

Interview with JAN MARINISSEN
Holocaust Oral History Project
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I AM ALICE HAMBURG. I AM HERE IN MY HOME IN BERKELEY WITH JOHN GATES--

THE CAMERAMAN: Grant.

Q FIRST MISTAKE; JOHN GRANT, THE TECHNICIAN WHO WILL GET THIS INTERVIEW GOING FOR US, AND WITH JAN MARINISSEN, WHO I'M GOING TO INTERVIEW; AND THIS IS MARCH 24, SATURDAY, IN THE EVENING.

Q JAN, I BELIEVE YOU HAVE A VERY INTERESTING STORY, AND I'M EAGERLY AWAITING TO HEAR. I'D LIKE TO HAVE YOU START WITH WHEN YOU WERE BORN AND WHERE.

A I was born in 1928 in Gronigen in the Netherlands. Gronigen is a large city. At that time it was around a hundred fifty thousand, the largest city in the northern part of the Netherlands.

Q AND WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR EARLY LIFE, SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR PARENTS, A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE SOCIAL MILIEU?

A Yeah.

Q WERE THEY NATIVE HOLLANDERS?

A Yeah. The family consisted of five kids and parents: three sisters and--all older than I am--and a younger brother. It was interesting; my parents, they both came from the western part of the Netherlands, from Holland, and they migrated.

Q OH, REALLY?

A That was quite a distance in those days; it was quite a

distance. My father was a representative of an Egyptian cigarette company, and so as a boy of an early age I stole cigarettes from my father.

Q STARTED THAT HABIT EARLY?

A I started that bad habit early. But you may know—I don't know if you smoke or not, but that particular Egyptian cigarette, that had a very peculiar flavor--

Q I BELIEVE IT.

A --and I compare it with kind of the flavor like marijuana. And so the aroma was also very good. It was a very expensive cigarette. My father helped many Jewish customers.

So, my parents migrated to the other side of the Netherlands. I think it had something to do with--my father was in the military service during the First World War, although Holland was not, the Netherlands was not affected. It was affected by it, but not occupied. He was in the medical corps, and so he had been stationed there as a military man. So he was familiar with it, so he asked his partner to come over.

Q WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS?

A My father was a very athletic person, so he and I always watched soccer--on Sundays--and I may mention that my parents were very orthodox in the sense of Christian Orthodoxy.

Q YES; WHAT WAS THE CHURCH? WAS THAT THE LUTHERAN CHURCH?

A No, the Netherlands was not very strongly influenced by Luther. It was more John Calvin, so it was in the Reform tradition.

Q THE WHAT?

A The Reform tradition; the Reform tradition.

Q I SEE; I UNDERSTAND.

A And so my parents were very orthodox in that sense.

Q OH, I SEE.

A The reason why I mention that, too, has to do with they were rather strict.

Q SO THAT APPLIED TO YOUR UPBRINGING?

A Yeah; yeah; and so on the Sabbath, or Sunday, according to the church, we were never allowed to go to athletic events, but my father always took me. We went always on a long walk, and in the process we watched soccer. Yeah, we used to go twice to the church on Sundays, in the morning and late afternoon, and in between we went always on a long walk, the whole family.

Q THAT'S NICE.

A I have some pictures of that. It's interesting to see what we look like.

Q YOU SAID, "REFORM CHURCH." NOW, WHAT DENOMINATION WAS IT? WAS IT DUTCH REFORM CHURCH? IS THAT WHAT IT WAS CALLED?

A It is an offshoot of the Dutch Reform Church.

Q OH, I SEE.

A A large percentage of the Dutch population in those days belonged to that particular denomination.

Q WAS YOUR FATHER—WHAT WAS HIS TRAINING IN MEDICAL WORK? WAS HE AN AIDE OR WAS HE—

A He was a sergeant. He must have gone through some special training for the medical corps. I don't know exactly; but I remember that very clearly, because whenever the kids were hurt, whenever I was hurt, he had very soft hands. He knew exactly what to do.

Q YOUR MOTHER WAS LUCKY THAT HE COULD TAKE CARE OF ALL THAT.

A And since I was an ardent soccer player as a young kid already, I came home with bruised this or bruised that. He was always ready to take care of the--

Q MINISTER TO YOU. WHAT ABOUT YOUR EARLY EDUCATION? WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

A The earliest memory is that I went to kindergarten, what we call (Freeble??) school, after the famous (Freeble??), and I still can see in my memory the two teachers I had.

Q OH, REALLY?

A Yeah. And, you know, I've been frequently going back on my long walks through the city where I was born. I always pass by the (Freeble??) school.

Q WAS THERE ANY--DO YOU HAVE ANY RECOLLECTION, OR IN YOUR--EITHER--CONVERSATION WITH YOUR FAMILY, ABOUT WORLD WAR ONE? YOU WERE VERY YOUNG, OF COURSE. DO YOU HAVE ANY--

A No, I was born in 1928, so World War One--I was 14, 18, so all I remember was the stories my father told me.

Q HAD HE BEEN--HE WAS NOT IN ACTIVE COMBAT, THEN?

A No.

Q WELL, WE CAN MOVE ALONG, THEN, AND ASK YOU ABOUT YOUR, ABOUT

YOUR TRAINING. YOU'VE GOTTEN TO KINDERGARTEN NOW.

A And then, of course, after the kindergarten, for two years, then, I went to primary school; and then one day in--I had one year in secondary school, and then five years in a combination of junior college and high school.

Q AND WHAT DID YOU SPECIALIZE IN? DID YOU--OR DID YOU?

A In languages, and social sciences.

Q I SEE. AND WHEN DID YOU FINISH YOUR FORMAL EDUCATION?

A Undergraduate, after my military service--and that becomes important later on--I took business administration and then I took three years of child welfare.

Q OH, I SEE.

A And then, of course, I came to the U.S.A. in 1955. I went four years to the Pacific School of Litany in Berkeley, and then I took a year of clinical training at Napa State Hospital.

Q OH, YES. WELL, WE'RE GETTING AHEAD VERY, VERY FAST. THEN TO GO BACK TO HOLLAND, WHAT ABOUT YOUR MILITARY TRAINING? HOW LONG, AND WHEN, DID YOU TAKE IT?

A Well, that was, of course, after the occupation. In 1948 I entered the military service and was discharged in 1950. I had a very hard time. I personally did not want to go into the military service, but my denomination doesn't have a tradition...

Q OH, NO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION IN--

A No conscientious objection in my denomination, and I had a difficult time connecting with groups which favored conscientious

tious objection.

Q YOU WERE OBVIOUSLY STILL A MEMBER OF YOUR CHURCH, THEN?

A Well, we have to somehow qualify that. Of course, I used to go to Sunday school, etc., and to the various groups connected with the church. But I was a kind of a very questioning person, and I never joined the church. I was merely a child of my parents, and I went to church with them.

Q I SEE. WELL, WHY DON'T YOU TELL US ABOUT WHEN YOU FIRST KNEW THAT THINGS WERE GOING BADLY, WHEN YOU HEARD ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON IN GERMANY, AND WHEN YOU FIRST HEARD ABOUT THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST PARTY, SO-CALLED, AND HITLER, AND WHEN YOU BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT THERE WAS TROUBLE?

A Well, that was an area which is not hazy in my own mind, but—I have been very critical of the Dutch government, in that it never—as I recollect—never informed the Dutch population of the events which were happening next door in Germany.

Q THAT WAS QUEEN JULIANNA, THEN—DURING THAT PERIOD, WAS IT NOT?

A No. Wilhelmina; Queen Wilhelmina.

Q OH, IT GOES BACK. QUEEN WILHELMINA; YEAH, I REMEMBER.

A Yeah, and in those days the—let's see—the government of the Netherlands was somewhat on the right. It was a coalition of the Christian Party and the Roman Catholic Party, and that may have been contributing to the notion that the Dutch people were not very well-informed about what was happening next door.

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Q WAS THERE--SO MANY OF THE ROYAL FAMILIES WERE RELATED OR CONNECTED AS WAS TRUE OF BRITAIN AND GERMANY? WAS YOUR, THE ROYAL FAMILY OF HOLLAND, WERE THEY RELATED TO THE (HOENFELDEN??)

A I didn't catch your question.

Q WAS THE DUTCH ROYAL FAMILY--

A Oh, the royal family.

Q YEAH, THE ROYAL FAMILY.

A Oh, yeah; of course, partially from Germany, the House of (Orange??).

Q SO, IN OTHER WORDS, THE PEOPLE REALLY WERE NOT INFORMED AS TO INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, WHAT WAS GOING ON AS FAR AS THE BEGINNINGS OF THE HITLER, OF THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST PARTY?

A That is my recollection.

Q I SEE. SO WHEN WERE YOU FIRST INFORMED, OR WHEN DID IT BEGIN TO IMPACT ON YOU?

A The family started talking about that in '39, and, of course, in 1940 the Germans occupied the Netherlands.

Q YEAH; WELL, DO YOU HAVE SOME RECOLLECTIONS--NOW YOU WENT INTO THE ARMY IN WHAT?

A That was 1948.

Q OH, '48.

a 1948; right.

Q SO YOU WERE FAIRLY YOUNG WHEN THIS--

A 13.

Q UH-HUH, AND WHAT ARE YOUR RECOLLECTIONS ABOUT THE OCCUPA-

TION? WHAT EFFECT DID IT HAVE ON YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

A Of course, I still see the Germans invade the area where I used to live. It was a very frightening period. There was hardly any defense of the Netherlands in that area of the country.

Q AND YOU WERE LIVING IN THE EASTERN PART?

A In the eastern part, the northeast, which was quite a contrast with 1945 when the Germans left the Netherlands, because Groenigen, the city where I lived, was the escape route through which the German army could escape back to Germany, because then there was a lot of fighting, etc., etc. So there was fear in the family that--that was before the invasion--that my father had to go to--you know, to be called up. That did not occur, but there was tremendous fear about that; and not only about my father, but about friends of his and colleagues of his, as well.

Q WHAT WAS THE ATTITUDE OF THE--OF THE PEOPLE TOWARDS GERMANY?

A Well, as you know from history yourself, the Netherlands has always been a very freedom-loving country, very independent in the sense to which many people escaped from previous wars, Hungary, etc., etc., Germany, Austria.

Q AND THEY ESCAPED TO HOLLAND AND MADE THEIR HOMES THERE?

A Oh, yeah; oh, yeah. And if you go farther back in history, which I won't do, you remember that Holland had a 90-year war with Spain. Spain occupied the Netherlands a long time, and that was not sitting very well with the Dutch; and you remember from history, as well, that the Netherlands has always been a haven for the Sephardic

Jew.

Q WAS THERE QUITE A LARGE JEWISH POPULATION?

A A very large settlement.

Q WHERE? MOSTLY IN THE--

A Primarily in the western parts of the Netherlands.

Q WHICH CITY?

A Amsterdam; The Hague. And then, of course, what comes to mind is Spinoza, and I don't know if Rembrandt, the painter, was a Sephardic Jew, but he profited very much from the Sephardic Jews in that they were wealthy and they were all, or many of them, were linked up with the East Indian Company. So, I don't know if Rembrandt himself was a Sephardic Jew himself or not, but he definitely--some of his portraits, as you well may know, are of Sephardic Jews. And, of course, there has always been a tremendous conflict in Holland between the Ashkenazi Jews and the Sephardic Jews.

Q IS THAT SO?

A In that the Sephardic Jews were well-to-do in general and were well-cultured; and the Ashkenazi Jews who came from Germany and Russia, etc., etc., they were, according to the Sephardic Jews, not very cultured, etc.

Q AND THEY WERE NOT AS WELL-OFF?

A They were not well-off and--I should leave all that. You know more about it than I do.

Q WELL, NO, BUT--WE NEED THE STORY. JUST ASSUME THAT I KNOW VERY LITTLE.

A Well, that may become--the reason why I am interested in all of this will come out a little bit later.

Q YES, I UNDERSTAND.

A In the city where I grew up there was a sizable Jewish community.

Q WOULD YOU SPELL THE NAME OF THAT CITY?

A Groningen, G-r-o-n-i-n-g-e-n, Groningen. But it was--(Princes??) also the city to which the Baptists escaped.

Q OH, REALLY?

A You know, who were persecuted and prosecuted in the middle of Europe. Well, the Brethren--you remember that the pilgrims--

Q YES; DEFINITELY.

A When they fled England, they went to the Netherlands and stayed there for 30 years.

Q OH, I DIDN'T REMEMBER IT HAD BEEN THAT LONG.

A And then, finally, they decided to get away because--and that's very interesting, because--you see, the new generation began to speak Dutch; and although there was misperception about Puritanism, Holland has never been very puritanical. They were very joyful, loving people, drinking lots of beer and dancing, and very colorful clothes, etc. And the pilgrims, when they came over, they didn't like their kids to be affected by all of that. And so, they finally picked up themselves and the kids and they--

Q FOR 30 YEARS. THEY MUST HAVE BEEN ABLE TO--

A Now, to come back to--then, after we were one year into the

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occupation, we had to move. We were living in an--in a nice house, and--standing by itself. We had to move. We were renting. And that was on the other side of town. And so, that other house has been primarily the house where we experienced, you know, the period of the occupation.

Q I SEE. YOU REMAINED IN THE HOUSE WHERE YOU WERE MOVED TO, WHERE YOU HAD TO MOVE TO?

A Yeah, during the rest of the occupation.

Q HOW LONG DID THE OCCUPATION LAST?

A Five years.

Q FIVE YEARS.

A And, of course, it was only after, you know, well--two years into the occupation that the difficulties began to arise about the Jewish population.

Q OH, I SEE.

A And the occupational forces demanding people to be working in the German factories, etc., etc.

Q WHAT FACTORIES WERE THERE THAT THE GERMANS WERE ABLE TO TAKE OVER?

A No, not in the Netherlands. They were transported to Germany to work in the German munition factories.

Q I SEE.

A So, it was--well, it was at the end of the second year, at the beginning of the third year of the occupation that all the difficulties began to develop.

Q HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT IT; DO YOU RECALL?

A Well, my father was very active in the union movement, in the labor union movement. He organized people, primarily secretaries, clerical secretaries, representatives of different firms and factories, the white collar people--he organized. And so he was very involved in that, and slowly he became involved in the underground movement which focused on the political aspects. My oldest sister got married; so my brother-in-law became involved in the underground in the--primarily in the distribution of identification cards and ration books, etc. My middle sister, she became a courier; and I was--I was still young--and I was asked to distribute the ration books and identification cards to specific addresses.

Q NOW, WERE THESE FORGED IDENTIFICATION?

A Of course. They were both forged as well as official.

Q OH, I SEE.

A There was another part of the underground which one could say was a violent underground in terms of taking over the printing presses--you know, where the identification cards were made, etc., etc. And they were then brought to my brother-in-law and then people like myself distributed to individual addresses. Right.

Q WHAT--CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE--WAS THERE A GROWING APPREHENSION, THEN, ON THE PART OF THE DUTCH PEOPLE--YOU SAY THE FIRST COUPLE OF YEARS--

A Primarily the first two years.

Q --WAS FAIRLY UNEVENTFUL?

A Right. Well, not uneventful, but in terms of the pressures the German occupational forces put on the Dutch population, in terms of rounding up the Jews and getting people a few years older than I am to go work in the factories.

Q I SEE; I SEE. WHAT ABOUT THE RATIONING? WAS THERE DIFFICULTY THERE? I MEAN, WITH THE GERMANS TAKING SUPPLIES, AND EVERYTHING WAS RATIONED?

A Oh, yeah. Everything was rationed, but since we lived in the northern part, we never suffered hunger. But the Dutch people in the west, of course, suffered hunger; and we had several relatives in the west.

Q WERE THOSE PEOPLE MAINLY IN THE LARGE CITIES, WOULD YOU SAY? ARE THEY THE ONES WHO SUFFERED?

A No, also in the smaller cities; but primarily in the west. And so, you know, we sent packages of food to the relatives living in the west.

Q YEAH; AMAZING.

A And, of course, what we did not have is, of course, electricity and gas and fresh milk and--so, what we used to do then, is we had made connections with farmers in the area, and then we went on the bike and we got the produce from the farmers.

Q WHAT ABOUT COMMUNICATIONS? WAS THE SYSTEM STILL INTACT SO THAT YOU COULD SEND PACKAGES AND THAT SORT OF THING TO OTHER PARTS?

A Haphazardly, yeah.

Q WHAT ABOUT--TELL US SOME MORE ABOUT THE UNDERGROUND, AND

PARTICULARLY WHAT I'D LIKE TO HEAR IS ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF THE HOLLANDERS. HOW DO YOU REFER TO YOUR PEOPLE? HOLLANDERS OR DUTCH OR--

A Well, depending upon to whom you talk, because if you say "the Dutch," that sounds so much German, so--

Q OH. I'LL SAY, "YOUR PEOPLE, THE HOLLANDERS."

A It very much depends upon the kind of group one belonged to. As you may know, the particular denomination my parents belonged to is, indeed, a denomination which seemed to have been the most active in the underground, in hiding people, in finding addresses for people, in the distribution of ration books.

Q HOW WAS IT ORGANIZED? WAS IT FROM THE MINISTERS OR LEADERS OF THE--OR WAS IT JUST REALLY A GRASSROOTS--

A It was a grassroots situation, but since the Dutch have always been very strong in organizational life, I think that helped a great deal. So, one used the existing groupings, the existing organizations.

Q WAS IT HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL? WERE PEOPLE CAUGHT AND PUNISHED?

A Oh, yeah; oh, yeah. My sister spent, oh, I think, six or nine months--something like that--in prison. She was caught, in that she--she was a courier. That meant that she had to go from one province to another province on bike, because there was no transportation, of course, and to send messages and to receive messages; and she was caught in that--there were, of course, all kinds of ways in which one tried to protect the couriers and people who were distributing ration books, etc. And one of the things, in her case, was that if the

curtain was totally closed then it was not safe. If it was partially open, then it was safe; and at that time, when she was caught, the curtain was closed.

Q OH, I SEE. SHE TRIED TO GET THROUGH, APPARENTLY?

A I mean, the curtain was open.

Q OPEN PARTLY?

A Yeah, because the person who was living there didn't have the time to change the curtain; and so she was caught. And then she spent--fortunately, they let her go after six or seven, eight months of imprisonment. She was, oh, I think, five years older than I am.

Q SHE'S STILL A YOUNG WOMAN.

A Oh, yeah. And then, of course, the--my brother-in-law and sister, who was the distributor--

Q SO YOU HAD TWO SISTERS WHO WERE INVOLVED?

A Two sisters and a brother-in-law. He had to go into hiding because he was suspected. So they moved in with us, with my parents. And then on top of that, we had a person living with us who was supposed to be working in Germany. He was a young man.

Q SO YOU WERE HIDING--THE FAMILY WAS HIDING HIM, ALSO?

A As well as my brother. And we had made a kind of an escape situation, in that on the second floor there was a closet in which we took out the ceiling and made it in such a way that we could push up the ceiling and we could be in the attic. There were a few instances in which all of us went there because there was something going on. We had received a warning.

Q AND SO THE FAMILY OPERATED AS A UNIT? THERE WEREN'T ANY PEOPLE WHO WERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OR WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE IN IT?

A Oh, no. It was a unit, but not in the sense that they were all working in the same aspect. They were different—they were working on different aspects of the underground.

Q WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE PEOPLE WERE OPPOSED TO THE GERMANS, REALLY VERY—I'D LIKE TO KNOW LATER WHAT PERCENTAGE WERE ACTIVE IN THEIR OPPOSITION, BUT WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE PEOPLE REALLY WERE OPPOSED TO THE GERMANS AND REFUSED TO COOPERATE?

A Well, there are two issues you mentioned. On the one hand, it was a small percentage of persons who became members of the National Socialist Party.

Q COLLABORATORS?

A Well, we have to be very careful when we use those terms, in the sense that, on the one hand, you had persons who joined the S.S. and joined the National Socialist Party—a small percentage. On the other hand, you had a large percentage of people who collaborated, because if you did not collaborate, then you either were shot or you were sent to Germany, to camps.

Q YOU WERE PUNISHED IN SOME WAY.

A Punished. But there was only a small percentage of persons who were actively engaged, either in violent or in nonviolent action in the underground. It was only a small percentage.

Q BUT THEY WERE—WERE THEY QUITE EFFECTIVE, THOUGH, IN SPITE OF THEIR SMALL NUMBERS, WOULD YOU SAY? HOW WOULD YOU EVALUATE THEIR

ACTIVITY?

A Well, in looking back, although many persons were hidden and saved from extermination—both Jews and other persons, as well as people who had been working in the German factories—of course, it is always disappointing to see that only a small percentage of people were saved in the long-run, which, of course, is not surprising; but it was very disappointing.

Q YES, SURELY; SURELY. BUT HOW WOULD YOU EVALUATE THE RESISTANCE IN HOLLAND? YOU KNOW, TAKING AN HISTORIC POINT OF VIEW, LOOKING BACK OVER IT?

A When you compare it with the Danes, you know, the Dutch were miserable. On the other hand, when you compare the Dutch with the Belgians and the French, the French people, I presume they did pretty well. But that's disappointing, nevertheless.

Q YES; I SEE.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY, THEN, WERE THE NEXT IMPORTANT INFLUENCES IN YOUR LIFE? WAS IT YOUR HAVING TO GO INTO THE SERVICE, INTO THE MILITARY, OR WAS THERE ANYTHING ELSE IMPORTANT DURING THIS PERIOD OF THE OCCUPATION?

A Yeah; there were periods that—that I was in hiding—a few instances, because the whole Marinissen family was suspect; and so most of us disappeared for a while.

Q NOW, WERE THERE OTHER FAMILIES THAT WERE SORT OF CONSIDERED SAFE, THAT YOU COULD GO AND HIDE WITH THEM?

A Right; right. I stayed with a family—there were, I think,

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three boys. One was--yeah--one was a year older than I was, and he never left his house. So I joined him.

Q AND YOU DECIDED TO STAY INSIDE AND NOT BE SEEN UNTIL IT WAS SAFE TO GET OUT?

A And then there were a few times that--you know, I was 18. I mean, how old was I? Seventeen, almost 18 when the war was finished, so I was eligible to be called up, to go and work in Germany on the fortification in the Netherlands.

Q THAT WAS STILL AT THE LAST YEAR OF THE OCCUPATION?

A Right; right.

Q SO, WHAT HAPPENED?

A I was hiding with that family I previously mentioned.

Q DID THEY COME TO YOUR FAMILY TO LOOK FOR YOU, OR DID YOU NOT REGISTER?

A They never came.

Q BUT YOU WERE AFRAID?

A Well, the family had received notification that they were looking; and this may partially have to do with neighbors on the left, three houses away from us. He was very active in the National Socialist Party. He was high up and opposite of us, neighbors; he was in the S.S. And I ended up in jail when I was 14, I think, for a couple of days, because I had a big hassle with that person's son who was about my age; and I ended up in jail. But it was more to frighten me than to--and, of course, aside from--aside from the involvement in the underground, of course, there were frequent alarms. The English

fliers and the American fliers came over, although they never bombed in our neighborhood.

Q BUT THERE WAS ALWAYS THE DANGER?

A Oh, yeah.

Q WERE THERE BOMB SHELTERS AND ALL THAT, OR JUST BASEMENTS?

A We had bomb shelters, and occasionally we went to bomb shelters. I hated those; I found them very scary, more scary than staying in your own house. What was, of course, an aspect of occupation were the tremendous pressures of constant danger, which constant danger places on the psyche.

Q DID IT CAUSE FRICTION WITHIN THE FAMILY, TENSION AND ALL THAT?

A Oh, yeah; and then having several people living in the house who were not supposed to be living there, who were hiding out, people who were very nervous and depressed, and all kinds of—that must have been extremely hard on my parents, I think, especially my mother, I think. I am sure about that.

Q WEREN'T THERE—DID YOU SUFFER SHORTAGES AS FAR AS FOOD AND THAT SORT OF THING?

A The shortages, yes. We never suffered hunger and—because what do you do when you don't have any gas or electricity? Everything was in the dark.

Q AND YOU HAD TO—DID YOU HAVE COAL, BURN COAL? NO?

A No, no. So there were times that we went into the forest, which was very dangerous, to cut wood which we used primarily for

cooking. But you have to cut it off in very small pieces and, of course, one becomes very ingenious.

Q YES, BECAUSE IT'S GREEN, ISN'T IT?

A Yeah.

Q SO IT'S HARD TO BURN?

A Right; right. And then we occasionally were able to get oil, vegetable oil, or some kind of oil--

Q WAS THAT ALWAYS RATIONED?

A Oh, yeah; everything was rationed--which we used for burning in a jam jar with water and a little bit of oil and a wick. It was--

Q YOU HAD TO BE PRETTY INGENIOUS TO SURVIVE.

A Yeah.

Q HOW ABOUT THE HEALTH OF THE FAMILY MEMBERS?

A Well, during the war my mother developed--what do you call that? She was sick for a while with pleuritis.

Q PLEURISY?

A Yes, pleurisy.

Q YOU HAD NO HEAT FOR THE HOUSE?

A No. And she was often standing in line for food, whatever little there was; and that was very hard on her. And, of course, the school was very irregularly--you know, we had to go from building to building, because our first--the school I used to go to was occupied by the Germans. They used it as a headquarter.

Q WHAT WAS THE INTERCHANGE OR THE ATTITUDE OF THE GERMANS AND THE HOLLANDER PEOPLE AS YOU WOULD MEET ON THE STREET? OF COURSE,

MAYBE YOU WEREN'T OUT ON THE STREET MUCH. BUT, WHAT WAS THE ATTITUDE?
WAS IT FEAR AND HATRED AND ANIMOSITY?

A Lot of hatred; lot of hatred of the Germans.

Q WAS IT SORT OF PENT UP?

A Oh, yeah; I mean, to express it--

Q YOU WEREN'T ABLE TO?

A No; no. Of course, it must have been in the third year that we were not allowed to meet anymore as kids in groups of the church. They were all forbidden, and several of the ministers ended up in jail and prison. Yeah. So the youth organizations were forbidden.

Q YOU MENTIONED THAT THERE WAS NO TRANSPORTATION. DOES MOST--IN NORMAL TIMES DOES MOST TRANSPORTATION TAKE PLACE ON THE CANALS? WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE WAR?

A Well, there's a very intensive net of canals in the north. They were used during the, during the war.

Q WERE THEY USED BY THE GERMANS SO THAT YOU COULDN'T USE THE--THE NAVY PEOPLE COULDN'T USE THEM?

A Oh, no. The navy people used them, too. The Germans had their cars and their--but all the Dutch automobiles were gone and--the Germans stole them. All we had were bicycles, and, of course, we didn't have tires anymore, on the bicycles either, so one becomes very industrious.

Q INGENIOUS.

A They developed tires from--rubber tires from cars, from automobiles; and there was a very intricate way of doing that. So

that's the way we got around. Not any more inner tubes, etc., etc.

Q OH, PEOPLE WERE INGENIOUS WHEN THEY HAD TO BE FOR SURVIVAL.

A Right; right.

Q WHAT ABOUT--YOU SAY YOU HAD A NEIGHBOR THREE DOORS UP WHO WAS A NAZI OR NAZI SYMPATHIZER. WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP? DID YOU JUST ENTIRELY AVOID EACH OTHER?

A Avoid.

Q NEVER CONFRONTED EACH OTHER?

A (Shaking head side to side.)

Q JUST STAYED OUT OF THEIR WAY.

A And he was so mean to his kid, you see. He was a real supporter of the Aryan race. So, his kid was my age and--well, a little bit younger. And during the winter--you know, the winters are very nasty, cold. The kid used to have to go to the balcony and his father would pour cold water over him. Oh, yeah; he had to be real a Aryan.

Q WHAT ELSE DO YOU RECALL ABOUT THAT TIME? AND YOU ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT--WERE YOU EVER--YOU WERE CALLED UP, EVENTUALLY?

A I was not called up.

Q YOU AVOIDED--YOU HID OUT?

A Right.

Q WHAT--WE HAVEN'T TALKED YET ABOUT ANY JEWS WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN FRIENDS OF YOUR FAMILY OR PEOPLE WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN IN THE RESISTANCE AND THE UNDERGROUND. SO, HAVE WE COVERED PRETTY WELL THE REACTION OF THE HOLLANDERS TO THE OCCUPATION, AND THE RELATIONS BE-

TWEEN THE TWO PEOPLE AND WHAT WENT ON WITHIN THE FAMILY?

A Maybe what I did not mention is the--there were a few--which we, of course, discovered after the war--there were a few persons who were known to us who were higher up in the hierarchy of the National Socialist movement, who turned out to be our friends rather than--you know, they were the spies within the--and we had been very careful towards them.

Q AND WHEN DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THAT?

A After the war. We never knew it. They were very close friends of the family.

Q OH, I SEE. THAT'S REASSURING, IN A WAY, TO FIND OUT ABOUT THAT. SO, YOU THINK THAT WE HAVE COVERED THE PERIOD OF THE--

A Well, there are several instances. For instance, I had friends who were living in the country. His parents were farmers. And I stayed there for a couple of weeks, hiding.

Q WAS IT MUCH SAFER IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, DEPENDING ON IF YOU COULD FIND A FAMILY?

A In that particular area, that had been, you see--quite a few of the supporters of the National Socialist movement were poor people, right? Which is understandable.

Q YES; CERTAINLY.

A And the area where my friend and his parents, who were farmers, lived, was known for having many supporters of the National Socialist movement. But at least I stayed there a couple of weeks, and I had never--I had never worn wooden shoes. So, we had to bring a

message, an underground message, from the house where my family lived, his parents, and we had to--I still don't know how many miles it was, but that was the first time I walked on wooden shoes. I had to walk on wooden shoes, because you know that when you--wooden shoes are far better to wear when you have to go over the fields of farmers; right?

Q VERY ROUGH.

A Very rough and muddy, and the wooden shoes are far better. And I suffered; I suffered. And it was a long trip, and it stands very clear in my mind and, and I really suffered. But then, of course, I should also mention that several of the friends of my parents, you know, they were eliminated, executed. As well as several friends and acquaintances who were working in the underground.

Q THEY WERE CAUGHT?

A Caught and wiped out.

Q DID THE COMMUNITY KNOW WHEN THESE PEOPLE WERE BEING TAKEN AWAY AND--

A Well, the community--it's not so much the community as well as the connections which people had, you know, working.

Q THE UNDERGROUND?

A And then immediately, you know, they were (UNINTELLIGIBLE SECTION) in order to--

Q WERE THERE CASES OF SO-CALLED (QUIZZLINGS???) IN HOLLAND?

A Oh, yeah. I am unaware that either our friends or my family were affected by that, but, of course, there were (quizzlings??).

Q THERE WERE? THEY WERE THE COLLABORATORS WITH THE GERMANS?

A Right; right.

Q WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE WAR WAS OVER, THEN, BETWEEN LOYAL PEOPLE AND--

A A lot of hatred. I should mention that we were liberated not by Americans, but by Canadians. Yeah, our part was liberated by Canadians.

Q WHAT DATE WAS THAT?

A May the 10th; May the 10th.

Q AND THAT WAS '44 OR '45?

A '45, and since we lived in the northern part of the Netherlands--you know, the southern part was liberated earlier.

Q EARLIER; EARLIER; I SEE. DID YOU GET WORD? DID THE WORD GET OUT?

A Oh, yeah. Of course, they didn't mention anything about the underground newspaper. Since we were a part of the underground, we, of course, received all the time the underground newspaper. We decided not to have a radio because we felt that, being a part of the underground, it was better not to have a radio on top of that, so we received the news from other people who had the radio. So, we kept abreast of, you know, what was happening.

Q HOW LONG DID IT TAKE BETWEEN THE TIME, THE ARRIVAL OF THE CANADIANS IN THE SOUTH, AND THE TIME THEY LIBERATED THE REST OF THE COUNTRY? WAS IT A MATTER OF WEEKS?

A Oh, no; no.

Q LONGER?

A Oh, yeah; longer than that. See, I forget, but what we did is we had a map on the wall, of course, and we followed exactly what was happening. And, of course, then there were periods during the occupation that we thought that the liberation was coming sooner than it actually took place. And, of course, people—I mean, very often people forget that there were many people willing to hide people for a short period of time, but weeks became months, and months became years; and to live as a family in fear, etc.—but then, on top of that, having strangers living in fear—

Q MUST HAVE BEEN VERY DIFFICULT.

A --as a unit. And we were fortunate in that we had ration books, etc., etc., but there were many people who were not as fortunate as we were.

Q HOW ABOUT YOUR LIVING QUARTERS? DID YOU HAVE A FAIRLY GOOD-SIZED HOUSE?

A Oh, yeah. We had two stories, sizable rooms; but, of course, no hot water; and that gets on your nerves, and no electricity, no gas, and—

Q WHAT WAS THE CLIMATE LIKE, THE WEATHER LIKE, IN THE WINTER? IS IT PRETTY—DOES IT GET FAIRLY COLD?

A Well, I learned to skate on the canals, of course.

Q YES, AND WET.

A And snow; yeah; it can be.

Q WHAT ABOUT THE JEWS IN THE COMMUNITY? NOW, DID YOUR FAMILY HAVE FRIENDS? AND CAN YOU TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THE FATE OF THE

JEWS IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

A Yeah. As I mentioned, my father had many clients. Some of them survived; many did not.

Q HOW? HOW DID THEY SURVIVE, THOSE WHO DID?

A Well, the same as that person who was hidden in my family house survived; and then there was, opposite of us, our neighbors in the front. They had hidden a Jew for years, and, of course, we knew that, because we could see one another; and they knew that we were a part of the underground, and--

Q NOW, WHAT--IN THE CASE OF THESE TWO MEN--WHAT HAPPENED TO THEIR FAMILIES? DID THE FAMILIES SPLIT UP AND TRY TO GET A HARBOR OF SAFETY WITH VARIOUS FAMILIES, OR WHAT HAPPENED?

A No, they--one person, a young man, stayed with us for, must have been, two and a half years. And my brother-in-law stayed about two years, something like that.

Q YOUR BROTHER-IN-LAW WAS NOT JEWISH, WAS HE?

A No.

Q SO, IN YOUR IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY WHAT DO YOU THINK WERE THE LOSSES AS FAR AS THE FAMILIES THAT WERE TAKEN AND THOSE THAT LOST MEMBERS OR--WAS IT--

A A sizable group were either exterminated or lost a life in one way or another; also, members of the church we knew, as well as some of the ministers--they were eliminated.

Q JUST BECAUSE THEY--I MEAN, CHRISTIAN MINISTERS, BUT THEY HAD--NO? YES? BUT THEY HAD GONE AGAINST THE OCCUPATION OR AGAINST

THE GERMANS AND SO THEY WERE FOUND OUT?

A Uh-huh.

Q THERE WAS ACTUALLY—HOW MUCH, IF ANY, FIGHTING WAS THERE?
YOU MENTIONED THAT WHEN THE GERMANS RETREATED, THAT THEY
CAME THROUGH HOLLAND?

A Through the city.

Q THROUGH THE CITY.

A Right. There was quite a bit of fighting.

Q AND WHERE WAS THAT IN RELATION TO WHERE YOU LIVED?

A Well, we were living pretty close to a railroad station and pretty close to the freeway, and when the Germans were being defeated in the south and in the west, they came up north and escaped through the area where I lived.

Q I SEE.

A And so there was considerable fighting; a lot of the inner city was destroyed. And the Canadians were standing on the back balcony of our house, and they were shooting at the (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Q THAT WAS IN THE FINAL DAYS OF THE OCCUPATION?

A Right.

Q YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY—HOW LARGE A CONTINGENT WAS
EVACUATED OR WOULD FLEE, IN NUMBERS? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY?

A Germans? No, no. That went days and days and days and weeks, in fact, that the Germans were—

Q CONSTANT STREAM?

A Uh-huh.

Q THEY DIDN'T TRY TO GET FOOD OR SUPPLIES?

A Oh, they stole what they could get hold of.

Q THEY STOLE.

A But there was not much left after five years. They had stolen everything that was around.

Q WHAT WAS THE FEELING OF YOUR PEOPLE AS THE GERMANS WERE RETREATING?

A On the one hand, afraid, because they were fighting severely; but on the other hand, very anxious.

Q WHAT WAS THE REACTION OF--WERE YOU PRETTY WELL PREPARED FOR THE CANADIANS, THAT THEY WOULD NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE? YOU KNOW, THE STORIES ABOUT THE RUSSIANS, WHEN THE RUSSIANS LIBERATED THE COUNTRY, THAT THEY ATTACKED PEOPLE, AND--

A Oh, no. Most of us spoke English, so that was helpful.

Q UH-HUH. AND THESE WERE MOSTLY YOUNG MEN AND--

A All young men.

Q AND THEY HAD COME FROM WHERE? WHERE HAD THEY BEEN SITUATED OR STATIONED BEFORE THIS FINAL--DO YOU KNOW?

A They were part of the force which fought in (Arnum??). You know, they were Canadians as well as Americans. They came from--and they came from--so, from the southern part, as well as from the western, northern part. Have you ever been in Holland?

Q YES, I HAVE. I WAS JUST THINKING WE NEED A MAP HERE.

A Well, it doesn't matter. So, they came from the south, as well as from the north.

Q UH-HUH. AND SO THIS WAS SORT OF THE PLACE--DID THE GERMANS ALSO COME FROM TWO DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS, OR NOT?

A Yeah; yeah.

Q AND THE CANADIANS WERE CHASING THEM?

A Yeah, they were chasing them.

Q I SEE. SO NOW, WHEN THE CANADIANS CAME, DID THEY HAVE THEIR OWN PROVISIONS?

A Oh, yeah.

Q AND SO DID THEY HAVE FOOD FOR THE PEOPLE, OR WERE THEY--

A Oh, mostly, you know--yeah; some food. But since we were not suffering that much of hunger--you know, chocolate, the typical chocolate; and on top of that, my younger sister fell in love.

Q DID SHE MARRY?

A No.

Q THEY JUST FELL IN LOVE; I SEE. WELL, THAT WAS QUITE A CHILDHOOD, THEN. SO, LET'S TAKE UP--IS THERE ANYTHING MORE ABOUT THE OCCUPATION, THEN, THE WAR AND THE LIBERATION, THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO TELL ABOUT?

A Well, it seems as if--the rest of my life seemed to have been to--we all survived. The family survived. It seems as if the period of the occupation has influenced my life, you know, when you look back, to quite an extent, in the sense that I became familiar at an early age with jails and prisons and lack of freedom and problems; and that seemed to have given me some direction in life.

Q WELL, WHAT--HOW DID YOU COME OUT OF IT IN YOUR THINKING?

WERE YOU PRETTY CLEAR ABOUT NAZIISM AND WHAT IT DID TO PEOPLE AND—

A It—I think it is more in the area of social justice that I—

Q YES, WELL, THAT'S WHAT I MEAN. WHAT WAS YOUR CONCLUSION ABOUT ALL THIS? THE GERMAN PEOPLE THOUGHT THEY WERE RIGHT. THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE CORRECTING A WRONG BECAUSE OF THE HEAVY REPARATIONS THEY WERE PAYING OR WERE SUPPOSED TO PAY AFTER WORLD WAR ONE, AND UNEMPLOYMENT; AND HITLER CAME ALONG AND PROMISED THEM ALL OF THESE THINGS, AND GET RID OF THE JEWS AND, YOU KNOW, THE FOREIGNERS, THE GYPSIES, AND ALL THAT, AND EVERYTHING WILL BE WONDERFUL, SO—

A So my learning from the occupation has more to do with an emphasis on social justice and freedom than it has to do with religion or—it has given me a basic sense of equality of all people.

Q BUT THAT'S AT LEAST THE IDEAL THAT WE STRIVE FOR. SO THEN, TAKE UP THE THREAD OF YOUR LIFE, YOUR STORY, THEN, AFTER THE LIBERATION.

A As I mentioned, I finished school in '47, and—

Q AND THAT WAS YOUR SECONDARY?

A Junior college; I finished junior college. And in '47 I had an opportunity to go and live in England for half a year before I had to go into the military service.

Q THEY HAVE CONSCRIPTION?

A In those days, yeah; two years.

Q TWO YEARS.

A And I did not—I wanted to be a conscientious objector.

Q WHAT WAS THAT?

A I wanted to become a conscientious objector. My parents and my denomination did not have any feeling for that; and I had big struggles with the minister in the church, and my parents, too.

Q WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR IDEA OF PACIFISM?

A Well, you see, I was very rebellious already about the religious orthodoxy of my parents.

Q OH, YES. AT WHAT AGE DID YOU START OBJECTING?

A Oh, that was really when I was 13. I didn't believe in what they—my life had been pretty well shaped by the prophets in the Old Testament, including Jesus as a Jew, as a prophet, and that is the emphasis on social justice.

Q RIGHT. THAT'S WHERE I GOT MINE, TOO, FROM THE BIBLE.

A And so many of the rituals and—you see, the Dutch soldiers had to go to Indonesia because Indonesia had been occupied by Japan, etc., etc., and my perception of colonism and colonialism didn't fit into my notion of social justice.

Q WAS THERE ANY SOCIALIST GROUP OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

A Yes, there was a socialist group, but that was too far removed from my experience.

Q YES. THIS WAS YOUR OWN INTERNAL THINKING?

A Right. So after having lived in England for half a year, I succumbed and went into the military service; and then on top of that, they wanted me to become an officer, and I had control over that. Right? I didn't have control—or at least I thought I didn't have

control—over becoming a soldier, but I had control over becoming an officer, so I had a big fight; whew; whew. Because I was a very good soldier. You see, I was very athletic, etc., etc.

Q YOU WERE INTELLIGENT.

A Right; so then they said, "Jan, you are a good officer." So, they wanted me to go to the officer school. I said, "Uh-uh. No, no. I take responsibility for myself, but not for other people." Well, I had to be interviewed by psychiatrists and all kinds of people, and finally they dropped me from—

Q YEAH, THEY DROPPED YOU.

A So, then I went to Indonesia.

Q SO DURING THE TWO YEARS, YOU WERE SENT TO INDONESIA?

A Oh, yeah; in '48 I was sent to Indonesia.

Q OH.

A And since I was only willing to take responsibility for myself, there came a time that I partially faked something. As a kid I had always suffered from my left ear—all kinds of middle ear—

Q OH, INFECTIONS.

A Specialists had been—

Q YOU DIDN'T TRY TO USE THAT WHEN YOU WERE INDUCTED?

A I couldn't; I tried; I couldn't. But then I ended up in Indonesia. I used—partly I used it; partially I was suffering from it, in the heat and so on. So they put me in the intelligence unit, and, like the experience of all armies during the war—the Dutch are no different—the intelligence units were torturing people. I had a

big fight—ooh—with the chaplain, with the officers, and I made the bigger boys aware of what was happening. Nothing. So finally they got rid of me. They sent me to a hospital because of my ear and then they shipped me back to the Netherlands.

Q I SEE. HOW LONG WERE YOU IN INDONESIA?

A Nine months.

Q OH.

A Nine months; and that was a real struggle. You know, one expects a little bit more, you know, from one's own—of course, it's crazy to expect more from one's own government, not to be involved in torture, having gone through a five-year experience; all armies do that and it's a part and parcel of military service. So that—that really hit me hard, the torture.

Q SO WHAT WAS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR FAMILY, THOUGH, WHEN YOU CAME BACK? DID THEY KNOW THAT YOU WERE VERY DISILLUSIONED AND DISAFFECTED?

A Well, they—for some reason or another—they thought I had gone crazy.

Q (CHUCKLING) THAT'S NOT SO UNUSUAL.

A No. I didn't know; I didn't know that.

Q OH, THEY DIDN'T TELL YOU?

A So when I got off the bus, nobody came—

Q —TO MEET YOU.

A They all thought—

Q HAVE YOU READ CHARLIE CLEMENTS'S "WITNESS TO WAR?"

A No, I haven't.

Q WELL, THE FRIENDS DID THIS DOCUMENTARY ON HIM. I HAVE THIS BOOK IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BORROW IT. I MET HIM; HE'S A VERY NICE FELLOW. ANYWAY, THAT'S WHAT THE AIR FORCE TRIED TO DO WITH HIM. THEY PUT HIM IN A PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, TOO; AND HE WAS FLYING OVER THERE IN VIETNAM.

SO, THEN WHAT? YOUR FAMILY DID NOT COME TO MEET YOU, SO WHAT HAPPENED?

A And I didn't know why not, you see. And nobody told me why not until many, many years later.

Q REALLY?

A Yeah.

Q SO WHAT HAPPENED NEXT IN YOUR LIFE?

A Oh, then I became very much involved in the youth movement, besides working. I worked in—for a short while I worked in the governmental agency, the Public Works, the Public Works. Then I went to—in the evening I got my business administration, and I became very active in the youth movement.

Q DID HOLLAND RECOVER FAIRLY WELL AFTER THE WAR, FAIRLY QUICKLY, WOULD YOU SAY?

A Well, you know, a lot of it was destroyed; and, of course, I should mention that I think around 44 persons were executed as a result. You know, Holland has abolished the death penalty since 1864, I think, but then temporarily they instituted it to deal with the war

criminals; and I think they executed 44 people.

Q YOU MEAN YOUR GOVERNMENT EXECUTED TRAITORS?

A Yeah.

Q OH, I SEE.

A But since then it has never been used again. Well, much was destroyed. Of course, the Netherlands profited from the Marshall Plan, and the rest of Europe.

Q YES, I WAS THINKING OF THAT.

A Then, I started working professionally with kids--kids from the big cities--Rotterdam, Amsterdam, the Hague, etc., etc.--who had been in contact with the police and--

Q THAT WAS BEFORE THE USE OF DRUGS AND THAT SORT OF THING?

(End of Section One)

SECOND HALF OF INTERVIEW WITH JAN MARINESSEN

HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

DATE: 3/24/90 PLACE: BERKELEY, CA

INTERVIEWER: ALICE HAMBURG

TRANSCRIBER: LOISMARIE ABATE

Q THAT WAS BEFORE THE USE OF DRUGS AND THAT SORT OF
THING?

A Oh, yeah.

Q BEFORE THAT?

A Yeah, and then they--the first was a governmental
agency and then a private agency dealing with kids who were
in trouble in the second institution as well as kids who were
slightly retarded. And so I did that for three years, but
then in the background, I always felt like I wanted to work
with people in trouble, in this framework that denomination.
But then I have relatives here in America.

Q YOU HAVE WHAT?

A Relatives.

Q RELATIVES, YEAH.

A In America, sister of my father.

Q YEAH.

A And she came over here as a nurse in the 20's or so.
And I had heard about a specific school of religion, because
of its unique, something unique they offered. So they said
well whenever you want to come over, you know you can stay
with us. And so I made some money as a poor immigrant, you
know, I came down here on the Greyhound bus.

Q YEAH. WHAT YEAR DID YOU IMMIGRATE HERE?

A '55.

Q '55.

(30.
Sp.
A Yeah. I had my birthday on the boat. Then I went to New York to Crayon?? (phonetic) from that to San Francisco. And so then I worked for five months, four months as a gardener, made some money, and then I had enough to go to Binsnar (phonetic). So I studied a lot sociology of religion, psychology of religion, and in 1955, I met my partner on the street at Berkeley, and she walked with a young woman. On the day that the football parade took place in those days.

Q OH, YEAH, YEAH, THE BIG GAME YOU MEAN?

A The big game, and the walking on Berkeley, tens of thousands of people. That was the last year that it occurred; it was declared unconstitutional because there was racism involved. So, I met my partner there on the streets.

(Q YOU MET YOUR FUTURE WIFE?

A Yeah.

Q WHAT IS HER NAME?

A Analeece. (phonetic)

Q ANALEECE, PRETTY NAME...AND SHE'S AMERICAN?

A She became one. She was Dutch.

Q OH. HAD YOU KNOWN HER THERE?

A No.

Q NO. YOU JUST MET HER?

Sp.
A They were walking, two girls in front of us, and I was walking with a Dutch student at B.S.R. (phonetic).

Q UH-HUH.

(A So, we were talking Dutch and the two girls in front

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of us turned around.

Q THAT WAS INTERESTING.

A And so we got together. It took us four years to get married.

Q YOU WERE MARRIED AROUND '59?

A Yes.

Q SO WHAT ARE HER INTERESTS?

A She's a psychiatric social worker.

Q I SEE.

A She came over in '46. Her parents were exterminated. She was an only child; she had been hidden for three years. She went to Mount Hulu, (phonetic) College, the University of Boston, and then she came to California because relatives.

Q I SEE. WAS SHE BROUGHT OVER BY RELATIVES LIVING IN THIS COUNTRY?

A Yeah, who are also Dutch and Jewish.

Q DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN?

A Two. A boy and a girl.

Q SO THEN WHEN DID YOU START WORKING?

A Well, during the time that I was a PSR, you know, I went one day a week at San Quentin for two years, and then I became a Chaplain for a year at the Juvenile Hall in Martines. (phonetic) And then I reached a school for retarded kids.

Q WHERE WAS THAT?

Sp.

A In Oakland. And in those days, you know, those many patients that lived in Senoma (phonetic) State Hospital.

Q I KNOW.

A And many of those patients, they didn't have to be there, but in those days they were there. They were functioning sufficiently to be (unintelligible) because their parents were, you know.

Q YEAH. YEAH. YEAH.

A I sat with them, I went to school for them on the weekend.

Q OH, DID YOU DO THAT UNDER THE AGES OF THE AFSC OF THE FRENCH?

A No, P.S.R.

Q OH.

A Yeah, a woman teacher, she was interested in me doing that because I was familiar with mental retardation, having worked with the kids.

Q SO, HOW LONG DID YOU WORK WITH THAT AGENCY?

A Well, only on the weekends for a year.

Q OH.

A And then what was a very interesting experience for me was that in those days, there was a small village which was called Harbor Oaks in Oakland.

Q I THINK I REMEMBER THAT; I REMEMBER THE NAME.

A And it was an old African/American church, a black church. And the preacher, I had come to know, black

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(unintelligible). He had an automobile accident, and so he asked me if I would be willing to be the interpreter while he was in the hospital. Well, I was honored. He is a Dutch man. I was speaking broken English in those days still.

Q AFTER YOU GRADUATED?

A No. No. I did that when I was a P.S.R.

Q YEAH, I SEE. UH-HUH.

A Yeah, I became an interpreter of lecturers in the Harbor Oaks, which was quite an experience I should say, which lasted about six or nine months or so, I forget.

Q SO WERE YOU ORDAINED THEN?

A In '59.

Q IN '59, I MEAN WHEN YOU GRADUATED?

A No, that's separate.

Q THAT'S SEPARATE, YEAH, I KNOW.

A I was ordained in '59, and I wanted to be ordained by a lot of people, and so I invited all the Chaplains of mental hospitals and prisons to ordain me, you know, all my colleagues who were the same kind of--

Q YEAH. YEAH.

A So, that's what happened in Pleasant Hill because I was the Chaplain of in Martines (phonetic) in the Juvenile Hall, and, of course, you knew you had to deliver the paper about your perception of religion and all of that.

Q WHEN YOU'RE ORDAINED?

A When you--yeah. Not when you graduate.

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Q YEAH. YEAH.

A Those are two different types.

Q YEAH.

A So I got an M.A. and B.D. from P.S.R., and then I had a big argument--well, I had a big argument with the denomination because I didn't want to do what they asked me to do. They didn't want to ordain me because I didn't have a church. And I said my church consists of people in trouble, you know, the police and the people who pick up those kids and well, finally they decided it's okay. Well, I wrote, you know, you have to deliver a paper in order for the people to ordain you. So I never really had the paper because I know it was a long paper.

Q WHAT WAS IT ABOUT?

A About suffering.

Q OH.

A Right. And I should re-read it if I can find it.

Q IT WOULD BE INTERESTING.

A And see what I mentioned.

Q WELL, IT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY IMPRESSIVE.

A I don't know. I don't know. And a year later, oh, in 1959, I got married, '59. Maybe we should stop for a minute.

Q WOULD YOU LIKE A DRINK? (He takes short break.)
WHAT MAKES ME SO FURIOUS IS THAT THERE'S NOBODY TO VOTE FOR GOVERNOR. DIANE FEINSTEIN IS FOR CAPITAL PUNISHMENT--

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A VAN DE CAMP--

Q VAN DE CAMP IS LIKE THAT. WELL WHICHEVER WAY WILL
GET THE MOST VOTES.

TELL US WHEN.

CAMERA MAN: OKAY, YOU CAN START IN ABOUT FIVE SECONDS.

A I think-- are you thinking or have you been thinking
about interviewing my partner? Somebody has to.

Q WE'D LIKE TO, YEAH.

A So, I don't talk about her.

Q OH, I SEE. WELL, WHAT DO YOU SAY? DON'T YOU THINK
WE SHOULD FINISH THIS FIRST?

CAMERA MAN: I THINK IT'S OKAY TO TALK ABOUT THAT
RELATIONSHIP.

Q ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT YES. SO YOUR STORY IS VERY
FASCINATING, AND I WANT TO ASK ABOUT YOUR CONNECTION WITH THE
AMERICAN FRANCE SERVICE COMMITTEE, BUT BEFORE WE DO THAT, TELL
US A LITTLE ABOUT ANALEECE, YOUR WIFE.

A Yeah, well, we met on the street in 1955, and she
had finished working, I mean finished studying, and she was
working with an agency in Oakland. And we liked one another,
but since I was studying, studying was more important to me
than getting too much time out for--

Q ROMANCE?

A Romance. I mentioned that she had lost her parents.
Analeece is going to (unintelligible), she's Jewish.

Q YES.

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(Sp. A Her parents never stepped their foot in the Synagogue. Her mother was a Soufee, (phonetic) so Analeece grew up as a Soufee.

Q THAT IS AN EASTERN RELIGION?

A Yes, it is a sect of Mohammadism.

Q OH, I SEE.

A And they have some beautiful poets, but according to Hitler, of course, she was Jewish because her mother was Jewish and--

Q WHERE DID SHE COME FROM IN HOLLAND.

(Sp. A DeHede, (phonetic) but she was hidden for three years like Anna Frank. And, of course, I met her relatives here, not very Jewish religiously, except culturally. And Analeece, having grown up as a Soufee, she didn't know much about Judaism, the Jewish tradition. So since I studied quite a bit of that--

Q YOU COULD TEACH HER?

A Right, but of course she had the experience as a Jew and during her occupation.

Q HOW DID SHE GET OUT OF HOLLAND? WAS THAT DURING THE OCCUPATION?

(Sp. A No. She came to America in '46. She was in DeHede (phonetic) for three years, but again this was before family. Well, we can leave that alone for a while.

Q YEAH. SO HER FAMILY WAS WIPED OUT?

(A Yeah, both her parents were attorneys and they had

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been divorced already, so she grew up with her mother.

Q NO SIBLINGS?

A No. Only child. Right.

Q I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU, I WOULD LIKE TO INTERRUPT AND ASK YOU SOMETHING WE'LL COME BACK TO, WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION TO THE UNITED STATES WHEN YOU CAME?

A I'm not a person who gets very excited about things. I mean I don't demonstrate too much. I enjoyed my work as a gardener. I became quite involved with a small church in Danville, (phonetic) that is where I lived in Danville, Alamo, the Hills, with a new congregation and the minister there was a Frenchman, and on one hand, I liked him very much because he was quite intellectual, but on the other hand, he was a strong anti-Communist, and were not quite high within my own.

Q WHERE WAS HE FROM?

A France. He went to P.S.R. and got his Ph.D. He had been part of the underground in France.

Q THAT'S INTERESTING THAT HE WAS HE BECAME A STRONG ANTI-COMMUNIST BECAUSE --

A It somehow fit into the American scene.

Q YEAH, THE AMERICAN SCENE.

A In the mid-50's, you know, you remember that period?

Q VERY WELL.

A So, I don't know, or that he placated somewhere along the line.

Q SO WHAT WAS YOUR--DID YOU EVER COME INTO AN ARGUMENT

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WITH HIM?

A Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Unfortunately he committed suicide.

Q OH.

A It was very sad, probably something happened.

Q BUT YOU WERE JUST IN THE CONGREGATION OR WERE YOU ASSOCIATED WITH THE PASTOR THERE?

A No. I was very much involved with a group. I met a nice young woman. She became my girlfriend for a little while there, but that didn't work out. So, the night was finished at Napa State Hospital, two offers came, one from the American/France Service Committee, and one from the University in Hawaii, to become the university Chaplain.

Q UNIVERSITY--?

A Chaplain. So, you know you make a tape, right, and I sent the tape to the University, and, but then I had a conflict because I just immigrated into the U.S.A. right. Well, you know what I mean?

Q YEAH, YEAH.

A So, I had to become familiar with this culture and all of that, and then I thought uh-oh, if I go over there, then I have to you know, it will take me a while to readjust to that. So I decided to accept the A.F.C.'s position, but they asked me to develop a program dealing with prisons and jails and criminal justice.

Q WELL, I IMAGINE THAT WAS RIGHT DOWN YOUR ALLEY.

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A That's right. That's right.

Q AND YOU HAVEN'T REGRETTED IT?

A No. No. No. No. No.

Q BUT YOU'RE NOT LIVING IN ALAMO NOW?

A Oh, no, no, no. We have been living in Berkeley since--I've been living there since '55.

Q OH, I SEE. HAS THE ALAMO BECOME LIKE SORT OF A SECOND--WHAT DO YOU CALL IT?

A No.

Q DON'T THEY DO A LOT OF COMPUTER THINGS?

A Oh, yeah, yeah, silicone (phonetic)

Q YEAH. THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

A Yeah.

Q IT'S FAIRLY NEW, THOUGH, FAIRLY RECENTLY. WELL--

A No. I left that alone and moved to Berkeley and ever since except a brief stay in Oakland when I was married, and that is when we had our first child, the boy, and then we moved to Berkeley.

Q SO THEN, WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL US--DO YOU THINK THAT ANALEECE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN OUR PROJECT AND THAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO TALK WITH US?

A She has been contacted by a variety of people. She is a member of the survivor's group which meets here in Berkeley.

Q YES, I KNOW ABOUT THAT, AND SHE HASN'T DONE IT SO FAR?

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A No.

Q WHY?

A Because people dropped out and people didn't connect with her.

Q DO YOU THINK SHE WOULD BE WILLING TO DO THAT?

A I think she would be willing, but a person has to be somewhat aggressive, because she has been contacted several times, and very disappointing. People have contacted her again, and nobody shows up.

Q NO, WE'RE NOT LIKE THAT, ARE WE?

CAMERA MAN: NO.

A No, you have to really, you need some persuasion.

Q YEAH, I UNDERSTAND. WHAT ARE YOUR CHILDREN'S INTERESTS?

A Well, unfortunately, Yvonne (phonetic) is in Napa State Hospital. He has been suffering from schizophrenia for ten years now. He was a very good student at Santa Cruz University.

Q IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT LATE?

A Well, that's usually when it happens; for boys, it happens between 18 and 26.

Q OH, I SEE. AND WHAT ARE HIS PROSPECTS? WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS? THEY SEEM TO HAVE SOMETHING NEW THAT I'VE BEEN READING.

A There's a new form of medication, Clausophine (phonetic), and Clausophine has been used in Europe for a long

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time, and it has been very successful, and it doesn't have the side effects which the other medication has.

My daughter is also graduate of Santa Cruz. She's now, she went two years to (unintelligible) University in Philadelphia; she's now a physical therapist. It is somewhat important when I talk about my son, you know, the kids weren't--we never belonged to a church or something, but the American/France Service Committee was that kind of grouping in which my kids grew up. Family retreats and staff retreats and some social justices, pretty much, you know, what I slapped them with my religion.

Q YEAH, REALLY.

A We have been telling the kids about Analeece, her parents and some other relatives who were exterminated, and we have some relatives in Palo Alto where the parents never told the kids that all their parents were wiped out, but our kids have known, you know, not automatically or so, but what happened, happened.

Q SURELY. SURELY.

A And when my son became mentally ill, lately, the last I would say the last nine months, he has been talking about Nazis, about Hitler, about being gassed.

Q REALLY?

A Yeah. And that is a new development, and we don't know if that is underlying the problem or that it is coming as a result of his schizophrenia. And, it's very hard on

Analeece, because she remembers of that almost every time that she visits. And he again--we don't know if he does that to be mean at her or I don't know. So, there's a new development and he raised the question which he has never done before, if he's a Jew or a Christian, and--when he was in Santa Cruz, he wrote a paper on Hitler and the anti-semitism, and you know, he's a great leader and he knows what he is reading, but suddenly (unintelligible).

Q HE'S HOW OLD NOW?

A Almost 30.

Q ALMOST 30.

A Yeah.

Q SO, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT HIS PROGNOSIS IS THEN RIGHT NOW.

A No. He has been struggling for ten years now.

Q I CAN IMAGINE.

A He has done damage to himself, trying to hurt himself, jump off places. I've been in many hospitals, in many emergency rooms.

Q YEAH, I KNOW WHAT THAT IS. WELL, I GUESS WE ALL, WHEN WE GET TO KNOW FAMILIES, WE KNOW THAT IN EVERY FAMILY THERE'S SEEMS THAT THERE IS SOME TRAGEDY LIKE THAT. SO WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO--I THINK IT WOULD BE INTERESTING IF YOU WOULD JUST TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR WORK AGAINST CAPITAL PUNISHMENT NOW, BECAUSE THAT SUCH A HOT ISSUE RIGHT NOW, AND THEN MAYBE WE CAN--MAYBE YOU WOULD LIKE TO WIND IT UP WITH

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THAT.

A Well, I think, unfortunately, people separate capital punishment from the rest of the penal system. Unfortunately-- because unless you see that as a part of it, you know, you don't work hard on the solution of where the problem is. You know, I was in Poland last year, right? And I was the only representative of California.

Q OH. WHAT KIND OF A GROUP WAS IT?

A We get together every other year that there are people who are like me working in the area of-- for criminal justice in general, and here it was. You know, I hold a paper for them telling them what it was like in California, how we lock up and exterminate a number of people, and that we practice a system of apartheid, which is hidden.

Q YEAH, WHICH IS PART GENOCIDE. GENOCIDE IS ANOTHER ASPECT OF IT.

A And I was in Poland just before the election, before, you know, the election.

Q YEAH.

A And I asked the organizer, a young woman, a professor at the University of Warsaw if we as a group could visit a concentration camp. That was interesting to see how they responded to that.

Q THEY WERE NOT VERY ENTHUSIASTIC?

A Well, yes and no. We had many discussions about that. We did go, and it was a sizeable group, more than I had

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expected, and quite a few Poles went along. And it was interesting to see how the way the Poles talk about that six million Poles had been exterminated, then you know, my next question was--

Q --WHAT ABOUT THE JEWS?

A --how many Jews were exterminated? Of the six million Poles, four million Jews had been exterminated, in Poland that is. So, it was interesting to see how they first group.

Q THERE'S A LOT OF RESISTANCE, I HAD IDENTICALLY THE SAME EXPERIENCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION. NOW, NOBODY KNEW ABOUT BOBBY YARR. THERE WERE A LOT OF MINISTERS IN THIS GROUP. THEY NEVER HEARD, AND THE RUSSIANS DID NOT WANT US TO GO, BUT WE INSISTED ON, WE ALL WENT AND THE PLAQUE THAT I DON'T KNOW, HOW MANY, 400-- 250,000 UKRAINIANS DIED HERE. NOTHING ABOUT JEWS, NOTHING. HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT BOBBY YARR?

CAMERA MAN: YES, I HAVE.

A So that's--we put capital punishment within larger contacts. We don't get anywhere, I don't think. It is a few to work in which is very necessary, and unless one has a good perception of the world in which you live, many people become disgusted, drop out, etc. So my work in France had been very rewarding in terms of helping individual prisoners and testifying before the legislature in Sacramento, and in helping, you know, I had quite a few interns. One of them is operating the presidential center for women prisoners with

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children in San Francisco, the Presbyterian minister, so you know, I've seen many people.

Q WELL, YOU HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF INFLUENCE IN THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE.

A A couple of weeks ago, I was honored.

Q YES.

A As "Campfather" of the prison movement in California for the last 30 years.

Q THAT'S WONDERFUL.

A So, maybe it's time for me to retire slowly or to decrease the amount of hours. I am very much involved with mental health, mental illness, you know, because of my son, and because you see many relationships with what is happening in the mental hospital, and what is happening in the prisons, many relationships--and sometimes many people who end up in prison probably should be in the mental hospital.

Q (UNINTELLIGIBLE) ON THESE STREETS EVERY HOUR OF THE DAY. DO YOU THINK THERE'S ANY HOPE THAT WE ALL STOP THIS, PUT THE GAS CHAMBER OUT OF COMMISSION?

A Well, they may do that, they are very anxious no doubt; and they had a proposal a couple of years ago, which I opposed, and that was somewhat funny--not funny, but they had a proposal three years ago to have death row in the new prison in Delnortica (phonetic), and I opposed that. I said if you're going to have a death row, it's got to be in the Bay area. And one Senator said "What did you say Mr. Marinessen?"

You as a person who is opposed to capital punishment, you want to have the gas chamber in--" I told the Senator, you know what I mean, so I became a little bit nasty. So, what they will do is they will eliminate the gas chamber, and they will do it in the near future by lethal injection, and then you can do it anywhere, and then it will be operated even down here or wherever.

Q OR WHEREVER?

A Yeah.

Q WELL, WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL US?

A Well, I think you've got quite a bit.

Q OH, I FIND IT A FASCINATING STORY, AND I JUST THINK IT WAS A PRIVILEGE TO INTERVIEW YOU, AND I HOPE YOU CONTINUE DOING YOUR WORK FOR A LONG TIME, BECAUSE WE HAVE VERY FEW PEOPLE WITH A BACKGROUND, THE UNDERSTANDING AND THE DRIVE THAT YOU HAVE, THE DEDICATION WHICH IS TYPICAL OF PEOPLE WHO WORKED FOR THE AMERICAN FRENCH SERVICE COMMITTEE. SO YOU MIGHT SAY THIS IS A SHOT A COMMERCIAL.

A Well, thank you for interviewing me. I enjoyed it.

Q I AM GLAD. AND WE SHOULD SAY THANK YOU TO JOHN BECAUSE HE IS ALWAYS THERE DOING THE--

A Yeah, he has been sitting quietly there. I've been watching his face, because he has been looking at my face and I cannot see him.

Q OH, WE HAVE TO TAKE PICTURES, IF YOU HAVE NO OBJECTION.