

-TITLE-JAN MARINESSEN
-I_DATE-3/24/90
-SOURCE-SAN FRANCISCO HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY-GOOD
-IMAGE_QUALITY-GOOD
-DURATION-1 HOUR 25 MINUTES
-LANGUAGES-ENGLISH
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
-CORPORATE_NAME-
-KEY_WORDS-
-NOTES-
-CONTENTS-

0:00 born in 1928 in Groningen, Netherlands, the largest city in the northern part of the Netherlands.

2:06 Parents were native Hollanders. They had 5 children, there were three older sisters and a younger brother. Father was a representative of an Egyptian cigarette company.

3:40 His father helped many Jewish customers. Father had been in the military corps while in the service in the First World War.

4:20 Parents were Orthodox Christians - Calvinists, in the reformed tradition. He had a strict upbringing. On Sunday they were not allowed to do social things but always took walks past soccer fields. Went twice to Church on Sunday.

6:15 His Church was an offshoot of the Dutch Reformed Church.

7:30 He went to the famous Freubel School(ph).

8:46 Kindergarten 2 years, then primary school, secondary school, 5 years Jr. College and High School specializing in language and social science.

9:29 After his military service he took business administration and three years of child welfare. He came to the US in 1915 and spent 4 years at Berkeley and did one year of clinical training at Napa Hospital.

10:18 He was in the military service in 1948 to 50 but really didn't want to serve, but his denomination was not considered to be valid conscientious objectors. He had never joined a Church, just went with his parents. Didn't have much realization of what was developing with the Germans in the 30's. The Dutch government did not keep the

12: 25 population informed, Government was inclined to be to the "right". It was run by a

13:13 coalition of the Catholic party, and the Protestant party. The Dutch Royal Family was connected to Germany in history.

14:36 His father started talking about Hitler in 1939 and the Nazis occupied the Netherlands in 1940.

15:18 He remembers the German invasion through his area; there was no defence where he was (NE part of the country.)

16:04 In 1945 the Germans used their town as an escape route.

00:17:00 The Netherlands was a very free, loving, people. Many people escaped there from other areas of Europe and the Netherlands had been a haven

00:17:55 for Sephardic Jews.

00:18:00 In Amsterdam and in the Hague there was a large Jewish community. There was frequent conflict between Sephardic Jews and Askenazi Jews and the Sephardic Jews were more well off and cultured. There was a large Jewish community in Groningen (ph). The Anabaptists had also escaped to there. The Pilgrims escaped to the Netherlands and stayed for about 30 years but decided that the atmosphere was too fun loving.

00:21:00 So then they went to the US.

00:21:55 After the first year of occupation he and his family had to move from their nice home to another house.

00:22:55 After 2 years of the occupation the troubles with the Jews began.

00:23:00 Young people, generally, were also being taken to work in Germany. His father had been active in the labor union movement - organizing secretaries, white collar people and through that he became involved

00:24:00 in the underground movement which focused on political issues. His brother-in-law was involved in the underground, in the distribution of identification cards and ration books, also his sister was a courier. He was also asked to deliver identification papers.

00:26:00 The papers were brought to them and then they would do the distribution. His community did not suffer much hunger because they were out in the country.

00:27:00 People in the West did suffer from food shortages and his family would send packages of food to people.

00:28:30 They had no electricity, gas or fresh milk. They used a bike to get produce from the farmers.

00:29:00 His people hid people and got papers for them, as a grass root effort. The Dutch are strong in their organization life and groups were in place to work for the underground.

00:30:40 His sister was caught working for the underground and she spent months in prison. She was a courier. She would go off on her bike with messages.

00:33:00 He had to go into hiding, also his family was hiding a Jew.

00:34:00 They had an escape situation; a closet where they could go out the ceiling and people could escape into the attic. There were instances when they all had to hide.

00:35:00 There was a small percentage of people who joined the NAZI party.

00:35:45 There were a lot of people who cooperated because the choice was death. There was a small group of people in the underground.

00:36:40 Although Jews were hidden only a small percent were saved. Compared to the Danes, the rescue efforts of the Dutch was not good but

00:37:50 it was better than that of the French and the Belgians.

00:38:28 There were times when he was in hiding, when the whole family was suspected and he had a network of families to stay with. He stayed with one family that had 3 boys; one of them never went out

00:39:00 (for fear of being conscripted for labor apparently). Towards the end of the occupation of the Germans he was old enough

00:39:50 to be forced to work. They had one neighbor who was a Nazi and one who was in the SS.

00:40:38 Jan was in jail a short while when he was 14 because he had an argument with the son of an SS agent.

00:41:48 There were frequent Allied bombers overhead. They lived under constant pressure of the occupation and fear. It

00:43:00 was difficult to be hiding people, having extra people about. They had no coal. They went to the forest for wood for cooking, which

00:43:40 they were really not supposed to do according to the Germans.

00:44:40 Maintaining a household was difficult for his mother. She had pleurisy during the war and there was no heat for the houses. His mother often had to stand in line for food. There was a lot of hatred for the Germans. In the 3rd year kids could

00:45:00 no longer meet as a group in the Church. Some of the ministers were in jail.

00:47:20 For transportation all they had was bikes and no bike tires.

00:48:30 In the winter, to toughen him, the Nazi neighbor would pour cold water on his son outside.

00:49:40 After the war there were a few people that they had thought to be Nazis but who turned out to have been spies for the underground.

00:50:55 Many poor people were supportive of the NAZIS.

00:52:00 While hiding with a friend they had to take a message to someone for the underground and he had to wear the painful wooden shoes.

00:54:20 After the war there was lots of hatred. The country was liberated by the Canadians on May 10, 1945; the northern part a little later than that.

00:55:00 There was underground newspaper but they didn't have a radio. They had a map on the wall and they watched the movement of the armies.

00:55:55 Months became years and hiding people became very hard. Many people hid others but it was difficult keeping them supplied with food.

00:58:00 His father had many Jewish clients and some survived. His family hid one and another neighbor hid Jews for years.

1:01:25 Canadians were standing on their balcony shooting at the Germans as the army retreated. It took weeks for the Germans to evacuate; they stole what they could but there was not much left at that point.

1:04:43 His family survived. The occupation had a big influence in his life; he became familiar with jails and lack of freedom, also affected (?) his

1:05:00 attitudes about social justice and the equality of all people. Finished school in '47. He had a struggle with his parents and the Church

01:6:55 about being a conscientious objector. As a Dutch soldier he was sent to Indonesia but he disliked colonialism. They wanted him to be an officer

01:08:50 because he was athletic. He refused. In Indonesia in '48 the government was using torture as part of intelligence work and he refused so the was

01:09:53 eventually sent back to Holland. He then became involved in the youth movement, took courses.

01:15:23 After the war the government executed 44 traitors but then that was the

00:15:30 end of the death penalty. He started working with kids in trouble, with the police and with retarded

01:17:00 kids... he had an aunt in the U.S. and so he came in '55 to go to the Pacific School of Religion. He met his wife on the streets of Berkeley. She was a Dutch Jew whose parents had been killed during the war.. She

01:19:00 was hidden by gentiles for 3 years.. Dutch relatives brought her over. They have 2 children. He became a chaplin in San Quentin and started a school.

.END.