

[INAUDIBLE]. Please tell us about this picture.

This is a picture which was taken in England when I turned 16 years of age and I needed an identity card, which was then required by the British authorities. I was an alien. And this was a photo which was taken by the authorities.

And what year was that?

In 1941, maybe.

Please tell us about this picture.

This is a picture a maid, which worked for us probably in 1928 or 1929. It has a connection with when I visited East Germany about one year ago. I wrote a letter to the mayor, which I'm going to read out later. And this letter was published in the local newspaper. And apparently she saw that article and, to her great surprise, she found out that I was still alive.

This is the house where she lived?

That is the house where she lived. And then she wrote me a very tearful letter begging me to answer. And she sent me a photograph of herself and the house she lived in. And she begged me to come. And she told me that I'd always be welcome. There would be a home for me ready there.

What year was this photograph taken?

I have no idea.

And what town is this photograph in?

In Güstrow Mecklenburg, East Germany.

Can you spell that?

G-ü- two dots on top --S-T-R-O-W.

OK, please tell us about this picture.

This is a maid who worked for us, and her husband. This must have been taken many years ago because she is probably very, very old today, probably in her 90s. I remember her husband. When I was a child, he used to tell us stories about the First World War. I was enthralled by his stories. I don't remember his face, but I do remember when he told us the stories.

Did you ever visit her or contact her after she wrote to you?

No. When I was on a visit to the town I was born in, my friend told me about her. And I had forgotten. And he reminded me. And some kind of memories flooded back into my brain. And he said, she's old, she's probably not alive. And I regretted this because she was alive. Because she wrote me a letter. I missed that opportunity to visit her. But I have made up my mind that as soon as I can, I will go and visit her.

When did you receive the letter from her? After your visit?

After my visit. When this letter I wrote to the mayor was published. So she found this article in the newspaper and she wrote me back immediately.

OK. And just for the record, how do we spell Mecklenburg?

M-E-C-K-L-E-N-B-U-R-G.

What's your maid's name? What was the maid's name?

Her name is Stanislaw Jesper. She is from Poland really.

Oh, OK. You probably should spell that too because the--

Her name is Stanislaw Jesper and it's spelled S-T-A-N-I-S-L-A-W-A. that. Is her first name. And her second name is J-E-S-P-E-R.

Thanks.

OK, so this is the article that the maid saw that ultimately caused her to contact you.

Exactly, yes.

So tell us about this article please. And we'll make a photocopy of this article so it'll be easier to read.

I will only tell you the headlines because I will read that letter later, which I've translated to English. It says "a Jew comes back after 53 years to the town of his birth."

OK. Tell us about this picture please.

This is a picture my mother gave me when I left her in 1938. It is her when she was at the age of 16. Her father and her siblings in Warsaw, Poland.

And what year do you think this was taken?

1916.

1916?

No, no, no. One moment. She was-- probably in 1915 or '14. I think she was born maybe in 1898.

So she's the tall woman in the back?

Yeah.

And the small children?

Her siblings, her brother and sister and her father.

What were their names?

I don't know. I've never met them. I never heard of them.

Did they survive the Holocaust?

I don't think so. I have no idea, but I don't think so.

What was your mother's name?

Her first name was [Personal name] and her second name was Kramkimmel.

Can you spell those?

K-R-A-M-K-I-M-E-L, Kramkimmel.

OK.

Tell us about this picture please.

This is my mother again. And I was serving in the British army. I arrived in Antwerp. And my mother and my sister went illegally in 1938 to Belgium. And they were deported in 1942. I went to the former Gestapo headquarters to find out the fate of my mother and my sister. And he found the file and he pulled out the file. And this picture was in the file. And he gave me the picture. And he told me according to the file that this transport, which went to Auschwitz, there were no survivors.

And who took the photograph and what year?

I have no idea, no idea.

Did the Nazis take this picture?

Probably, probably.

Did they take a picture of all the people they sent on transport?

I have no idea. I think so. Probably in every file there must have been a picture because in the file of my mother was this picture.

What about your sister?

Also-- maybe I brought it, maybe not. I found her picture too. I don't think I must have brought it. I must have missed bringing it. I can send it.

Maybe next time you can?

Yeah, fine, fine.

And tell us about this drawing please?

This is a drawing which my little sister drew. It probably depicts a Belgian policeman with his wife or his girlfriend. She sent it to me while I was in England through the Swiss Red Cross. I received it. I had no idea that my little sister was artistic. But I've kept it for many years and it's very precious to me.

And what year did she draw this picture, and how old was she?

Probably in '41 and she must have been about eight years old.

And what town was she living in when she drew the picture?

In Brussels, Belgium.

Was your sister sent on the same transport as your mother?

Yes, yes.

So she didn't survive either?

No.

So you're saying the character on the right is a policeman?

Looks to me like a policeman.

Any thoughts about the character on the left?

They look both like-- a little bit like cats. So she might have made them into human beings. I really don't know.

Please tell us about this picture.

This is an army photo. And this was-- I'm wearing a winter uniform. I was inducted in 1944 in January. It was before I was sent overseas.

And so what year was it taken, and what town was it taken in?

I think it was taken in London in 1944.

--please?

I was serving in Germany, in Westphalia, in the town of Bielefeld. And I was about 19 years old and I had my picture taken in Germany.

And again, what year would this have been?

1945, after the war, after the war had finished.

Could you spell the town?

Bielefeld, B-I-E-L-E-F-E-L-D.

And Westphalia?

W-E-S-T-P-H-A-L-I-A, Westphalia.

Thanks.

Tell us about this please.

This is taken in Israel in the kibbutz, Kibbutz Lavi which was established in 1950. You can see the rocks and the first [INAUDIBLE] having been erected. That's my wife and my firstborn child, Benjamin. And I was sent on an officer's course in the Israeli army.

How did you spell the name of that--

Kibbutz L-A-V-I, Lavi, which means lioness.

What was your-- you lived on the kibbutz but you were sent away too I was sent by the kibbutz on an officer's course in

order to be made in charge of the security of the region.

What did the kibbutz grow?

It's based on agriculture. And it has a hotel.

Hotel?

Hotel, beautiful hotel. And it has fruits trees and vineyards. All those rocks, we cleared those rocks. It took us 20 years to clear them. It's very fruitful today.

What was your job on that?

I was a truck driver at some time of my stay there. And I used to be in charge of the repair shop.

Thanks.

Please tell us about this picture.

When I visited the town I was born in, a pastor contacted me. He heard that I was in town. And I went to him and he was very interested in the Jews, the local Jews, who lived in that town. And he gave me this picture of the synagogue. Of course, it does not exist any longer. It was destroyed in the Kristallnacht in 1938. I was very interested to receive these pictures. I remember the synagogue very well indeed.

Was there only one synagogue in your town?

Only one synagogue.

Tell us about this please.

This is the inside of the synagogue. I also received this from the same pastor. I remember the synagogue very well indeed. What you see in the foreground-- the director used to sit there. All the important people who were the directors of that synagogue, they used to sit in there with top hats while the congregation sat back at the benches. It brings back memories. I remember very, very well indeed the synagogue from the inside.

And please tell us about this photo.

This is the mortuary in the cemetery. Which, of course, doesn't exist anymore either. But according to Jewish law, every person who dies gets cleansed and then put in a shroud and then buried. I remember that mortuary also. I remember my father being bought there and the whole family went there for his burial. So, of course, as I mentioned before, it does not exist any longer.

And this also was destroyed on Kristallnacht?

I don't know when it was destroyed. I imagine that it was destroyed the same day.

Would you please tell us about this picture?

This is a kind of a supermarket the town built on the cemetery itself. This was probably the outer perimeter of the cemetery. And they built this supermarket on it.

And what year did you take this photograph?

In 1990, when I went back to visit the town.

Is part of the Jewish cemetery still intact?

No, it isn't. They took gravestones and put them aside. And they put a kind of an ornamental fence around it and a placard depicting that this is the Jewish cemetery. But I do not think it is the place where bodies are buried.

So it's more of a commemorative site--

Yes, but it's right next to it.

--rather than an actual cemetery.

It's right next to it.

And so the pictures you have of the gravestones are from that commemorative site?

Yes, exactly. They took them and put them up.

OK.

Please tell us about this picture.

The person standing there is the only person who I recognized. He was a former schoolmate of my brother. He's slightly older than me. He took me around the town. He took me to the cemetery.

So this is what remains of the old cemetery?

I wouldn't say it remained. I think that the authorities took the grave stones from their original places and put them slightly next to the cemetery in order to commemorate the cemetery.

So you think that the people are not buried here?

I do not think so.

And what is your friend's name?

Jonny Janoshka.

Can you spell that for us please?

J-O-N-N-Y. And his second name is Janoshka, J-A-N-O-S-H-K-A.

And he is not Jewish?

He is not Jewish, but he always associated with us as children as his father was a-- either a communist or a social democrat. And he was at odds with the German authorities. He gave me lots of information of our childhood. I was amazed of what he knew.

Have we talked about that on the earlier tapes?

Yes. Yes, we did. He appears there.

Which authorities made this kind of commemorative? The Russian authorities?

No, the East German. The town.

The town?

The city.

What happened to the Jewish cemetery during the war?

I have no idea. I have no idea what happened to it. Well, as you know, they built the supermarket on it. And they displaced the stones and put them somewhere else near to it, quite close to it. Maybe this was even part of the cemetery. I think so.

Tell us about this please.

You see in the foreground the iron fence which depicts the Jewish candelabra, which Germans probably did, the East Germans. And it is, again, part of the cemetery with the gravestones. And my friend Jonny Janoshka standing there.

Tell us about this please.

Well, these are the gravestones from the original cemetery. And it shows according to the date when the person died how long the inhabitants of this town lived in the town. Maybe 150, maybe even more years, many years they must have lived there.

On this gravestone it looks like the dates are 1790 to 1865.

So that's 200 years. But I think that the history might even go back much longer.

And this?

Again, gravestones. And again, the dates are of importance, showing how long Jews lived in that town. Probably 1858, or something like that.

Yes, this please.

Again, another gravestone. One of those gravestones I, of course, do not know any of these names. They were, of course, inhabitants of the town.

Was your town destroyed during the war?

No, it wasn't even touched. I asked my friend what happened, how the town was captured. He told me that the Russians approached the town and the burgermeister, the mayor, and all the notables of the town went with a white flag and surrendered. Nothing. It wasn't even shelled or bombed.

What happened to all the newer gravestones? I mean, did you look for your father's gravestone?

Nothing to look at. What you saw here was very small indeed, maybe 10 or 12 or 15 gravestones. I went through those gravestones. They were all old ones, maybe 200 or 150 years old. There were no-- nothing less than 200 years old. So I have no idea what happened to those gravestones.

OK. Tell us about this please.

When I went to the cemetery, I saw the sign which says JÃ¼discher Friedhof, which means Jewish cemetery. And I saw it standing crooked. And I was taken aback by this. And I tried to straighten it. It was impossible. So in my letter, which I wrote to the mayor, I mentioned this crooked placard which says Jewish cemetery.

Did the mayor respond to that?

Yes, I received a letter from the mayor. But he did not respond to that.

He did not respond to the crooked signs?

No.

So you don't know if they fixed it or not?

I have no idea.

Do you have any idea why it's crooked, or why they just leave it that way?

Wear and tear. Nothing is repaired in East Germany. Everything was in disrepair. They had no money. They had no workers. They had no materials. I suppose this wouldn't have taken much to repair it. But when I do go back, I will repair it myself.

We need to spell that for the transcriber. J-U-D-I-S-C-H-E-R F-R-I-E-D-H-O-F.

And below the Friedhof says restanlage, which means "place of rest."

OK. Friedhof is-- what's that word mean?

Friedhof, cemetery.

OK.

Jewish cemetery. Fried means actually "peace" and hof means yard, court. Court of peace in literal translation, but it means cemetery.

Thank you.

--about this picture please.

When I came to the cemetery with my friend Jonny Janoshka, I tried to find out where my father was buried. He died in 1936, so I was eight years old. I thought that he was buried in a different place. But he told me that he had been present at the at the burial. And he said he thinks that this is the place where my father is buried. So I photographed it and I put on a yarmulke and I said Kaddish in front of him. He looked at me, but he understood.

Where is that today? Is it near what is the Jewish cemetery?

Next to the supermarket, it is there, exactly on the pictures you saw before. I have my doubts. I think he was buried-- but then, of course, I was only seven or eight years old. And he must have been about 11 or 12. He is five or six years older. He told me that my father would be approximately buried there.

Tell us about this photograph please.

This is our house. This is the only one of the Jewish houses still standing. And in fact, there are two girls living in there-- one upstairs and one downstairs. Now, you see, the two windows at the bottom. Those were put in later. They used to be a show window. We had a shop there.

So my father had a shop. You see the bricks lying there. Nothing is repaired. I didn't even recognize. I didn't realize that



the roof was so steep. But eventually I entered the house, and I was very much moved. I saw my family there in my mind and everything came back to me. In fact, the house was taken from us. And I am, at the moment, in contact with the German authorities in order to get it back.

How is that going? What have they said to you?

Oh, they sent me from pillar to post. I wrote to the West German authorities. They told me to contact the council in that town, which I have done. I have received in the meantime. There really isn't a break through.

There's really what?

No break through. It's not easy to. And it's very close to the center of the town. So probably, it might have some real estate value in the future. At the moment, I don't think so. But there might be possibilities.

And what years did you live in this house originally?

I think from about-- maybe from 1928 to 1938.

And this photograph was taken in 1990?

Yes. When I was there, I took that photograph.

And when you say it's the only one of the Jewish houses left standing, what do you mean by that? What transpired?

Well, this is the only house which people live in. The rest of the houses are shells. They are ruins. I went into every single house.

Was that because the Jewish people lived there? Or just because they were destroyed during the war, or they fell apart since then?

Nothing was destroyed during the war in that town. They looked, in a way, burned out. And completely-- in a way, it was a shell. You will see soon a picture of my cousin's house who lived maybe 10 houses up in the same street. And I went in that house. And everything which could be taken out was taken out-- the frames and the staircase and so forth, and the doors.

And I have no idea how that happened, why they let it go like that. But in essence, the Germans in East Germany didn't repair anything. They didn't have workers. And the workers they had were sent to Berlin, I heard. And they had no materials to repair anything.

Did you meet either of the two women who are the current tenant in the house?

Yes, yes.

Did they have anything to say to you about the history of the house?

No, they were young women. They didn't know anything about the history of the house. My friend heard some of it. He said there was an ice cream parlor there, and then a shop, and then it was turned into a house for people to live in. And these two girls didn't know much. They only were compassionate and sympathetic. And they allowed me to go through all the rooms. And I took pictures of the inside and of the courtyard. But they were detached in a way. I don't think they could have felt what I felt.

--about this picture.

This is one of the rooms in our house. And I think it was the room where I slept in.

--about this, please.

This is a kitchen. I remember my mother working in that kitchen making those wonderful Jewish foods. And all these thoughts came back into my mind when she prepared those foods and we sat around the table on weekdays, on Shabbat, eating her wonderful cooking.

Now, these are all taken when you went back?

Yes.

So they're in this condition the house is in now?

They changed things a little bit, not very much. Like these tiles, for instance, weren't there. But fundamentally, nothing has changed.

Have the cooking utensils changed much?

Yes, they have changed. We used to have a stove that we used to put in coal briquettes. Briquettes, you call it?

Briquettes.

Briquettes. And we used to put those in. And my mother used to cook on those. I don't remember what they cooked on. They haven't really advanced in any way, the East Germans. Maybe today. Probably with the reunification, probably things will pick up in Germany.

Please?

This is what we used to call the dark room. In German, the [GERMAN], the dark room.

It still looks dark.

Yes but they put a window in. It did not have a window. That's where we used to eat. And we always used to have electric light in there. And it was right next to the shop we had, to the store. And I went in there and, of course, again, all these memories went back when we sat around that table, the whole family eating.

Were all houses built so that they would have a dark room or rooms without windows?

In those days. They didn't have much of architects. It was a good house. We grew up in that house.

Tell us about this please.

Well, this is a lavatory which my father had put in probably in 1935 or '34. It was most probably the first water closet in the whole city. There was no such a thing. I, being a plumber today, have no idea how he connected it to a sewer system. I don't know whether there was a sewer system.

But before that, we had an outhouse in the yard which was used. And then once a month, some people came and used to empty that outhouse. It was-- it used to create a terrible stench. So my father had this water closet put in. And I don't think that the system, the toilet itself, is from those days. But the sanitary installation were put in by him.

What's the difference between the toilet and the sanitary installation?

Well, the toilets were probably different in those days. And the tank, which is probably here, which you see in the picture, is made of plastic. In those days, they were higher up and it had a cast iron system with a chain to pull it. This is

a different thing. But the system, the sanitary system, is probably the same. Only the utensils are different.

One time when we were talking you said that even today many houses in that town have no indoor facilities?

Yes, yes. There still is-- nothing has really advanced in that town, in East Germany on the whole.

Does that mean most houses don't have indoor facilities today?

I suppose today they do have. I would say that, yes. But in 1934 when my father had this installed, none of them had. Or very few, at least, had inside toilets.

And this please?

This was a room my two brothers slept in. This is also a bedroom. And I remember we used to have battles with pillows. In those days, we were very happy kids.

How many rooms were in the house?

Let me think. One, two, three, four, five, six-- about eight homes.

How many were bedrooms?

About six.

Six bedrooms? How big were the rooms in terms of feet?

To tell you, there were Maybe 10 by 6, something like that, on the average. Not very big rooms, but big enough. There was a kitchen and there was a stove. And there was an entrance corridor and the stairs going upstairs, and a big huge loft where we used to play when it rained. And my mother used to put apples in store, and so we have apples out of season. Or cucumbers, he used to put in barrels. And those we used to eat. Very nice.

And this?

This used to be the store, the shop. And it was turned into a living room. And I remembered all the wares we had for sale then there on the counters and so forth. So that did not exist any longer. It was turned into a living room.

OK, tell us about this please.

This is my friend, Jonny Janoshka standing in the courtyard of our house. And the girl with her back towards us is one of the girls living in that house.

Now, the courtyard-- was that formed by several houses being built around the courtyard, or was the courtyard in the middle of your house?

In the middle of the house, middle of the house. And I don't know what the back was [? difficult. ?] On one side I think was a courtyard of a neighbor house.

And this?

This is also the courtyard. You can see the drainpipes which lead away the rainwater from the roofs. They made a kind of a concoction to lead the water away, very primitive. As I mentioned before, they have no materials and no craftsmen to do anything. They probably did it by themselves.

And this?

This was the washroom where my mother used to boil the washing and she washed all our clothes in. Now, those windows-- there was a broken window on the right-hand side, on the lower right-hand side. And we used to invite all our friends from the street. And we used to put up [? bells ?] with planks. And everybody had to pay five pfenigs And I used to go through that window-- the snake man.

[LAUGHS]

And what did you do?

Went through the window.

Just went through the window?

And they had to play five pfenigs to see me go through that window. We make performances.

How much did you make?

[LAUGHTER]

So these pictures are all taken when you went back in 1990 and the condition the houses are in now?

Correct.

OK.

Tell us about this please.

This is the house I was born. I had no idea, really. But I did take my birth certificate along. And then I saw the street and the number. So I went to that house and had myself photographed. This is the house I was born in.

And so what year was that and how long did you live there?

I have no idea. I was born in 1925, delivered by a midwife. And that was in this house.

OK. Tell us about this please.

This is the house my distant related cousin lived in. As you can see, it's a shell. I don't know what happened to it. Everything has been taken out-- the doors, the staircases, window frames. I went in there and I remembered their family sitting at the table in the kitchen, eating. They had a maid, Marie. I mentioned it in one of my audiences here that she used to serve them. And she used to put butter in her hair. And sometimes she used to work for us, and sometimes she used to work for them.

I contacted my cousin. He lives in New Jersey today. And I sent him those photographs. He seemed unmoved. He doesn't want to go back.

Is the maid the woman whose pictures were at the beginning?

No, no. Another one.

That's a different maid.

Another one. But in the street we lived in, there were maybe six or seven Jewish families who had stores, who had shops. And not a single house remains, or it looks the same as you can see on those photographs. The only house which

is still inhabitable is only ours.

How many of the houses in your town are inhabitable today? Are many of them like these houses?

No, no. Most of them are inhabited by the population. Only Jewish homes look like that.

Only Jewish homes?

Only Jewish homes.

Did you find out why that is?

No, no, I didn't ask. I do not know why. I mean, a house like that, I mean, still standing. The fundamentals are there the walls are there. it could be rehabilitated, this house. But as I understood, there was no money and there was no materials, as I said, and no craftsmen.

And so this is 10 blocks away, you said, from the--

No, 10 houses.

10 houses Away from your house?

10 houses away. Very close to our house. A minute away.

And it's just the Jewish homes?

Yeah. I think it's only the Jewish homes which look like this.

Obviously it's the same courtyard.

No, it's the same house, only taken from a different angle.

Tell us about this please.

This is a kind of a yard on the left. It used to be a hotel which served the travelers who used to come to the town. Today, it's a shell. On the very left-- you can't see --it was an entrance where they used to put their horses. In those days, we didn't have cars but they had horses. And there was a kind of a stable where the horses were put up for the night. We used to play in there.

At the back where you see the white kind of placard, we used to play football and that was the goal. And very often, the ball used to go over this gate. And me, being the smallest, I had to go underneath to retrieve the ball. The yard beyond it belonged to the city. They had all the materials and tools there.

So was that the origin of your snake man routine, going under this gate?

Part of it.

[LAUGHTER]

Tell us about this please.

This is an annex to the synagogue where the cantor used to live. And the cantor was also the ritual slaughterer. There were also rooms for classrooms where the children used to learn Hebrew reading and writing. And sometimes services were held there on weekdays because synagogue was too big and the attendant were only a few. Maybe a minyan,

maybe a 10. So a big synagogue was not used. But on weekdays, this building was used for prayer.

About how many children would go to the classes?

Maybe 15 or 20.

This please?

This is the same annex, only from a different angle. That used to be the entrance to the annex. And the two windows you see, those were the rooms where we learned to read and write Hebrew.

And this?

It is the same building, taken from a different angle.

And tell us about this please.

This is the empty plot where the synagogue used to stand. It was burned in the Kristallnacht. And as you can see, there is nothing left of it, no sign of it. And they want to put up a monument depicting that this was a place where the Jewish synagogue stood once.

Are there any Jewish inhabitants of this town today?

None. In fact, the pastor whom I had spoken to, he wanted to bring in Russian Jews. Russian Jews are coming into Germany. He wanted to rehabilitate the buildings and house in those buildings Russian Jews. And he asked me to try and find funds for it. I didn't respond to that. I'm not interested in Russian Jews would go to Germany.

Please tell us about this.

This is a letter my sister wrote to my mother on Mother's Day, I suppose. It's in French. I don't speak French. She learned French while living in Brussels and she sent it to me. I can see she has a beautiful script. I didn't even realize that she wrote so nicely.

We'll make a Xerox photocopy of the letter so it'll be easier to read.

OK.

Do you have a translation of what it says?

Somebody translated it. It talks about how she loves her mother and wishes her-- congratulates her on Mother's Day. Something of that sort.

Actually, this has to do with the last set of pictures. What was the pastor's name who is so interested in the Jewish people, who wants to bring Jewish people back here?

His name is Pastor [Personal name] And he is a pastor of the most beautiful church next door, a really nice church. A very compassionate man and a true Christian. And we had a long talk. But I already spoke about this. And he went to the mayor and wanted to speak to him about funds of putting up a monument where the synagogue used to stand. And when he came there, the mayor showed him the letter I had written him. So I had quite a correspondence with him, but I have somehow not answered some of his letters. I just-- I suppose I should do it, but I haven't done it. This is interesting.

You mentioned-- this is the envelope that the pastor sent you a letter in.

Yes.

And you had a comment about the stamps. Could you tell us please?

Well, I was surprised after all the relations we had with East Germany which were strained, which were Russian-orientated, and there I saw a stamp with the Jewish candelabra on it, and I was very much surprised.

You know, those articles that have been in the paper lately about that East German town that's had-- I don't know if it was just antisemitism, but they--

Against foreigners.

--through riots, they kicked out all minorities.

Yeah.

Do you think that that could be a problem in this town?

I don't think the town is a single foreigner.

I mean do you think the sentiment, so that if a foreigner were to move in?

Yes, certainly. I'm convinced of it. Because there's lots of unemployment today in East Germany because of the whole reconstruction of the economy. And in any case, they were very bitter against their regime. So imagine that there would be immigrants coming or foreigners coming into that town and taking the few jobs which are available away from them. So I see no reason why they shouldn't behave the way they behaved anywhere else.

I always maintained that fundamentally, that there's no change within the Germans. They haven't changed at all. Even one talks about the new generation, they're different. I, for one, think there's absolutely no difference. I think they haven't changed.

Why?

I don't know why, but I do think they haven't changed. I think it's within the German psyche that they haven't changed. I think they're militant, and I think they are-- they have the capacity of being brutal, which many other nations haven't got. I live in America for some years, and I find a lot of compassion here in this country.

When I think back of how the Germans behaved, I feel this great lack of compassion. There are individuals, there are just men in Germany. I'm not saying that. But on the whole, I think the character of the German people has always been war-like. And I think it hasn't changed. And I don't think it can be changed that easily.

One talks about democracy in Germany. I think democracy cannot be hung like an ornament around somebody. It takes probably, not only years, but generations to educate people to be democratic. I don't think that works in Germany that fast. I don't believe for one moment.

Tell us about this please.

This is a membership in the Maccabi sports organization, a Zionist organization, which transcended all political beliefs. It was for Jewish children in the town I lived in. And I was a member of it, like all other Jewish children. It showed that it was given to me in 1937.

OK. We'll make a Xerox copy of this document so it'll be easier for people to see.

OK.

--about this please.

This is an East German policeman. I was at a motorcycling race and I was very tired. So I went among some trees to take a rest and I fell asleep. And suddenly, he kicked me with his boots and said, get up. He might have thought that I was drunk or something. When I got up, I was very annoyed with him. And he said he wanted to see my papers. And I said, what papers? It reminded me very much of the Nazis, the way he handled me.

So I was-- I said, I have no papers. He said, you have got an identity card? Of course, I spoke German. He didn't know that I was not German. So I pulled out my Israeli passport. And in one side is Hebrew. And he opened that side in Hebrew. And he asked me what it was. And I told him that I was an Israeli and I was a tourist. He showed no kind of reaction whatsoever. But I was very annoyed by his handling of me, the way he kicked me and the way he asked for my papers. But then he left. I took his photograph. And there he is.

How did he feel about you taking his photograph? Did he have a problem with that?

He agreed. There were two. There were two, in fact. And I asked, can I take your photograph? The other one walked off, and he posed for me.

Did you find out what his name was?

No. I never did. I wasn't interested in him.

And tell us about this please.

This is one of the two lakes in the town I lived in. And the whole family used to go in summer, and we used to picnic there. And we had a beautiful time there. And my father used to own the boat. And all the family went in that boat. And we used to go out into the middle of the boat. Wonderful memories.

Who's that person in the bottom left?

This is the wife of my friend.

Jonny's wife?

Jonny's wife.

I'm sorry, did I interrupt you? Were you going to say something else?

No, that is essentially what I have to say about this lake.

What's the name of the lake?

Sumpfsee.

Could you spell that please?

S-U-M-P-F, and the [? Csee ?] is a C-S-E-E.

Tell us about this please.

This is a East German produced car called a Trabant, which is being scrapped right now. It's [INAUDIBLE] car. It so polluted. It belches out such a lot of smoke, it's unbelievable. When I was at there at the racing, so many people drove those cars. And in fact, you had to wait maybe 7 to 10 years to get such a rubbish car. Terrible car. Now, I read in the newspapers, they're being scrapped. I photographed it because I heard about that car so much. And it works like a



motorcycle. It makes a noise of a motorcycle.

I went to East Germany before the reunification. They were talking about reunification. And I needed a visa. And this is the border crossing.

What were the guards like at the border crossing? How did they treat you?

One had to show one's passport and one's visa. And I really thought that they would remark upon the fact that I had an Israeli passport, because I don't think there were hardly anybody going into East Germany with an Israeli passport. But then it occurred to me that this was all of the crossing which went to Berlin. So probably many Israelis went to Berlin, that crossing. So there was really no reaction.

But they took my passport. And he went to some office. And they came back and I had to add another few marks in western currency. I didn't really know why, but I paid. It was simple. It was simple to cross that border. It was no problem.

And this please?

Again, the border crossing. I think on my way back.

--tell a story about your border crossing?

Yes. On the way back when I came to the border, I had some East German money left. And I wanted to get rid of it. So there was a restaurant there and I thought I might go into the restaurant and have some food. I had been five days in GÃ¼strow, in the town I was born in. And the food was terrible. I don't eat non-kosher food. And I had cheese and maybe some fish. It was so bad that my stomach juices used to come up during the night. It was-- really, I suffered a lot from the food. But I thought maybe I'd find some milk or some dairy food in there.

And I went in there. It was a big restaurant, many people there. So the waitress told me to fill up a table. It's not like in America that you don't fill up tables you wait till you get a table by yourself. But there in Germany, you fill up. And there was a man sitting there. And the waitress came up to me and said, what would you like? And I said, well, have you got some dairy food? She said no. I have some pork and this. I said, well, I don't eat pork.

So she says, why don't you eat pork? I said, well, I don't eat pork. I don't want any meat. So the man opposite me looked at me and said, she doesn't know what kosher is. So I was a little bit surprised that the man would know what kosher is. So he started up a conversation with me. And he said, well, I'm from Frankfurt and I'm on vacation. I'm going into East Germany.

And he ordered his food. And there wasn't much for me to order except some cheese, which was also terrible. It was so acidic. It killed me, that food. So I ate a bit. I nibbled at the food. I didn't really eat it. Then suddenly, he came up and looked at me in my eyes and he said to me, I have a problem. Maybe you could help me? I said, well, you tell me your problem but I don't know whether I can help you. I'll try my best.

He said, I have an elderly mother who lives in my house. And she still lives in the era of the Nazis of Hitler. She used to work for big shots in the party. And every time I have visitors, she bursts into the room she raises her hand and shouts "Heil Hitler." So [LAUGHS].

I said, what can I tell you? Not much I can tell you. You could possibly do one of two things-- when you have visitors, see to it that your mother is in a room and you close it that she shouldn't embarrass you. Or you can do another thing. She is your mother. You have to respect her and you have to love her. You might want to put her into an institute if she's so old.

So I was taken aback by this kind of advice he wanted of me. Anyway, he said she lives still in the glory of the olden days and she can't forget it. I said, she's your mother. There's nothing much you can do except one of those two things.

See to it that she cannot enter the room when you have visitors or you put her into an institution. And he thanked me. And he said, you gave me sound advice. [LAUGHS]

Tell us about this please.

Well, this is a picture with my friend on a place where I stood 53 years earlier with my brother and my sister, taken in the same place. When I showed my friend the picture which had been taken 53 years earlier, he recognized the place immediately. And he said, I'll take you. I'll take you there. And he took me there. And we were photographed there in the same place.

OK. In the next photograph, we'll show the original photo of you in the old place. Tell us about this. This is the original photo you referred to?

Yes. That was taken-- I don't know exactly in what year, but probably in 1936 or '37.

And left to right, the three people are who?

On the very left, the little girl is my little sister. She looks so nice. I didn't even realize I had such a nice little sister. And this is my brother, the middle one. And there on the right am I with a school cap. I was really a terrible little chap. I was always full of tricks. You can see the way I stand, I had no patience to be photographed. I wanted to get away and play.

The snake man.

[LAUGHS]

OK, and this photo is reprinted from Tikvah magazine.

Correct.

And you have the original. Tikvah had the original.

And Tikvah is spelled T-I-K-V-A-H.

If you take this a page further, you will see me. I've written an article.

You-- this is another article you wrote in the same Tikvah News magazine?

No, this is an excerpt of a book I'm writing. I've written approximately already 20 pages. And they have taken out an excerpt and printed it. Hopefully if I have the patience and the stamina, I will finish that book. If you would be interested, I could send you those 20 pages. They're interesting.

We would very much love to have it, very much.

OK, I will send it to you. I was bar mitzvah then, 13 years old.

This is the same spot from the earlier photo?

Yeah, exactly the same spot.

--about this please.

This is when I approached the town, G<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>strow. You see it on the top on the right. And I went out of my car and I photographed it. And all these names, like Sternberg and Wismar and Ventschow, they were so familiar to me. I'd forgotten about them. And they brought back all these memories.

We need to spell those for the transcriber.

And this please?

This is the beginning, the entrance to the town. I thought I would never reach it, and there I was. I had reached it. In my dreams, I always dreamed I would be coming to the town and I never really reached it. And there I was. I had arrived.

Did you get a lot of memories and feelings as you entered?

Tremendously. I couldn't believe it. I was so euphoric. When I spoke, I thought somebody else was speaking. You know that kind of feeling? My head was in the clouds. I couldn't-- I wasn't volatile. I couldn't even express an opinion. I couldn't talk. Something was happening to me that I just wasn't myself at all. Well, next time I'll go, maybe I'll be able to be different. But something happened to me there, I don't know.

You can go. I'll give you an [? invitation. ?]

I returned to the town I was born in just over a year ago. And I had contacted the mayor of that town in order to be able to get a visa. It was before the reunification. And in order to get a visa, one had to prove accommodation. And that would have taken too long. So I wrote him a letter that he should help me to get a visa fast in order to be able to get into his town. So he knew when I was coming.

And when I did come there and I stayed five days. And when I returned, I stayed in a hotel in Hamburg. And I wasn't able to sleep, so I got up in the middle of the night and I wrote him the following letter. I wrote it to him in German, and this is the translation into English.

"June 6, 1990. Dear Mr. Mayor, I had informed you that I would be staying in your city, GÃ¼strow, between April 19 and 25, 1990. Yet you did not find it necessary to either invite me to your office or to inform the local press that a former resident of GÃ¼strow would be visiting the house of his parents and the city he was born in after more than 50 years. You did not pay me this respect. And by this, you deprived all former Jewish residents of GÃ¼strow of this honor.

During my stay in GÃ¼strow, I sat one day on a bench opposite the City Hall where your office is located. And I looked at the people passing before me. I looked especially at the people of the older generation. And in my mind, I saw these people as they cheered when all the remaining Jews of your city were forced to sit on the top of the Jewish hearse while a few elderly Jews were put in place of horses and were made to pull the hearse through the city.

I spent five sleepless nights staring at the ceiling of the hotel you reserved for me in the [Place name] Strasse. And I saw the shadows of the murdered Jewish community pass before my eyes. Those people who choked to death in the gas chambers or were burned alive in the Warsaw ghetto.

I remember my mother and my little sister whose ashes were scattered into the Vistula. A supermarket was built on the grave of my father. And the signpost pointing out the site of the former Jewish cemetery stands crooked and is broken. All this in contrast to my people, who, despite all persecutions and humiliations, stand straight and proud.

At the site of the former synagogue, I found an empty lot filled with garbage and weeds. Only the memories of the prayers and hymns of the Jews who prayed to the only God for millennium pass like ghosts in front of my eyes. I remembered when on Jewish holidays and on the Sabbath, the Jews came from all directions toward the synagogue to pray with their families. I remember how with devotion, we also prayed for the well-being of the German government and for our fellow citizens.

I did not see one single street named after Jewish personality who lived in your city. In the Bible we are told that Sodom was destroyed because Abraham, who begged God to spare the town, was unable to find a single righteous man. During my visit in your city, I searched and found several righteous people. And I believe that their existence is a reason why

GÅ¼strow was spared from destruction. I am sure that our Jewish dead have not yet found peace in GÅ¼strow's Jewish cemetery.

Mr. Mayor, if you search, I am sure that you will find your image of God again. Sincerely, Abraham Adolf Grossman, Berkeley, California." Stop.

Did you--

10 seconds.

I received a reply from the burgermeister, which he wrote on the 26th of June 1990. He wrote-- I will read it in German first, and then I will try and translate it into English.

[SPEAKING GERMAN]

Can't read it.

[SPEAKING GERMAN]

I will try and translate it now into English. "Dear Mr. Grossman, I would like to thank you for your letter which you wrote on the 6th of June 1990, which moved me to my very depths. I have to tell you, though, that I am only the mayor since the 22nd of May 1990 as the mayor of the city. My predecessor left things, lots of work, which I haven't been able to attend to.

But I do work with the Protestant church in GÅ¼strow since July, and the first steps are being taken in order to revive and work on the persecution of the Jewish people in the city. I would be very happy to greet you in GÅ¼strow in this town. Maybe there would be in future time an opportunity to greet you. Best regards, Mr. [Personal name] the mayor."

With your permission, I'd like to write two stories which I have written, of quite a few stories which have quite a connection with the Holocaust. It is called "The Tale of the Dying Horse." And I have written a dedication to my children and grandchildren, which I would also like to read to you.

"This story is dedicated to my four grandchildren. [Personal name] the first born, handsome and proud and intelligent, serious and at the same time light-hearted. Tamar, his sister, beautiful and sensitive, the delight of my heart. Natan the present given by God in his mercy to my beloved son, Benjamin, and his wife, Lillian. Intelligent child with a compassionate heart. [Personal name] the youngest, who radiates beauty and adroitness and has a marking of a person who will go far.

All of them possess a paramount virtue to be found in a human being-- goodness of heart, and love for their fellow man. May the story, for all it is worth, be an indication of the dangers lurking in the shadows for the Jewish people. I have never spoken to my grandchildren nor to my sons about those dangers as I know they really cannot understand them, for all of them were born free people in a free country in a Jewish land. May God bless my grandchildren and their parents, Benjamin and Lillian, [Personal name] and his lovely wife, [Personal name].

The Tale of the Dying Horse. The whole country was filled with the fragrance of oranges. It was the month of January. And in the orange groves, the branches of the trees were weighed down with luscious and juicy fruit. Hundreds of trucks made their way to the markets and to the harbors with tons of fruit to be sold or to be shipped to all parts of the world. The skies were overcast and a steady rain fell to clear and refreshen the air.

After a long hot and parching summer, the whole countryside turned to green. And what had been lifeless and dull was reborn in glorious and invigorating splendor. I had won a bid for 100-unit housing development project to install the plumbing in all those units. The engineer in charge of this enterprise advised me to get acquainted with the building site and to get in touch with the project manager. I drove my car on a rainy day to the building site and arrived there at midday.

Recognizing the prefabricated hut which was the only building, I knocked on the door. And on hearing a gruff voice bidding me to enter, I stepped inside. The foreman, with a full face and heavy set, was in the process of eating his lunch. He turned toward me and with his mouth filled with food, introduced himself and said, my name is Shimon.

Ali is my name, I introduce myself. I am the person who will do all the plumbing here. He seemed unconcerned and continued to eat his lunch while completely ignoring me. I watched him eat and a feeling of aversion overcame me as I saw him gulp his food down. He held a chicken in his hand and was devouring it ravenously.

His mouth was filled with food to capacity. His cheeks blown out. He tore at the chicken almost without chewing, in the manner of dogs. Grease was dripping down from both sides of his mouth and running down his chin. Eating noisily while constantly smacking his lips, only interrupted from time to time by a tremendous burp. He seemed oblivious of my presence.

I was so taken aback by the spectacle that a remark escaped me which I was to regret to my dying day. I said, can't you eat like a decent human being? As soon as I have made this remark, I was appalled at my behavior. It was a slip of the tongue. Instead of a well-deserved admonition, Shimon to turn slowly toward me on his round chair and replied, listen, I want to tell you a story.

I had just turned 14 years of age when the Germans decided to evacuate all the remaining inmates of the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex to the west, away from the advancing Red Army. I had already been three years in various camps and weighed less than 50 pounds.

Of 30,000 people who were let out of the camp, only 5,000 survived this terrible ordeal. They dropped by the side of the road from starvation, exhaustion, and succumbed and froze to the death from the bitter cold. All those who still had some life in them were shot by the brutal guards.

I was scantily dressed in a striped uniform and a similar cap on my head. I had no shoes and I had several layers of old newspaper wrapped around my feet. I did not feel my toes. They were frostbitten. I walked dazed in a stupor, dreadfully famished, shivering from the cold, along with the column. From time to time, the column closed as more and more people dropped by the side.

I walked and walked, 12 hours each day with only one ladle of watery soup doled out to the prisoners. Suddenly, a person who had closed ranks was walking next to me turned his head and said, isn't your name Shimon? Are you not from Rzeszów I looked up and recognized a former schoolmate of mine by the name of Jonny. He looked as emaciated as myself. He was my age, but look a wizened old man.

I saw your father a few columns back, he told me. I stared at him unbelievably. And slowly, without drawing the attention of the guards, I retreated line by line. All of us were herded like cattle, punctuated with beatings and whippings. Anyone who screamed or caused any inconvenience to the murderers could reckon on being gunned down on the spot. All pleas for mercy were answered with disdain.

Suddenly, I recognized my father. And what I saw caused me to weep. My proud father, still a young man, looked like a skeleton. His hair was shorn and he was unshaven. All his teeth were gone and his cheeks were sunken. Also, he had no shoes and was walking barefoot in the snow. A number like my own was tattooed on his left arm.

Rage against the Germans built up in my chest. The day of reckoning has yet to come. I was filled with anguish that I could do nothing to help my father. This sense of sense of helplessness left me with the feeling of guilt, which will never leave me. I walked next to my father, supporting him. When a Polish peasant on a cart torn by a horse passed by us.

Suddenly, the horse stumbled on the ice and fell down. The peasant jumped from his cart and in a woeful voice cried out that his horse had broken its leg. A German guard took his rifle, pointed it at the head of the horse, and pulled the trigger. A jet of blood and brains spurted from the horse's head.

The prisoners, crazed from hunger, threw themselves upon the horse like flies around honey, and started to devour the horse. The German guards who were wearing belts on whose buckles was written, [GERMAN], "God with us," started to beat the people with the butt of their rifles, but to no avail.

Only when there was nothing left of the horse did the prisoners desist. Of the horse, only the bones and hooves remained. Everything had been eaten, even the skin with the hairs. My father and also I had taken part in this orgy.

Shocked to the core by this narrative, I sat there pale and shaken. And the thought flashed through my mind, how can those Germans have the chutzpah to count themselves as part of the human race? You see, he said, whenever I eat, I am always afraid that the food will be taken away from me. That is the reason why I eat so fast.

I did not utter one word. In my heart, I asked God for forgiveness. This day I learned a valuable lesson which has guided me ever since. Do not judge a flask by its exterior, but look for what is in the inside. Thus says the Lord, the people who survive the sword shall find grace in the wilderness. When Israel goes to seek rest from afar, the Lord appeared saying, with everlasting love, I love you. Hence, I draw you to me with affection. Again, I shall build you and you shall be restored, maiden of Israel. Again, you shall array yourselves in your temples and join the merry dances. Again shall you plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria. The planter shall plant and enjoy the fruit. The day will come when the watchman among the [INAUDIBLE] shall call. Let us rise and go up to Zion, to the Lord, our God."

That's a true story?

Yes. Can I read the second?

Yes, please.

Good story?

Yes.

It is called, "A Dispatch From the Front." Is it on?

Yes.

"A Dispatch From the Front. I could not fall asleep. Only from time to time I fell into a fitful slumber which only lasted a few minutes. I was wrapped up in a military overcoat inside a sleeping bag, but the bitter desert cold penetrated to my bones and left me shivering and unable to get some rest. I gazed at the firmament above me, this vast expanse with millions of stars. I recognized the Big Dipper, and the small one, the North Star and the star Cassiopea. pointing towards my home, so near and yet so far.

I realized that my not being able to sleep was not only caused by the cold, but also by my thoughts. I thought of my two sons who were somewhere facing terrible danger. It was the first time that all three of us were called up and my thoughts were wholly focused on them. On prior similar emergency, it was only myself had to go and my family stayed at home. I thought of my wife who stood by the main arteries, handing out food and refreshments to the passing troops.

I was immersed in prayer on Yom Kippur in our local synagogue when suddenly, I heard the noise of passing traffic and loudspeakers making incomprehensible announcements. On Yom Kippur, the holiest of holiest of festivals in the Jewish faith, it was unprecedented that a single vehicle could be driven on this day.

I hurried outside and I was able to understand what's been announced on the loudspeakers-- go home everybody and turn on your television and radios. Go home, go home. I reached home and as soon as I turned on the TV, I heard all the secret code words-- dark knight, open windows, steel and fire, running water. I recognized the codes of my two sons and also the code relevant to me. Both my sons took their uniforms and weapons and made their way immediately to their respective units.

I suddenly realized that only two weeks before I was given orders to join another unit. I had served with my unit for 20 years, and apparently it was time to transfer people of my age out of crack units into other less strict and demanding brigades. My unit belonged to the 11th brigade of the southern front. A unit which had distinguished itself in many wars and in many battles. My eldest son was in the Navy on a missile boat. And my youngest son was in the Army Corps in the north.

According to the media, the Egyptians had taken us by surprise and crossed the Suez Canal with great success and there were fierce battles. Without telling my wife, I left and made my way to the headquarters of my former unit. The fortress was empty of soldiers. Where there was always a hum of activity, now there was an eerie quiet.

In one of the offices, I found a woman soldier who told me my unit had left to Sinai two days earlier. I decided on the spot to join my unit. In uniform and carrying an Uzi submachine gun, I hitched to Bir Gofgofa the biggest encampment in Sinai. While passing Gaza and El Arish on the way, I had the feeling that we were not being told the true situation.

In the demeanor of the Arabs I passed, I noticed something I had never seen before-- arrogance. They were different. Making our way through the streets of Gaza with our military vehicle, they were slow to make way for us, as if they owned the streets. Arriving in Bir Gofgofa I went straight to my former unit's offices and was told that the whole brigade was at the front.

No transport being available, I hitched my way towards the front a command car took me halfway and then disappeared in a different direction. The sun was setting and I was alone in the vast desert, only sand and sky, not a single tree or bush. I laid down on my pack for a pillow, a loaded Uzi and a spare magazine beside me. I hope for a vehicle to pass. I must have dozed off when I was woken by the noise of an approaching vehicle.

Egyptian commanders were roaming the desert, attacking our forces in lightning strikes and disappearing in the darkness of the night. I had to make a desperate decision whether to show myself or remain in hiding. It was too dark to discern whether the approaching vehicle was ours or that of the enemy. I had only 30 seconds to make a decision.

I stood up and stood in the middle of the road waving to the approaching vehicle to stop. It came to a screeching halt and two soldiers jumped off, weapons pointed at me, not knowing if I was one of them or one of ours. One of the soldiers pulled out a flashlight and lit up my face. Grossman, you crazy bastard. What in hell are you doing in this desert by yourself? They were my buddies from my unit.

I hopped onto the command car heaving a sigh of relief. Apparently, God looks after the ignorant. The welcome I received on arriving at the encampment was memorable. David, the brigade commander, gave me a hug and kiss me on both cheeks, exclaiming, this is unbelievable, this is unbelievable.

David briefed me on the situation. It was serious. The Egyptians had crossed the canal, established a foothold, and had captured every bastion along the Suez Canal from Port Said in the north to Bea Tawfik in the south. Only one single bastion stood fast.

The fuel line along the canal had failed to ignite. Egyptian frogmen had sabotaged it secretly and successfully. The Syrians had recaptured the Golan and were approaching the borders of the state of Israel. The task of our brigade was to prevent the Egyptian forces from reaching the Gidi and Mitla passes, for this was the key on which hinged the possibility of recapturing the Sinai peninsula.

I was put in charge of my old unit and a feeling of confidence was felt by all the soldiers and also by myself. I was back in my natural element. That same night, our brigade moved and fierce battles ensued. We stood fast and in the end prevailed, though suffering considerable losses in armor and men. In that battle, the Egyptian lost 600 tanks. I had my first night's rest when the battle was done. It was bitterly cold and I could not sleep. My thoughts were with my sons.

Some soldiers feeling the terrible cold had lit the fire to warm their bones. I got up and told them to douse it. There were lots of Egyptian commanders and soldiers who had been separated from their units. Those soldiers were desperate. They

were searching for water to slake their agonized thirsts.

The field telephone rang and my commander was on the line. A Piper plane will come in 20 minutes to take you to Jerusalem, he told me. Pack up your gear. He put down the phone before I could ask any questions. I got ready and the plane came. An hour and a half later, I was in Jerusalem.

We landed at Atarot airfield and a waiting staff car whisked me to the line fortress in Shuafat, headquarters of the central command. My transfer had come through at last. While walking through the fortress, I passed a glass-plate window and saw my image. My uniform was covered with yellow sand from the desert. Storm goggles were hanging around my neck. My hair was disheveled and dusty. My 12-day-old beard had turned gray in those 12 days. My eyes were bloodshot from lack of sleep.

I reached the office of the executive officer. A high-ranking officer was sitting in a comfortable chair smoking a cigar. He gave me my new appointment. You shall be a liaison officer between the military and the civilian arm. With this appointment, you shall hold the rank of captain.

It dawned upon me what this appointment meant. One of many duties, it also entailed visiting the families who had lost the next of kin-- a husband, a son, or a father who had fallen in battle. I wanted to object but the officer told me, that is all. Proceed to the Kirya in Tel Aviv immediately.

In the meantime, the brigade of [name] had crossed the canal, established bridgehead and proceeded to destroy the SAM-2 and SAM-3 surface-to-air missiles that had been playing havoc with our planes. The decision to cross the canal and destroy the missiles on their launching site turned the tide of the war.

The second and third Egyptian army on the west side of the canal were cut off from all the possibility of getting supplies. Half a million Egyptian soldiers were at the mercy of the IDF. They had no water, no food, no fuel. After a few days, Israel gave permission for water and food to be brought their mortal enemies.

We had reached a point of 101 kilometers from Cairo. The situation in the north was similar. The Golan Heights were recaptured and our soldiers were within 14 kilometer of Damascus. The Arab armies had suffered a terrible and devastating defeat.

I was attending the funeral of a soldier who had died in the Battle of the Chinese Farm. I was there to represent the IDF. He was of Moroccan ancestry and the shrieks and wailing of the family were unsettling. I had seen too much of death. I had a surprising feeling of impatience.

I was standing apart from the mourners when suddenly I noticed a person a few feet from me with his back towards me. Somehow he seemed familiar. His clothes hung from his body, his shirt outside his pants, shoes dirty, and his curly, white hair disheveled. I sidled up to him. I recognized him immediately.

It was Mihail. He turned his face toward me. His eyes were glazed. No light of recognition sparked in them. His face was vacant. There was something about the stance I recognized as a kind of post endemic to deranged people. I said to him, Mihail, I'm Ali, your old friend. Don't you know me? It seemed as if he had not heard me.

I had met Mihail in the fall of '52 when I was a member of a kibbutz and I was a truck driver. Every day I used to drive to Tiberius to bring provisions to the kibbutz. I also brought water in a tank to the kibbutz in the beginning. It had not been connected to the national water supply system.

Mihail was the owner of a laundry and I brought the laundry of the kibbutz to him to be washed. We became friends. He had black, curly hair and was always singing at the top of his voice. Invariably, he had something good to eat-- a juicy slice of watermelon, some bananas from the Jordan Valley, wonderful grilled fish from the Kinneret or some hummus or [INAUDIBLE] steeped in olive oil.

When I left the kibbutz a few years later, I settled in the developed town in the south. While visiting a neighboring town



which had a hospital, I met Mihail who had become an ambulance driver. We gave cries of surprise when we met up with each other. I had not seen Mihail for a considerable time when I recognized him at the cemetery. He asked me in an eerie voice, a freakish smile on his lips, whether I would like to meet his son. I readily agreed and said, of course, I would be delighted to meet him.

Mihail took me by the hand and led me to a grave that had a military headstone. The name of his son was engraved upon the stone, the day of his birth, and the day when he fell. He spoke to his son and introduced him to me. Then he turned into himself and forgot that I was standing next to him.

I turned slowly and walked to some trees. I covered my eyes with my hands and wept. I could not remember the last time I had cried. By Nebo's lonely mountain on this side Jordan's wave, in a veil in the land of Moab, there lies a lonely grave."

[INAUDIBLE]. Tell us your story about your writing please.

Well, I was once invited to give a talk. And I really never did public speaking. I have done so little bit lately. And I was telling part of my life story when I noticed an elderly man looking at me all the time. And I was a little bit taken aback by the way he looked at me. But I didn't know him.

When I had finished, he came up to me and he introduced himself. And he said that his name was Max Knight. And he said that he is a writer. He is a writer who writes a book. And he is from Vienna. And he said to me, you know, you should write. I teach writing in the university. And please write and write 10 pages and give them to me.

Well, I wrote 20 pages and I sent them to him by mail. And the very next day. He phoned me up very excited, and he said, I'd like you to come up to my house immediately. And I came up. I had no idea. I was a little bit embarrassed by my writing because I didn't know the value of it.

When I came to his house, he told me he was very impressed by my writing. It was so simple way, a modest way of writing. I don't quite know what he really meant by all that. So forthright, without complications. At least, maybe, I became a little bit vain. So he encouraged me all the time to write.

So I started to write stories. I've written more stories than those two I read just now. And they seem to strike a chord within people because whomever I have given it to, they all liked it. It does something very nice to me to be able to write. And maybe it's a gift from God, which I have never really utilized it.

I intend to write a book. I've and started to write a book on my childhood. And hoping to this day, coming to America, I hope to finish that book. [LAUGHS] It's a lot of work. It needs a lot of editing and spelling and whatever writing entails. Hopefully I'm able to write a book. In fact, I sent it to a journalist. And she said it would make wonderful film material. That is even better. OK?

OK. Well, earlier we were talking about Germany and the Germans today and what do you think about whether or not Germans have changed.

Well, I maintained all the time that there is no change Germany. Of course, it was based on only feelings. But it was certainly strengthened by the fact when I did go back to the town I was born in, I didn't see any change. Although, I didn't feel any antisemitism there whatsoever. People didn't react to the fact that I was Jewish, although I was being introduced as being Jewish.

But the fact that in my mind-- I have no indication of it, but people didn't seem changed to me at all. Except I was the only one who had changed because I wasn't a frightened person any longer. I was completely self-confident and have an Israeli passport with an Israeli flag. And I have a land of my own.

I felt that because of the situation with the reunification of Germany, the economy is not in a sound situation. Many East Germans are reading the newspapers don't like the idea of the reunification because they lost their jobs. All the factories

are outdated. They need to-- everything has to be renewed. And of course it'll take time.

I'm sure that in time Germany is going to be very prosperous with the influx of another 36 million Germans. But in the meantime, things are bad. And we see it in the newspapers, of course, that there are riots against foreigners and immigrants. And that is typical of Germany.

Now, I know in America there are immigrants and there are blacks and whites and yellow-- all kinds of people. And it would be inconceivable that there should be riots against immigrants or newcomers or whatever. It doesn't happen in America. Everybody is accepted. If there is unemployment, poverty is not blamed on blacks, on whites, on yellows. Whatever it's blamed on, I don't quite know.

But in Germany, I know that-- I read the newspaper, for instance, that a German said, pointing towards a black person, that he could even maintain that he is German because he's black. He couldn't conceive that a black person could call himself a German. That again shows only how the Germans are concerning their theory under the Hitler dream of the purity of the race, that only whites can be German, and not Jews or Gypsies or Blacks or whatever.

So I do believe that given certain circumstances, that the Germans would be very antisemitic. I don't know whether this, what happened under the Nazi regime could ever happen again, but who knows. But I am not able to trust the Germans. I think they have a military past.

And Germans are aggressive. They are very aggressive. They easily become excited and they will have fights. I've seen those fights. I've seen those fights when I was a child. And I have seen fights when I was stationed in Germany. I've seen fights when I was there not long ago, people fighting in the streets. I've been nine years in America, I haven't seen a single fight in the streets.

America is different from Germany. I don't believe that Germany will become-- it is a democracy in words, in theory. But I don't believe that Germany is a true democracy yet. It'll take not years, but it'll take generations. One has to change not only the mentality, but history will have to be changed. It'll take a long time before Germany becomes a member of the nations of the world. I don't believe it. I cannot trust the Germans.

Do you think there was a reaction among younger Germans now, the grandchildren of the people who lived in the Hitler area, that to react to the blame by denying the blame-- do you know what I'm saying?

Yes, I understand exactly what you mean. Let me put it this way. I will not answer your question directly, but by giving you a kind of a picture. I compare the remorse the Germans feel-- there are many Germans who have remorse. And they want to make up what they did to the Jewish people by doing all kinds of things, even going to Israel and helping Israel by going into a kibbutz or into the army to help.

I would say if a thief, as long as he steals and is not found out, he feels good. But as soon as he's found out, he has remorse. That kind of thing applies to the German people. As long as they won in the war, they had no remorse. They had only remorse when they were defeated.

If the Germans, God forbid, would have won the war and would have captured the whole world, which was-- it was would have been possible in a certain stage of the war, they were very victorious. They had captured half the world. Hitler would have been today buried in a mausoleum and he would have been revered by the German people. He would have been a great hero, like Napoleon.

And there would have been no remorse. There would have been only a glorification of the Hitler regime and especially of Hitler. They would have made out of him a saint. And only because they lost the war, like a thief when he is found out, then there is remorse. This remorse, in my opinion, is not genuine. It's not true.

Of course, the younger generation wasn't at fault. They weren't alive. But I should say that the Jewish people should take heed and be very careful of what Germans are doing. Especially I would like to say that during the Yom Kippur War when Israel was in dire, in dire, in dire danger.

The situation in Israel was unprecedented. That America under Nixon sent armament to Israel and they needed it fast. And Germany did not allow for the American planes to land. In order to refuel, they had to be refueled in the air. So when you talk about Germany, I will not, I cannot accept anything which can be said for Germany at all.

So do you think part of the reason there's still a problem today is the difference between real remorse and remorse? I'm not sure I want to call it fake remorse. I mean, I think it's probably genuine remorse, but it's based on "we got caught" sort of thing. The difference between true repentance and repentance because you got caught. Do you think that if it had been true remorse that Germany and Germans would be different today?

Well, let me put it this way. Again, I'd like to repeat what I said, if they would have won. And kept -- the question of remorse wouldn't have come up, not at all. Now because of these terrible revelations, these terrible crimes they committed, these inhuman crimes, never before happening in the annals of human history. This is something extraordinary what people could do. I mean, after all, they had families. They had children. They had wives. They had parents. This complete disregard for human life, which is-- I don't think anybody can explain that.

So I would say that had they won the war, you couldn't talk about remorse. You would have only talked about like Germany has had lots of stories about their ancestors, like the Greek--

God, the Greek gods?

No, no. The Greek stories. The Greek-- whatever the-- mythology. Also Germany has German mythology. And they revere their heroes. And the heroes are the most important. But the Jewish people have their profits and their God and their religion and the laws. We don't revere heroes who won battles, except maybe the Maccabees, but that was a war against oppression.

The Germans always revered war. And it is only because of these revelations. Because they lost the war, that's why there is remorse and why they want to make up.

I have had contact with Germans. I've had contact with German authorities. I went-- several times I had to go to the consulate. I felt there's no remorse. If I would belong to a nation who had done such terrible things, I don't think I would want to be part of that nation at all. I would probably emigrate. I would not stay in such a nation. I would be ashamed of such a nation.

But you don't have Germans say I'm ashamed of Germany, I don't want to belong to that nation any longer. That, I have never heard. And only two or three weeks ago, I went to the German consulate in San Francisco. And she knew I was Jewish. And she knew I was Israeli. One could have felt maybe a kind of a sign -- a special kind of relationship, a kind of a behavior towards me. None. None whatsoever.

I think they resent the fact that they had to pay so much restitution to the Jewish people. I have that kind of feeling. If somebody comes and maybe would like to inquire for pension, I think the feeling is you've had enough, how much do you want? That's my definite feeling, that they think that the Jewish people are only grasping for money and they want something that doesn't belong to them.

They don't realize what they have taken not only in life, but in actual monies and properties and destruction and so forth of their livelihood and so forth. I'm talking about taking of life, which can't be repaid in any way. So my definite opinion is that the remorse is genuine but under these certain circumstances.

I guess the reason I was asking the question between true remorse and remorse based on getting caught is because I hear a lot about there must never be another Holocaust and we must do everything we can to prevent another Holocaust. And I'm thinking of motivation as being the reason for the Holocaust. Ultimately, some motivation was the reason.

So the reason I was asking that is how do you change people? How do you change motivations? How do you think, so that in fact we could actually prevent another Holocaust?

The only way to prevent a Holocaust is to be strong, to support Israel completely, and to be united, and to educate, not only the Germans, but to educate ourselves, the Jewish people. That the only way we can protect ourselves is to have a strong army, and to be purposeful, and not to give in to anybody.

I believe the Salvation can only come from the Jewish people itself. Any promise-- and there have been plenty of promises --isn't worth the paper it is written on. The only way we can preserve ourselves and see that we are safe, us and our children, is through the Jewish people-- through Israel and the Jewish people.

I don't think-- we haven't changed the outlook, fundamentally, of Christianity towards the Jewish people. I don't think so. I don't believe for one moment that these things have changed. I mean, there are, of course, people of the church who are benevolent and understanding towards Jewish people.

Fundamentally, I don't think the Jewish people have ever been forgiven for having, so to speak, "killed their Savior, Jesus Christ." I think that is ingrained in many, many people, especially in the Catholic church.

And when it comes to to the real crunch.

To the what?

To the crunch, to the real crunch, to the point where--

To the crunch.

To the crunch, then I think there's no forgiveness of the Jewish people.

For?

For what they have done. I mean, for, I think, first and foremost that they have crucified Jesus Christ. And there is no-- it doesn't seem-- they don't seem to be able to forgive the Jewish people for that. And that is the basis of it. And then, of course, in history. When you read Shakespeare about Shylock and then you read Charles Dickens about Fagin and all these things which were--

I mean, plenty of things are happening. I hear it on the radio and television sometimes. People come up with questions, very venomous against the Jews. They haven't changed. Of course, I'm not saying that everybody. Many people have changed and are true friends of the Jewish people. But again, one has to take heed. One has to be careful. One has to be strong. One has to be united. And-- it's OK.

Well, those people that you said really, truly did change, what caused them to change do you think?

Again, this is a phenomenon. I think, too, religion has changed. And you see, to be a religious person is not easy. One has to be a truly religious and to keep all the Commandments of the Christian religion, which is based on love and forgiveness. And if you are a true Christian, then salvation can lie within this context. But if you are only religious in name and say, I'm a Christian, that isn't good enough.

You have to practice true Christianity in order to forgive and to understand. And that isn't easy. Most people are not like that. But I have many friends who are true friends of the Jewish people. They are true friends of mine. I do believe that they are certainly not antisemitic. But that isn't good enough to have a few friends. I think, fundamentally, there must be a change. The change won't come from without.

From without?

Yeah, from-- it will not come from the Gentiles. It'll have to come within the Jewish people. It hasn't changed for how many centuries? For 2,000, 3,000 years. I don't see any reason why it should change now. Especially with this problem

in the Middle East. This is even exasperating the whole problem. It's making it even worse.

How?

Well, the Jews have been considered victims all their lives, all throughout history. And suddenly we are not victims any longer. As long as we were victims, then the poor Jewish people. They might have helped them. Might not have helped. But we are looked upon now as oppressors. You know, we are pressing the Arabs. And we have taken the lands and so forth. People don't like it.

But I, personally, don't care about this opinion. I care about oppressing another nation, which I think one should solve this problem. I think one should solve the Israeli-Arab conflict. Hopefully, the peace negotiations have started yesterday.

I am crossing my fingers that peace will come out of it after all. I have children. I have grandchildren who will eventually have to go into the army. And I have been in the army almost all my life. I don't want-- I really want peace more than anything else, but not under any price.

We have to be-- people don't understand that the security problem is the most crucial problem with this conflict. If we haven't got security, we can't give anything up. But on the other hand, I do believe that we should not rule another people. I think they should have their own political and national aspirations. They have a right to it. How and when, I don't know. But first and foremost, security.

I want to go back to some other questions I had ready to ask you today. I believe we left at just about the time that you were to go on a Kindertransport. So how did you get the chance to go on the Kindertransport?

Well, it was after the Kristallnacht and the 10th of November 1938, when all Jews, male Jews over the age of 16 were taken to concentration camps. And then when they were released but given the opportunity to emigrate. In those days, Jews were allowed to leave. But then after the war, they couldn't leave any longer.

I think Hitler was trapped. He didn't know what to do with the Jews, so he started to annihilate the Jews I think. Beforehand, Jews could leave. So the situation was so bad that all Jews wanted to leave Germany.

So a organization was founded by the Jewish community in England and maybe together with the British government, and they took almost 10,000 children from the age of very young to the age of maybe 16 or 17 who were allowed to go to England. I was amongst those children.

Where did you go to-- how did you get there? By boat, train?

We were brought to Berlin. And from there, we were taken by train to Holland. To Hoek van Holland, which is a town in Holland. I think it's a town by the sea somewhere. And then we were brought over by ferry to Dovercourt, near Harwich in England. And there I stayed for three months in a kind of a camp. And then we were taken to London into a hostel.

In a hostel?

Yeah, I stayed in hostel. When the war broke out, we were evacuated with our schools to smaller towns.

How big was the hostel?

Maybe 25 children.

All Jewish?

All Jewish. All from the Kindertransport.

Who ran it?

The Jewish community, I believe. And there was a matron there. And we had accommodations and slept there and so forth, and ate there. And we went to school.

What was school like? The British schools are kind of-- have a real reputation.

[LAUGHTER]

I don't know. I didn't know any English when I came to England, and so it was pretty tough for me. And then I was stunted by going to German schools. I was always frightened what the teachers would do next, you know? What they would do to me. And I wasn't really a good pupil because of this. I had no fundament. I had no-- I couldn't learn. I was always persecuted in the German schools.

So I came to England. I was a mediocre kind of. But I learned English pretty fast. And it was a grammar school. And I learned all the usual subjects. We had decent teachers, except one. He was an Irishman. He didn't like the Jews. His name was Mr. Flanagan. I remember him very well. And he always used to run the Jews down.

And he had almost the same kind of theory about the Jews like the Germans. The Jews looked different. That they had long noses, and long fingernails, and kinky hair. All this kind of nonsense.

And they let him teach you?

Yes. I asked him. Even being only 14 years old, I went up to him. I said Mr. Flanagan, why don't you like Jews? I said, if you're going to hit me-- because in those days, you were being caned. Had a cane and they slapped you across the hand with the most terrific force, without any compassion, the way to hit a child. Anyway, this doesn't seem today sensible to hit. You're not allowed to. In those days, you were beaten.

I thought he was going to cane me, but he didn't. He said, you know why I don't like Jews? And he said it in a very sort of venomous manner. He said, because one day I went to the East End of London and I bought a jacket and he cheated me. And he was a Jew. So I asked him-- only 14 years, I said, didn't Christians ever cheat you? And he was very angry with me.

[LAUGHS] He's a stupid man. He's a teacher.

The authorities never talked to him about his attitude?

I don't remember. I don't think so. You know, there's antisemitism in England as well as anywhere else in the world. Always stupid England people, you find them. More than I would like them to be.

You went to a regular English public-- their terms are different.

No, it wasn't a public school. It was a--

A regular English day school?

Yeah.

With other English children?

Yes.

What was it like? Is it like all the rumors are about English schools?

Well, I didn't make many friends. They called us Germans because the war broke out and there was lots of propaganda against the Germans. And then German refugees were interned on the Isle of Man.

Were you interned?

No, I was too young. Over the age of 16, they were all interned. Like the Japanese were interned here, they thought anybody German is a spy. Until they realized that we were Jewish refugees, until they sorted things out, there was a panic in England. Hitler had captured France and they were about to invade England. So they went into a panic. But slowly, they were released and they were even able to join the army. So things started to get normal.

But the children in school when-- I had a German accent, of course. They thought I was German. They didn't quite realize the difference being German and Jewish.

Were there a lot of culture shock?

For me?

For you.

You can't talk about culture. What culture does a boy of 14 got? I left my parents. It was tough, of course. I had to eat at somebody else's table. And I was fundamentally very shy. And there I was taken away from my home, go somewhere else. And not easy.

When I look at children of 14 I'm surprised-- and 13, I was really when I left. That a child like that can be taken away from the parents and brought into the big world. And has to fend, in a way, for themselves. Not materially. We had to eat. And we had, of course, all these material things. But spiritually, we had to fend for ourselves. We couldn't go to a parent and maybe cry or ask for advice or to be consoled. I had nowhere to go to for the child. These elementary things a child needs, I didn't have those anymore. That was gone.

Nobody at the school at least tried to, to some degree, fulfill that function?

None. I never had it since I left my parents. I haven't. That was gone. It was gone. I sometimes think about these things that a child of 13-- really never did I have anybody whom I could confide in or look for sympathy. That was gone. That, -- the Nazis took away from us.

They took away our childhood, took away our youth completely. And that can never be repaid. Whatever they paid, gave us in restitution money, there's no way. Some don't realize that maybe. I don't think the authorities are concerned about things. They're concerned about, we have an agreement with the Jews to pay them and that's it. We've paid. That's all we can do.

Maybe the other people who work on-- maybe the church or intellectuals or people who deal with these things. They probably will realize what has been done. Books have been written about it. But the German authorities deal with figures.

How did not having anybody to talk to anymore affect you throughout your life?

You know, I'm fundamentally a very strong person. And I adapt myself easily. But there were times when I had to go through crises. Sometimes I remember the Shabbat with my family. And I remember even today, I remember my parents. And in fact, it gets worse even. When I was a child somehow it was deflected.

But now sometimes suddenly I see a picture of my sister, like today, and I almost want to cry. But I haven't done it before. It's gone. Very difficult to define. And then I saw my mother's picture here suddenly. And I realized suddenly that she was a beautiful woman. As a woman, a young girl of 16, she looked so nice. And I never looked at my mother

as somebody who was beautiful.

Mother, you know, she was maybe when she died, 38. Or when I knew her she was maybe 32 or 33 or 34. So she was an old woman. You know, I looked at my mother like a child looks at the mother. He doesn't look at his mother as if she were also once young or she was a child. But for me, she was a mother, another generation, old.

But now when I look at those pictures, the thoughts flood into my mind. She was a child. She was an adolescent. These things come only late. And this is a-- well, this is a terrible crime, what they did. It is. You see, honestly, I want to tell, I can't forgive. We talk about today, you must forgive but you must never forget. It's not for me to forgive. It's for the dead to forgive. The victims to forgive. Who am I to forgive?

I will never forgive the Germans. The question is, of course, what does a new generation-- difficult. I don't know. I can't, I can't deal with the Germans, whether it's a new generation or the old generations. I will not deal with this. I won't even think of it because it's too difficult even to analyze and crystallize this whole situation.

But I have, I carry rancor in my heart against the Germans. Outrageous, disgusting people to do such things to other people. It's beyond my comprehension, just beyond. I can't make it out. I know when I see a dog or a cat suffering, I mean, I have compassion, or men begging for money or hungry. Without these feelings, well, I have no idea. Even people who deal with these things, I don't think there's an explanation for that at all. But don't talk to me about forgiveness. I will not forgive.

When you were sent away from them, how long did you live in the hostel?

Oh, maybe about seven, eight months. And the war broke out. And we were all evacuated to a small town. All school children were evacuated from London, which was bombed, as you know. And they were sent to smaller towns. And the schools were erected there in those little towns.

Where were you sent?

To a place called Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, maybe an hour from London. And I stayed with a Gentile family, very nice. The problem only arose when their son was set to join the army. So he joined the 6th airborne army, which were parachutists. And he was sent to Palestine. [LAUGHS] And there were those, you know, those terrorists, the Etzel and the Lehi the Jewish underground playing havoc with the 150,000 British soldiers. So he used to write home letters what the dirty Jews do to them. [LAUGHS] And I was in his parents' home. So that created a little bit of a problem.

How people were in the family? How many children?

Oh, they were an elderly couple. And they had two daughters and this son. And one daughter had a husband. His name was Benjamin. And he was a very bright man. But what he used to do, he used to deliver bread. And on the weekend I used to go with him. Delivered bread in a van and I helped him. And he told me wonderful stories. He came from a very religious home, Christian. And his parents made him go to church three times a day or something like that.

He rebelled. And he joined the army to get away from them. And he joined the Air Force. And unfortunately, he was shot down over the Gulf of Biscay and he died. And I was really heartbroken because he was something which I could relate to. He got somebody I could speak to. The others were really-- English working people are primitive. They are not educated. They have very little knowledge.

You know, I could never speak to them. Although, I was only a child. But some things I could maybe speak to them about. About Judaism, about my religion, about my life in Germany and so forth, about my parents. I couldn't talk to them about it. They talked about their daily lives and about their livelihood and maybe about football and about beer. That's the things they talked about, which was even then strange to me.

But Ben was a little bit of a knowledgeable man. He was a little bit of an intellectual. He had read things. So I had spiritual contact with him. And I liked him very much. And then when he died over the Gulf of Biscay, I was



heartbroken. He was one link which I had that went.

So did that leave you feeling very lonely?

Very. I was always lonely. I was always lonely. I was living in a Gentile home. And I had to eat the Gentile food, even bacon and pork, which I would never touch. I had to sort of fall in with the pattern of their living. I couldn't be any different. But it irked me.

It irked me that I had no choice. And the terrible loneliness about me. I was all by myself. And thank God, I don't think it has left on me any mark. Because I feel myself to be a normal person, thank God.

Was the food a culture shock?

Yeah. Well, if you know about English food with the Yorkshire pudding and everything's boiled, and the cup of tea with the milk and so forth, you know? I acclimatized myself to it. I lived. And of course, there was rationing in England in those days during the war.

And the way of eating-- everybody had to eat with a peculiar mannerism. The fork isn't held like this, but it's held the other way around and peculiar. The fork is built in such a way that there's a hollow the food should go into. But the British hold it the other way around.

So I learned all that. They have a good table manners, the British. But they're very sparse in eating. They don't eat a lot. They're very careful with what they spend. But I was never hungry. It was OK.

What was the food like? What did you get with rations?

Oh, bread wasn't rationed, for one thing. Butter was rationed. Milk was rationed. Tea was rationed. Meat was. Everything was rationed. But it was enough to keep you going. There was no petrol, gas for the car. No cars ran. But I think everything was rationed. Maybe bread, I think, was not rationed if I remember correctly. Eggs were rationed. Fish. Everything. Everything had to be bought on ration cards.

I was talking to a British woman whose mother was alive during the war. And this woman told me that all of-- she said all of. I don't know if it was really all of. All of the British mothers would have arsenic or cyanide, some poison. But they kept it in the house in case the Germans ever actually would be landing. And they intended to kill their children with it and gas themselves.

I don't think so. Maybe there were some who thought. I know that the woman I lived with, with the family, she said if the Germans would come, she would put her head into the gas oven. Now, if the Germans would have come I doubt that she would have done that.

After all, the Germans did capture the Netherlands and Belgium and France. And the whole population didn't commit suicide. Some people were taken away for slave labor and so forth. Some people were killed. But on the whole, the whole population survived. I mean, they left them in peace. Now, they wouldn't have killed--