activities.

1749

01:46:24,000 --> 01:46:29,190
Not to belabor the point,
but since we're here, again,

1750
01:46:29,190 --> 01:46:31,050
was there a discussion
or did anyone talk

1751
01:46:31,050 --> 01:46:32,010
about the Holocaust?

1752
01:46:32,010 --> 01:46:41,990

1753
01:46:41,990 --> 01:46:44,210
I think there might have
been discussion, but not--

1754
01:46:44,210 --> 01:46:48,099

1755
01:46:48,099 --> 01:46:55,040
surely when we went to Yad
Vashem we talked about that.

1756
01:46:55,040 --> 01:47:02,155
But, no, there wasn't too much
focus about the Holocaust.

1757
01:47:02,155 --> 01:47:06,980
So you were there for a year
and then returned back home?

1758
01:47:06,980 --> 01:47:07,480
Right.

1759
01:47:07,480 --> 01:47:08,890
And then what did you do?

1760
01:47:08,890 --> 01:47:10,060
I went to college.

1761

01:47:10,060 --> 01:47:11,210
In San Francisco?

1762
01:47:11,210 --> 01:47:11,710
Right.

1763
01:47:11,710 --> 01:47:14,650
I went to City
College for two years.

1764
01:47:14,650 --> 01:47:19,660

1765
01:47:19,660 --> 01:47:24,790
Then I started going
to San Francisco State.

1766
01:47:24,790 --> 01:47:28,400
And I was majoring
in speech therapy.

1767
01:47:28,400 --> 01:47:30,080
But then I dropped
out of school.

1768
01:47:30,080 --> 01:47:33,110
I went one semester
and I dropped out.

1769
01:47:33,110 --> 01:47:37,390
I didn't go back to
school till I was older,

1770
01:47:37,390 --> 01:47:40,255
till I was 35, when I
moved to Sonoma County.

1771
01:47:40,255 --> 01:47:47,590

1772
01:47:47,590 --> 01:47:51,610
Does your sister live
here, or is she in Holland.

1773
01:47:51,610 --> 01:47:52,270
She came back.

1774
01:47:52,270 --> 01:47:56,020
She's still living in Oakland.

1775
01:47:56,020 --> 01:48:00,970
She's a RN at San
Francisco General Hospital.

1776
01:48:00,970 --> 01:48:03,640
And what are you doing here now?

1777
01:48:03,640 --> 01:48:05,080
I'm a potter.

1778
01:48:05,080 --> 01:48:08,170
I'm doing pottery.

1779
01:48:08,170 --> 01:48:14,800
I also work part-time, and I
work as a public health aide.

1780
01:48:14,800 --> 01:48:19,930
I go into people's homes
and help older people,

1781
01:48:19,930 --> 01:48:25,030
to keep them out of homes.

1782
01:48:25,030 --> 01:48:27,550
And they get to
stay at their house.

1783
01:48:27,550 --> 01:48:28,265
[INAUDIBLE]

1784
01:48:28,265 --> 01:48:30,860
It is very important.

1785

01:48:30,860 --> 01:48:35,500

So they can still stay
in their own home.

1786

01:48:35,500 --> 01:48:38,620

I cook for them, and shop,
and keep them company.

1787

01:48:38,620 --> 01:48:41,740

1788

01:48:41,740 --> 01:48:44,140

Do you do that in Sonoma?

1789

01:48:44,140 --> 01:48:45,340

Yeah.

1790

01:48:45,340 --> 01:48:48,130

Santa Rosa.

1791

01:48:48,130 --> 01:48:52,430

Do you have any hopes or
plans to get back to Israel?

1792

01:48:52,430 --> 01:48:57,160

I hope to go back to
visit, but at this point

1793

01:48:57,160 --> 01:48:59,710

I don't see myself going back.

1794

01:48:59,710 --> 01:49:04,250

I don't see myself
going back right now.

1795

01:49:04,250 --> 01:49:09,510

And possibly Belgium, just to
visit or gather information?

1796

01:49:09,510 --> 01:49:11,290

Right.

1797

01:49:11,290 --> 01:49:11,830
Right.

1798
01:49:11,830 --> 01:49:15,238
Are there any other
thoughts that you have

1799
01:49:15,238 --> 01:49:16,630
and that have been left out?

1800
01:49:16,630 --> 01:49:19,880

1801
01:49:19,880 --> 01:49:21,140
I can't think of anything.

1802
01:49:21,140 --> 01:49:23,720
I think I've said it all, maybe.

1803
01:49:23,720 --> 01:49:25,410
I'll probably think
of things later.

1804
01:49:25,410 --> 01:49:30,090
But right now I think
I've said a lot.

1805
01:49:30,090 --> 01:49:34,010
What we're going to
do is [INAUDIBLE]

1806
01:49:34,010 --> 01:49:35,790
and if you think of anything.

1807
01:49:35,790 --> 01:49:37,660
All right.

1808
01:49:37,660 --> 02:02:41,280