

Ready. OK. Today is March 1st, 2000. We're at the home of Ernest Mehlman, at 4046 Fruitvale Avenue, in Oakland California. And we are interviewing Ernest Mehlman.

Is that how you want me to write it? As you have it on the slate as Ernie. So how do you want me to write it on the tape?

What do you prefer Ernie or Ernest?

Well, Ernie, everybody calls me Ernie. But the formal name is Ernest.

And how do you spell it?

E-R-N-E-S-T.

OK. That's how it is in the records.

But in Europe, I was Ernst-- E-R-N-S-T.

OK. Maybe we should do it that way.

OK.

OK. That's what I-- Yeah all right. Could we have-- my name is Peter Ryan, interviewer, and Matt Binder is doing the videotaping. Could I ask you where and when you were born?

I was born in Belz, Poland, 1914.

And how many people were in the family?

We were six all together, mother, father and four children.

And where were you age-wise in the four?

The second from the top, the second oldest.

Who was oldest, another brother?

One brother above me, and one younger than me, and that sister who was the youngest. And the sister is still alive.

Where does she live?

In San Francisco.

What did your father do?

Well, he worked in a warehouse packing material. See that was before the war, World War II. And that was the only occupation I know of.

How big a city was Belz.

Well, I don't know. I have no recollection of Belz because I left only during my infancy. Then my parents with my older son, were moved to Vienna, Austria. That was during World War I, for the reason because, during the war the battlegrounds were approximately in the neighborhood of where we lived. That was the battleground of the Russians versus the Germans. And they were battling back and forth.

The Russians were coming into Poland driving out the Germans. Then there were counter-attacked by the Germans, when they were driving out the Russians. And it went back and forth, and that was too much for my parents.

And so we moved to Vienna, Austria, because at that time, Poland was part of the Austrian Hungarian Empire. And Poland was part of the Empire, so it was easy to move from Poland to Vienna and that's where we stayed.

Being part of the Austrian Hungarian Empire was it still Poland?

Yes.

It was?

Yes.

OK. And where did you live in Austria in Vienna?

In Vienna? You mean the specific areas?

Well, yeah, the neighborhood.

The neighborhood was the 20th Bezirk it's called. These are the

Districts?

District, Yeah. And that's the only bezirk I remember. Probably a village.

Now, that wasn't Downtown?

No, no, Downtown was the first bezirk. Yeah.

What kind of a neighborhood was that?

Oh. It's a working-class neighborhood, but pretty good.

Mixed? Jews and non-Jews?

Oh yes indeed.

And what did your father do there?

My father, in Vienna? As I mentioned before he worked in a warehouse, and he was the manager over there.

Oh I see, so that was in Vienna?

In Vienna. Yeah

OK.

What he did in Poland, I don't know.

OK. And what kind of living quarters did you have?

Well, we had two bedroom, and one bath and the apartment belonged to the city of Vienna, because at that time the city

had a huge building projects because of the housing shortage. And they built thousands and thousands and thousands of apartments, in large complexes. And in one of them, we lived in there.

Do you remember your early schooling?

Yes.

Could you describe it?

Well, I went to grammar school.

A public school?

A public school. Then I went to the middle school. And then I graduated from over there with good graduate certificates. I was considered one of the best in school, in the class.

What were you good at?

Anything.

[LAUGHS] That's modest.

Yes. I got what we call sehr gut good. sehr gut good means, very good.

Very good.

Very good in all subjects. From all of the teachers.

Did you like school?

Very much so. Because it was easy for me. I didn't have to study at home, whatever I learned stayed in my brains.

How about your siblings, were they good in school?

Yes, I would say, Yes.

As good as you?

I would say yes.

OK. So you finished the middle school?

The middle school and then I went to a school which we call handelsschule you know, which was a step higher up.

And what kind of training, we are getting there?

Getting there to-- business subject.

Business?

Subject, yes.

Were you hoping to go into business?

Well, at that time. That was in Vienna, there was no hope for an ordinary young man out of a poor family, to go into his own business, unlike here. Where I went, besides working for the US government, I went into my own businesses apartment house owner. I invested in real property, and I still have some of them, and rented it out.

So what were you hoping to do as a young man, in Austria?

In Austria? Just make a living.

Make a living.

Because Austria at that time was a poor country, not like today. Today Austria is a well-to-do country. But at that time Austria was poor.

Was your family religious?

My mother was very religious, orthodox. My father less so. My mother was strictly Kosher but I doubt very much whether my father was Kosher, when he was away on business.

He was away a lot?

Quite a lot, yes.

Travel?

Traveling, yeah.

So you had a Kosher household?

Yes.

When you were in school, did you have friends who were both Jewish and Non-Jewish?

Yes, definitely.

Both.

Both. We got along extremely well.

And in the neighborhood, same thing?

The same thing, yeah.

Did you know any anti-Semitism in Austria, at that time?

I didn't particularly feel affected by it, although I'm sure there was anti-Semitism. And of course it came out after the so-called Anschluss, when Hitler came into Austria. Because all of a sudden, all the Austrian, Aryan, or Christian Austrians, all of a sudden, became Nazis.

Had their Nazi pins on their lapels, and didn't want to know us anymore. In other words, if they asked then several would say, they are victims of Nazism. That's not true.

They embraced it?

They embraced it enthusiastically. And there were more Nazis than the Nazis themselves.

What year did you get finished with your school?

I would say it was in 1932 or so.

32?

Yeah.

And by that time the Depression had hit Austria?

Oh very much so.

So what kind of work do you do?

First I worked-- over there you had to start to be an apprentice. And I got a job with that company which sold goods for making dresses.

Which material?

Material, Yes. And I was a sales person over there. But then of course, I went over to be in an office, with a company which imported yarns from abroad, particularly Belgium. And of course, imported it for sale within Austria.

Austria?

Yeah.

To make dress?

To make dresses. Yes.

Do you remember the assassination of Dollfuss?

Yes. And very much so. Was very much in my mind at that time and I've never forgotten it.

What, do you remember?

Well, I remember that he was shot and left to bleed to death. And of course, it was before the so-called Anschluss, several years before that. It was of course, organized by the Nazis.

Now, they had some street fighting then. Didn't they?

Oh Yes. There was some, Yes, there were some street fighting.

Did you see any of that? Were you involved in any of that?

No.

No. Did you witness any of it?

No.

Did you understand what was happening?

I read the newspaper every day.

Was your family political at all?

No.

Did they vote in Austria?

Yes.

So you had an office job?

Yes.

And how long did you have that?

Until after the so-called Anschluss. When a Nazi in uniform came into the office and told my boss that he should discharge all the Jews in the office. And I was the only one, beside one of the two bosses. One was a Jew too. And so he had no choice but tearfully, let me go. And he says, I'm sorry, I was told that I must discharge you.

I said that's fine, I want to leave anyhow.

You'd been in that work about four years?

At this company? Yes. Several years. Yes.

That must have been hard for you.

Well, in as much as I had planned to leave, it just fit into my schedule.

What kind of plans had you had?

I'd planned, as soon as the Anschluss arrived, I mean, was taking place, that means the marching in of the Austrian troops, of the German troops, I went to the American consulate to register for an immigration visa to the United States. That was, I believe, practically the day, or the day after the German troops marched into Austria.

What did you witness, regarding the Anschluss?

Well, the arrival of the German troops, and of course, all of a sudden, you saw the politically army of the Nazis, like the SR, and the SS, these were the abbreviation for the stormtroopers. And I saw quite a bit of them. But of course, you tried to stay away from them.

How would you do that?

Well, if you know that there's a meeting taking place, we stayed away from them.

You avoided it?

Yeah, avoided it. Very much so.

Now you know you lost your job, how about your father?

He lost his job too.

And your older brother, was he working?

My older brother? Yeah, he was working too. He was working for a very large clothing store. And he was salesman over there.

Did he lose his job?

Yes. Because it was a Jewish company, was taken over by the Nazis. So all the Jews working over there had to go.

So essentially everyone in the family who was employed, was suddenly nonemployed?

Nonemployed. Yes.

That must have been hard for the family?

Yes it was. But of course shortly thereafter, I said I'm not going to stay here and wait for my immigration visa because it might take quite some time. And so I thought I'm going to go first to Switzerland. That's where my first adventure began, in Switzerland.

Now, were Austrians allowed to go to Switzerland?

Well, if they had a visa, Yes. But if they didn't have a visa as far as the Nazis were concerned, they didn't give a hoot. But the Swiss did. If you had a passport, which the Nazis freely issued.

They wanted people to leave?

To leave. But we get a letter J at the top of the passport. If you had a passport with that big red letter J first on the top of it, the Swiss wouldn't let you in unless you got a Swiss visa. And the Swiss didn't issue any visas to Jews.

So, how were you able to get into Switzerland?

Well, first I thought I would be able to talk to the immigration officer at the Swiss border into letting me in, but I had no success.

Did you try?

I tried. I took the train to Basel, Switzerland. And then I showed him my passport and he paged to look for a reason, then he finally he said, I can't let you in, you have no visa. So I said, well, you know, it's self-preservation. If I go back I might be arrested by the Nazis and taken to a concentration camp and that would probably be the end of me. He said I'm sorry, if I let you in, I could lose my job. You have to go back.

So I took the train back again, to the next village in Germany. And got off, and said if I can't get in legally, I'll go in illegally. Meaning, cross the border and avoiding the border guards.

How did your family feel about you leaving and going to Switzerland?

They gave me their blessing.

They did?

Yes.

Were you the only one in the family who left out there?

No. First my-- let me recollect it. First my younger brother was arrested on the street of Vienna and sent to a concentration camp. So--

Where did he go? Do you know?

First to Dachau then he was transferred to Buchenwald. You see, when I left he was still in the concentration camp. And my brother left, and he was successful.

Your older?

My older brother left, and he went to France.

France?

And they lived in France.

They let them in? Yes, they let him in at that time. Yes, he said he's a refugee, so they let him in. And he lived in a little city, near the city of Paris. And I thought I'll go to Switzerland first. And so--

Why did you choose Switzerland? Remember?

Pardon me.

Why did you choose Switzerland?

Because my younger brother, he visited Switzerland before the Nazis came to Austria, and he made friends over there in Basel. We got friends.

There were people that could help you?

Could help. Yes.

So you wanted to go Basel.

To Basel. And then of course, what I thought is that, Jews being Jews, one Jew helps the other. That's this history of our survival for thousands of years. So I thought, well, we'll start with Switzerland, and then go to those friends.

And those friends never let me down, never. They were really good friends. And they are still friends. Not the elder generation, but the children. We still talk to them over the phone, write to each other, and visit each other.

They're still in Switzerland?

They're still in Switzerland.

How many people were there, there? To help you?

Oh in Switzerland? Well, in Switzerland, the greatest help I got from the Jewish Federation over there. And I'll tell you, how come? When I tried to go to Switzerland the roundabout way, avoiding the immigration, I got caught by the German border guards.

This is when you first tried to get into?

Tried to get into, Yes. I was there with a friend of mine. The two of us felt better, when we're both two of us. A good friend of mine. And we were of course, we were arrested and taken to the headquarters over there. And interviewed.

This was on the German side of the border?

On the German, Yes, and it was inside. Just inside the German border. And the chief over there, Oh he gave us hell for attempting to go in there, until he told us to take everything out of our pockets, to see what we carry in there.

And of course, we carried just a small amount of money because there were restrictions of everybody who leaves.

How much you could take?

How much we could take. I believe you could take only 10 German marks. At that time it was the equivalent of 2 and 1/2 dollars. That's what we could take out if--

You could have one meal for that?

Well, maybe one, or if it would be very full, it maybe two or three, it depends. And so of course when I took everything out, and put it on the table as he asked us to. When he saw that we took our handkerchief out, and put it on the table, Oh he got so mad, and he threw everything on the floor. He said, so what do you do? Put your handkerchief on the table?

So I apologized, and put it back again. Because he said put everything on the table. And the handkerchief was a clean handkerchief, anyhow. And the room was occupied with other of that chief's colleagues. Then finally, the room, one after the other left, of the Chief's colleagues, and then he was by himself with us.

He became a different man. He said, I tell you two, you didn't go the right way. I'll tell you how to go into Switzerland. So he took us to a wall map, and showed us where we are, and how we should go. And when, exactly when we should start.

You mean like what time of day?

What time of day, Yeah, of time of day. And that's exactly what we did. And he's told us to go with this particular road, passing his house. I mean, the Gestapo house, or whatever it was. And goes this way and until we come to a tram track. We should wait for the tram, get on, because the tram only goes into Switzerland, without any immigration or border guards. Because they only bring workers, who work in Germany, back to Switzerland.

That's exactly what we did and here we got to Basel. And before we left he gave us the address of the Jewish Federation to go to. And that's what we did when we came to the place, of the others. They embraced us like we were their own, long, lost sons. And they gave us a room to stay, and they gave us coupons for meals.

And now this friend of yours, tell us a little about him? Was he from your school friend? Or?

Yeah, he was. I believe we went to the same schools, but I don't believe we went to the same class. But we are about the same age together. And he was also successful in coming to the United States later on. But he stayed in New York, until he passed away.

How long had you been friends at that time?

Oh several years.

Several years. Yeah he was a good friend. Very fine friend.

So the Jewish Federation really came through?

Oh very much so.

And where was this, in Basel?

In Basel. The very same city I want to go into legally, but they required me to go to the police and register. I registered, went back, that was it. Until such time--

Did they see your passport?

Of course.

And they didn't--

No the Basel police then they just registered as it was. They are accustomed to do so, if you want to live there, whether you are legally or illegally, you have to register.

Now could you work in Switzerland? Were you allowed to?

No, not at all. If they catch you working, they would send you right back. And that's why the Jewish Federation over there had to support us because we could not work. We were not permitted to work.

What kind of living arrangement did you have?

Oh we had a nice room. We got enough coupons to buy the food. And it was small, and then of course, we had plenty of free time. In Switzerland -- and Basel, it's a beautiful city. And as far as we knew, this was friends, we know they were all very friendly, and often invited us to their home, often. And we had as you would say, a fairly comfortable living over there.

Now, were you in contact with your family?

Yes.

And what did you know about what was happening to them?

Well, of course what was happening to them, we knew either through letters or through the newspapers. And then of course when the so-called Kristallnacht came, I don't know if you know at the time, in November 1938, I felt my sister, the youngest of the siblings is still there, we have to get her out of there. We have to get out of there as quickly as possible.

Now, one brother, your older brother had gotten out?

He got out.

In France?

He was in France.

And your other brother was in the concentration camp?

Concentration camp. And I was in Basel. So I went to my Swiss friend and said, I have to get my sister over here. Knowing that to get a visa is, legitimately is impossible. We have to get her out in a different way. And they right away said, will help you.

Ernest, how old was she then?

She was 18 years of age.

18?

Yes. 18.

So how were they going to help?

Very interesting. They had to enlist a German on the other side of the border, the German border. The German was a locomotive engineer, he worked for the German railroad, and he said, Yes, I'll help.

And this help also consisted of keeping her in his own home for a couple of days until he felt that this is the right day to bring her into Switzerland. And so he gave my Swiss friends the plan, together on such and such a train in Germany.

The train would go from Vienna to Germany?

From Vienna to Germany, because the travel was free. Austria and Germany, one country, you didn't need any visas because the Anschluss, means, was one country. So she got into that very particular train she was told to go into.

And someone is going to contact her, right on the train, to tell her when to get out of the train. Because the plan was to stop the train in the middle of Switzerland, because the train had to go through a certain area, which was Switzerland, to go into the German part again, it was a tank.

And so when this particular spot arrived, she was expected by another Swiss friend who would then take her into Basel. And so that Swiss friend who organized it, and the locomotive man, was not only the German, but also the Swiss friend's father. Except that one lived in Basel, the other one lived in Germany. [PHONE RINGS]

Can I answer?

OK.

Well, that man stopped the whole train, my sister got off, was received by a young woman, a Swiss girl. And they went to Basel. They registered with the Swiss police, which was the requirement of the Jewish community over there. You must register with the Basel police.

And there she stayed for several years in Basel, until I helped her to get to the United States, the legal way. [LAUGHS]
Yeah.

Now, of course, my sister and I were in Basel. We felt we have to do something for my younger brother, who is in concentration camp, we have to get him out.

He was still there?

Oh he was still there.

How long had he been, in?

Well, he was arrested, shortly after the Germans came into Austria. He was arrested by the Nazis, but the Austrian Nazis of course, and turned over to the Germans. I felt the Austrians were worse, much worse than the Germans.

And I was questioned, at the border guard, when I was arrested first, "Is it true what I hear that the Jews have a hard time in Vienna?" I said yes indeed, very hard time. In other words, he wanted to know how things are going over there, and I had confirmed it.

And so we started writing letters to England, to get him into England. The war hasn't broken out yet. And we wrote

dozens and dozens of letters.

Now, one of the conditions for getting out of the concentration camp is you had to show them that there was some place you could go?

That's correct.

And so you wanted to get some kind of residence in England for him.

In England for him.

OK.

And so, we wrote and wrote and wrote. We received no particular answer. So we felt we'll have to go a different way. Let's get him to go to China. Because when you go to China, you don't need a visa. All you need is a ship ticket, to get onto a ship, and get out of it. Get a way in China, you're free to go, particular Shanghai.

And so we appealed to a Swiss friend to loan us the money because we were poor. And he said fine, we'll loan you the money and at that time a ship ticket to China, from Switzerland. It wasn't cheap, but they loaned us the money and we bought the ship ticket.

We sent the ship tickets to-- no wait a second no, we didn't send it to my mother, she was still living in Vienna. But in the meantime, we got the answer from one of the Swiss recipient of one of our letters, and he said, I'm going to help your brother get out. And that meant to come here and he--

To come to Switzerland?

Not to, no, to come to England.

To come England?

To England.

You got an answer from one of those letters.

Yeah, one of those letters.

How did you get the names of people?

We got it out of a telephone directory.

Huh, just--

Yeah. Just the telephone directory.

Did you pick Jewish names?

Well, we picked names which-- yeah, I would say yes. First we went to the telephone directory to pick names with the name of Mehlman, our name, but we found very, very few of them. We found even fewer here in America. You tried to look the telephone, you find one more Melhman in the telephone directory, in the city of the East Bay.

So it didn't work, to use that name?

Yeah. That name didn't work so, but it did work because he appealed to the British authorities over there to issue a visa

to my brother and they did. They send it to my mother in Vienna. And she went to the Gestapo over there and said, he can go to England.

So they said OK. We will notify the camp, to release him. And after that he has to leave within 24 hours, or 48 hours. And so my brother was released, came back. As soon as he came back, he grabbed a few clothes and right away he went to England.

How old was he then?

He was born in 1916, and that happened in 1930-- I believe in 1939, before the war began. And so he went over there and he lived over there and became a British citizen. You see.

And eventually, he wanted to come to us, to America, and we helped him. Prepared affidavits of support, and we were legal residents here, and he eventually came here too. To The United States, and lived in Oakland, about two blocks away.

So all four of you at that point were out?

All four of us were out, Yes.

And your mother and father were in Vienna?

My mother and father were in Vienna. And they eventually went to France.

When?

It was just before the war started.

And there was no problem getting out to freedom?

No, my brother arranged it, that they would get to France.

The one who was in France?

In France, Yeah. Because he had in the meantime enlisted to serve in the French Foreign Legion and so he could go and says, I'm going to be one of the French soldiers, I would like my parents to come to France. So they gave them a visa to come to France.

So when did they come?

They come before the war began, in 1939. And they came to Ajon. That was the province which was willing to receive them, because each province in France had its own rules pertaining to refugees. And in Ajon is a city, they could live with us. I mean, in this province.

Now, what were you doing in Switzerland during all this time?

Well, in Switzerland, all of a sudden, a group of Jewish refugees, by such and such a name, had to report to a certain place to be taken to a labor camp, and I was one of them. But it was a penal institution. And the name was Dietersberg.

It was actually a prison? A prison.

And what were you to do there?

It was in winter, shoveling snow. That's the only thing we could do, shoveling snow. And shoveling amount of snow

here to put it there, and then of course put it back again. Because they wanted us to work. And of course, after a few weeks, or maybe two or three months, I felt that's not life.

Now how far were there from Belgium?

Oh I would say, it was still within Basel land. So in Switzerland itself, is comparatively small geographically, and so I don't know the exact mileage between one and the other. But it was too far away.

Were you able to see your sister?

No.

You had to stay there?

You had no visiting rights also.

And they didn't have any visiting rights to see you?

To see me, no.

Your sister was still in Basel? What was she doing?

In Basel. Yes. She became my housemate. Because that was the only shortage there was. If someone wanted to hire you as a housemate, it was all right.

Would they pay you?

Pay you? Food and

Food and--

I'll be with you in a sec. Get some -- a good [INAUDIBLE]

I just wanted to ask if you had any idea why that German policeman helped you?

Because we probably gave him the right answers of the question he asked? He asked the other man, "What was your dad doing?" He said, he was a city policeman. So that was a good answer. Which he was.

What was my dad doing? I said he was a warehouse man. In other words, we were not the big shots. We were just poor people. And the only regret I had is, that after the war, I could reciprocate with giving help to those who helped me. And I forgot this particular man.

And what help could I give them? I gave them food, which was in short supply in the French occupied part of Germany, once they were defeated. And of course the locomotive engineer, of course could come with a truck, trunk loads of food. Because in the army, I became the first Sergeant of the company, and of course I had commissary privileges.

I went to the army commissary, purchased the food I know they are most in need of, and brought it, put it all in the trunk and brought it to them. And believe you me, it was a God-sent.

He had survived?

Oh he had survived. I even got him, the French to give him an exit visa to go to Switzerland, whenever he wanted to, back and forth. Because he needed medical help, and he couldn't get it over there, because lack of doctors, lack of medical prescriptions, medication. And in Switzerland everything was available.

So you sought him out, and helped him?

And helped him, yes.

Was he surprised?

Well, no, because I told his son what I'm going to do. And he in turn notified him, so when he saw me first, and I was still in uniform.

Did you remember you?

Of course.

Yes?

Oh wait a second. No this man never met me, at that time, the first time I came, because the locomotive engineer, he didn't even see-- he saw my sister, but not me.

I see.

But of course, coming in uniform was identification enough, because his son notified him that I'm going to come and visit him. So he doesn't get shocked that an American soldier's coming maybe to arrest him.

Yeah.

And so of course I unloaded the food and continued on to Basel. Because in Basel, I had my sister living down there. Yeah, see. Well, anyhow in Dietersberg, I didn't like the job I got. And the strict discipline when you were sitting at the table, in the mess hall, you couldn't whisper a sound.

If you made a sound right away, the boss over there, the chief over there would say, leave the table. You went to bed hungry.

So you couldn't talk?

You couldn't talk. The only time you could talk when you were outside and it was evening time. You went back to your place to sleep. Well--

This is when you met Arnold, Mark?

No. He was in a different camp. Yeah. I met him, Arnold Mark, I believe I met here in America.

In America?

In America, Yeah. And I met him just a short while ago, during the services of my wife of 51 years, you know. Well, anyhow--

So how long are you in this labor camp?

Oh I don't remember the exact time, but it must have been about, at least two months.

And you decided this is not good?

It's not good. No future. Because I expected the war to last a long and long, long time because the German army is the

almost invincible at that time. And so I escaped from over there.

Now the war had already started?

No I don't believe so. The war hasn't started yet. I escaped and went to Basel and went to my Swiss friends. And they housed me, until I could arrange for my brother in France, to smuggle me into France.

How did you arrange that?

Well, I communicated with him. Probably by mail. And right away he organized it with the Swiss men, for money of course, at that time, to smuggle me into France.

Did you want to go to where your brother was?

Yes, but over there, he couldn't because he lived too close to Paris, and they closed any further acceptance of refugees. So he told me I should go to a different place. And I believe the name of the city I went to was Amiens.

And there. I was accepted as a refugee. And stayed there until I was interned, by the French, after the war broke out. And of course the French interned everybody who came in with an Austrian or German passport, regardless of religion.

Although you might imagine that the Jews were friends of the French.

Because they considered you a friend of the enemy?

A friend of enemy, Yes. But the guards, the French soldiers who guarded us, thought differently. They knew better, that we are not friends of the Germans, we are friends of the French. And they treated us loyally.

What camp for you were you in?

It was a camp, it was a vacated barn, a row of barns, where the animals were concentrated in one or two barns. And we were to use the other barns. And all we had was lying on straw and with blankets. But it was warm, and we got plenty of food at that time. It was the beginning--

What year was this?

It was in 39. 1939. Yes. That was winter. No, not quite winter yet. Not quite winter yet. And pretty soon, because they had a lack of manpower to harvest the fields, they recruited us to help with the harvest. I gladly went. And I went, and that farmer he picked us up every day from that particular internment camp, took us to his farm, and we were harvesting sugar beets.

And he was very satisfied with us. And so he came back every time, every day, he came back. And he wanted just us, there were several other people, because we proved to be good farmers, harvesting the sugar beets.

Did he feed you?

Oh Yes. And then royally. Very good. We went back to camp, and so we had no particular hardship. And on Saturdays and Sundays,

You didn't have to work?

We didn't have to work. The guard said, would you like to go to town? I said, fine, we go to town. So we went, not Paris, but the village. So he took us down and he said, well, I give you so-and-so many hours to be away, wherever you want to go, but you must be back at this time. And so we were back at this time, and went back to the internment camp.

Well, the time came when my visa finally came through, so a French officer came to me and said, we got an immigration visa, for you to pick up. We were notified that one is available for you, so you can pick it up. And we'll take you down to the American consulate, to pick it up. So they took me down.

Your visa to America?

Visa, Yes. It was--

What time of year was this?

It was already during the war, and that was, I would say, in 1940.

Early 40s?

Early 40s, Yes. Early 40s.

Early 40s before France was invaded?

They'd just invaded it. And so it was, we couldn't leave from Le Havre anymore, which was the nearest port. We had to go to a port called Saint-nazaire in Southern France. And so a German soldier was assigned to guard me, to take me to the port, take me on board ship. Then he would say to me, "You are free."

France was already occupied then?

The northern part was already invaded, but the southern part was not occupied as yet. It became, as you know, Vichy France.

But you're saying a German guard took you to--

No, no, not a German guard, a French guard. If I said German guard, it was wrong, a French guard.

OK.

And they said you are free. And so the ship--

What was the ship?

The ship's name, I remembered it, it was a French ship, passenger liner. A regular passenger ship. And he took me to the ship and apparently, the Jewish community apparently arranged for the ticket. Because I didn't have a ticket on me but they must have sent it on to the ship itself. Because no one asked me for any tickets.

So it arrived in New York, sometimes in May. May 1940.

So that was the time of the invasion?

Yes.

And France didn't last very well?

No, did not. The Maginot line was built for practically no purpose. Because the Germans just circumvented the Maginot line, and went into France, through Holland and Belgium.

The guards didn't turn backwards?

Pardon me?

The Maginot Line guns only the faced towards Germany?

Faced towards Germany, Yeah.

And when they came from behind, they couldn't turn them around?

[LAUGHS] But it was a stupid Maginot line. And billions of dollars were spent on it to guard the French border. But they forgot that the French border stops at the line of Belgium and Holland, but the Germans said, they don't care.

If they want to invade France, they go around the Maginot line, and that's exactly what they did.

So you arrived in New York in May 1940?

May 1940.

And did you know anyone?

Yes. The person who sponsored me, a distant cousin of mine.

On what side? Your father, your mother?

That's a good question. I've never been able to find out the relationship. It may have been only an imaginary relationship, just to issue me affidavit of support. Because at that time it was thought, if it's a relative, it has more weight.

But he treated me like I was his own son.

Where did he live?

In New York, in Manhattan, on Delancey Street, a very well known street.

Oh Yes.

Yeah. And I stayed there for about, from May through the end of June. And I got a little job, but then when I got a job, the Union, which found out I got a job, said, you have to be a Union member to work in this particular place. So I said, fine, I'll become a member.

So I was questioned, do you know? Have you ever worked in this particular job? It was making picture frames, that was the product that particular job provided. And so I said, no but of course, I'm learning, I'm learning. So they said no way, in order to be a union member, you must know that job. So we can't accept you.

I said, well, how can I become experienced and that if you don't let me. He says, well, that's your responsibility. So from then on I wasn't very keen about the unions at all, and still am not. Although I became a union member when I worked for the Federal government. But it was a different union of course.

Well, anyhow, so I decided I'll go to San Francisco.

Why?

Because I saw in Vienna a picture, which was called San Francisco, which Jeanette McDonald, Eddie Nelson,

Clark Gable.

Clark Gable, Spencer Tracy, and so on.

And the earthquake.

And the earthquake. And I was so impressed with it. That when I saw the picture, I had dreams of going to San Francisco. And here I had the chance. So I took a bus. Cousins said, "Why do you want to go to San Francisco. Here you have a room. You have board. And you'll get another job. So why go to San Francisco?"

So I told him, "I want to go to San Francisco." And I went. Took a bus. It took four days and four nights, and I enjoyed every minute of it. And I arrived in San Francisco in July of 1940. And it was cold in San Francisco. [? And ?] [? last ?] I had New York.

And I had my warm clothes all in my luggage. When I got off the bus it was so cold, I remember so well. I said, well, I have to get a room. So I went to the Jewish community, said, where can I go and get a room? And they said, we have a Russian lady, she came after World War one here, and she rents the rooms to refugees.

So she rented me a room, I believe for about \$5 a week. A furnished room, including all the utilities paid for. And here is the start of my life here in America, until the army drafted me.

When?

The army draft me in March 41. By lottery, I was chosen to report to the board, to the draft board. And of course before that, we all had to register between such and such age.

And of course I registered, and I was drafted. And I didn't mind going into the army. Because I felt it's my war, more than anybody else's war, because they are fighting the Nazis, a great evil.

Where did you get your training?

I got my training, I was inducted in San Francisco, sent to Camp Roberts in Central California, where they got my training. And instead of sending me out to the field, they felt we need you here, the Training Center. Because we gave you a test, that's my theory, you came out very well. And we like to put you in the finance office.

The finance office?

Army finance office. To pay the troops and pay the camps. They kept me there for several years, until about, from 1940 to about 1943. Until I got tired and said, I want to go overseas. So I went to the finance officer who was a Colonel, and says I like to transfer, I want to be transferred to Europe.

So he says "Are you crazy? You can stay here for the rest of your life. Why do you want-- I said, I want to go. So he said, well, if you insist, I'll give you a release. So the next assignment, guess where they sent me to? To the University of Illinois, to stay over there, what for?"

They want to put me in the intelligence corps, and I should brush up on my German. What do I need to brush up? German was my native tongue. I could read and write. But all my schools were in Vienna. And in Vienna they had very good schools.

And so I stayed there for several months until I was sent to France. At that time the invasion has just taken place. On June the 6th 1944. And I came to France, and then of course, and finally, Luxembourg.

What was your job there?

Well, at that time, I was already a sergeant at that time. And the job was to prepare, to send broadcasts to the German

soldiers, to give up their fight. And also to print leaflets, to give them free passes to come back to our lines, where we'll treat them well, and for them the war will be over, until the war is really over. And then we'll send them back home again.

And of course, then we took prisoners to interrogate them, in other words, those were for intelligence purposes.

Our headquarters, where the headquarter chief was, guess who? General Eisenhower. We were under his command. And of course, later on, I became a first sergeant, because the first sergeant of my company, he got very ill, and they had to send him back to the United States for treatment.

And so the company commander, appointed me the first sergeant. And the first sergeant that I had, with me, and under me, 140 enlisted men.

Would you actually to do some of the interrogations?

Well, no. Because of the first sergeant, I was just the coordinator. Coordinating for all the activities. And of course I made many friends. And I always considered myself very lucky. It goes up to this day. Because when I came to this country, and as a civilian, I had already a wife whom I met in Hamburg.

And you can her over there. We were married for 51 years. She was a wonderful woman. Wonderful wife.

How did you meet her in Hamburg?

Well, when a job opened up in Hamburg, after the war ended, We had a military government over there. A US military government. And I became an employee, I transferred from a military to civilian status. And worked over there is a civilian employee.

And I was assigned to duty in the British occupied part of Germany, to organize the payment of obligations we had against former German prisoners, who were our prisoners, and who worked for us. Because the Geneva Convention required that, if we employ German prisoners, we have to pay them. And they pay was \$1 a day.

And when they were discharged to go home, we gave them certificates, indicating the number of days they worked for us, and we owe them the applicable amount of \$1 per day. And we were to pay them through the German banks. My job was to organize it through the German banks. It was the Reichsbank, German Reichsbank at that time. To pay them.

And that job of course lasted about a year. Most Germans came with their certificates, and were paid at that time, in German marks. But some Germans were very smart, and said, I'm not going to change my dollar certificates, against German marks, God knows what's going to happen. Because the German marks in the meantime, became less and less in value as compared to the dollar.

They wanted to take their money in dollars.

They wanted their money in dollars. But at that time, we couldn't pay them in dollars, and we never did. But when the German currency reform came, then of course the German marks all of a sudden became a very valuable currency. And they exchanged it, for the good German marks. The marks which are now in circulation.

When did that happen, do you know?

Well, my job over there was I believe from 1937, no not, 47, 48, I believe. It must have been in 48.

And you were in Hamburg?

In Hamburg. Yes.

And how did you meet your wife?

Well, we needed a help in my office, so we hired her. So I was my wife's boss, of course, later on after we met, she was my boss. [LAUGHS] But she--

Now, she was from where?

From Hamburg. She was born in Hamburg.

She was German?

She was German. But at that time I didn't know it, and she apparently didn't know it. Her father was half Jewish. But he hid his ethnicity.

She what?

He hid.

Oh he hid that.

He hid it. Because she was born in Copenhagen. Copenhagen, Denmark. So my wife was over there, a quarter Jew. Which of course later on, when I found out, pleased me, because I'm Jewish myself. And we got married in Berlin. We had a big wedding at that time. And invited mostly American guests, of course some German guests as well.

Because I acquired German friends as well, because not every German was a Nazi. Although I would say that they might have belonged to the party, but more for economic reasons, than maybe otherwise.

And of course, the Germans as you know this, like all the people involved in the war, suffered a great deal. Because the destruction the Germans went through, but greater than the destruction to other countries. Because we were concentrating our attacks on the Germans with great strength, as you know.

The constant bombings, where the British were bombing by night, and the Americans were bombing the big cities by daytime. The only city which was saved, for a certain reason, was Heidelberg. Because it was to become the headquarters of the American army upon the occupation.

And what happened to your older brother who was in France?

Well, he was in fact, he was he was sent to Africa, over there. But the French Foreign Legion was not engaged in any of those combats against the British. So he never saw any military action and when the war was over, he came back to France. And of course, due to the fact that he was a member of the Foreign Legion, he was entitled to French citizenship which he became. He became a French citizen.

And stayed there?

And stayed there, until such time as he felt he should go back to Vienna, Austria, where he used to live.

He wanted to go back?

Yes. And he went back to Vienna.

He went back?

Yes.

How about you? Did you want to go back to Austria?

Never.

Did you want to go back to visit?

To visit? Yes, and I visited very few times.

When did the first time?

The first time it was in 1977.

And what was that like for you?

Well, it was such as, how could I possibly ever have lived here? Except at that time, when I lived, I as a young fella, I had a wonderful girlfriend. And that was the only fond memory I had of Vienna. And of course, I stayed there for about two weeks and I went back to America.

And the second time I came back because my older brother passed away. And I wanted to be there before he passed away, but unfortunately, due to some problems with the plane who was to take me back to Vienna, we had to postpone my ride by one day, by the time I came down there he just had passed away without seeing us.

But we could attend the funeral. That was my sister, and I, we travelled together.

And what happened to your sister?

Oh my sister? Well, I wanted them to come to America.

When we left off, she was in Basel?

She was in Basel. And she applied for a visa, but she was so far behind in, because that time there was a quota system, that to get a visa, was a waiting period. A great waiting period. So I said maybe I can help, and at that time, I still in uniform.

I was a first sergeant with six stripes on my arms, in both arms. So I went to the American consulate over there, in Zurich, and requested that she be given a visa. So they looked up her file and they said, well, we could give your sister a visa, but her husband is way behind it.

So I told the council, I said, if you can't give it to her husband, she won't go either. Because in the meantime, they had a young boy. So the council went back to his own room, probably discussed it with someone, and then he came back and says, well we have decided to give both of you visa. So that's what happened.

And they came to the United States, a year before I came back from Europe, to the United States. So when I came back from my European tours she was already in New York, living in New York for one year.

So she came in what, like 47?

47. So she lived the whole war out in Switzerland?

In Switzerland, Yes.

And your younger brother went to England after he got out of the concentration camp?

That's right. He went and stayed there, became a British citizen. And then of course, eventually he said, I want to join

my family. Meaning, me, my sister.

Had your sister to come out here, by then?

By the time, Yeah she was. Yes she was already here. Not in San Francisco, but in New York. And so when I came here, I bought this house, because I couldn't find a place to stay. We had a rent control. Do you know what rent control means? You can't find a place to stay as a tenant. You had to buy one, or you were homeless.

So I said to myself, well, I saved enough money for a down payment, I'll buy a home. So we traveled around neighborhoods and I came to this house. And it was advertised by the owner, an attorney. So I rang the doorbell, walked into, they showed me the place. I liked it. I called up my wife who stayed temporarily, in Mill Valley. She came out here and she saw it too. She liked and we bought it.

This was when?

This was at the beginning of 1949.

And what happened to your parents?

Well, my parents in Ajon. My mother came to England after the war. But my father was betrayed by a Frenchman to the Nazis. When the Nazis were still the bosses in Vichy France. And he was taken to Auschwitz, and over there he perished.

And we got a statement from the Red Cross indicating when he died, the exact date, you know the Germans are very thorough. The exact date he died. And he died of cardiac arrest. You know what it means, after you're gassed, your heart stops. So the consequences, you have a cardiac arrest. That was the cause of death.

When was that, do you know?

Well, my sister, she got this certificate, that was well, about three, four years ago, she got the certificate. She inquired about it and they answered her, and sent her that particular paper.

When did he go to Auschwitz?

That was shortly after he was arrested. It must have been, I would indicate in 1943. Because the French, unlike what you might hear, they were collaborators with the Nazis. After the war was over, everybody claims they were in the Maquis. Maquis was underground. But it's not true.

Now, how come they took your father and they didn't take your mother?

At the time they wanted only men.

So they left her alone?

They left her alone.

They knew where she was.

Oh Yes.

And they left her alone?

They left her alone. Yeah.

All during the time they

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

--people off?

That's right.

You had a very nice girlfriend in Vienna before?

Yes. A very nice girl.

Did you ever find out what happened to her?

Yes, yes. I found that she was still living in the same place. And when I visited in Vienna, my older brother, I visited her. And of course, in the meantime her mother had passed away. And she had married in the meantime, someone else.

Was she Jewish or not?

No, she was not Jewish. She was born in Vienna, although her parents were from Czechoslovakia. And of course, she lived from a small pension she got from the government, because her husband, he was killed in action, during the war.

He was in the German army?

Yeah, either German or Austrian. Well, at that time they were all German armies. And she has a son who lives in Germany. And just a few years ago, about three or four years ago, the son wrote me a letter that she had passed away.

Although before she passed away, when I met her, I felt she lives in poverty, I'm going to support her. So each and every month, I sent her a \$100 money order. Because at that time I could well afford it.

When you go back to Austria, do you feel at all that that's part of you?

No.

No?

No. Except the following, I'm getting an Austrian pension, being a survivor. And so each and every three months I get a notification from my bank that such a check, and such and such an amount, its average is about, depending on the currency fluctuation, about six to seven hundred dollars a month, has been deposited to my account, you see. That's the only connection I have with Austria.

And then now and then they send me a very nice letter in which they fully admit the horrible time the Jews, and other victims had. And how much they regret it. And of course, the fact is, they can't do more than giving us support. Giving us a pension.

I've been receiving the pension now for the last 21 years. Because the pension began at the age of 65 and I'm now 86.

You have to be 65 to be eligible?

To be eligible, but--

So they're treating it like social security?

Yes but they added, but inasmuch as I left as a young man, they added on, so many extra years to it for the entitlement

in order to give me an amount. Because when I left Austria my social security contributions amounted to only a very few years, and you needed just like here, you need 40 quarters. And then also you need many more quarters. So they added that on an account of being a victim of Nazism.

Now, how did that start, did you have to apply for that? Yes, you applied for it.

And they accepted it right away?

Well, they accepted it, but they accepted it with such a small amount, because they based it on what you earned before. And through a very complicated formula. I just got such a small amount, and I said, well, that's ridiculous, that's what you call a pension? That's pocket money. And so I fought them, and I was successful in having them raise it to the regular, normal rate I expected, you see.

And each and every year, there's inflation advances, they increase the pension. And in fact they increased it by just a good amount, because they felt that if I need help, now because I'm sick, or old That they'll give me an additional \$300 a month.

So I filled out the application form, and they send me back a letter says, we have approved it. Normally they would require a doctor to verify it, but in my case because my own doctor of Kaiser Hospital, wrote down, what I have. And the fact that I'm aged, they didn't even require the Austrian so-called [INAUDIBLE], a doctor whom they hired.

To evaluate.

To evaluate.

How do you feel about America?

Great country. Paradise. Do I need to tell your more? Beautiful country.

Did your wife have any trouble leaving Germany and coming living here.

No, she was a war bride. Meaning, because I was a soldier, and I married in Germany, she fell into the war bride act, to come here without any difficulties.

Did she want to come here?

Oh she wanted to live with me. First of all, she never was married. Secondly, it was a great hardship to live in Germany, at that time. Because people were hungry. Because the Allied forces made sure that the Germans get their share of hardship, they created around the world. And so food was in short supply until the currency reform.

After the currency reform, then of course the money could buy anything you wanted to buy.

Did she leave family in Germany?

Her father.

Was that hard for her, to leave her father?

No. Because he has remarried. And the new wife of his didn't want her around. Although she did live with her father, personally, but she had a room of her own. But she wasn't welcome into the same household as her father.

And the father told her, listen, confine your coming to us, to a very few visits. Because he was very much in love with his wife, who was a lot younger than he was. And he felt he had to abide by the rules of his new wife.

And so she suffered from this. But she got used to it when she came to America. They were even on warmer terms than at the time they left. We even asked him to come and visit us.

Did he come?

No. And we told him we're going to send him an airplane ticket to come here. So he said, if I can't afford an airplane ticket myself, which I can't, I won't come. He was too proud.

How do you feel about being Jewish?

I feel good. Very good. And I support the-- in fact, I just wrote my annual donation check to the Jewish Federation. To the Federation for the Jewish family and Children's Services. When I leave here I'm taking it to the post office to mail it.

You got a lot of help from them, you want to support them?

I support them. Believe you me, I tried my very best to support them with thousands of dollars each year. Because I felt if I don't support them, where they're going to get the money? And how did the Jewish nation survive?

So you feel very strongly about that?

Very much. Although I'm not a very religious Jew, but when it comes to this portion of it, I defend my Jewishness greatly. And then my wife passed away a month ago, and although she wasn't Jewish, she wanted to be cremated.

So I've purchased a crypt in a mausoleum at a Jewish cemetery, where her ashes will be laid into the crypt, and when I go, which eventually of course I will, that I'll join her. Because the crypt is for an ordinary coffin. And an ordinary coffin plus that little box with ashes, fit into the crypt very well.

And the placement services took place on Tuesday.

Do you have children?

Two daughters.

Two daughters. Are they Jewish? Are they religious?

Not particularly.

Are they married?

Yes. Well, one is now widowed. Her husband, he was only 52, he developed a brain cancer. And within a few short months, he passed away. And the other one is still married. And she lives in Tahoe.

When the bell rang, I thought it's my daughter. But in fact, she comes unannounced, because she has keys. of course, my daughter. But this gentleman, he is one of my best friend. We used to be partners in the real estate business together.

Yeah, we bought properties which particularly needed fixing up. And he being a fire captain, he had on the fireman and colleagues who had various skills. And this fireman he had to work 24 hours on duty and 48 hours off. So they had plenty of time to do the work, and they did excellent work.

Do you think there could be another Holocaust?

I doubt it very much.

Tell me why? What is your thinking?

That Holocaust in our country? Oh during the World-- Oh throughout the world, there are plenty of Holocaust in other nations. Look at Rwanda. Look at Kosovo.

Why not here?

Because we're too much rooted in our democracy and the laws of the land, and the Constitution. That's why I think it will never happen. And of course, we don't let anybody forget that it did happen.

You think that's important?

Yes.

How did you feel about doing this tape?

I feel comfortable.

What you thought about it, when I called you.

Yeah, I don't feel any-- because I consider myself lucky all the time, all the time. I was lucky I was imprisoned, I was interned. I had always good jobs, and made good money. What more do you want? And I had a happy married life. I went with my wife in no less than 18 cruises. And provided her with a good living too.

And I never wanted to work outside the home. I wanted to raise the two children. Stay home. And that's what she did. She only did voluntarily, particularly with Kaiser Hospital, Kaiser Permanente. She had her own car which she would drive down to her volunteer work at least twice a week, for four hours and then come back.

So you feel blessed in your life?

Very much so. And to have a good sister, good daughters, wonderful grandchildren. Five of them. Three boys and two girls. And I love them all.

Is there anything that you would like to add, to what we've talked about?

Well, that is, the gratefulness that you're interested in getting the histories of people who experienced the Holocaust, because eventually everybody dies. It may be this is a small contribution of keeping what happened alive. Although my story greatly differs from some of the Holocaust survivors, who were survivors from German concentration camps, death camps.

And Oh we saw many times on TV, who were rescued by the Allied forces, as skeletons. And survived and became good citizens.

Did your brother ever talk to you about his experience in the camp?

Oh Yes. He gave me some advice, if we ever get into a camp what to do. Just don't be an outstanding man, just make yourself invisible. You don't want to be noted.

And he survived that way?

He survived that way. Yes.

Did it have a bad effect on him, do you think?

No. He became a successful real estate man. Yeah.

So you all went into real estate?

My sister, my brother, and me. But I as an investor, they as brokers. As an investor they needed a license. Well, Ernest, on behalf of the Holocaust Oral History Project, I want to thank you tremendously for being willing to do this interview. And for doing such a wonderful job.

Well, thank you very much. I'm glad to hear it.

OK I didn't record any of that, so, OK start anywhere you want and then just put that one in

Good. [INAUDIBLE] I'm going to do it.

These are the pictures, which were displayed at the services. At the occasion of my wife passing and this is my wife, Inga. Her maiden name was Trier, Inga Trier. And next to her is myself. And this was the wedding, after wedding pictures.

Would those pictures be when you were in Hamburg?

In Hamburg. Yes. No, these are pictures in Berlin. Because we got married in Berlin. And these are the witnesses to the wedding. He's he was an Army Major, and this was a German citizen, a businessman.

And of course, over there, right at the corner, is my wife clapping. She was at a baseball game somewhere. She had a candlestick.

That looked like candlestick.

Yeah that's right. And--

Did she like baseball?

Oh she loved it. And of course,

She looks like she's in a fur coat?

Yeah.

It's so cold there out.

Now, this is my wife's father on the horse. He was quite a wealthy man, because his job over there was selling wholesale oil. Buying oil from oil companies and selling it. And this is him again. And that's Ingrid's [INAUDIBLE]

This is him again now. This is your wife's father.

OK, and then over here, this her brother.

That is [? Ingrid ?] my wife, her mother and her father. Again

It takes me a while to shift. OK so now I'll point again.

Yeah. That's my wife's mother, and her father.

And her.

And of course her.

OK.

And this is the same picture you find here enlarged. And of course here, it's me again, at an office in Hamburg.

OK, there's a little bit glare there, but Yes, I can see.

All right. Can we move on?

Yeah, just like that, perfect.

And of course my first--

What are you doing there?

In Hamburg, there we were--

You were still in the army?

I was still in the-- No, at that time no more but we had to wear the army uniform because we didn't have civilian clothes. We just took of the insignias. Next to it is my wife again,

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

OK, lean it, lean it back there, lean it forward. Further, further, further, keep going, keep going, keep going. I'll tell you when to stop. There, OK.

And what year is that?

It was probably in 1948, in Germany.

In Germany.

In Germany, Yes. And then of course I didn't take the Volkswagen along because I knew at that time here, we didn't have any services for a Volkswagen. If it would need parts or services, no, where would I go? So I sold it again and bought a Nash, an American car. And of course over there--

The large one?

The larger one here. That's my wife too.

Let me move this over, a little bit closer to you.

Yeah.

And there's one of, you and your wife, holding hands. And they're over there, holding hands.

Whats that? A gun?

That was, probably, maybe one of the cruises were made. And of course the picture right above, represents. sent. Represents of course, not only my wife, but to some of the members of the family, and myself, and I believe one of my

daughters, and my nephew, at the very right hand the corner.

OK.

Now, those below are my five grandchildren. The right hand corner, down below. The bottom line. Two girls, and three boys. One of the boys, the very uppermost pictured, is my oldest grandson, and he's now in the army, and stationed in Alaska. Yeah This is my wife again, over there.

What was doing she doing? Oh with a grandchild?

Yes, she holds the grandchild, and the grandchild is the lowest picture over there, Jennifer is her name, the youngest grandchild. Now these are my two daughters when they were little girl's. Martha and June.

This of course is Inga again, my wife.

Now, this picture presents my wife, my late brother's wife Hanzi [Personal name] and my mother. It was taken here, probably in Oakland. In here, because we have similar pictures. That was my mother, my wife, and I believe my sister, my younger brother, and my sister's husband.

And then right next to it?

And next to it it's an old picture of my wife here, with German friends. I don't know their names. Now, I'm going to get a frame here, and then hang it up in my bedroom.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

They all are collecting together all the images and symbols in time makes it very rich, and these people just sit down and make this doll in the afternoon. What gestures to create hands and things.

Yeah. That's true. And what kind of mood they wanted to give it.

Thanks for letting me stay in here.

Oh sure. Are you ready. OK.

Sidetracks.