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Interview with Eddy Wynschenk
Holocaust Oral History Project
Date: March 4, 1990 Place: San Francisco
Interviewer: Peggy Coster
Transcriber: Lee A. Bursten

1 [Begin Tape 1]

2 Q Why don't you start out by telling us, have
3 you ever talked about this before?

4 A No. I do talk a lot for the last 20 years
5 about what happened to me from 1940 to 1945, as a
6 nonprofessional speaker who doesn't accept any fees.
7 But I never, except with my wife and two children,
8 never talked publicly about what happened from the
9 liberation until, say, today.

10 And I feel I have to talk about it. I
11 don't know if I can succeed, because it may be kind of
12 a reliving again, but I feel it's a continuation of
13 the Holocaust. The Holocaust will always be in me, if
14 I like it or not, will always affect my life, and is
15 affecting my life every day.

16 Q Why don't you start out by saying how you
17 think it affects your life.

18 A During the interview it will come out how
19 it affects my life; emotionally, physically, where the
20 anger comes from, the pain comes from. From the day
21 when I was liberated, I never realized it until many
22 years later, I lived for 32 years, actually -- yes, it

1 started in 1940 when the Germans occupied my country
2 then, Holland, until 1972, I lived in a state of
3 shock, but I never realized it. All my feelings were
4 gone. I didn't have any -- could not feel, actually,
5 could not feel enjoyment, couldn't feel any pain.

6 I was numb. I was told I was in the
7 freezer for 32 years, but I am slowly but surely in a
8 process of defrosting. I can talk about what happened
9 in the camps, and I will try to talk about what
10 happened after the camps.

11 Q What started this defrosting process?

12 A That started in 1972, in a way.

13 Q You mentioned something about your
14 12-year-old son helped start this?

15 A Now we jump to 1972, okay?

16 Q Well, we can go back and start.

17 A I would rather start from the beginning.
18 But whatever is better for you.

19 Q No, that's fine.

20 A Is he taping now?

21 Q Yes, he is.

22 A I'm sorry.

1 Q That's okay. Go ahead. Why don't you
2 start talking about what happened at liberation.

3 A I was liberated -- by the way, I was born
4 in Amsterdam, Holland. My whole family was murdered.
5 I was liberated by the United States Army, by the
6 104th infantry division, nicknamed the Timberwolves.
7 But when I was liberated, I didn't know who liberated
8 me. I only saw soldiers, American soldiers. I was 17
9 years old and my weight was 70 pounds when liberated.

10 From 1943, April 1943 until April 1945,
11 exactly two years at five different camps as a
12 teenager. I was never a teenager. I don't know what
13 it is to be a teenager, because from 1940, when the
14 Germans invaded my country, then Holland, I was 12
15 years old, and I never had a normal childhood after
16 that. I don't say that to have sympathy, but it
17 affects part of my life.

18 It is also said by professional people that
19 survivors who were in the teens suffered more, not
20 many teenagers survived. In my life, generally
21 speaking, I had a much harder life than people who
22 were already adults in the camp, because the growing

1 years from child to adult I never experienced. I was
2 17 years old but I was already a very old man because
3 of my experience in the concentration camps. I was
4 one year in Auschwitz Birkinau, and that by itself
5 would be enough.

6 I was 70 pounds. I was a cripple. I am a
7 cripple. All my ten toes are cut off. Again, I'm not
8 talking about sympathy or pity. It affects my life.
9 Also, during this interview, there's a possibility
10 that people won't like to hear it or don't agree; but
11 as long as I tell the truth, if people can't handle
12 this, that's not my baby.

13 I also feel very strongly that I have to do
14 the interview as a message to people, to the younger
15 generation born after World War II, and 50 percent of
16 the population of our country are born after 1940. I
17 was liberated in the concentration camp Dora, near
18 Nordhausen, where the V-12 and V-2 rocket factories
19 were underground. That was actually a sub-camp of
20 Buchenwald. Near every big concentration camp, in the
21 area were little sub-camps.

22 Q So you were in a displaced persons --

1 A No, no. I was liberated from the
2 concentration camp. The American soldiers opened the
3 gates of hell, and this they never were trained for.
4 Then --

5 Q What did you observe about the American
6 soldiers and how they reacted?

7 A I mean, I was completely numb, as I said
8 before. I was numb, in a state of shock, from 1940
9 until '72. I didn't have any cause for celebration
10 because my whole family was murdered. I didn't feel
11 any enjoyment, nor emotion. I was dead inside. No
12 feelings. There was no home to go to!

13 But now the American soldiers, on April
14 11th, 1945, one American tank came in the
15 concentration camp with three members of the United
16 States Army, and I was fortunate, I was one of a few
17 survivors. They had a reunion in 1986, my liberators,
18 in South City, in the Airport Hilton, and it was the
19 first time after 41 years that we could say thank you.
20 And the people who liberated me, the first tank, were
21 still alive. And they remembered. That we cried and
22 laughed together goes without saying.

1 Then the next day, on April the 12th, the
2 other Americans came, all American soldiers. I
3 remember, I learned English in high school. I was
4 only a couple of years in high school, and most
5 people, the few people who were in the camps could not
6 speak English, we were all skeletons, the American
7 soldiers, the first thing they did, they did it from
8 the heart, the giving, they gave us all military food,
9 the canned food, but our system couldn't handle it.
10 They never experienced so much inhumanity, to see
11 skeletons. They had a hard time handling it.

12 There were survivors who died of the rich
13 food. But the Americans are not to blame. Later they
14 realized they have to stop giving food. They were
15 trained to fight other soldiers, but they were not
16 prepared for what they saw when they opened the gates.
17 I could not eat, I was too ill.

18 But I do remember that the Americans had
19 Lucky Strike cigarettes, and everybody wanted to have
20 cigarettes, and I was the only one who could speak a
21 little bit of English, so the American soldiers gave
22 me cartons of cigarettes to share with the other

1 fellows, and when I did light the first cigarette I
2 fainted. I remember, I fainted, because I couldn't
3 handle it.

4 The American soldiers, they were very
5 angry. They were in a rage. They wanted to give all
6 the inmates who were in good shape weapons to go after
7 the Germans. Some of the inmates who could walk went
8 to villages and killed Germans. One could say that
9 was cruel, to kill people. But around every
10 village -- I'm sorry, around every concentration camp
11 were villages, and they knew what was going on in the
12 camps.

13 To kill Germans was kind of revenge. I
14 couldn't participate. Otherwise I probably would
15 have.

16 Q What made you unable?

17 A Physically. I couldn't walk. I didn't
18 have any toes.

19 Q So it was physical.

20 A Physical, yes. The American soldiers told
21 the inmates, when you go in the village and you see
22 some of the SS murderers -- they changed to civilian

1 clothes -- let us know. Some inmates went into the
2 villages and recognized the SS murderers. The
3 American soldiers said, don't touch them, bring them
4 in.

5 And they brought them in. And what they
6 did, it was just after the liberation, shortly after
7 the liberation, they told the inmates, the ex-inmates,
8 okay, beat them up. And finally the Americans shot
9 them to death. No trial, nothing, because what they
10 saw justified them to kill the SS.

11 And then the commander, I think that was
12 the ex-Governor of New York, Carey, C-A-R-E-Y, many
13 years ago he was Governor of New York, and I think he
14 was in charge, he said stop, we're now allowed to get
15 out. Then we went to Buchenwald, the main camp.

16 I never saw a doctor. I can't remember.
17 I'm talking about after the liberation. I can't
18 remember ever seeing a doctor, because the war was
19 still continuing. It was April 11th. Many of my
20 liberators were killed afterwards, between the 11th of
21 April and the 8th of May, the end of the war. The war
22 wasn't over yet.

1 So we went to Buchenwald, which was
2 liberated also, I think, April the 11th. Now, in the
3 camp you were always bald. Before the liberation I
4 was very, very ill. My toes were cut off, and I had
5 other illnesses, apparently. I don't remember what it
6 was. For two months my hair was not shaved -- head
7 shaved. So my hair was growing. And it was not
8 allowed.

9 And I remember -- now I go back to before
10 the liberation -- the barber was a Belgian inmate. He
11 said, Dutchman, come down, because you have to have a
12 haircut. I said, I'm too ill. He said, they will
13 beat the hell out of you. I don't care. I'm too ill.
14 I could not physically, and I couldn't care less. So
15 when I was liberated I had hair. As a young child I
16 had a lot of wavy hair, I was always proud of my hair.
17 What I have now is still mine, of course, but I don't
18 have much.

19 So when was liberated I had a little hair
20 and a little wave. So when we arrived in Buchenwald
21 they put us in barracks, after the liberation I'm
22 talking about. Then they had German soldiers, POWs,

1 who had to take care of us. And they were very quiet.
2 Of course, they lost the war, thank God. But they had
3 a kind of fear. But I never realized it until many
4 years after the war. But I remember very well, one of
5 the first things I did -- by that time I only spoke
6 German. Now I can't, and I don't want to, but then I
7 did.

8 So I ordered them around the way they
9 ordered me around. I said, bring me a comb and some
10 soap, whatever you can find, I want to wash my head,
11 and I want to comb my hair, and I want to see a
12 mirror. That was the first time I saw myself in two
13 years. So they brought it to me, and they held up the
14 mirror, and I never forget, the thing I never forget,
15 and I told them -- let me clean it up -- you idiot,
16 higher, higher, I can't see it, are you kind of a nut?
17 But other language, the same that they use to me I use
18 to them.

19 One can say, why do you lower yourself to
20 their level? No, but for two years I only heard
21 expressions as, you dirty Jew, you Jewish pig, you are
22 not human, you are an ant, the little ants are better

1 than you are. We were human garbage in the camp.

2 And I understand it's very hard for you to
3 comprehend, to understand what it was all about, for
4 people who always have lived in freedom and slept in
5 their own bed, and don't know what it is not to be
6 free. I understand that, but you have to try to have
7 some kind of compassion for what people like myself,
8 and I'm not the only one, went through.

9 And then I remember, they put us on the
10 plane. I went back to Holland, now, to the southern
11 part of Holland, it was May 14th, 1945. I have a
12 tremendous memory of dates. May 14th has a special
13 meaning for me. On May 14th, 1940, the war between
14 Germany and Holland was over. Holland was completely
15 occupied.

16 On May 14th, 1943, my father and mother
17 were murdered by the Germans in the extermination camp
18 of Sobibor in Poland. How ironic. I arrived back in
19 Holland on May 14th, 1945. I hope I make sense to
20 you.

21 Q Yes, it does.

22 A We went by plane, and I remember I didn't

1 like to fly. I still don't like to fly. It was a
2 military plane, we were on stretchers, and it went to
3 the southern part of Holland that was liberated in
4 1944. The rest of Holland was liberated May the 5th.

5 Anyway, when we arrived in Holland I did
6 not see people, there was nobody. I repeat myself
7 many times, I know that already, I was in a kind of
8 shock, no feelings, no expectations. I remember there
9 were only people from the Red Cross in ambulances, and
10 they brought us to a hospital. There was nobody to
11 say, welcome home. Nobody.

12 Later, I think I realize why, but -- it was
13 many years later. Then I didn't -- I only remember it
14 happened. I had no feelings. I hope I make sense to
15 you.

16 Q I'm not sure. Do you mean that you just
17 felt forgotten?

18 A Many years later.

19 Q Did you have any feeling?

20 A Then, no, I didn't feel anything.

21 Q When you finally realized why you thought
22 it happened, why was it?

1 A A lot of anger came out, but it was much
2 later in life. But I'm telling you, I'm now back in
3 time -- actually May 14th, when I arrived in Holland,
4 1945. Did I confuse you?

5 Q No.

6 A Please tell me. Because, again, I never
7 talked about it before.

8 Q No, I understand, nobody was there at all.

9 A No. And I am actually visualizing what
10 happened to me, even though I didn't see myself. I'm
11 sorry, what did you say? There was nobody there, no.
12 Ambulances.

13 Q Yes.

14 A Then they brought us to -- I'm talking
15 about us. Not only Jewish people were liberated. The
16 underground fighters, people from Holland who were
17 very ill. Others went by train, but I'm talking only
18 about what happened to me. They brought us to an
19 emergency hospital. There was a school used as a
20 hospital.

21 I never forget, when they put me in a bed,
22 and I couldn't walk, I was on a stretcher, it was a

1 real bed, real pillows, pillowcases, real sheets. I
2 remember, all of us, we only talked German, and I
3 always talked to the nurse, and I called her in
4 German, "schwester," something like that, that means
5 nurse.

6 And she said, you're in Holland, don't you
7 know how to say it in Dutch? Because apparently in
8 the camps we were so brainwashed or a robot or
9 whatever. I don't know if I ever talked Dutch in the
10 camps. I can't remember that part. In camps in
11 Germany and in Poland, I'm talking about. I was also
12 in camps in Holland.

13 But anyway, again, the only people who
14 visited us were -- every day two nuns came, and they
15 knitted for me a pair of slippers. They never talked
16 about religion. They were real good human beings.
17 But I realized later, apparently they wanted to give
18 something from themselves. They knew, not from me,
19 maybe from the doctor, that I didn't have any toes.

20 I was the youngest in the big room, maybe
21 40, 50 guys. And I was a baby. And I also remember
22 the nurses always tucked me in. They tucked me in and

1 gave me a kiss on the cheek because I was a child. I
2 was 17 years old. And I remember the other inmates
3 were jealous, at bedtime. But by the way, I never
4 knew, maybe thinking back -- I had three sisters, one
5 was married, had a baby girl, a husband, of course,
6 who was murdered, and the two other sisters, but I was
7 the youngest. And the other two sisters were not
8 married, always spoiled me.

9 So maybe the sisters who spoiled me, in my
10 mind, in my unconsciousness, were my sisters when I
11 was a little child before the war who spoiled me. Do
12 I make sense to you?

13 Q Yes.

14 A And then something happened, they brought
15 in, in the big room, it was kind of a big room,
16 classroom, actually, but they changed it, put beds in,
17 whatever -- oh, yes, we got German cigarettes, but
18 German POWs who were working downstairs we heard were
19 smoking Camels and Lucky Strike. So the adults, not
20 myself, raised hell. Boy, did they raise hell. Those
21 bastards, and we have the junk?

22 That was right away changed and stopped.

1 They got the junk and we got the good stuff. I didn't
2 raise hell because -- but I remember that it happened.
3 There was so much anger then. But I never realized
4 until many years later what they did to us, the
5 Germans, that is. I mention Germans because I only
6 know about Germans. The people who did it to my
7 family never showed an ID that they're a member of the
8 Nazi party. The Germans, I want to emphasize that.
9 The Germans during World War II.

10 One day they brought in a young man about
11 my age, his whole body was open. We found out he was
12 a Dutch young man who volunteered to fight against the
13 Russians. And he was kind of dying. We could care
14 less. And we raised hell, get the traitor off the
15 room here. And he was always crying and whatever. He
16 was a volunteer for the Germans, who fought the
17 Allies, whatever. We didn't want any part of him.

18 Later we found out that he died and we
19 enjoyed it very much. It sounds inhuman, but he was
20 one of our enemies regardless of his age, because he
21 went voluntarily.

22 Q He was a real volunteer?

1 A Yes. Why -- but the insensitivity started
2 there. Why to put such a person in the same room with
3 all Jews and non-Jew alike, physically handicapped, we
4 were all physically handicapped. You don't put such a
5 person together with us. Do I make sense to you?

6 Q Yes, it makes sense to me.

7 A But, again, of course, the doctors and the
8 nurses, they didn't realize what we went through.
9 Now, then one day a young lady came, and she was a
10 Jewish young girl, apparently she was maybe my age, a
11 couple of years younger, she was in hiding with her
12 parents, and she made me -- and I read this, this is
13 now 45 years old, "Nederlands, Buchenwald," with the
14 flag from the Netherlands, and she wrote on the back,
15 "Please remember me," and her name, Ruth Winter -- as
16 the climate, winter -- and her address.

17 I didn't know how she knew about me. I
18 don't know. Oh, it was announced on the radio, I'm
19 sorry. It was announced on the radio when survivors
20 came back in Holland, the names, and we heard our own
21 names being announced. Maybe that's how she knew. I
22 don't know. And I will never throw it away. That's

1 very touching.

2 People who visited us were people from the
3 neighborhood. One day a lady from the Dutch Red Cross
4 came. I laugh about it now. What she brought us was
5 pencils and paper. Just what we needed. Pencils and
6 paper? Insensitive. Besides the two nuns, nobody of
7 any religion. No Rabbi ever showed up, no priest,
8 nobody. Only the two nuns came and stood for a couple
9 of minutes, every bed, how are you doing.

10 And for me they made the slippers. And I
11 needed slippers because I couldn't walk in shoes. I
12 couldn't walk at all then. But here maybe my anger is
13 slowly coming out, and that's all right. I let it
14 come out. Why not? It was pushed down long enough.

15 Then one day -- my mother had three
16 sisters. Everybody was murdered except one sister who
17 was married to a non-Jew. He was the principal of a
18 high school. During the war he was not allowed to
19 stay principal, they kicked him out. He was
20 non-Jewish, but his wife was Jewish. They had one
21 daughter. One day she came with a girlfriend. How
22 she survived, I never asked, I don't know, to visit

1 me.

2 But thinking back about it and looking back
3 to that time, I don't think I had any feelings. Oh,
4 they were sweet. They came, I think, by bike, or they
5 got some transportation, I don't know. A tremendous
6 distance from Amsterdam to the southern part of
7 Holland. It was very sweet, but I didn't feel
8 anything. I hope I make sense to you.

9 No hugging, no kissing, no holding hands,
10 no tears, not from my side. Just dead, completely
11 dead. It's hard maybe to understand or to comprehend
12 that a person can be completely without feelings.

13 Q I think probably it is hard for a lot of
14 people to comprehend it, but I do comprehend it.

15 A I was told many, many years later, it was a
16 part of my survival, in my unconsciousness, you block
17 everything out, so completely in the freezer, and a
18 big fence around me. But anyway, then I had my 18th
19 birthday in that hospital.

20 Q Before you move on, did you ever see your
21 family again, your mother's sister and her daughter?

22 A Oh, yes.

1 Q You did. Okay.

2 A As I said before, people did not visit me.

3 It still amazes me. Some of the fellows could walk.

4 By the way, we did not have any clothes. We still had

5 our inmate outfits, mind you. So they went, they were

6 allowed in daytime to go walk around in that city.

7 The city is -- have you ever heard about the big

8 Philips Corporation, P-H-I-L-I-P-S, a giant nowadays?

9 In that city, Eindhoven, E-I-N-D-H-O-V-E-N.

10 And they were allowed to walk, and they

11 were walking in the pajama camp outfit. They got

12 presents, everything, the population was fantastic,

13 and they brought it for us, too; but people,

14 officially nobody visited us.

15 But anyway, then I left, I couldn't walk,

16 or hardly walk. I had to learn to walk again, because

17 when you have toes, I think -- I don't even remember

18 anymore, I presume you go that way when you walk, but

19 I walk on my heels. There's the foot. So I have -- I

20 had to learn to walk.

21 Q And you still walk that way, right?

22 A Oh, yes. To keep my balance.

1 Q Does that cause you other problems, like
2 with your back?

3 A No. My feet. The older I get, the worse
4 it gets. If you want to hear more about that later,
5 I'll tell you. I don't want to be rude, but otherwise
6 I will lose it, because I never talked about it
7 before, so it's not easy to keep the story straight.

8 Q Okay. I'm sorry.

9 A Oh, no, that's okay. My feet didn't want
10 to heal. They were amputated, my toes, but still junk
11 was coming out. But I learned how to put the bandages
12 on. The doctors who looked at it, yes, once they
13 found a little bone, because my toes were amputated
14 with a pair of scissors, not a regular amputation, and
15 I was conscious. That took place in concentration
16 camp Dora.

17 It was in the camp of course, so they took
18 a pair of scissors and cut it off. Apparently there
19 were still bones left. So once I remember a bone was
20 growing out, out of the amputation, and then the
21 doctors looked at it and pulled it out. Yes, that
22 happened once.

1 So then I had to learn to walk as a little
2 child. Thank God for the beautiful nuns, they gave
3 me -- made me the slippers, otherwise I couldn't -- no
4 shoes, of course. So I walked in a way, held by
5 nurses, on slippers, on my heels. I was scared to
6 death to put my foot down. I walked that way. Now I
7 walk that way.

8 I went in an ambulance, and I went to my
9 aunt and uncle and their daughter to live. Now, let
10 me first tell you, the people meant well, but I was
11 then 18 years old. Under the law in Holland then, you
12 are a minor until you're 21. In age I was 18, but in
13 experience in life I was maybe 50 or 200, or 500 years
14 old, I don't know. So they thought, Eddy is back,
15 he's 18 years old, and we treat him like any other 18
16 year old. But that didn't work out.

17 Let me explain what I mean. The
18 insensitivity of people, and they're not bad people,
19 let me emphasize it. My aunt was a sick woman, she
20 had diabetes. They treated me the same as, say, their
21 daughter, who is 18 years old. You have to be home by
22 bedtime, whatever.

1 And they meant well, but here, I who came
2 back from death and hell, I don't want to be boxed in.
3 I wanted to breathe. But they didn't realize that
4 they cut off my breathing. Not to hurt me, but they
5 didn't know. They saw an 18-year-old kid.

6 I didn't stay there long, because they
7 couldn't handle me. But while I stayed there, they
8 never, never asked -- no, they did ask me. Did you
9 see anyone of the family, aunts, uncles? I said, no.
10 They never asked me. In the hospital nobody asked me.
11 And there the beginning of my anger building up came
12 out, after '72, pain and anger and rage.

13 My own family, aunt and uncle, they never
14 asked, Eddy, do you mind to talk about it? Maybe I
15 would have said, no, I don't want to talk about it.
16 Okay.

17 Q You mean do you want to talk about it, not
18 do you mind.

19 A Whatever.

20 Q I was just confused for a second.

21 A They did not ask me, Eddy, we would like to
22 know more, do you think you can talk about it, will

1 you tell us what happened to you.

2 Q They didn't want to know?

3 A No, no. It was never asked. Later I
4 realized, on account of my counseling that I have,
5 why, and it angers me tremendously. Maybe I don't
6 make sense to you. They did not ask me any questions,
7 what happened to me, whatever. They didn't even ask
8 me how come you don't have any toes. They knew I
9 didn't have any toes.

10 Okay. Then I didn't realize it. I wished
11 they would have asked me, not only them but other
12 people. I would maybe be a different person now.
13 Thank God, now, if you take the Vietnam veterans,
14 thank God, they deserve treatment, the delayed stress
15 syndrome, they get treatment, psychiatry, whatever. I
16 never heard about psychiatry, or go to a doctor. So
17 everything stayed frozen.

18 Now, on account that I was a handicapped
19 person, I went to the department -- disability
20 department to ask for a disability payment. Now, let
21 me make it clear, I never in my life asked money
22 because I think people owe me money or they owe it to

1 me on account that I am a survivor. No way. I'm too
2 proud for that.

3 But I thought -- I was a Dutchman then,
4 right, I was a kid, when it happened to me, when I
5 came back I was still a kid. My uncle, by the way,
6 was appointed by the court as official guardian. My
7 aunt and uncle told me, your father left money behind,
8 which I didn't know, and you have to pay us every week
9 20 guilders, say, \$20, but you don't work, of course,
10 because you're sick, and when you're 21 years old --
11 we wrote everything down, they were honest people,
12 don't misunderstand me.

13 I hope I make myself clear. So they
14 charged me \$20 a week as a boarder, and they took it
15 from the money that they had from my father, do I make
16 sense?

17 Q Yes.

18 A And when I was 21 -- they were honest and
19 good people, but again, no warmth, no hug, just
20 nothing. It was cold. Maybe I was cold too. I don't
21 know. Maybe my unconscious, I drove people away. I
22 don't know.

1 Q Was this new after the war? Before the war
2 were they warmer?

3 A I was only a kid.

4 Q So you don't remember?

5 A No. I remember them before the war, but I
6 was not the same child. They thought they would see
7 the same child that they knew when I was 12 years old.
8 They expected the same, apparently. And the person
9 who came back from the death and hell was a very old
10 man at age 17. If I would be in their shoes maybe I
11 would have been -- acted the same way as they did. Do
12 I make sense to you?

13 Q Yes. It does.

14 A Does it answer your question?

15 Q Yes. Did you find it just as insensitive
16 that they would charge this board from you?

17 A Not then. Again, I was in a state of
18 shock, no feelings. I couldn't care less. I didn't
19 have any feelings. It didn't touch me. Much later --

20 Q Did that bother you later, then?

21 A Oh, yes. A lot of things. But I will talk
22 about it later, if you don't mind. No, no. I was

1 still a robot in a way. But I never recognized myself
2 then as a robot. I was told years later, in
3 counseling.

4 So I went to the department of disability
5 and I wanted to have disability benefits. I'll never
6 forget, it was an elderly gentleman. I told him my
7 background and that I could hardly walk, only in
8 slippers, how I went there I don't remember. And the
9 man started to cry. He said, I want to prove to you
10 that you can't get any money. He wanted to prove it
11 to me.

12 And I remember he opened a big book, the
13 article, whatever, in the year 1900 whatever, if you
14 never paid in you can never collect. And he cried.
15 He said he was an underground fighter and he saved
16 people. It hurt him so much to tell me, nothing for
17 you. Again, I didn't have any pain.

18 Then at the beginning of the war, my father
19 and myself gave to our neighbors for safekeeping, I
20 helped my father carrying, in 1941, beginning of
21 '42 -- '41, '42, carrying all kinds of stuff to
22 neighbors, who we thought were honest and decent

1 people, in case when we come back. It was silverware,
2 but also my bike. So after the war my aunt and I -- I
3 was walking on slippers, I didn't have any shoes, I
4 never heard about orthopaedic shoes. I went with
5 public transportation.

6 So we went to see the people, and then I
7 saw a beautiful carpet from my mom and dad on the
8 floor. First of all, after they took us away in 1943,
9 before the Germans came to plunder our home and send
10 it to Germany, neighbors, it happened all over the
11 place, went into the homes of the Jewish people and
12 grabbed whatever they could. I don't say they're bad
13 people, but that's what they did.

14 So I saw the carpet. So I asked them, not
15 even about the carpet, I wanted to have my bike back.
16 Then there was a big fight. Not physically. The
17 oldest son, who later became a member of the clergy,
18 mind you, worked part-time for the police, and he
19 threatened me. Here I'm just back from hell and
20 death. If I don't leave their home, they will get the
21 police.

22 In other words, he'll put me back in jail.

1 Here I am, just 18 years old, emotionally a cripple,
2 one can see, physically a cripple. Besides being a
3 cripple, the experience. I only came to get what was
4 legally mine. Finally he gave me only my bike back,
5 but they took off the tires, would you believe that?
6 The tires of the bike. They were very religious
7 Christian people.

8 Now, I have to jump a couple of years
9 later. In the same period, '41, '42, I helped my
10 married sister bring all kinds of stuff to neighbors
11 for safekeeping, okay? A lot of Jewish people thought
12 they had neighbors they could trust.

13 I also went there because I was close to my
14 married sister, especially on account of their little
15 baby, who was murdered when she was one year old, but
16 I always loved her very much, even though I was only,
17 when she was born, 14 years old.

18 I went to the neighbors of my sister's, and
19 here is what they told me. When your sister brought
20 the stuff she told us, don't give it to anybody except
21 to us, when we come back. I said, I brought it over
22 with my sister myself, because I know you, when I

1 visited my sister we visited you next door. Very
2 religious people. I never got it back.

3 I've told now about people who took
4 advantage, but then my father, who had a wholesale
5 business in food and vegetables for many, many years
6 in Amsterdam, had clients, of course. And as a child
7 I was always working, and really working, with my
8 father in the business. He said, you can visit, but
9 you have to work.

10 On account that I helped him, until 1941, I
11 was born in 1927, so as far as I know I was always --
12 on the wholesale market, not retail. We started to
13 work in the middle of the night. Anyway, I always had
14 to carry heavy crates. Maybe it helped me survive,
15 somebody told me years ago, that I had such strong
16 arms, I could do work. I don't know.

17 But he had two clients who I knew very
18 well, and in the old country, you would never call
19 older people by their first name, you never call them
20 Joe. It was always Uncle Joe and Aunt Mary, for
21 instance. Never the first name. Oh, are you kidding?
22 No way. So I remember them as Uncle So and So and

1 Uncle -- so they saw me growing up.

2 And one came to me one day and he said,
3 Eddy, your father gave me money, and I want to give it
4 back to you. I didn't know about the money. I was
5 only a kid. My father never told me about it. I
6 said, that's beautiful. Do you have children? He
7 said, I had a son, and he was killed after the war.
8 And he started crying, because I wanted to give
9 something to him as a thank you. He was not a
10 religious person. He was not Jewish, but he was a
11 real human being.

12 Then about the same time, another client of
13 my dad brought me jewelry from my parents. I didn't
14 know he was hiding it. He was not Jewish. Both, as
15 far as I remember, I got to know them quite well,
16 never went to church.

17 So going to church -- maybe there are
18 people who don't like it, how can you say that, but
19 going to a synagogue or church doesn't make somebody
20 good or bad. It's inside of people. And I
21 experienced that. And I emphasize, in our synagogue
22 or church -- I believe for myself God is around me. I

1 don't go to a place to worship, I don't have to.

2 But being a church-going person, two
3 families, they stole. The other two never went to
4 church, they were honest. Later I realized that going
5 to a synagogue or church doesn't make anybody good,
6 regardless of how much they give to the church or
7 synagogue. But anyway, I got my bike back. I hope I
8 make myself clear. I got my bike back without tires.

9 But I didn't have an occupation nor
10 education. Only two years of high school. I couldn't
11 go to school. I had to make a living, but I didn't
12 have an occupation. Then I went to the Salvation Army
13 and got second hand shoes, because I had to have
14 shoes, and I put cotton to fill up the shoes, where
15 the toes are supposed to be, and all kinds of layers.
16 I had to be very careful because I could feel the
17 stones through the soles. But I had to walk.

18 The Government of Holland then had the
19 philosophy, the Jews came back but they were not
20 political prisoners. We're not underground fighters.
21 There is no law for them, okay? Later, maybe -- all
22 the accumulated anger, maybe I make myself clear now,

1 but it happened after the war, it was building up, but
2 I never knew it was building up because it was not
3 there, the feeling, but it was still building up. Do
4 I make sense so far?

5 Q Yes, I understand. You can have lots and
6 lots of feelings and not feel any of them.

7 A Nothing. Right. I didn't feel anything.
8 I wanted to have the business from my father back. In
9 '41 a Dutch German sympathizer came and stole Jewish
10 businesses. Not only from my dad, from other Jewish
11 people too. He stole private money, business money,
12 and kicked people out. He was a robber, a thief. And
13 he became a German sympathizer on account of making
14 money off the stolen Jewish businesses.

15 After the war I wanted to have the business
16 back. But I was not trained or knew anything about
17 doing business, let me emphasize that. But I thought,
18 I'm the sole beneficiary of my family, I can prove
19 that, my family was murdered. It was not easy. I had
20 to take a loan. The Dutch government created the
21 department of reinstatement of justice. I always
22 called it continuation of injustice department.

1 One of the reasons I talk about it today is
2 about justice. Not about money. Justice. I fight
3 for justice. I will not accept injustice, under no
4 conditions will I compromise with justice, because I
5 know what it means to live under a system where you
6 don't have justice. I fight for my rights, because
7 they took everything, my rights, away.

8 They took away my civil rights, legal
9 rights and human rights, and my human dignity during
10 the war. So I made up my mind, when I came out of the
11 freezer, to fight for it. But apparently I started
12 fighting then, but I never realized it. If I would
13 have been open then, I would be another person today.

14 But anyway, I had to go to a lawyer, we had
15 to -- and yes, they gave me the business back. Then
16 what happened? The Dutch German sympathizers were
17 punished in court to go to jail, many of them. But
18 slowly but surely they all came out, because, quote
19 unquote, they were ill. They became ill, got a piece
20 of paper from a doctor, okay, and they were released.

21 And they got their own businesses back.
22 But the Dutch government appointed people to run them,

1 to be in charge of the business. So the thief who
2 stole my father's business and private money was
3 allowed to have his business back after he was feeling
4 better, mind you, he was never punished, he was never
5 required to pay the money back to me, never. That's
6 why I called it the continuation of injustice office.
7 It was more justice for the wrong ones.

8 I realized still today, it got stronger,
9 we, the innocent ones, we become the guilty ones, and
10 the guilty ones became the innocent ones. Do I make
11 sense, what I want to say?

12 Q Yes, except I'm a little bit confused.

13 A I will make it clear. The Dutch government
14 appointed a caretaker while they were put in jail,
15 right, punished for what they did, the Dutch German
16 sympathizers, right?

17 Q Right.

18 A After the war, they went to jail. Say, a
19 sentence of three years or whatever. But after a
20 couple of months they were freed.

21 Q Because of the doctors?

22 A Oh, yes. And money, of course.

1 Q Now, were they sent to jail because you
2 prosecuted them?

3 A No. I didn't, because I didn't know the
4 man then. Apparently others did. Maybe he did the
5 same as what he did in Amsterdam. He came from
6 another city, Rotterdam. Have you heard about
7 Rotterdam? The biggest port in Europe.

8 Q Yes, my grandparents sailed from there.

9 A Right. I left from Rotterdam to go to the
10 United States, that's right. Now, so that man was
11 allowed to work in his own business again, a similar
12 business to what my father had, but he was not a free
13 man. He was not in charge, only a manager. He was
14 not the owner. The Dutch government appointed
15 somebody, a caretaker, say, for two, three, four
16 years, as part of his punishment. But he was
17 managing.

18 Q And this was what part of your father's
19 business --

20 A Let me make myself clear. He had his own
21 business in Rotterdam. The man who stole my father's
22 business had his own wholesale business in Rotterdam.

1 But he stole businesses in Amsterdam.

2 Q And incorporated them into his business?

3 A I don't know. But he stole it. No, he
4 kept it and he ran in Amsterdam during the war, and in
5 Rotterdam everything flourished because he made a lot
6 of money, besides stealing a fortune, not only from my
7 dad but from other people too. Business money and
8 private accounts. Do I make sense to you?

9 Q Yes.

10 A You're sure?

11 Q Yes.

12 A If I don't make sense, it's my mistake,
13 okay? So anyway, he was allowed to go back to his own
14 business in Rotterdam, okay? But he was not the
15 owner. Somebody appointed by the court was the owner.
16 After the war -- how do I explain it? During the war
17 there was no free trade in Holland. Every wholesale
18 dealer got a percentage from what he had before the
19 war, because there was hardly any food during the war.

20 It was not actually free trade, because
21 retail is more than happy to pay to get some food for
22 the people, right? A big organization was formed

1 during the war, I found that out after the war. So
2 he -- you didn't have to do anything. You got so much
3 business. Automatically the next morning the
4 retailers came and you didn't have to say, do you want
5 to buy, I have beautiful cauliflowers. There was no
6 business. There was hardly any food, especially at
7 the end of the war, but they made good money.

8 So the thief, the Dutch thief made money on
9 account of what my father sold, from '35 to '40, for
10 instance. From that total of what you sold, you get
11 so much percentage is your part, is your part, to be
12 fair to all the wholesale dealers. Do I make sense?

13 Q Yes. They just gave you the same
14 proportion.

15 A Correct. And I think they took the income
16 tax, whatever. It was complicated. I found out after
17 the war. But what did I know? So after the war when
18 I came back, there was money accumulated in my
19 father's business, but it was stolen by the Dutch -- I
20 say "bastard," okay? I hope that's acceptable. But
21 he made money on what my father sold from '35 to 1940,
22 before the war.

1 So after the war, after going through the
2 lawyer again, I didn't have any money to pay a lawyer,
3 I got money that was accumulated from 1945 to 1947,
4 after the war. I'm talking now after the war. Food,
5 there was still hardly any food. Same organization
6 still existed, but now in a free country, all of
7 Holland was liberated in '45.

8 So they gave me an amount of money that was
9 due me as the beneficiary of my dad on what he sold
10 between 1935 and '40, right? And he, the bastard, the
11 thief, made money from 1941 to '45, from my father,
12 because he stole the business. So I got the money.
13 It was not a lot of money, but money.

14 Then I got a letter, it was unbelievable,
15 in my mind, in my opinion, from the man who was in
16 charge of his business in Rotterdam. Mr. Wynschenk,
17 you owe this corporation the money you received after
18 the war in '47, '48. I said, what? That's money due,
19 what my father sold between -- okay?

20 I couldn't believe it. And I said right
21 away, no, I'm not going to pay a penny. I have to pay
22 the thief who stole everything from my father and my

1 mom, private money, business money, stole everything?
2 I went to a lawyer. I said, I'm not going to pay. He
3 said, here's what you do. Pay him \$10 a month and
4 then stop. And then you get letters, and then you pay
5 him again.

6 I said, I don't want to pay. But I was not
7 strong as I am today inside. I was threatened, mind
8 you, if I don't pay they would take the furniture
9 away. I was married in 1949. History repeated
10 itself, because the Germans took our furniture away.
11 Here in '49, they wanted to do the same, but it was
12 the Dutch government. The guy was appointed by the
13 Dutch government. Maybe he was during the war also a
14 German sympathizer. I don't know. I never met the
15 man.

16 Now, I'm going to tell you what people
17 don't like to hear, maybe. I was just married in '49.
18 And it happened about 1950, whatever. I hope I make
19 sense so far. I knew where the business was in
20 Rotterdam. I lived in Amsterdam. I never met that
21 bastard, I never met anyone. I found his address and
22 I told my wife, I'm going to kill that man.

1 She said, you can't kill people. No, you
2 can't kill people. But I said it. My father-in-law
3 and my wife talked me out of it. But I went. He
4 never met me before. He was general manager in his
5 own business, the thief, okay? So I never forget it,
6 when I walked in there, I said, where is the thief and
7 war criminal? I spell the name for you, B-I-J-L,
8 pronounced "bile."

9 And I went at a time that was a very busy
10 time, on purpose. And people came to me, you want to
11 talk to Mr. Bijl? I said, yes. Where is he? I
12 yelled. I didn't realize it was already anger coming
13 out. I didn't realize that.

14 So they brought me to the office, and they
15 introduced me, and the guy wanted to shake my hand.
16 No. I said, you know who I am? He said, no. He
17 said, no. I said, I am the son of Moses Wynschenk.
18 You stole everything from my father. Business money,
19 private money. And now you want to have all the money
20 back?

21 You're lucky, because my wife and
22 father-in-law talked me out of it, otherwise I would

1 kill you right now, because in a way you helped kill
2 my father. My father worked for 25, 30 years in his
3 business, and stealing his business was the beginning
4 of my father's end. I realized it many years later in
5 life.

6 He said right away, Mr. Wynschenk, quiet
7 down. I said, wait a minute. This is not the war
8 anymore. I was very aggressive. I yelled. I
9 remember that. He said, I am not free -- and it was
10 true -- I am only the general manager here, but in a
11 couple of years I am free. I promise you, if I am
12 free I write you a letter that I don't want to have
13 your money. And let me say, he kept his word.

14 Now, justice. I had to pay him. I never
15 got back what he stole from my father. Either a
16 dollar or 10,000, I don't care; but the stealing, the
17 plundering, because they stole everything from us in
18 the war, again and again. But the stealing continued
19 after the war in a free country, Holland.

20 Now, I started to get my father's business
21 back. I had to go to court to fight it. And I opened
22 a business. But I could hardly walk, and I failed. I

1 went bankrupt, because I was 18, 19 years old. I
2 never did any business. I helped my dad as a kid. I
3 didn't know business. But I didn't know -- I thought
4 I knew, but I didn't. And I hardly had any money. I
5 didn't go bankrupt. I paid all the debts and then
6 closed up.

7 And I remember, I named the business still
8 the same as if my father had been alive, not my name,
9 in honor of my father, and in memory of my dad.

10 But I didn't have any occupation. And
11 there were no organizations, be it Jewish or
12 non-Jewish, that we could go to or I could go to, and
13 I'm not talking about money, to ask for help, for a
14 job or whatever. The only thing I got after the war
15 was one package from the Dutch Red Cross.

16 I had a close friend after the war who was
17 with me in the camp, I lost sight of him but we met
18 again, he was my age, and I found out last week that
19 he passed away a couple of years ago. I am now 62, so
20 maybe he was 59. He lost half a leg and half a foot
21 in the camps.

22 And I remember we went to a Jewish

1 organization in 19 -- oh, let me see -- '48, '49.
2 They had all clothes from the American Jewish people.
3 Now, we hardly had any clothes, because we came back
4 naked, only our inmate outfit. So we went there not
5 to expect an expensive tailor-made suit, but they had
6 only rags.

7 In the camps we walked in rags. Again, we
8 did not expect beautiful clothes, but decent clothes.
9 Myself, I would never give to the Salvation Army junk.
10 Either we give decent clothes or we throw it away.
11 Human beings are human beings, maybe because of what
12 my wife and myself experienced in life, in World War
13 II.

14 So we were outraged. But I needed clothes.
15 And my anger was still -- was not there. I picked out
16 an Army coat, from the United States Army, but they
17 painted it dark blue. It was warm, heavy. Ugly, but
18 beautiful, warm, heavy coat. The rest was rags.
19 Apparently in our own unconsciousness we didn't want
20 to have rags anymore. Again, we did not expect
21 expensive, beautiful clothes. No. Decent. There's a
22 difference between decent and rags.

1 The American Jewish people listened to that
2 and said, what does the survivor expect, we give him
3 diamonds? No. If you give you give with your heart,
4 but don't give rags.

5 Do I make sense? You can feel now the
6 anger building up, but it never came out. I was in
7 boarding homes, I was under 21, my aunt and uncle put
8 me from one boarding home to another boarding home.
9 Why? I don't know. I never asked, because they made
10 the payments to the person in charge of the boarding
11 homes. I was in about six or seven boarding homes in
12 about four and a half years --

13 Q Now --

14 A -- from '45 to '49. I never realized how
15 much pain I had from that until many years after the
16 war, when I opened up. I come back to that every
17 time. Because since 1943 I never had a normal home
18 life, and in 1940 they took us away. My normal life
19 stopped in 1940. My aunt and uncle never had the
20 common sense to say, listen, we have some money from
21 your dad, but why don't you go on a little vacation,
22 go out with girls -- I never knew what girls were.

1 You come back at 17. I never know what holding hands
2 or kissing or dating was.

3 In 1940 when I was a 12-year-old, I became
4 an old man. So I paid a price for it, I know. Nobody
5 can change it. I never had the forming years, that
6 parents nowadays say, in a normal life, "My
7 17-year-old, he drives or she drives me nuts." I
8 never had that. I mean, I also never had sexual
9 relationships, didn't know what sex was. You
10 interview me, and I want to be open, I have nothing to
11 hide, and thank God nowadays we can talk about sex.
12 But I didn't know.

13 My aunt and uncle should have said to me,
14 okay, we make a reservation in a summer place,
15 whatever, in the summer of 1945, right, when I came
16 back, and stayed there for a couple of weeks, and with
17 money from your dad we pay for that. No, there was no
18 rest in between. There was no time to become human
19 again. And again, apparently I fought for survival,
20 but I didn't realize. After the war, I had to keep
21 fighting for survival.

22 I always said, the Holocaust for me will

1 never stop, until I die. The Holocaust is still in
2 me. Somebody said, you can take the Jew out of the
3 camp, but the camp never out of a Jew. Maybe other
4 survivors don't agree or don't feel it, but I agree
5 with it, because I feel it very strongly.

6 So I never had a vacation. I needed
7 special shoes, orthopaedic shoes. I had to fight with
8 the Dutch government until 1953, '54, that I had to
9 sign a paper that they only gave me one pair of shoes.
10 Go to an orthopaedic shoemaker and we pay for it.
11 This is only once. The rest of your life, never come
12 back. And I never asked for money, never asked for
13 favors. But I needed orthopaedic shoes. I could
14 hardly walk.

15 I hope I make sense. It's not for
16 sympathy, but it's a fact of my life. In 1945, the
17 Dutch government, and I gave them credit, made a
18 special offer to underground fighters who were in
19 concentration camps, caught by the Germans, who came
20 back, they were treated fantastically, deservedly so,
21 when they came back maybe as much a wreck as I was,
22 and aftereffects, whatever.

1 I was in the hospital after the war
2 together with many of them. They deserved everything
3 they get. But for Jewish survivors, there was nothing
4 at all. It's hard to comprehend, to understand.

5 I hope I make sense to you. There is
6 bitterness, yes. Anger, yes, a lot of anger. Let us
7 give the guy \$1,000 a week, I'm not talking about
8 that. There are other ways. For instance, if I could
9 have gone back to school and the Government said,
10 okay, we give you \$20 a week so you can pay the
11 boarding home, then maybe I could finish my education,
12 because without a high school diploma it's hard to get
13 a job.

14 So I failed in my father's business. I was
15 out of the camp, 18 years old. How I even tried it is
16 unbelievable to me, that I even tried it, when I look
17 back on it. But I didn't have an occupation. So I
18 worked in a factory, in a leather factory, and had to
19 stand the whole day on my feet. But I did. And my
20 feet were swollen and my amputation was still not
21 healed.

22 But then, in the old fashioned way you

1 didn't get a paycheck, you got a little brown bag, say
2 you earned 25 guilders or \$10, whatever, you put it in
3 a little brown bag, on a Saturday they give you that
4 money. I worked five and a half days a week, the same
5 as Americans then. There was no check, nothing. I
6 was a minor, not allowed to handle money.

7 I was in a boarding home on one side of the
8 city. My aunt and uncle were on the other side. I
9 had to borrow money for public transportation to bring
10 that little brown bag that I earned, they turned
11 around and gave me two guilders and 50 cents pocket
12 money. If I wanted to go to a movie, I didn't have
13 enough money. Even when I started realizing there is
14 such a thing as girls in the world, you know, but you
15 can't take a girl out for a cup of coffee. I didn't
16 have any money.

17 So it was building up in me. Then I did
18 something, at a tremendous, good boarding house, but I
19 could not handle it anymore. Depression from my aunt
20 and uncle, they treated me as a little child. I was
21 choking. I went in hiding. After the war, I went in
22 hiding. I made a big mistake. I made a lot of

1 mistakes in my life.

2 I had money accumulated somehow, and I got
3 a cab, I ordered a cab with an open roof, for
4 everybody to see. I don't know why I did it. And I
5 left. Everybody could see that I left, went to the
6 railroad station in Amsterdam, and went to a friend, a
7 survivor who lived in another part of Holland, and
8 went in hiding. Mind you, in hiding.

9 One day, the police came. What apparently
10 happened, the guardian, my uncle, went to the juvenile
11 police and said, he's gone. So they were looking for
12 me. I didn't commit a crime, but I was in hiding,
13 goodbye. And I remembered -- I had to come back. And
14 then I had a long conversation with the inspector of
15 the police. And when I talked, the man cried. He
16 said, I can't blame you what you did, I would have
17 tried to go in hiding in the war. But after the war?

18 Also, many years later I found out that
19 somehow, some way, people who want to be good to me, I
20 pushed away, people who wanted to be warm and good.
21 Later I learned through counseling, it was normal,
22 even though it was not nice. I didn't realize it,

1 because goodness in people, I lost -- in the camps, if
2 people, certain people want you to have some extra
3 bread or whatever, there was always, hey, why? What
4 is behind it? Why nice?

5 The Germans also use the tactic all over
6 the place, whoever comes in the railroad station at
7 10:00 in the morning gets extra bread. In the Warsaw
8 uprising in 1943, you remember, they used it all over
9 the place.

10 So when people were good to you, apparently
11 in my unconsciousness, hey, wait a minute, that's not
12 kosher, go away. So I pushed -- where I could I made
13 up for it, but after the war a lot of good people I
14 pushed away, on account -- and I didn't realize why I
15 did it. I was still in the camp. I was told, you're
16 still in the camp.

17 Now, do I go to slow or too fast? Do I
18 make sense?

19 Q No, you make sense.

20 A Any questions?

21 Q Well, I'm kind of interested in, how did
22 you manage to do those jobs when you didn't have any

1 toes?

2 A I didn't have any choice. I had to make a
3 living.

4 Q How did you get support eventually so you
5 could support yourself?

6 A I don't know what you mean. Until age 21 I
7 was a child under law, right? So I could not buy a
8 shirt or a handkerchief. They bought everything.
9 They meant well, my aunt and uncle, okay? In their
10 mind they did exactly what the law told them to do.
11 But there was no love or understanding.

12 Maybe I would have done the same if I had
13 been in their position. So people say, hey, you walk
14 funny. And I remember saying, I don't have any toes.
15 Nobody ever asked, how come. After the war people
16 asked me, I'm so and so, Jewish, I heard you are a
17 survivor, did you know my aunt, uncle, blah, blah,
18 blah. These are normal questions. And I have to say
19 no.

20 Nobody, Jew and non-Jew alike in Holland,
21 ever asked me, over all the years, I lived in Holland
22 from '45 to '56, do you mind talking about it? Can I

1 ask you questions what happened? Nobody.

2 I was told, the good Jews were murdered and
3 the bad ones came back. Apparently you survived
4 because you did terrible things in the camps. Oh,
5 yes. You came back, Jew, but you better shut up,
6 you're lucky to be alive, don't make any waves. The
7 non-Jews told me that. You're kind of shocked, right?

8 Q I'm very shocked.

9 A I can see it. Yes, I was shocked then.
10 Now I feel angry. By the way, in a way this is still
11 the same here, but I'll tell you later. Anyway, it
12 was my country then. Again, I never asked for, please
13 help me with money. No, no. I want to have a chance
14 to live life. They bottled me up. Justice, I never,
15 never, ever got justice. Till today, never.

16 So nobody asked. Maybe, and I repeat
17 myself, maybe I would have said, I don't want to talk
18 about it. That's fine. But looking back so many
19 years, if they had have asked me, I would have been
20 different maybe today. I would have started talking
21 about it, slowly but surely, the same as we talk, and
22 as we did eight or nine months ago. And I would be

1 inside a different person.

2 Nowadays you hear people say, oh, 45 years
3 after the war. They don't know. Thank God they don't
4 know. But don't kick me, don't minimize me as a human
5 being, because -- I'm easily angered, of course I am.
6 I talk now the same way, the first time ever I talk
7 about that part, as when I go to schools and
8 universities or wherever, radio, if I am invited. I
9 address myself -- you address yourself when you talk.
10 Yes, I have nothing to hide.

11 In 1948 -- so I worked in a factory, in a
12 leather factory. In 1948, when I became 21 years old,
13 18th of July, 1948, I was a free man. They gave me
14 all their papers, your father gave you so much money,
15 said my aunt and uncle, and we spent so much on
16 underwear, so much on socks, and all receipts. They
17 were beautiful people, they were honest. Only they
18 were not warm. No love.

19 You know what I did? I quit my job, and I
20 became an alcoholic, because I wanted to die. By
21 being an alcoholic I wanted to commit suicide. I
22 better tell you, I tell the younger generation when I

1 go to schools, I don't want to live anymore.
2 Apparently in my unconsciousness I couldn't handle to
3 be alone. I never had a role model in life.

4 In normal life, a parent can be a role
5 model, a brother, a sister, an aunt, an uncle,
6 whatever. And that is the price teenager survivors
7 pay -- all survivors pay a price, but we pay a heavier
8 price, in my judgment, because we were children, but
9 we were never allowed to be children. Only the age of
10 children.

11 So I became alcoholic, and spent money, oh,
12 my gosh, I went out with girls. Finally I started
13 going out with girls. I was wild, I could care less.
14 Working, no way. And one man, he kicked me. Not
15 physically. He kicked my behind. And I fought with
16 him, with my mouth. He never asked me what happened
17 in the past. He knew I had come back from the camps.
18 It was an expression, you came back from the camps.

19 And he hit me. And I accepted his hitting.

20 Q How did he hit you?

21 A By talking to me. It was the first time
22 ever -- he was kind of a stranger, who talked to me.

1 Q About the camps?

2 A No, about life. Yes. Not about the camps.
3 He knew I came back from the camps. He knew I didn't
4 have any toes.

5 For instance, before the war, in Europe,
6 the sport was and is soccer, you know that, right?
7 Here also, of course, but not as big. Here it is
8 baseball and football. So I grew up a soccer player,
9 and I wasn't a bad one. I don't say a good one. I
10 was fast as a kid. Then the man who kicked me said,
11 why don't you play soccer? I said, are you out of
12 your mind? I don't have any toes. How can I play
13 soccer? My feet aren't even healed.

14 He said, you can buy soccer shoes and let
15 them somehow build a way to protect your feet. I
16 said, but I can't run. Do you know the game of
17 soccer? You have to run a lot. You also have a
18 goalie, right? The same as hockey, correct?

19 Q I don't know soccer, but --

20 A A goalie, you have a goalie in ice hockey,
21 for instance, or field hockey, right? You have to --
22 in soccer you have to kick the ball in the nets. He

1 said, why don't you become a goalie? I said, I never
2 played goalie, I was always forward.

3 He said, any organization would like to
4 have a cripple like me. And he found one, and told
5 them apparently my background, I mean that I didn't
6 have any toes, and I lost my toes in the war, that's
7 all he said, because that's all he ever knew.

8 And they said, okay. Will you try it? So
9 to get to the point, I tried it. And on account of
10 that, playing soccer again -- he was so smart, that
11 man. He touched apparently one spot that was open,
12 that was my youth, in soccer. It was my hobby, it was
13 my life. I remember when I came home from school,
14 before the war, my mom would say, homework? No, I
15 want to play soccer. No, homework first, then soccer.
16 And it was very normal at that time of life. My
17 parents were very conservative.

18 But anyway, I couldn't -- I don't think I
19 really enjoyed it, because remarks were made, look, a
20 cripple, the guy walks and plays soccer as a cripple,
21 whatever. And I didn't really enjoy it. So I had to
22 stop it. Physically I couldn't do it. My heart, yes,

1 oh, yes. But I couldn't do it.

2 Then I stopped drinking. I never touched
3 any alcohol anymore from that time on. Never.

4 Q What caused that?

5 A Because he talked me out of it, to stop
6 drinking, and don't commit suicide. I didn't say
7 commit suicide. Later in life I realized I was
8 committing suicide. By the way, there are survivors
9 who committed suicide after the war, who couldn't
10 handle it anymore. Apparently we could handle the
11 things that happened in the camp. Not what happened
12 after the camp.

13 Q I was going to ask, do you think it was
14 more often the memories, or the way you were treated
15 afterward?

16 A There is the key. Afterwards. No justice.
17 Now, I got married, and I was still frozen, right? I
18 was still in a state of shock. So I got married. I
19 never cried. I never talked -- didn't even think
20 about birthdays or my family, as I do for many years
21 now. I never talked about it. My past was never
22 talked about. I told her -- my wife, she knew about

1 my feet, and I told her.

2 Another thing that people said, you know,
3 you think you had a rough time in the camp, right? I
4 said, yes, pretty rough. Ha. You should have been
5 here in Holland, because we had terrible hunger.

6 True, the winter, 1944, 1945, many people
7 died on account of starvation. They were not in
8 camps. There was hardly any food. But so the people
9 minimize the Holocaust. Ha, you think you had it hard
10 in the camp. They didn't even know what happened
11 because nobody asked. You should have been here. I
12 thought, now I can say, I wish I would have been here.

13 So they even minimized and compared with
14 their hunger. But they could go on their bike or walk
15 and try to find something to eat without the fear of
16 being put in a gas chamber. All the years, they slept
17 in their own beds. Not in freedom, but slept in their
18 own beds.

19 And I don't say there were no non-Jews
20 killed, many underground fighters were killed. I'm
21 talking about what the people said, you know, you
22 should have been here. You think you had it hard. If

1 people told me now, I would jump on them with my mouth
2 and teach them something. Then apparently --

3 Q Well, what happened inside when people said
4 this to you?

5 A It never came out. It was building up.
6 I'm still building up, what I'm telling you now is
7 still accumulating. Do I make sense?

8 Q Yes.

9 A It was there, but I didn't feel it.

10 Q Did you feel like you were two people?

11 A No. Nothing. I didn't feel anything.

12 Q So you never split or anything like that?

13 A I'm sorry?

14 Q You never split?

15 A No.

16 Q That happens a lot of times under stress.

17 A No. No. I don't think so. I also went
18 back to the old neighborhoods where I grew up,
19 whatever, and people -- I go and say hi to the people,
20 hey, I'm back. Not for sympathy, just hi, I was born
21 there. People completely ignored me.

22 Q Even when you would say hi?

1 A Yes.

2 Q They would walk by?

3 A Yes. Just ignored me.

4 Q Did everybody do that?

5 A I can only tell you what happened to me.

6 Q No, I mean, did everybody you met there do
7 that?

8 A Except the clients of my dad. They were
9 nice to me. But where I grew up, I can't remember
10 anybody saying, hey, come in for a cup of coffee,
11 whatever. No. Or they would say, hi. I know now
12 why. I talk about it later. Oh, yes. I know why.

13 So I got married, right? My first wife was
14 not Jewish, but what did I care? And I worked in a
15 leather factory, of course. And my income was about,
16 when I got married, 22 guilders a week, and I got a
17 raise to 27 guilders. The prices were low. But I,
18 again, had no education. She had a job. And we lived
19 with her parents, so the rent was very low.

20 Then in 19 -- in the beginning of '50 --
21 remember the first chancellor of Germany, Adenauer? I
22 wrote him a letter. I said, listen, my name is so and

1 so, whatever. This is what happened to me. I only
2 ask -- because the Germans are responsible, I am not
3 -- I only ask for the payment of orthopaedic shoes and
4 a pension on account that I am a cripple. I don't
5 even ask you for all the suffering, mental suffering,
6 nothing.

7 I got a letter back, they turned me down.
8 And I wrote more letters, angry letters. I remember,
9 my wife then said, no, they put you in jail. I said,
10 listen, I write the truth, what I feel. If they put
11 me in jail, I could care less.

12 I sometimes have cramps on account of my
13 feet.

14 Q Do you want to stop and walk around?

15 A No, that's okay. I got a letter back from
16 Adenauer, yes. It was terrible what happened to you,
17 but you were a Dutch citizen. You have to go to the
18 Dutch government. I said, wait a minute. They did
19 it. The Dutch didn't do it to me. I wrote the Dutch
20 government. I got a reply. It was terrible what
21 happened to you, but the Germans are responsible. We
22 don't have any laws for people like you.

1 Justice? But there was all the anger
2 building up, correct? So the Germans said, no, you
3 have to go to the Dutch. The Dutch said, you have to
4 go to the Germans. And we don't have any laws for
5 people like you.

6 And I remember, I wrote -- apparently the
7 anger, at certain times the anger came out loud and
8 clear, because when I wrote letters to Adenauer and to
9 the Dutch government, to the Secretary of State, there
10 was a knife in the letters, if you know what I mean.
11 I didn't hold back, right? And Adenauer, oh, I kicked
12 the behind of the Germans, because that's the way I
13 felt. And after the letter, I would close everything
14 up again. It was very strange.

15 And then my wife said, they will put you in
16 jail. I said, put me in jail, for what? The kind of
17 language, my God. It's truth, it's my feelings. Big
18 deal, put me in jail, send me back to Auschwitz, big
19 deal. So I never got justice in Holland. There was
20 no law for people like myself. Not only for Eddy
21 Wynschenk, but for many people like myself. That's
22 maybe why a lot of Jewish survivors left Holland,

1 Dutch Jewish survivors.

2 Before I go on, do you have any questions?

3 Q How was your first marriage working out?

4 You said you didn't talk to her at all about your
5 experiences.

6 A I think did I. I think -- about my feet,
7 of course. And I presume I talked, but, -- in detail,
8 but I don't remember. Of course, she knew about me
9 because she was a girlfriend of my cousin.

10 Q But wasn't it hard to have a marriage when
11 you were having all this anger building up?

12 A I think, yes. Let me tell you, I'm married
13 now for the second time. But I admire every spouse
14 who marries a Holocaust survivor, be it a he or a she.
15 I admire them all, because it's not easy to be married
16 to a survivor who is not in the freezer anymore, and
17 who erupts. I admire the children of survivors, how
18 hard it was for them, when they were children, to grow
19 up with sometimes an angry parent or to be a witness
20 to Auschwitz, whatever it is. Because children of
21 survivors, in my judgment, most of them are victims
22 too.

1 Q They have an organization called Children
2 of Holocaust Survivors.

3 A Right. I wish I could make up for it, but
4 I was not nice enough to my two children, who are
5 adults now. There's no way I can make up for it. And
6 probably my first wife, I wasn't very pleasant at all
7 with her, and I'll talk about it later. I wish I
8 could make up for it, but I can't. But my second
9 wife, Marianne, we're married now seven years, there's
10 a difference. She knew what kind of person I was.
11 And still I admire that she has the guts to marry me,
12 I mean, with the pain. But --

13 Q I just want to say that I don't think --
14 you're probably not the hardest person to be married
15 to, because you're open to the idea that your past has
16 these effects on your life.

17 A The past has a tremendous effect on my
18 life.

19 Q Right, but what you don't seem to be doing
20 is, I am always right, and you don't know anything.
21 And so I think that makes a person much easier to live
22 with. Our coming out, the way you phrase it, coming

1 out of the freezer. I just want you to know I don't
2 think you're the worst person to --

3 A Let me thank you for the compliment. There
4 may be one or two walking around worse than Eddy
5 Wynschenk. Call the lawyers, we'll have a lawsuit.

6 Q You know what I mean. I just think that
7 it's just taken so much courage for you to go out and
8 start talking about it and to start --

9 A Now, that's something different. But later
10 I talk about the rage and anger and the explosions. I
11 call it explosions.

12 Q Okay.

13 A But I thank you for the compliment, but I
14 don't agree with you. I don't agree with you, what
15 you just said.

16 Q About what?

17 A About that it's not that bad, or whatever
18 you said, about easy. It is not too hard. Yes, it
19 is -- I think it is hard to live with -- to be married
20 with a survivor, be it a he or a she, who is out of
21 the freezer.

22 Q You think it's more difficult than being

1 with one who still has their emotions under control?

2 A Oh, sure. Of course. I had it for a long
3 time. Sure. I didn't feel anything from 1945 until
4 1972. That's 27 years, right?

5 Q Right.

6 A Please remind me to talk about it later,
7 okay, about the rage and the anger and the explosions,
8 right?

9 Q Yes.

10 A So we were married in 1949. I didn't have
11 any family, so there was nobody from my side. And I
12 never felt any loss, no pain, no tears, because it was
13 still -- everything was numb, state of shock, in the
14 freezer. So I -- yes, I wrote the German government
15 and Dutch government. But I didn't come to first
16 base. So I was again a person without any rights. No
17 justice.

18 So the nonjustice that happened, from the
19 Germans in World War II, all our rights, all my
20 rights, and of course all the injustice being done, in
21 a different way, but still continued the injustice.
22 No rights. Because if I would have gotten my rights,

1 why do I have to pay the thief who stole my father's
2 business after the war? I owed him money.

3 If I tell people, they say, I don't believe
4 it. I say, yes. I remember the name of the man, now
5 I remember it, the Dutch government appointed a
6 guardian over him for a short time, he could only be
7 general manager, and the name was -- let me spell it
8 for you, D-I-R-K-Z-W-A-G-E-R. He was a fanatic, he
9 was after me. I never met the man. I don't know why.
10 He went after me.

11 Q So you really worked hard to get this
12 money?

13 A Yes. I don't believe in justice. Until
14 today, I don't believe in justice.

15 Q I understand.

16 A Right? Hard for people to understand or
17 comprehend. And again, I don't want to have sympathy,
18 but that was life. Still today, never got justice. I
19 fight for justice.

20 Q Did you ever actually pay the man this
21 money?

22 A A little bit, on the advice of a lawyer,

1 because I didn't want to. The thief wanted to get our
2 furniture, but my father-in-law said, if they come for
3 the furniture, don't worry about it. It's my
4 furniture. You rent here a furnished apartment, don't
5 forget. I said, thank you, but no way. Nobody ever
6 will take furniture away from me again. I said it.
7 So in my unconsciousness, I went back to 1943, right?
8 Do I make sense?

9 Q Yes, you went back to where they took your
10 furniture away.

11 A The Germans. So nobody ever, ever, over my
12 dead body, never. But it's hard for people to
13 understand, and thank God they don't understand,
14 because they don't know what it is. But this part of
15 after the war has to be told. It has to be known.
16 Not only for me, and not for sympathy, but for
17 understanding.

18 And the people should accept us. We have
19 the Vietnam veterans who went through hell; the World
20 War II veterans; or Korean soldiers who fought in
21 Korea during the police action; a Holocaust survivor.
22 Accept them the way they are. And in my judgment,

1 until today, they don't. People don't.

2 Q Right.

3 A But I talk about it later. They don't.

4 That was one of the reasons that I made up my mind to
5 be interviewed about this, after the war, otherwise I
6 would never have done it. Not only for myself, but
7 for other people. If there is one person who watches
8 this program or two who changes from pushing people
9 away with my background or similar backgrounds, but
10 accepts them, then it is worthwhile, what I go through
11 now. I hope I make sense to you.

12 Anyway, I wanted to leave Holland. I
13 wanted to go to Canada or Australia, but my wife said
14 no. Then in America there was a new law, signed by
15 Eisenhower, President Eisenhower, who made it possible
16 to enter the USA. In order to come to the United
17 States you have to have a sponsor, you have to wait
18 three, four, five, six years, whatever. An
19 organization sponsored me. There was a law made for
20 victims of World War II. I'm not talking about Jewish
21 people. Victims. It made it easier to enter the USA.

22 Q All victims?

1 A Yes, who want to come to the United States.
2 You have to go through a process, the police checked
3 you out in Holland, and a counselor and everything,
4 you have to be in good health, whatever. Before I
5 came to the United States you have to go back and
6 forth, it was understandable.

7 And I have to go -- they called me, I was
8 notified you have to come to the police station. I
9 thought, I didn't know what I did wrong. But they
10 needed questions about me, questions about if I was a
11 Communist or whatever. But I didn't feel any pain
12 about it. But I wanted to leave Holland very badly.

13 Also, what later hurt me, and maybe people
14 who watch this program don't like it, in particular
15 Dutch people, there were German war criminals in
16 Holland who were responsible for the death of over
17 100,000 Jewish people. 100,000. And these Germans
18 were in jail, and they got the death penalty. And the
19 Queen of Holland then, by the way that came out last
20 year, and I tell you now, the Queen of Holland, then
21 was Juliana, now it is Beatrice -- the Germans, they
22 were mass murderers, one I experienced some things

1 from that person myself -- person? He was not even an
2 animal. He was inhuman. He was responsible for over
3 100,000 Jews that went to their death, Dutch Jewish
4 people.

5 And he was going to be executed after the
6 war. And the Queen said, if you execute him, I will
7 not be a Queen anymore. That came out last year.
8 Now, what happened, apparently --

9 Q That wasn't Peter Mentin?

10 A No, not Mentin. Mentin was a little war
11 criminal. He died, by the way. You know that, right?
12 He passed away. No, he was a German. There were
13 several in jail, several went free for medical
14 reasons, were released by the Dutch government, mind
15 you, for health reasons, for poor health.

16 One of them, L-A-G-E-S, was released while
17 I was already living in the United States, and a
18 doctor or doctors convinced the Dutch government that
19 he had cancer, he was a war criminal. It's hard for
20 people to comprehend, he was responsible for 10,000
21 people or 30,000, or he shot 50,000 people, whatever,
22 it's nothing. I can be sarcastic now, of course. And

1 they convinced the Dutch government he was dying of
2 cancer, so they let him go to Germany. I think he's
3 still alive. He fooled them.

4 Cancer is terrible. Dying of cancer is
5 terrible. But that kind of people don't belong on the
6 street. They should be against the wall or at least
7 for life, no parole, nothing. But there's a lot of
8 politics behind it, because Germany put a lot of
9 pressure, Germany became stronger and put pressure on
10 the Dutch government.

11 Q Also from what I read Prince Bernhard made
12 a deal with the German government and actually tried
13 to betray Juliana's country, from what I read.

14 A No, I never heard about that. He fled.

15 Q He fled, but it was a secret -- the book I
16 read it in was a book about Peter Mentin.

17 A Mentin, yes. He was a war criminal and a
18 thief, of course.

19 Q Right. And Prince Bernhard saved Mentin
20 right after the war. He stopped the --

21 A I'm sorry, I never heard about it. But I
22 can't accuse -- it's kind of funny. It's sad. The

1 grandmother of the current Queen Beatrice was
2 Wilhelmina. During World War II we had Wilhelmina.
3 Her husband was a German. Juliana married a German,
4 Bernhard. Beatrice, the current Queen, married a
5 German, Waffen SS man, who has blood on his hands.

6 Q Really?

7 A Would I lie? I make a statement here.
8 There were big riots in Amsterdam. "Can you" imagine?
9 You have the SS, Waffen SS. They were a special
10 unit -- Hitler's special units. His name is Claus,
11 C-L-A-U-S. Can you imagine? You're flabbergasted, I
12 presume. That's the truth. Of course, he became a
13 Dutch citizen when he got married, you know. But
14 still, he's about my age.

15 Q You know that?

16 A But he was not in the regular army, no, no.
17 Waffen SS is something different.

18 Q That was army, right?

19 A Yes, but they were murderers. SS, in
20 the -- the Waffen SS, for instance, killed American
21 POWs -- yes, American POWs, in the Battle of the
22 Bulge. You remember, in '44, you heard about it, you

1 read about it? The Battle of the B-U-L-G-E, in
2 Belgium, near Ardennes.

3 Q Yes, it was our last offense.

4 A Correct. In 1944, if my memory is correct.
5 And the Germans had American POWs. So against the
6 Geneva Convention, they undressed the American
7 soldiers, put on them civilian clothes, tied their
8 hands behind their back and shot them to death.

9 Crimes against humanities and against
10 Geneva Convention. The Waffen SS killed them. And
11 one of the members, I don't say he did it himself, but
12 a member of the Waffen SS group is the current husband
13 of Beatrice. Can you imagine? Can you imagine? I'm
14 not surprised.

15 Now, in '56 we went to America, and then
16 still everything was frozen. I never felt sorry that
17 I left Holland. I came into Philadelphia, where I was
18 sponsored. I stayed a year in Philadelphia, never
19 talked about my life. Started from scratch, of
20 course. I didn't have any family, no friends, nobody.
21 And I came with the attitude of, America doesn't need
22 us, America doesn't have to adjust to us, we have to

1 adjust to them.

2 So a lot of kind of funny things happened.
3 We did not have money for a car, of course not,
4 furniture, nothing. We came with \$70 or \$90. But a
5 lot of immigrants came with nothing, it's nothing
6 special. And the organization that sponsored us about
7 America, you know, about jobs, et cetera, the first
8 thing we asked, how do you go about jobs?

9 Now, my first wife was a fantastic office
10 worker. You know blind typing? You type but you
11 don't look -- I think 70 or 90 words a minute. She
12 was fantastic. In different languages. But I didn't
13 have a good occupation for the United States. I
14 worked in the leather factory.

15 So to the Jewish organization, Family
16 Service of Philadelphia, who sponsored us, I said, I
17 would really like to have a job. They said, take it
18 easy, take it easy. I said, we didn't come here to
19 take it easy. By the way, we arrived here the 28th of
20 April, 1956. We left Holland April 18, 1956. We left
21 Holland the day that Grace Kelly, the late Grace Kelly
22 got married with the Prince of Monaco.

1 I always made the joke, we came by boat --
2 and I became seasick, but I always made the joke, one
3 famous person left Philadelphia -- Grace Kelly came
4 from Philadelphia, right? Another famous one is going
5 to Philadelphia. And Jimmy Durante can make it with
6 his long nose, so I can make it, too. I always made
7 that joke on the boat while the boat was not on sea
8 yet, because I became seasick. But anyway -- then it
9 was not funny.

10 But anyway, we told the people in
11 Philadelphia, we came here to start a new life. How
12 can we find a job? Again, we were never asked -- I
13 was never asked about my background. Never. But I
14 was still in the freezer in '56.

15 So we didn't have a place to stay. In
16 Holland you have waiting lists. You can't rent a
17 place like here, you look around for an apartment,
18 whatever. So we lived with my in-laws in Amsterdam.
19 And then somehow, because my father-in-law was very
20 ill, became ill, he couldn't handle the noise from
21 young people, and doctors checked it out, and then we
22 got on apartment on our own. We were very lucky,

1 very, very lucky.

2 But anyway, we didn't know -- in Holland
3 you don't have signs, vacancies. Philadelphia is a
4 very big city, right? I start laughing. Here is what
5 we did. We went to find a place to live. No idea
6 where to look, to go. We never heard about real
7 estate offices. You don't have that in Holland. The
8 Government has a waiting list, how many children do
9 you have, one, two or three children, and you wait
10 about three or four years, and maybe your in-laws can
11 take you in, because of the shortage of homes,
12 apartments.

13 So downtown Philadelphia -- have you ever
14 been to Philadelphia?

15 Q No.

16 A You start counting 1st street until up to
17 60th Street. 1st Street is near downtown, if my
18 memory is correct. So we were looking for a place to
19 live. In the meantime we did not have money for a
20 car, we had only a couple of dollars, we did not use
21 public transportation because we wanted to save the
22 money. The Jewish organization paid one month rent

1 when we found an apartment, yes, \$50. A terrible
2 apartment. They did not help us to find a job. We
3 didn't know anybody. Later I found out that in
4 Philadelphia, 10 percent of the population is Jewish.
5 Many had businesses, but they did not give me a job,
6 or a chance to prove myself.

7 Again, the anger was -- I felt it similar
8 with Holland somehow, as a Holocaust survivor I was
9 being pushed away. I didn't feel. Later it came out.
10 Don't come close to me, keep a distance. I tell you
11 later why in my judgment that feeling existed and
12 still exists.

13 So we wanted to look for a job and they
14 told us, look in the yellow pages. In Holland you
15 don't have yellow pages, but that's the way I found a
16 job, looking in the yellow pages and going to all the
17 factories with similar work as what I did in Holland.
18 In my first job, I made a dollar an hour. It was a
19 lot of money then, in '56, a dollar an hour gross.
20 And my wife made a dollar an hour gross.

21 In the meantime we needed a better place to
22 live. And we saw all signs on buildings, vacancy,

1 vacancy, vacancy. And I'm not making it up. People
2 said we have a good sense of humor, maybe it helped us
3 survive. I told my wife, people are cuckoo here. She
4 said, what are you talking about? Who is going on
5 vacation and putting a sign in the window so burglars
6 can go in? Because "vacancy," in Dutch you have the
7 word "vacantie," it's only spelled a little different,
8 "vacantie" in Holland is spelled T-I-E. It's so
9 similar.

10 And I couldn't get over it. And we walked
11 from block one to block two to the 50s block, and I
12 was tired walking, thank God no hills, it was flat,
13 and I could not get over it, how stupid people are in
14 America to go on vacation and put a sign in the
15 window! You don't do that.

16 And I was not that upset over it, but I
17 didn't say America, I said, are people cuckoo, stupid,
18 I would never do that. But realizing, "vacancy," what
19 it means -- so then we didn't know what to do, where
20 to go, because where do you look for a place in
21 another country? Somebody said, go to a real estate.
22 I said, what is a real estate office?

1 So we went to a real estate office, and I
2 said, will you explain to me why people put the signs
3 up, "vacation"? He said, vacation? The guy broke up.
4 Then I learned something. I felt embarrassed. My
5 God, in my mind maybe I insulted the American people,
6 I didn't mean to, but how stupid, to go on vacation
7 and put a sign up. My God.

8 But then with his help we found a nice
9 place. But we walked until in the 50s. I'll never
10 forget. We could have had an apartment in the first
11 block, but we didn't know there was an opening.

12 We stayed about a year in Philadelphia, and
13 we saved money, but we couldn't handle the climate
14 anymore because the humidity was too much. I didn't
15 have a car. We went shopping by public
16 transportation. Sometimes, the nice landlord, they
17 would pick us up and we went for grocery shopping once
18 a week.

19 Then, I always made a joke about it, my
20 wife -- my first wife's birthday was March the 7th.
21 And we arrived in Philadelphia at the end of April,
22 1956. In '57, we made up our mind, we're going to

1 leave Philadelphia, let's go to the West Coast. We
2 didn't know anybody. We didn't know any people. We
3 heard about an elderly couple, but no family, no
4 relations. How to go? So we saved money to buy a
5 car, but I know nothing about cars, nothing.

6 In the meantime nobody ever asked me, where
7 I worked, questions. They thought I walked funny,
8 that's all. The remarks, what is the matter, you walk
9 funny. I said, yes, I don't have any toes. Oh.
10 That was the end of it. I never volunteered to talk
11 about it. Nobody asked me, because I felt it was my
12 problem, probably.

13 So I made a joke, I told my wife, okay, I
14 buy you a lipstick for your birthday or we buy a car.
15 Of course, the cost of a car is different. So we
16 bought a second hand car with the help of somebody.
17 \$500, \$700. We were members of the Triple A, a sister
18 organization of Triple A.

19 We wanted to go to San Francisco. Again,
20 Holland is a very small country, very small, compared
21 with America, of course. So we look at the map from
22 America. You go from here to there -- no idea what

1 kind of a trip, and the distance, right? So we bought
2 a car, and I went for my driver's license and I passed
3 the first time -- yes, drivers license, then we bought
4 the car, and we bought the car near downtown.

5 And I said to my wife, we go right
6 downtown, through small streets and terrible traffic.

7 [End Tape 1, Begin Tape 2]

8 My aunt and uncle and other people said,
9 okay, you came back, now pick up where you left off.
10 I left as a 15-year-old kid. I came back as a
11 17-year-old old man. But there was no home to go to,
12 so I could never pick up, because there was no family,
13 nothing. They were stupid statements. People are
14 very insensitive, even my aunt and uncle.

15 From Philadelphia we arrived in San
16 Francisco in 1957, and in 1960 something happened.
17 Now, we talk about kind of, I did hope, justice in
18 1960. The German government made a deal with the
19 Dutch government. I have it all in black and white
20 here. They gave Holland the amount of about \$100
21 million for all survivors. All people who suffered
22 during the war, Jews and non-Jews alike. That sounds

1 like a lot of money, right?

2 Q Right.

3 A Correct? But when you cut it in so many
4 pieces, the Dutch government had to make a decision.
5 Nobody could receive more than about 5,000 guilders,
6 maybe about \$2,500. In 1940, I was a minor. I could
7 claim for my parents who were murdered. Then I would
8 get the maximum of 4,800 guilders, say \$2,500 or
9 whatever.

10 But then I could not file a claim for
11 myself, because I got already the maximum under the
12 law. Do I make sense? The Dutch government said, no
13 one person can receive more than 5,000 guilders or
14 \$2,500. On account of that, I could not file for my
15 brother, my sisters, nobody. Only I could file for my
16 parents, because I was living with my parents.

17 But I could never file a claim for myself,
18 but I still did! My own claim was denied. So I never
19 got one cent, penny, compensation from the money that
20 the Germans gave to Holland. They gave peanuts to
21 Holland, and they made a deal with Holland, a dirty
22 deal. It's a long story.

1 I have it all in black and white. I was
2 declined on account that I received the maximum amount
3 for my parents. So I never was recognized as a
4 Holocaust survivor who is a handicapped person. Now,
5 then I start fighting with the West German government
6 again. Here in San Francisco. I'll only read you
7 parts of letters, okay?

8 Q Okay.

9 A Let me see. Dated June 7th, 1984, that
10 came from San Francisco, the consul general, the
11 German consul general. "As you will remember, our
12 office, in a prolonged and very serious effort, has
13 approached the authorities competent for restitution
14 in Germany to repair the '63 to '65 in order to
15 carefully examine as a possible claim of yours, being
16 former Dutch citizen," because I'm an American now.
17 "Also our embassy in the Hague was included into our
18 efforts to clarify the matter."

19 Then they write me here, on account, as a
20 result of -- "Unfortunately, it turned out that there
21 is no legal basis for a claim against the Federal
22 Republic of Germany, as you have been already

1 informed, on account that you were a Dutch citizen."
2 They kicked me with "Dutch citizen." They took me
3 away in 1943, even though I was a Dutchman!

4 Then in 1987 I continued to fight, right?
5 "I have learned that from the ambassador, German
6 ambassador in Washington, D.C., and I have learned
7 through the consul general of the Federal Republic of
8 Germany in San Francisco that you are one of the
9 victims of Nazi persecution who did not receive
10 compensation for your sufferings because you were
11 during World War II a citizen of the Netherlands."
12 Then they should have never touched me, correct?

13 Now, '87 and '88, I kept fighting again. I
14 got from the ambassador in Washington, the West German
15 ambassador, "Under the German law, no payment can be
16 made out of government funds unless there is a legal
17 provision authorizing such payment. I have to come
18 back to the explanation which you have heard probably
19 a hundred times, and that is, there is no legal
20 provision for compensation for former Dutch citizens."

21 The German government never recognized me
22 as a victim from Germany. I don't exist for them.

1 Q You know, I guess, I thought we were
2 open-ended on time, but since we're not, we don't have
3 much time left, and so there seems to be the thing
4 that, like, the denial that you had to deal with --

5 A No justice. There is no justice. I only
6 asked for orthopedic shoes, and a disability pension
7 because I'm crippled. That's all.

8 Q I mean, you didn't even get recognition.

9 A From the Germans, no.

10 Q From anybody.

11 A I'm talking about the Germans who did it to
12 me. I'm talking about Germany who is responsible.
13 Nobody else.

14 Q Right, but earlier you were talking about
15 the insensitivity, which very often sounds to me
16 like --

17 A Right. In 1975, the Dutch government
18 changed. 30 years after the war, and then they
19 realized that people from concentration camps, be it
20 under the Japanese, in the Japanese concentration
21 camps in the Pacific, or in camps in Germany -- are
22 suffering.

1 Q Right, but you said you were going to talk
2 about the insensitivity and why you figured out later
3 people were so insensitive, why they didn't come to
4 visit you, why they wouldn't talk.

5 A Okay. I found out -- let me tell you what
6 changed me, okay? Let's jump now to the important
7 part, the most important part, correct?

8 Q Right. Well, I think it's important.

9 A I never talked about my experiences.
10 Nobody asked me, and I had no feelings. In 1972, when
11 my son, Michael, was 12 years old -- close to 13, I
12 was a member of a synagogue, and he went to Sunday
13 school. One day I got a phone call from his teacher
14 on a Sunday, I remember. He said, Mr. Wynschenk, I
15 heard from your son that you are a Holocaust survivor.

16 I said, yes. Do you mind to come and talk
17 for the kids? And I went in a kind of a rage. How
18 dare you? I said, absolutely not. I don't want to
19 talk about it. I was angry at the idea about talking
20 about it. He said, think it over. He was a real a
21 gentleman. I was the one who was in terrible anger.

22 Now, I'm glad that my children, my daughter

1 and son grew up with the knowledge of the Holocaust,
2 otherwise if he wouldn't have known, my son through
3 me, and I hadn't talked about it, I wouldn't be here
4 today, I would never talk about it. My son helped me
5 open it up.

6 So the teacher said, here is my phone
7 number, call me back if you change your mind. Then I
8 had a terrible fight inside. I said, I can't do it, I
9 never talked in front of groups of people, impossible,
10 no way. To stand in front of people, no way. I said,
11 I will let you know. But I don't think I will do it,
12 but I will think about it.

13 So I told my wife, if I don't talk about
14 it, I think I'm kind of selfish. Maybe I should just
15 make a step and tell the younger generation. And if I
16 don't talk about it, then the story goes with me and
17 stays in, everything stays in, and I take it to my
18 grave.

19 So I called him back. I said, I will try
20 it. I never did it before. So we made a date. I
21 went and talked for the kids. I don't know how I did
22 it. I don't remember it. If my son was in the class,

1 I don't remember. When I came home, I remember -- I'm
2 still talking about my first wife -- she had to put me
3 in bed. I was a wreck. My whole body ached,
4 everything ached. It was apparently slowly the
5 process of my talking, slowly opening.

6 It was a terrible aftereffect. My wife
7 said, I don't want you to do it anymore, don't do it
8 anymore. It kills you. It takes too much out of you.
9 But by talking about it, I started to change.
10 Feelings that I never felt before, anger,
11 particularly, injustice, rage. Nightmares, I always
12 have nightmares, I think many survivors have -- I
13 always have nightmares. Muscle aches. But that's a
14 part that you have to accept.

15 But then things came out, I felt, that I
16 never felt before. Then my wife, my first wife saw
17 suddenly a stranger. I'm not knocking her. A person
18 she never knew. I was a different person.

19 Q All this from talking once?

20 A No. Slowly but surely, that was the
21 beginning of -- I was changing, because I talked more
22 and more and more. She told me not to talk anymore,

1 but I still continued more and more to talk. My son
2 went to high school, he told the teachers, and my son
3 had to interview me, and my daughter interviewed me, I
4 had more and more requests to talk.

5 So I changed more and more. And my anger
6 and the pain came out. Something -- the injustices
7 being done to me, and then the rage. I can go in a
8 terrible rage suddenly. If you would say, the
9 Holocaust never happened, I go in a rage. Not
10 physically, but I'll let you know, it takes everything
11 out of me, my whole body would start shaking.

12 I hope I make sense to you. So I start to
13 defrost. And then the Eddy came out that my children
14 and my ex-wife never knew. It was very hard to live
15 with me. I understand that. I am responsible for
16 that, they are not. But I can't help it.

17 And in particular, when my son reached age
18 12, my son is the oldest, I started to change already
19 before I start talking, because I was 12 years old
20 when my freedom was taken away in Holland.

21 Q I just thought of that, yes.

22 A So I was my son. I'm glad I'm talking

1 about it. When I was 12 years old in 1940, the
2 Germans occupied Holland. End of freedom, end of
3 childhood. The moment my son became 12, I panicked.
4 Oh, my God, the same is going to happen to him. Oh,
5 my God.

6 Later my daughter became 12, I had the same
7 feelings. And I thought, Michael and Nancy, God
8 forbid, if it happened now. Michael is 14, Nancy is
9 12. You will not survive. Especially the oldest,
10 Michael, my son, when he became 12. Oh, my God, if it
11 happens, I survived, but -- I never told him, but he
12 can never survive. I have tears in my eyes from
13 thinking about it, if it ever were to happen.

14 So that started the turmoil, the pain, the
15 rage. Then I became apparently a different father,
16 too. Because the anger I had, I maybe took out on
17 them -- I learned that later, through counseling --
18 and on my ex-wife. That's why all of them suffered on
19 account of me?

20 And then Michael became bar mitzvah'd when
21 he was 13 years old. In the Jewish religion a boy
22 becomes bar mitzvah'd. I remember my bar mitzvah when

1 I was 13 years old. It was the last time my whole
2 family was together, July of 1940, my aunts and
3 uncles. So I enjoyed his bar mitzvah, but I didn't
4 enjoy it in a way, because Michael did not have aunts
5 and uncles, grandparents, et cetera.

6 Q It brought memories?

7 A Oh, yes. I saw he was me. And that scared
8 me terribly. It could have happened to him. Later to
9 my daughter too. So I became actually a person they
10 never knew, and my ex-wife and my children didn't know
11 me.

12 So it was nearly impossible to live with a
13 person like me. So from '45 until '72, what built up,
14 27 years, suddenly exploded. It's still exploding.
15 My psychiatrist, he said, what built up, even the
16 years in the camp, you have to add them to it, because
17 you could never express yourself, from 1940. So
18 actually from 1940, occupation, until '72, 32 years,
19 to be correct, all these years to get it out, and not
20 everything is coming out. I am still partly in the
21 freezer.

22 Do I make myself --

1 Q All the grief and anger?

2 A All the anger, a lot of pain. Now, about
3 people. I was told on account of my counseling, that
4 apparently when people walk around you, I can feel it.
5 Some people have a fence. I don't trust people.
6 Trust has to be earned. If I trust I get hurt. I
7 learned that in the camp. Because I'm open. Before
8 the war I trusted everybody. I never thought about
9 it. But do I make sense? I was another Eddy
10 Wynschenk then, right? Do I make sense to you?

11 Q Yes.

12 A So I don't trust people. I'm a very
13 private person. There is a state of fear that they
14 will come back again, always thinking that there are
15 bad things going to happen or they will happen,
16 because it is -- the fear that things are going to
17 happen is also from 1940, '45, it is in my system,
18 what is coming out.

19 And I'm on my third psychiatrist, and he's
20 fantastic. There are some psychiatrists who can't
21 handle a survivor, I realized that. The man who
22 counsels me now understands. He says, I hear you, I

1 can never feel it, but that's secondary.

2 I started to change into a different
3 person. Then I started missing my family who were
4 murdered. I anyway observe their birthdays, the dates
5 of their death. Then, feeling the pain that my
6 children -- have no grandparents on my side, no aunts,
7 no uncles, no nephews, they have nobody, I don't
8 think I ever told them, but it hurts me since '72, and
9 every day it gets stronger and stronger, the loss for
10 my children, what they lost. Their loss, the family
11 they never knew!

12 Now, I feel people around me. I was told,
13 not by one, but by several people, do you realize you
14 are the conscience of people. I said, why? When you
15 talk, and people like it or not, you become their
16 conscience. Do I make sense to you?

17 Q Yes.

18 A Because what angers me also -- this is
19 something maybe the American Jewish people don't like
20 to hear, but that it's not my baby -- during the war,
21 with few exceptions, in the free world the Jews and
22 non-Jews alike were silent. The churches were silent.

1 The synagogues were silent. When the few survivors
2 who came back -- I always talk about it now as
3 somebody reaching out, okay, hold my hands -- there
4 was nobody to hold our hands, nobody cared.

5 And I talk about other survivors, friends
6 of mine, my age group, from Holland, two young men I'm
7 thinking about, there was nobody to hold my hand, or
8 hug me or whatever.

9 So my philosophy is, you always have to try
10 to save a life, and if you fail there is no blame. If
11 you don't try to save a life, then there is a blame.
12 And I blame the Jews and non-Jews alike, the churches
13 and the synagogues, with few exceptions, that they
14 didn't try to save a life. If they would have tried
15 to save a life and succeeded, it was worthwhile. I
16 blame the International Red Cross, that is located in
17 Switzerland, when I talk about World War II. They
18 didn't try to save one Jew.

19 Then I heard from American Jews here, they
20 told me, are you American? Do you think we owe you
21 something? I said, I never asked you for anything.
22 Nobody owes me anything. It's a defense. Don't ask

1 me.

2 Q So it was defensive that nobody asked you?

3 A No. I was told, you come here, you think
4 we owe you something. We American Jews owe you
5 something because you're a survivor? I said, you
6 don't owe me anything. They were afraid that I would
7 ask for anything.

8 Q And they said that before you even asked,
9 right?

10 A Yes, I didn't ask anything. I never asked.
11 I'm not a beggar.

12 Q So was this an extension of the kind of
13 insensitivity that you experienced so much in Holland?

14 A Correct. A continuation. Until even
15 today, and I feel it, I feel people, okay? When I
16 talk about -- if people hear me talk and get angry,
17 how dare he say it, but I only tell the truth and what
18 I feel and what I experienced. And I thought it was
19 me, so I talked to other survivors, one in particular,
20 a close friend of mine from Holland.

21 And we communicate excellent. I always
22 tell him, listen, if you don't agree, tell me, but is

1 it me? What's wrong with me? He said, no, I'm
2 exactly the same. So much similarities. I always
3 thought I am the one with the hangups or whatever it
4 is. Another thing that made me very angry, very
5 angry, that the free world, the people in the free
6 world, and in particular the Jewish people in the free
7 world, did not learn the lesson from the Holocaust.

8 Q No, I don't think they did.

9 A What angers me is not for me, but for their
10 children and their grandchildren, they told me -- and
11 I'm speaking publicly now for 18 years, so I know what
12 I'm talking about, not being a wise guy, but that's my
13 experience -- Eddy, it was so terrible. I said,
14 listen, thank God you don't know how terrible it was.
15 Thank God.

16 Oh, yes, but I heard a survivor once five
17 years ago, and he talked for an hour, I know
18 everything about the Holocaust. I said, thank God you
19 don't know. But you have to know so you can tell your
20 children. You don't do me any favors. But they push
21 you away. And I am an outspoken person, that's an
22 understatement, right, Peggy?

1 What I do is not for my ego. When I try to
2 go on the radio as a guest or on TV, it's not because
3 I like it. I'm a nervous wreck. When I go to talk to
4 kids, I'm a nervous wreck. Thank God I never charge a
5 penny for any talk when I go to kids, but money is not
6 the issue. But I have to do it. You can't buy it.
7 There's no price tag for it.

8 But I have also the experience in the
9 media -- now generally speaking, please, 18 years
10 talking -- that generally speaking, I emphasize that
11 and I repeat it, I get more help in my mission from
12 non-Jewish people in the media than from the Jewish
13 people.

14 Q In the media?

15 A Yes. Strange. You are an exception, thank
16 God. Generally speaking. And it hurts me very badly.
17 Because I have a feeling, they don't want to have a
18 part of me. Here is the key, why people would rather
19 walk around me. I remind people of the unpleasant
20 things in life.

21 I was told years ago by somebody, Eddy, if
22 one has a lot of friends, and that person goes to the

1 hospital, not many show up to visit, hold their hand,
2 to say I love you and care about you. It's
3 unpleasant! The same with you. You have to accept
4 it. You don't understand it, but accept it. You
5 remind them of the unpleasant things in life, so, "Go
6 away, go away."

7 And I feel that from people.

8 Q And you think that's the basis of all of
9 the insensitive things that you experienced?

10 A Oh, yes, yes. From Holland, when I came
11 back in my old neighborhood, you remind us of the
12 terrible things, go away. They don't tell you, but
13 you can feel it! Because over the last years I became
14 very sensitive, I pick things up. Also due to the
15 counseling.

16 So I always tell people, in five, 10 years,
17 there are no survivors left. Learn from us. No pity,
18 no sympathy. Then hopefully it will never happen
19 again to anybody, regardless of race, religion, color,
20 creed or sex. You can save you, you can save your
21 children, your grandchildren. Don't push me away.

22 Q Well, when they pushed you away like that,

1 did that increase your sense of isolation?

2 A Yes. Yes.

3 Q And how did that affect you?

4 A I have one person that's close to me. I'm
5 not talking about my wife, of course. But a Dutch
6 survivor who lives in Berkeley is close to me. We are
7 close emotionally, right? Because I feel his pain, he
8 feels my pain, and we talk about our pain. Thank God
9 we can help each other by talking about it, right?

10 So that I quit being a member of a
11 synagogue in the Peninsula, after 20 years, because
12 they didn't stand up for what was right. They would
13 rather please the community than stand up as real
14 Jews. And I will tell you, when the Pope came here,
15 '87, I think, '87, '88, I have nothing against the
16 Pope or the Catholics, but about Waldheim, the
17 Waldheim affair, again, I respect everybody's
18 religion, and I hope they respect my religion too.

19 You could right away see that here you had
20 the survivors, and there the Jewish community, and a
21 few from them joined us, a very few. And we stood up.
22 We had to stand up. We owed it to the 6 million who

1 were murdered. And we owed it to our children and to
2 humanity to stand up. What kind of a person would I
3 be not to stand up?

4 Now, if people don't like me for it, I
5 could care less. I have to live with myself. So I
6 was angry at the temple as such. I went before the
7 board and I resigned. They don't need me, I don't
8 need them. Because that was the time to stand up, and
9 they didn't. They did not. At least join. But they
10 didn't want to make any waves because they wanted to
11 have a good relationship between the Catholic Church
12 and the synagogues.

13 There should be a good relationship. But
14 there is a time in your life when you have to stand up
15 and be counted. Life is not always steak and prime
16 ribs. Sometimes it's a slice of bread without
17 anything on it.

18 So they turned me off on the Jewish
19 religious -- organized religion. I don't need a
20 temple to believe in God and to pray to God.

21 Q So the impression I'm getting is that you
22 don't feel like the Jewish people who didn't go

1 through the Holocaust are any more sensitive than
2 anybody else.

3 A Correct. There are exceptions. Please,
4 let's emphasize that. But we're talking about
5 generally speaking, right? In other words, are you
6 aware what happened in the convent in Auschwitz, they
7 build a convent, the Catholic Church?

8 Q Oh, yes, I'm aware of that.

9 A And the cross? They put a big cross in
10 Auschwitz? Yes, the convent with a big cross from the
11 Catholic Church. Now, we picketted peacefully, right,
12 we survivors, okay, we picketted a place two years
13 ago, a year, whatever. Nobody from the Jewish
14 community, be it a rabbi or whatever, joined us.

15 Because it was in the Jewish Bulletin, a
16 whole article -- I don't blame the Jewish Bulletin, I
17 have to give the Jewish Bulletin credit, they help me
18 tremendously whenever they can, absolutely. They're
19 great for me. They believe in my mission. They
20 believe in other survivors' mission. They don't push
21 us away.

22 That's my personal experience, and I can't

1 talk for other survivors. They are great for me, to
2 be honest, because they believe in what I do. That is
3 not for my own ego -- it's for humanity and for
4 prevention. Now, when -- somebody was interviewed
5 from the Jewish Community Relation Council, and that
6 Jewish person said, that is a survivor's issue.

7 Now, wait a minute. Is the convent and the
8 cross a survivor's issue, or is it a Jewish issue?
9 Now, here we go. They pushed us away, what I felt for
10 many years, my anger, when I read it, and -- oh, we
11 were furious. Here we go. Here survivors, here are
12 you, and here is the rest of the Jewish community. I
13 was told by my psychiatrist, I said, am I abnormal?
14 He said, no. You are different. If you had not been
15 different you would be abnormal.

16 But what for other people is normal is for
17 me a red flag. I see a lot red flags. You know what
18 a red flag is, right? When I get in a rage, big red
19 flags. So I'm not against American Jews, but -- I
20 can't change them, I don't even try, but it angers me.
21 During the war they were silent. Here we go, the
22 connection. They didn't do what they have to do. If

1 they tried and lost, I admire them, I say, thank you
2 for trying.

3 Q So does it feel kind of like
4 re-abandonment?

5 A Yes, 100 percent. There was a non-Jewish
6 gentleman who wrote a terrific book about it,
7 Mr. Wyman, a reverend, I think. Oh, yes. I feel
8 abandoned by the Jewish community. Absolutely.
9 Absolutely. As a human being. They turn around and
10 say, yes, he keeps distance. Wait a minute. I feel
11 people who are -- who really accept me the way I am.
12 I talked about it before.

13 Accept me the way I am, with my
14 shortcomings, my good side, my bad side, whatever,
15 because I was not born the way I am. I was made that
16 way. If I would have had counseling that I have now
17 for many years, in 1945, I would be a different person
18 today. I would have been open since '45. I would
19 have a lot of peace.

20 Q In 1945, did you want people to ask you
21 about it? Did you feel like you wanted people to ask
22 you about your experiences?

1 A Put it that way, Peggy. If they would have
2 asked me, I don't know today if I would have answered,
3 but at least the gesture, the reaching out, asking
4 is -- if it happened to you, if I see you crying I
5 would say, Peggy, what happened to you, I give you my
6 shoulder, I'm reaching out, correct?

7 You might say, I don't want to talk about
8 it, I don't need your shoulder, but I'm reaching out.
9 Nobody reached out to me. And I don't feel sorry for
10 myself, but it was the effect on part of my life.
11 Nobody said, listen, do you mind telling me, what
12 happened? Nobody.

13 Here, nobody in our country, with a few
14 exceptions. Of course, people don't want to be around
15 the unpleasant, don't want to be around people who
16 remind them of the unpleasant things in life.

17 Q I have a question about that, because in
18 Holland after the war, a lot of people kept their
19 belongings, they didn't give them back. That happened
20 to a lot of people.

21 A Oh, yes.

22 Q I always -- some of the reading I've done,

1 it sounds like Holland was one of the better
2 countries, it really made more efforts to save the
3 Jewish people than a lot of other countries did. So I
4 had the impression that Holland was a lot less
5 prejudiced. But it sounds like from what you're
6 saying it was very real --

7 A I can only say what happened to me and what
8 happened to other people in big cities. Not for all.
9 Maybe other people have other experiences, okay? But
10 Goebbels was the Minister of Propaganda for the
11 Germans. His poisoning, that started in 1933, '34,
12 '35, right? That poisoning came in Holland in 1940,
13 for five years the people were poisoned by them,
14 during the occupation, right?

15 Q Yes.

16 A Before I left, before 1940, I don't
17 remember as a kid, that they say, oh, you dirty Jew.
18 I don't remember being discriminated against or being
19 looked at as a second class citizen. I'm talking for
20 Eddy Wynschenk. But after the war a lot of people
21 were poisoned. Why to make a statement, "the good
22 ones were killed and the bad ones came back," "you

1 survived, apparently you did something wrong," or "you
2 better be quiet, you're lucky to be alive, shut up,
3 don't talk, don't make waves."

4 Q So you think the level of prejudice was
5 increased?

6 A Oh, tremendously. It still exists today.
7 I hear it from other people. I'm not talking about
8 the good people who saved Jewish lives. I'm not
9 talking about that. You're absolutely right.
10 Shocking.

11 Q But didn't it exist before the war, too,
12 but it was increased?

13 A As far as I know -- you always have people
14 who don't like Jews or Catholics or whatever, yes. Of
15 course there were people who didn't like Jewish
16 people. But you can't compare it to after the war.

17 Q How come you think the Dutch government was
18 so unhelpful?

19 A Until 1975.

20 Q Because they were very helpful, it sounds
21 like, to the underground fighters.

22 A Yes, amazing. They -- I think basically,

1 basically, that many of them were anti-Semitic, or in
2 their unconsciousness they would say, Jew, you came
3 back but shut up, you have your life, what do you
4 want? Because we were not considered actually
5 political camp inmates.

6 Q Why not?

7 A That is the answer the Dutch government has
8 to answer. Not the current Dutch government. From
9 after the war. We weren't treated similar as the
10 underground fighters. No. There was no law. They
11 made a law for them, not a law for us. And they
12 deserved that law, the underground fighters, don't
13 misunderstand me. Do I make sense to you?

14 Q Oh, it makes sense. I would think that the
15 men who had that attitude -- how did that affect your
16 psychology, I guess?

17 A Since '75, when I go to counseling, but the
18 insurance company doesn't pay, they pay.

19 Q Who pays?

20 A The Dutch government.

21 Q Oh, they do?

22 A Since '75, I'm talking about.

1 Q So in '75 there was a change?

2 A Correct. For us -- outside Holland in '75,
3 and inside Holland, '72. For orthopedic shoes, all
4 the years in America I paid for them myself. Now they
5 cost about \$400, for instance. Since '75, the Dutch
6 government pays for it. Do I make sense to you?

7 Q Yes, it does. Yes.

8 A But for 30 years, nothing. And I think I
9 needed it -- personally I needed more. Right after
10 the war it was impossible to expect it, but in a
11 reasonable amount of time, right, we were ignored,
12 completely ignored. I would have been different if I
13 could have gone to psychiatry or whatever, after the
14 war, go to organizations for help.

15 After the war I even lived with other
16 Jewish kids in a Jewish orphanage, for boys, of
17 course. Nobody cared about us. Now we laugh about
18 it. Nobody cared. Nobody visited us. Nobody --
19 there were some people who invited me sometimes over
20 for dinner. I remember that, yes. But for jobs, no
21 way, no way, nobody helped us.

22 I'm not saying -- I don't mean giving

1 money. Help me start in life, because this is a new
2 life. I had no education, no occupation, no family.
3 I'm alone. But give me a hand. Only give me a hand,
4 guide me, tell me.

5 Q Have you talked that over, do you have any
6 insights on -- I find that really incomprehensible
7 that you would be back there, you didn't have any
8 toes, could you hardly walk, and that you were just
9 discarded, basically. Have you talked about that --
10 do you have any insights on why would people do that,
11 just totally ignore the obvious physical --

12 A In my opinion, it's that I shouldn't have
13 come back. In a lot of people's minds, all the Jews
14 should have been killed.

15 Q They really believe that?

16 A I feel that. Please. I'm talking about
17 after the war now. Not today, now. Right? I can't
18 accuse people who have nothing to do with World War
19 II. Because many, too many in Europe, in occupied
20 countries, profited from the death of the Jews. In
21 France, it's terrible, terrible. Holland had a bad
22 reputation. Denmark had the best reputation during

1 the war. My gosh, the Danish people are beautiful
2 people.

3 But here we go again. And I never realized
4 it, until it was pointed out to me several years ago,
5 through my counseling. People don't want to be
6 reminded of the unpleasant things in life.

7 You don't even realize it, you remind them
8 of the unpleasant things in life. If I go to talk
9 before a junior high school or a high school or
10 wherever I go, I can feel love from the kids, and I
11 love the kids, the kids are beautiful, when they hug
12 me afterwards and we cry together, I am in their
13 hearts. My reward is their letters. The kids write
14 me letters. I get thousands of them. In their way,
15 they reach out to me as nobody ever did, no adult ever
16 did.

17 It's beautiful. That's something positive.
18 But maybe their parents would not do it. Because kids
19 are innocent. When I was a kid I was innocent. Kids
20 can be nasty. Why don't you behave, you're late,
21 whatever, but kids are innocent. Kids are pure. 12,
22 13, 14, 15 years old, they are pure. There are always

1 exceptions, but they are beautiful. And if they write
2 you, if you read it you would cry. Nobody has to
3 dictate it to them. It's from their heart. Kids
4 write with the heart. They hug with their hearts. I
5 know it!

6 But for them, I am, quote unquote, a
7 special person. I am a kind of a role model. My
8 gosh, he made it, right, when he was my age, blah,
9 blah, blah, so I better shape up, whatever. Oh, yes.
10 Yes.

11 But on account -- okay. I think I have a
12 part of the answer, in my judgment. Guilt feeling.
13 The people who did not try to save us have now a guilt
14 feeling. We remind them of their shortcoming. That
15 is probably what you were looking for, right, or
16 searching for, right?

17 Q I don't want to search for something that's
18 not there.

19 A No, but suppose my neighbors, where I lived
20 and was born, in Amsterdam, in a non-Jewish
21 neighborhood, maybe they would have tried, we can hide
22 you in the basement or whatever. But nobody offered

1 anything. I'm talking about my family, now. Not
2 about other families. So when I came back without
3 anybody else, right, maybe they have a guilt feeling.

4 But I feel here, and I come back to that
5 again, the American Jewish people, the older
6 generation in particular, have a kind of a guilt
7 feeling. Oh, yes, they have a guilt feeling. That's
8 why they push away the word "Holocaust."

9 Q What do they feel guilty about?

10 A That they didn't try. They don't realize
11 it, but in my opinion, and I will never change my
12 opinion about it, they didn't try to save, try to make
13 waves.

14 Q You know, some of the reading -- apparently
15 some did.

16 A I said there are always a few exceptions.
17 But I'm talking generally speaking. And I thought it
18 was my hangups. But I talked to other survivors. I
19 read books. And you mentioned about the Jews, and we
20 felt they let us go. Do I make sense to you?

21 Q Yes.

22 A But what I expected from them is to try.

1 You do whatever you can. Give everything you have.
2 Because they forget one thing. Hitler and his
3 henchmen, the Germans, created the Jewish Question and
4 the Final Solution -- that means what to do with the
5 Jewish people, and the final solution is murder them
6 all.

7 Hitler never said only German Jews or
8 European Jews. He said the Jewish people. If Hitler
9 would have won the war, then American Jewish people
10 would have been murdered, too. I wouldn't be alive
11 today. Our country here would be a big concentration
12 camp. Of course, the Japanese would have also won the
13 war.

14 The Jewish Question, the Final Solution,
15 and they don't realize it. If Hitler had won the war
16 they would have been killed, too. Maybe I don't make
17 myself clear.

18 Q No, you do make yourself clear. I think
19 maybe the Jewish people are more aware of the whole --
20 you know, the history of the Holocaust than non-Jewish
21 Americans.

22 A No. They use it as an excuse not to hear

1 about it. I was told so many times that it's too
2 terrible to talk about it. It's too terrible to
3 listen about it. I said, you were never there, thank
4 God, you don't know how terrible it was. And it's
5 better to listen to it and have an upset stomach but
6 live in peace and freedom than not to listen to it and
7 one day it will happen again.

8 Q Do you think that refusal to listen to it
9 at all could actually lead towards it happening again?

10 A Yes. History in every respect will repeat
11 itself, be it unification of Germany, the power of
12 Japan. That's politics, of course. Yes. I'm not
13 worried about my life, but my children and hopefully
14 grandchildren -- I think it is possible to get another
15 World War, absolutely, in the next 20, 25 years, at
16 the most. I'm very pessimistic about it.

17 Because he who doesn't learn from the past
18 is doomed to relive it.

19 Q What are the important lessons that you
20 think, most important lessons -- like, how would you
21 prevent another Holocaust?

22 A To anybody in the world -- not only the

1 Jewish people, by the way. Cambodia, 3 million people
2 were murdered. People. It happened, and nobody
3 stepped in to stop it. Uganda, a quarter of a million
4 people. The Vietnamese boat people. We can go on and
5 on. If the world would have learned something,
6 Cambodia, the holocaust in Cambodia would not have
7 happened. But 2 and a half, 3 million human beings
8 were murdered.

9 Q And what do they need to have learned?

10 A To step in, to stop it.

11 Q Intervene?

12 A No countries in the world, with a few
13 exceptions, small countries, helped the Jewish people.
14 They said, you can't come in. They said, we don't
15 want to help the Jews. The St. Louis, the voyage of
16 the damned, 1938, Cuba, America turned the Jews away.
17 Most of those people were murdered in the gas
18 chambers, they had to go back.

19 So all the borders were closed, right? So
20 nobody cared, right? If you say, okay, it's politics,
21 if we have the Jews, then we have unemployment -- but
22 you talk about human beings, about little babies,

1 about children, the elderly, sick. We are all human
2 beings, with all our shortcomings, Jew and non-Jew
3 alike. They should have helped the Gypsies that were
4 murdered. Nobody cared about the Gypsies either.

5 Q It sounds like the lesson you're talking
6 about is making people more important than politics
7 and boundaries and jobs.

8 A You're absolutely right. Human beings for
9 me are number one. Politics is number two. But I'm
10 sorry to say, it's politics, money, politics, money,
11 politics, money, and maybe a little human being.
12 That's why I talk for the younger generation in the
13 hope that they can change it.

14 I tell them when I talk. You are the
15 future. You are the only hope for our country here.
16 I tell them. I count on the kids, not on the older
17 generation. I gave up on them. I don't even get
18 upset about it anymore.

19 Q About --

20 A You want to have another example of
21 insensitivity?

22 Q Okay.

1 A Once a year is Yad Vashem, the day of
2 remembrance, observed over the whole world. Not only
3 in synagogues, but the Government, our government is
4 in a way involved with it, when we remember the 6
5 million. Now, as a survivor I don't have to have a
6 special day, because my family, and what I experienced
7 and the 6 million -- my family is always with me. I'm
8 an extension from my family who were murdered. I
9 represent my family.

10 It is more, in my judgment, to remember the
11 people for the benefit of people who don't know. We
12 survivors don't need a remembrance day. It's
13 excellent, I'm in favor of it 10,000 percent.

14 The day of mourning, the 22nd of April this
15 year, 1990, it is for me a day of mourning. People
16 should go, if they want to go, to synagogue and pray,
17 whatever. Services should be held in synagogues.
18 Now, I am all for interfaith. I love it. I love to
19 talk for all kinds of people. But what has happened
20 in the last couple of years in the Peninsula where I
21 live, I will not mention names -- you want to have
22 names, I'll give you names, I have nothing to hide,

1 and I'm not running for a popularity contest, either.

2 The day of remembrance service, the 22nd,
3 the whole week is the week of remembrance, from the
4 22nd to the 30th. And it should be observed as days
5 of mourning, a particular service in a synagogue,
6 because it's a Jewish day of remembrance. The only
7 place is a synagogue, or the Holocaust memorial. But
8 we talk about buildings now.

9 For the second year in a row, temples and
10 churches in the Peninsula, Northern Peninsula here,
11 Burlingame, San Mateo, have an observance in a church.
12 I have nothing against a church, interfaith. It
13 belongs in a synagogue, and invite the non-Jewish
14 community, absolutely, everybody is welcome. But
15 foremost it should be held in a synagogue, in my
16 judgment. So I talked with other survivors about it.
17 They are furious. And that hurts me. I am furious
18 about it too.

19 Then last year they have a main speaker.
20 It should always be, on the day of remembrance, a Jew,
21 and I prefer a survivor, whoever it may be, because
22 who can better give the message than a survivor?

1 Nobody else can. And I'm not pushing the non-Jewish
2 people away. On the contrary. Join, come. The same
3 as a rabbi is not invited at Christmas to go -- yes,
4 to go to give a speech in a church, or Christmas is
5 going to be observed in a synagogue. You don't do
6 that. I hope I make sense.

7 So the mourning should be observed in a
8 synagogue. And let the clergy, a member of the
9 clergy, non-Jew, make a speech. Beautiful. Let it be
10 a part of it. But it should be a Jewish observance.
11 the emphasis should be on the Jews who participate. I
12 was invited last year. I hope I make sense to you.
13 And I talk about the Peninsula here. They didn't
14 learn from the Holocaust, they don't understand the
15 Holocaust.

16 If they had understood the Holocaust and
17 understand the sensitivity to the survivor, they would
18 not do it in a church. On top of every church you
19 have a cross, correct?

20 Q Yes.

21 A I talk only for myself. The Germans were
22 religious people during World War II. On the buckle

1 of their belts was the slogan, "God Is With Us."
2 Many, many, many of the camp guards who were murderers
3 went to church on Sunday and came back and murdered
4 again. How you can misuse God, that is very hard to
5 understand!

6 Now, the cross, I'm talking about as a
7 symbol, is for me personally a red flag. It's the
8 same cross that was in Auschwitz, correct? Not the
9 religion. If I didn't like the religion I would be a
10 bigot, and I hope I'm not, please. I think all
11 religions should work together for humanity, to save
12 humanity, regardless of what people look like or
13 whatever religion.

14 But I don't like a day of remembrance in a
15 church, any church. The same as Christmas, it should
16 not be in a synagogue with the Star of David on top.

17 Q So that was a form of insensitivity?

18 A Correct. I was invited with other
19 survivors. I was invited, because I want to
20 participate. I didn't give a message. I don't want
21 to be the main speaker. I am not a person to be a
22 main speaker. Give me five minutes, that's all. Then

1 I can give some input. Because a lot of non-Jewish
2 people attend, it's excellent, beautiful.

3 I was only allowed to light a candle, and
4 tell in two minutes what happened to me in five years.
5 And I was told that by a young Jewish lady. I got
6 into a big fight. This is my rage. Then I exploded.
7 I'm not a nice person for them. Oh, he's not nice.
8 Oh, he yells. Big deal! I felt hurt and insulted.

9 Yes, then I yell. How dare you. Do I have
10 to be a decoration, sitting in a church, lighting a
11 candle, a shalom Jew, being told by American Jews who
12 sat on their behind while 6 million people went to
13 their death? What did they learn? Nothing.

14 They didn't learn from it. Not for my
15 sake, but they don't understand this for their sake
16 and their children's, and their grandchildren's sake.
17 They don't understand it. They go through denial.

18 Q And if they understood it, what would they
19 understand?

20 A Then they would understand, they have to
21 try to learn from the survivors. That can be their
22 survival. Not that we are special people. No. But

1 how can women who are raped, and they give a session
2 and tell other people what it is, what you can do to
3 prevent, these persons are teachers, from their pain
4 and aggravation and stress the rest of their lives,
5 other women can and should learn.

6 To listen to us, in a way we are teachers,
7 right, by talking about it. Everybody talks about
8 history is a teacher. But the real teachers many
9 times don't talk about it. That's another story.

10 But if they would be open, invite us, they
11 would. Again, the children want to hear us. All
12 children want to hear me. But why to push us in a
13 corner again, on the day of remembrance? It's not
14 their families who were killed. Our families were,
15 correct? In the 6 million is my family too.

16 So I'm sure this year I will not be invited
17 even to light a candle. Thank God for little favors.
18 I don't need them. But that is what angered me
19 tremendously. And I thought it was me. I contacted
20 other survivors. And they went in a rage, similar as
21 I. So I let them know my feelings, and they pushed me
22 away. I could feel it. But I will not be silent

1 ever!

2 I think the organization of the day of
3 remembrance is in the hands of a non-Jewish clergy
4 person. Nothing against that person. I don't know
5 who it is. It belongs in the hands of the Jewish --
6 it's a Jewish day of mourning. I give you an example
7 now of the insensitivity.

8 They didn't learn. 45 years after World
9 War II, they still didn't learn. They try to please
10 their non-Jewish friends, and I don't know why, and
11 push us aside, only light a candle. Hey, you
12 survivor, light a candle. That's enough. Sit down.

13 Q Have you ever read a book by Alice Miller
14 called, I think it's called "For Your Own Good," and
15 in it -- the book is about child abuse, and she
16 proposes that one of the reasons the Holocaust
17 happened was because of child abuse, abusive child
18 raising practices in Germany, and actually kind of all
19 over the world, but in it she talks about Hitler at
20 length. She also talks about Eichmann and Himmler.
21 Have you heard of that, the people who link child
22 abuse to the Holocaust?

1 A No, never heard about it.

2 Q Have you thought about the role psychology
3 played in it?

4 A No. I am not -- by the way, I am not an
5 intellectual person. I'm not an educated person. I
6 go by feelings and by experience in life. There are
7 people who are "experts" about the Holocaust,
8 historians, thank God they were never there. They
9 know it. But it irritates me also. They have a
10 speaker on the Holocaust. For me an expert is a
11 survivor. Actually, the 6 million are the experts,
12 but they can't talk, they don't even have a grave.

13 Q I guess the reason I ask that question is,
14 I'm asking, why do you think people actually
15 participated, and why did they --

16 A Hate. The Jew was a scapegoat in Germany
17 because the economy was terrible. Hitler in the 30s,
18 '33, whatever, came into power on account of that. He
19 used the Jews as a scapegoat. In "Mein Kampf" he
20 wrote in 1927 or the '20s, he wrote what he was going
21 to do with the Jews, right? Are you aware of that?

22 Q Yes.

1 A So he had it all planned out. He followed
2 his plan.

3 Q But what created such hatred? Do you have
4 any thoughts on that?

5 A Scapegoat. There are people who hate black
6 people in our country. Whatever goes wrong, it's the
7 blacks, or the Vietnamese, or the Jews. The
8 minorities are always being used as scapegoats,
9 particularly in bad economic conditions.

10 Q That's true.

11 A Everything is well in Germany until -- they
12 united, there will be one Germany, nobody will get
13 hurt. The moment the economy gets bad, it's the Jews
14 who are to blame, the Gypsies, the Jehovah's
15 Witnesses, and we start all over again.

16 Q How does that prospect affect you, Germany
17 getting together again?

18 A They go together, and I think eventually
19 Poland has to give them a part of the territory. They
20 will -- nothing changed. Only the faces and the
21 clothes and the names. Basically they didn't learn
22 from their own mistakes.

1 The prime minister, Kohl, was a teenager
2 during World War II. He is innocent. Now we find
3 out, in my judgment, he didn't learn from history. In
4 the back of his mind he wants to have a part of
5 Poland. He wants to have a part of Poland back.

6 Q He said that?

7 A Oh, yes.

8 Q Recently?

9 A Yes. Really. And he gets a lot of press,
10 he says no, I didn't mean it. But he wants to have
11 Poland. After the war, Poland got a part of Germany.
12 He wants to have it back. I hope I am wrong. Who am
13 I? You ask my opinion, I give it.

14 No, I will not be surprised if eventually
15 Hitler -- there will be another Hitler, and you get
16 another war in the next 15 or 20 years, because why
17 didn't people help the Cambodians? In the eyes of the
18 rest of the world they were minorities. Uganda people
19 were killed. A quarter of a million! Why didn't the
20 rest of the world step in? The free world, easy.
21 Right? Send them some troops and tell them we're
22 coming in planes and bombs to save people.

1 In 1944, in the summer of '44, I was there
2 since November '43, in Auschwitz Birkinau, remember I
3 told you before, in the railroad station when the
4 people came, I worked there. I was an eyewitness to
5 who will live and who will die. I was 16 years old.
6 Then one day the American planes came over, and I
7 remember, we talked to each other, drop, drop the
8 bomb, drop it, flatten it, because we were going to be
9 killed anyway.

10 So if they would have flattened the camp,
11 say they killed 30,000. Maybe they could have saved a
12 million, 2 million people. They had to do it. They
13 didn't drop one bomb on a gas chamber, nothing. It
14 was daylight, summer, I'll never forget, May, June,
15 '44. They knew and they didn't do anything about it.

16 They knew it. They didn't bomb the
17 railroads to all the concentration camps, to
18 Buchenwald, Mauthausen, while they flew over Germany.
19 They wanted to get rid of the Jewish people.

20 Q Americans wanted to get --

21 A In particular, England.

22 Q To get rid of the Jewish people?

1 A Absolutely. They didn't do anything to
2 stop the trains. Nothing. Absolutely. They closed
3 their borders. America closed their borders, too.
4 I'm proud of my country, but we can't be blind. I
5 can't be blind, okay? But you ask me, how come, in my
6 judgment, it happened in World War II? The Jew was
7 the scapegoat. So by focusing on a minority, then all
8 the other troubles go away for the people, in their
9 mind, correct?

10 Q Oh, okay. Focusing on a minority makes
11 people -- okay. That makes sense.

12 A I'm not an intellectual, I'm not a
13 psychiatrist, nothing. I only go by what I feel. I
14 have common sense. Always blame the minority, that's
15 the game.

16 Q So actually one of the lessons then would
17 be to focus on your own problems, your real problems?

18 A The lesson is, be sure to respect everybody
19 as an individual human being, and treat everybody as
20 an individual human being. Don't put people in a bag.
21 And reach out to people. Reach out. Don't think only
22 about money, the greed. They respect people, oh, he

1 or she is a leader of the community, she gives them
2 half a million dollars, whatever.

3 Money doesn't buy respect, in my book, or
4 character. Ivan Boesky, he gave a lot of money to
5 charity. He makes now a dollar a day, whatever.
6 Remember Ivan Boesky? The stockbroker.

7 Do you have more questions about -- do I
8 make sense now about the rage, the anger?

9 Q Yes, it makes a lot of sense. Actually, I
10 could probably talk a lot longer, but we've already
11 gone way over.

12 A I hope I make sense to you.

13 Q You make a lot of sense. Before I end, I
14 would like to ask you, having no toes, has that given
15 you a lot of physical back problems during your life?

16 A No, but -- on account that I didn't have a,
17 quote unquote, "a normal amputation," I have lately
18 terrible pain, my feet are swollen. I can do nothing
19 about it. They made me a cripple for life.

20 Q It just gets worse?

21 A Yes, the swelling goes down, and up and
22 down. A lot of muscle aches. Of course, every day

1 when I see my feet I get angry, especially in the
2 morning, here comes the anger. Germans, why did you
3 do that to me? I was innocent. I may not be fair to
4 all the Germans, but the Germans did it to me.

5 The Germans took me away, and whatever else
6 happened to me, why do you do it to me and why don't
7 you recognize me, that you did it? You are the guilty
8 one, I am the innocent one. And don't push me away.

9 Q That's very important, isn't it? That they
10 recognize --

11 A Yes. The recognition. There are -- I'm
12 talking about Eddy Wynschenk. There are people who
13 have compensation, from the German people. I'm
14 talking about me. I'm not talking about other
15 survivors. I can't talk about other people. If they
16 would have said, we give you \$1 a month pension, I
17 would have accepted. Then they admitted they were
18 wrong.

19 I hope I make myself clear. Not a cent.
20 And they don't like to hear it when I go public,
21 wherever I go, but that's their baby. Let them tell
22 them that I lie, right?

1 So no, I will never forgive them, what they
2 did to me, and I can never forget. Because there are
3 people who say, you know, why don't you forget what
4 happened and forgive them? Oh, forget, okay, then I
5 have to forget that I once had a father, a mom, a
6 brother, and three sisters, and a brother-in-law, and
7 a one-year-old niece, all murdered. Forget my
8 nightmares. To forget my pain, my sadness of the ones
9 I once had, I loved, all murdered -- what kind of a
10 person would I be? If I forget, I would betray my
11 family!

12 I should forget I was in concentration
13 camps, I should forget that I don't have toes anymore,
14 part of forgetting, right? I have to forget I have a
15 number on my arm. I should forget the crimes they
16 committed against me as a human being.

17 And I should also forget Christmas and
18 Hanukka and Memorial Day, please forget Memorial Day.
19 That's in a way to honor the soldiers who gave their
20 life so we can live in freedom. Forget everything.
21 Forget your grandmother's birthday, forget your
22 grandparents' birthday, forget your heritage!

1 And forgive? I can't forgive what they did
2 to my family. My family can only forgive them. I
3 can't. Only a victim can forgive. Nobody else can.
4 And I can never forgive them what they did to me, for
5 myself. I can't. That's absolutely impossible. And
6 I know people say, yes, it is now 45 years after the
7 war, my God. I say, yes, 45 years I don't have any
8 toes, it is 47 years that I don't have any family.

9 That is also easy to say, when you always
10 slept in your own bed in a free country, no fears, and
11 thank God, don't know what war is, what went on during
12 the war, what man can do to man. You only know it
13 from movies or from books, maybe school, a page from a
14 history book. Then I understand that you would say,
15 forget it. And the only ones who have a right to
16 forget or forgive are the victims, nobody else.

17 Q I have a question before we end. Did you
18 always have to work on your feet, or were you able to
19 find employment where you didn't have to work on your
20 feet anymore?

21 A Oh, yes, I can't stand on my feet for
22 employment. Is that what you mean?

1 Q Yes. Were you able to find a job finally
2 where you could work without --

3 A I had to, yes. I had to. I couldn't stand
4 anymore. I couldn't do it anymore. And the older I
5 get the worse it is. Oh, yes. Yes.

6 Q And were you able to get other education?

7 A No. I became an assistant bookkeeper in
8 the United States. I went to evening high school in
9 Philadelphia, because I like figures, bookkeeping
10 work. But I'm an outside person, not inside. But
11 anyway, then I got a job as assistant bookkeeper. And
12 then I became a salesman, January 1st, 1958, in the
13 insurance business, as a salesman. So I don't have to
14 stand up, I could drive in my car, right? Yes.

15 But I could not handle any job where I have
16 to stand. I can't stand in line to go to a movie,
17 whatever. My wife stands in line. I sit in the car,
18 and then she calls me. I can't stand on my feet for a
19 long time.

20 And thank you for giving me the opportunity
21 to hopefully give a message or warning; and an insight
22 in Eddy Wynschenk. In a way I felt I undressed myself

1 in front of you and John. And I don't mind. Probably
2 there will be reaction of people, "that's not true,"
3 whatever -- let them come to me and tell me what is
4 wrong, what I said, what kind of lies I said. I have
5 no reason to lie.

6 Q Thank you very much.

7 A Thank you for inviting me.

8 [End Tape 2]
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