Interview with HARRY KIEFER

Holocaust Oral History Project

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Q. ALL RIGHT. HARRY, WHAT I'D LIKE TO DO IN THE INTERVIEW IS HAVING YOU TELLING THE STORY. AND I'M VERY INTERESTED IN WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG, YOUR FAMILY, YOUR MOM AND DAD, YOUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, WHERE YOU LIVED, AND YOUR GRANDPARENTS AND WHERE THEY LIVED AND -

A. Okay, yeah.

Q. -- TELL ME WHERE YOU COME FROM JUST IN THE BEGINNING. WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND WHEN?

A. Well, I was born on June 25th, 1924, in Krefeld in the Rheinland, which is near Dusseldorf. My father, Leo Kiefer, was born in a little town called Osterath, which is a suburb of Krefeld, in 1886 I think it was.

And we were-- my mother was-- my mother was born in 1897 in Frankfurt, Germany; and my-- I had one sister who was-- was four years younger than I am. And I'd say we were the typical, middle class German Jewish family.

My father had a business. Krefeld is a textile town, and he was in the textile business and notions. He had a wholesale business.

Q. WHAT KIND OF BUSINESS?

A. Wholesale textile and notions, anything associated with textiles. And he went through an apprenticeship in Krefeld, learned the-- there were quite a few Jewish wholesalers, weavers, you know, manufacturers. And he learned the business-- you know, what they call--

You know, they-- Germany has an apprenticeship system where you go to work at 14, and then you go to class during the-- once or twice a week. I don't know exactly what-- or every day in the morning, and then in the afternoon you work. Anyhow that's how he learned his trade. And he was in his own business.

My-- his-- his family lived in Osterath which, you know, like I say it was a suburb. It seemed like miles away, but I think it's probably not more then ten miles if it's that far, maybe not even that far, from-- from Krefeld. And he had-- there was six in his family. My mother came-- like I say, came from Frankfurt. There were seven brothers and sisters. My grandfather on my mother's side was

some-- it was in the banking. He worked for a bank I think in Frankfurt, and my mother also before she married my father worked in a bank in Frankfurt. And I don't know what else to tell you.

My-- let's see. My father was a typical German Jew, 100 percent German. The town that he-- little village almost that he grew up in, there were some Jews there. I think there were several Kiefer families, but he grew up with non-Jews. You know, the kids he played with were not Jewish I don't think. And he went into the Army. He had to serve in 1904. I think he had to serve, you know, two years or whatever it is. And then in 1914 he was called back into the Army, and he-- he became a-- like a sergeant I think at the end.

Then he worked-- you know, served in various units. He was what you called a Front Soldat. He served at the front. At one time he was in the-- he worked on the general-- he was like a noncom on the general staff that was in the field. And he considers himself German.

We were-- I wouldn't say non-- in other words, we went to holiday-- you know, we went to services. The-- we were I guess-- sometimes you call them-- they used to call them Drei Tagen Juden:

Three day Jews. We went on, you know, the two days Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and I guess-- and then I went-- well, in fact, I served in-- I was-- I was little I served in the choir.

Actually what had happened-- that's interesting. In the town that I lived in, Krefeld, the population was about 1,600 Jews. There was one synagogue there, which was conservative. It has-- it had-- you know, the women sat upstairs, but it had no organ. And when Hitler came in, they-- I guess attendance picked up. You know, Jews-- people suddenly became Jews. People had no intentions of becoming Jews. You know, there used to be a saying they had-- what did they say? (Judens' Haus uns gemacht gesehe. In other words, Hitler made us into Jews. And the attendance picked up.

And so they had two services. They had the regular service, which had to be at sundown. But they also-- other people wanted to go later on so they had the service later on. And they needed people for the choir, so I used to have to sing in the choir. They got a bunch of kids together, and we used to sing in-- for the early service that actually took place at sundown.

There was another small congregation in

Krefeld of orthodox Jews, but they were in somebody's home. You know, very small, maybe 20. I don't know. I remember going by there; that was it. And I assumed there wasn't much more than 20 people. I guess they had to have ten at least. So-- but the majority were-- you know, were non-observant or went to the synagogue. I--

Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR GRANDPARENTS? WERE THEY VERY OBSERVANT?

A. I don't know. Now my-- see, my father was 37 when he got married. He was youngest of all the children. And my mother was the youngest of all the children. And so I never met my grandfather on either side. My grandmother on my mother's side, I only met her-- I think I was-- I remember walking with her, and I think she died when I was four or five or something like that. So I didn't know her. She was actually born in England. My-- evidently the-- the-- her name was Schoenfaler, and her family went to England to-- I think, they had a logging business. Went to England, and she was born in England.

But then the family went back to Frankfurt So then she married Mr. Grunbaum, so I never met him, and I don't think-- I don't think they were

observant.

On my-- on my grand-- on my father's side they were in the-- they had a butcher shop and cattle-- I think they dealt in cattle or something. But like I say, he died I think when my father was ten or something like that so I never met him. My mother-- my grandmother at-- on my father's side, little old lady, she died at 94. She died just after we got here to this country. She died in '39. So, no, I don't think they were very observant. I didn't know-- we-- we didn't keep kosher, absolutely not.

Q. WHEN YOU SAY THAT YOUR FATHER WAS VERY GERMAN, WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

A. Well, like a lot of-- you see German Jews tend to be assimilists as opposed to Polish. And-- you know, especially Polish and Russian Jews who were separate. German Jews felt themselves as German. They were 100 percent German.

If you talk to, you know, friends of mine who come from Poland like a good friend of mine from Poland who went through the Holocaust and so on, he-- he always felt like he was a stranger in his own land. They lived in Poland. There was a large Jewish population. German Jews at least they didn't feel that way in Krefeld. We did not live in a Jewish

area.

And up until '30-- you know, once Hitler came in and some of the laws were passed and the restrictions came in, kids I played with were not Jewish.

Q. AND THE SCHOOL YOU WENT TO?

A. The school I went to-- I went to a Jewish school for the first four years, a Volksschule. Then once you-- when you get to be ten you have to-- Germany still has that separate system. You either decide you want to become into the vocational or you go to the Gymnasium where you-- which is more college oriented. And when I was ten, I went to the Gymnasium in Krefeld. And that was-- that would be in 19-- let's see, '30-- '34.

And then later on they started-- you know, the-- 1935 the-- the Nuremberg laws came in and that was-- you know, starting to become restrictions on what Jews could do. And also they started restricting the Jewish children in the non-Jewish schoolhouse. So the Gymnasium was not a Jewish school. I think the pop-- there were maybe five percent Jews in the school or maybe less.

Jewish population of Krefeld was less than 1 percent. And Jews like every place else go for

education, so the incidence of Jews in this particular school was higher than the general population. You had to pay for it. I mean it wasn't free. So people like my folks paid for that.

Then I remember some of kids started-- you had to leave, some of the Jewish kids. But because my father was a Front Soldat, quote unquote -- in other words, he served on the front -- I was allowed to stay. And I stayed until '38 when we left.

Q. YOU WERE STILL--

A. I was still in the Gymnasium.

A. DID YOU HAVE ANY JEWISH TEACHERS AT ALL?

A. I had Jewish teachers in the Volksschule, but at the Gymnasium the Jewish teachers were all kicked out. The first thing that happened, of course, in Germany was when-- in '33 when-- all the Jews were kicked out of the governmental service. And the teachers, I imagine they-- there may have been some Jewish teachers at the Gymnasium, but I don't know. I never had any in the Gymnasium.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER THAT TIME WHEN THE JEWS WERE KICKED OUT OF THE CIVIL SERVICE? YOU WERE EIGHT?

A. No, I don't. I remember something. For example, I remember-- let's see, in-- in April--

April 1st, 1933, was the general boycott of the Jewish businesses. That was on a Saturday. And we had a wholesale business in the-- well, the building was called the Hunse Haus, which was owned by the city. It was downstairs. And the police department was upstairs or some-- there was some police offices upstairs. What I don't know.

And I remember the Saturday they announced the boycott, and I remember my family having-- getting together and discussing this problem. And I remember they were going to write to Hindenburg. Hindenburg was still alive. And after-- you know, here was this-- you know, all these problems coming up. And they thought Hindenburg would take care of it.

Anyhow so when the-- in '33, that Saturday, they-- the storm troopers stood in front of the Jewish stores. There were quite a few Jewish retail stores in the-- you know, in Krefeld on-- Kastrikeholz Strasse was nearby. And so that worked well for them.

Now my parents-- you know, my family had a wholesale business. They didn't do much business on Saturday. But I do remember the storm trooper in the brown uniform standing out front-- in front of the

business. And there was a back door to the building so some of the wholesale customers came in the back. And I think my folks mentioning that one of the policemen who worked in the building came in the back because he could buy wholesale from my folks. So he, you know, came in the back door and bought something that particular day you see. So we-- we eventually had to move out of that building and find another location because the city would not lend to Jews anymore. I mean, you know, how could you.

Q. AT THIS TIME -- APRIL FIRST, 1933 -- OBVIOUSLY YOU-- YOUR FAMILY WAS CONCERNED BECAUSE YOU SAY THERE WAS A FAMILY GATHERING?

A. Yeah.

Q. WHO GATHERED?

A. Well, there was-- as a matter of fact I think it was in Cologne, and there was some uncles and-- you know. And I don't know who was there, but I remember them talking about it see.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOUR PARENTS WERE SAYING WHEN THEY-- I MEAN OBVIOUSLY--

A. No, not really. I just remember hearing something about writing to Hindenburg, see, because I was eight or nine-- yeah, eight, yeah, so I remember that see.

Q. SO YOUR LIFE WASN'T DISRUPTED AT THIS POINT.

A. No, but it started to. In other words--

Q. I MEAN THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME YOU HAD BEEN CONFRONTED WITH BEING JEWISH AND DIFFERENT I GUESS OR--

A. Well, we knew we were Jewish because, first of all, I went to a Jewish school.

Q. RIGHT.

A. And-- for the first four years. Then, you see, those who didn't transfer to the Gymnasium could then stay there, and I think the school had-- it was actually two classrooms; first two grades I think or three grades were in one room, and all the other ones were in another room. There were two Jewish teachers. And one I met--

See, the city of Krefeld invited the Jews back about two years ago and invited everybody back that they could find. They thought they would have 30; turned out to be about 130. And so I met one of my teachers again, but I was-- I don't remember him. I was little. He left early. So, let's see, what else were you asking about?

Q. YES. I WAS JUST WONDERING WHAT THE FEELING OF THE TIME WAS ESPECIALLY FOR YOUR FATHER WHO

IDENTIFIED SO MUCH AS A GERMAN.

A. Well, the feeling I think in general always was that it's going to blow over. You know, the feeling was it's not going to last, it's going to blow over, they're going-- after all, you know, Germany had had I don't know how many governments, one government after another. You know, they-- like three or four a year almost. And-- and there was always a lot of turmoil.

See, I lived in the Rheinland. When I was born, the Rheinland was occupied. 1924 the Belgians and the French put-- you know, went back into the Rheinland and-- to force the reparations. I was told when I was born there was a shortage of food; you know, how to get milk and so on and so forth. And, you know, so there was always a lot of turmoil in there. And so they figured it would blow over.

And my father's business I don't think was affected right away. As a matter of fact, it picked up. Business got a little better because, first of all, Kiefer's not a Jewish name. My father didn't look Jewish. And business picked up because the general business climate got better. After all Hitler militarized and, you know, there was--

Hitler came in during a deep depression.

That's why he was basically voted in. He had a different agenda that nobody knew-- nobody would believe it. Who would believe it, you know? So they didn't-- you know. So then there were small restrictions, and in '35 we had to give up our maid because the maid was Christian. You were not allowed to have non-Jewish women under a certain age in your household.

Q. WITH JEWISH MEN, RIGHT?

A. I guess they felt, if there was a Jewish man in the household, you could not have a-- a non-Jewish woman under the age of, what, 40 or 45. I don't know what the age was. I know we lost our maid.

Q. AND THAT WAS IN '35?

A. That was in '35. '35 is when the Nuremberg laws came in, and then they became more restrictive. And then slowly, you know, one thing happened after another. Some of my friends in school I-- in school I noticed that the kids would slowly-- one would come in with the uniform of the Hitler-- not the Hitler Jugend. There was something else below that. Pimpf I think it's called. That was in the brown uniform like the Boy Scouts here. And they would-- I think Hitler Jugend start at 14, so this was something

below that. But they did come in one after the other. They would first one, then there were two, then there were three, then there were four. And then after I noticed-- I-- kids-- some of the kids didn't talk to me anymore.

Q. HOW DID YOU NOTICE THAT?

A. Well, I mean it's-- you know, I knew I was Jewish. There was one other Jewish boy in my class that-- and they tormented him quite a bit. I wasn't bothered that much by it. I was kind of-- I've always kind of flowed along in life, see.

Q. HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IF IT WAS MANDATORY IN SCHOOL?

A. Well, we had-- we had religious instruction at the Gymnasium. The rabbi came, and he gave us once a week and we had a classroom. They-- I remember at first the school gave them a room. The only difference was that we felt different you might say because some of the kids would go to-- you know, they had Christian religion in the morning or whenever it was, and we didn't go to that.

Ours was in the afternoon because they would get several classes together. You know, there weren't that many so I remember we had five or six or seven kids once a week on some afternoon he would

come and give us classes. I did not get much Jewish education as such, at least I don't remember much. I don't-- didn't learn Hebrew. I mean I read Hebrew and I became bar mitzvah and got the coaching. And that was done by the cantor in town, and that's it.

We-- like I say, we were not very observant. We had pesach, you know. We got together, but my father couldn't-- you know, he didn't know how to-- I don't think-- I guess he knew how to read some, but he didn't read the service. I came here and married my-- you know, when I married my wife, they were a very observant orthodox family from Hamburg. And my father-in-law knew how to do that. I don't think anybody really in my family knew. I remember we had pesach. We struggled through the seder and so on you see.

Q. WHEN YOU WERE-- SORRY.

A. Go ahead.

Q. I WAS JUST WONDERING AS A YOUNG BOY IN THE GYMNASIUM DURING '33 THROUGH '35 WHAT WAS HAPPENING. YOU SAY YOU WERE A PRETTY EASY-GOING GUY.

A. Well, '33 see I was-- I was in the-- you know, I was-- would be like the fifth grade here. And I really didn't notice that much, you know. I had my own troubles just getting along in school and

so on and so forth, see.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. 'Cause it's pretty strict. And they always used to say that I didn't apply myself enough see, that-- but I guess that was a good student, but could be better. I remember that on every --

Q. REPORT CARD?

A. -- report card, see.

Q. WHAT WERE YOUR HOBBIES THEN, YOUR SPECIAL INTERESTS?

A. I don't know. Kids at that age don't have any hobbies, you know. First of all, you went to school, you know, I guess six days a week, Monday through Saturday. And then sometimes in the afternoon there was some classes, and then sometimes we-- you know, once a week we had the rabbi. And then I noticed that as time went on--

Like, for example, there was a-- in an apartment house. We had a big flat in the-- in the house. And below me was a boy whose father worked for the city in the city theater. He was some sort of a-- either scenic designer or director or something like that. And after a while he didn't play with me anymore. He just ignored me. What I found out I think his family had told he shouldn't

play with the Jewish boy, or he told the son so he didn't talk to us anymore.

Q. SO WHEN THIS WAS HAPPENING--

A. And so this-- yeah.

Q. GO ON.

A. No, go ahead.

Q. I WAS JUST WONDERING HOW YOU FELT ABOUT THIS.

A. Well, we felt cut out. You know, different. You feel more different, you know. Then-- then the signs started appearing that, you know, Jews were not allowed to go to this theater or this--

I remember we used to go swimming. There was a-- a-- the-- it was an indoor natorium I guess you'd call it. The swimming pool in Krefeld was not too far from my father's business. And I guess when I was still going to the Jewish school we would go up there once a week, once a month -- whatever it was I don't remember -- and take swimming lessons, or started to learn-- you know, swim.

And-- but then they stopped that after a while or at least-- I don't remember. Then, you know, signs came and you couldn't learn to-- could not-- Jews were not allowed in that--

Q. IN THE SWIMMING POOL?

A. In the swimming pool. And I remember the Jewish community then started forming various organizations for the kids and for the adults. You know, social things. So after a while our social life really became-- you know, it was centered around other Jews because we were starting to get separated out.

I learned to swim. The Jewish community bought or rented a-- oh, I don't know how-- it was like a little water hole you might call it. It was an excavation pond that they had used. See, Krefeld is very flat. It's low-lying. Anytime they start digging, they hit the water table. And so they had this pond you might say that was-- as a matter of fact, the old machine that dug the dirt out was still there rusting away. It was full of water, and we learned to swim there. So-- so the Jewish community built the little swimming pool-- not a swimming pool. It was, you know, sand around.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. And so that's why I learned to swim. The teacher was a non-Jew. And as a matter of fact he had been a police lieutenant, and for political reasons he got kicked out. I remember somebody saying that he spent some time in a concentration

camp. He was probably in 30-- you know, in the early 30s, so he taught us how to swim.

And the Jewish community then built a-- like a community hall where they had entertainments and so on. And after a while you couldn't-- the Jewish community used to put on events even at the-- what-- at the city theater; you know, the city auditorium you might say. And I guess they were excluded from that. I remember I was in a little play once, you know; and I must have been maybe eight, seven-- something like that. And that was still in the community theater.

Then eventually that was cut out. So we were slowly being shifted out of the general community. But I was able to continue school until just before we left.

Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR BROTHERS-- YOU HAD A SISTER.

A. My sister stayed in the Jewish school. She was ten. See, she would have to decide. See, she was ten when we came here so she was, what, in the fourth grade. So she had to finish, had to switch over to the-- there was a girls' Lyzeum they called it; a girls' school, a high school, that a lot of the Jewish girls went to-- those who could afford it

again. You had to pay. So she stayed in the Jewish school, and then we left.

We were supposed to leave back in '35 or six, something like that. Maybe before. My-- my mother was you might say-- there was a saying in-- there was a joke going around in Germany when people started to leave in '37, '38, Where are you going? And the joke says, Well, I don't have any place to go. I didn't-- we didn't have any black sheep in the family. In other words, the black sheep were sent over to America, Australia or other countries.

My mother had-- was fortunate. She had-- there was seven in the family as I said. Two of her brothers came to the United States around 1904 probably to get away from the-- from the Army and also to get education-- better education. One of them became a dentist. And my uncle who came to Oakland, he was the eldest of all of them. And he wanted to get the whole family out. He--

You know, in the United States-- you knew more what was going on in the United States than in Germany. After all it was a restricted country. There was censorship. You didn't know what was going on. So he was-- he told my family -- my mother and father -- that we should come out first because he

could see it wasn't getting any better.

But my father decided, Oh, it would probably get better. You know, This isn't going to last. And he didn't want to leave because we had the youngest children in the whole family. My sister and I were the youngest. All of my cousins were older. So we didn't leave at first. So some of the other uncles and, you know, people came over. But my uncle was able to get the whole family out.

The last one was a sister whose husband taught at a Jewish high school in Frankfurt, and he came out in '39. As a matter of fact, he just-- I mean the last minute. He was arrested after Kristallnacht and so on, and he went to England, and then I guess the war started. He got out just before the war, so that was the last one of my mother's.

My father's family, they were not that lucky. My-- let's see. One brother, Herman, stayed; but he died in '39 of cancer. His children, my cousins, got out. They were in their 20s. There was another-- let's see, I'll have to go down the family. There was one called Lanchen. And Lisam, she had three sons, and they got out early and went to South America, and I guess she got out too.

There was a brother named Gustav of my

father, Gustav Kiefer. He stayed. As a matter of fact, he continued to live in Osterath, and he didn't get out. He had a wife, Francesca; and he had two daughters. And the two daughters I understand got engaged to two German-- you know, two Jewish men. And they went to Kenya, and the girls were going to follow them. Or maybe they were married and-- but then the war came so that family, although it's my uncle-- that's Gustav and Francesca and the two Ruth and Karla, they all perished.

Let's see, my grandmother died, you know, soon after we had come here. There was another aunt who lived with my grandmother also stayed in Osterath. Her name was Zelma Kiefer. She married some distant cousin who had already died before. She didn't survive.

Let's see, there was a-- another sister who was married to a man who owned a butcher shop in Westfalen, and they were able to get out in '39 because they had a daughter who had moved to England, and they got out. I mean they got out by the skin of their teeth. And that's about it, see. You know, Zelma died and Francesca died. Oh, then my-- my uncle Herman who had died just before-- you know in '39 of cancer his wife, Eda, didn't survive. She

went to-- I think she went to Theresienstadt. So those are my father's family.

On my mother's side everybody got out and they all came to the United States, so all seven brothers and sisters were here. Some were back east. You know, two had left in 1904, and then the other five got out.

Q. HARRY, WOULD YOU SPELL THE LITTLE SUBURB FOR US? OSTLAND?

A. Osterath, Osterath, O-s-t-e-r-a-t-h. It's between Krefeld and Dusseldorf. Osterath. It's-- I don't think it's now considered part of Krefeld. It's-- it may be part of Dusseldorf. I'm not too sure. Like I say, we used to drive to visit my grandmother, and it seemed to us when I was little, you know-- we-- we had a car, and we used to drive there. And it seemed like an interminable ride. Probably took half-hour or so, maybe more.

And when I was back this last time, we took a trip from Krefeld-- I was there two years ago. And I drove, and there was a town halfway in between called Fischel, a little village too. You know, it was definitely-- it was demarcation. I mean it was Krefeld-- there were fields. Krefeld still has a lot of agriculture around. It's industrial, but a large

portion of agriculture. And then you would notice that you were in the next town, and then there was open field again; and then, you know, you got to Osterath. And I drove there and I never left town. Suddenly I realized I was in Fischel, and then there was one open field and, boom, I was Osterath, see, and the town got-- the distances got smaller I guess when like-- like it always does when you go back to your youth.

Q. WAS THIS--

A. So-- yeah.

Q. I WAS INTERESTED, YOUR FATHER-- YOUR UNCLE HAD WANTED YOU TO LEAVE-- YOUR PARENTS TO LEAVE IN '35 OR SOMETHING?

A. Something like that. I don't know.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER THE DISCUSSIONS AT HOME ABOUT THE RELUCTANCE OF YOUR FATHER TO LEAVE? WAS THERE A STRUGGLE BETWEEN YOUR MOTHER AND YOUR FATHER?

A. No, no. I don't think so, no. They-- I don't think anybody realized how bad it was going to be. I don't think anybody-- actually nobody realized until-- until '38. November 11-- 10th, isn't it? 10th or 11th when Kristallnacht, which is-- you know, the name Kristall makes it sound like glass, but it was an out and out pogrom.

Q. RIGHT. BUT YOUR PARENTS LEFT--

A. And so we left before.

Q. SO WHAT'S INTERESTING TO ME IS WHAT PROVOKED YOUR FATHER--

A. What provoked-- okay. I think what happened is he was-- I would say-- my guess is that the turning point in his thinking was that somebody challenged him with I guess you'd call it indecent exposure. And what happened was we were on a-- you know, we were riding in the country someplace. And, you know, Germany does not-- those days did not have all the--

Q. FACILITIES?

A. -- facilities. You know, gas station, toilets, and so on and so forth. So when you had to go, you stood out in the field, and that's what we did. And somebody-- turned out that I think it was a Nazi from another town, Nuremberg or someplace. Well-known Nazi turned him in and charged him--

Q. WHAT HAPPENED?

A. I don't know. I don't remember because I was still little. You know, I was 11, 12-- something like that. And he-- he had to go before the Court in Koblenz. And man charged him with all kinds of things and a whole bunch of German-- you know, Bund

Deutsche male. You know, the German had marched by, and I don't know what all. But he was cleared of all charges and so nothing happened to him. But I think that's-- my guess is that started to convince him. And then you could slowly see-- also being near the border from Holland, you could see war coming up and so on and so forth.

Q. HOW COULD YOU SEE THAT?

A. You see the preparations near the border. You see the-- you know, after all my father traveled. You could see what was going on. As a matter of fact, we got the affidavit; we packed up everything. My family here-- in other words, one of the uncles had gone into the furniture business here in California. And he said, "Don't bring any furniture. Nothing fits."

So most German Jews, wealthier ones, if they could afford it they packed what is known as a lift. It was a big box, and you put all your furniture in there and all your-- you know, your clothing-- you know, all your--

Q. POSSESSIONS.

A. -- possessions. And-- but they told them not to do that. So I remember my father when he closed up the business-- incidentally he did

something very interesting. I remember him telling about it. You know, in general German-- Germans or German Jews don't talk money. You know, at the table money is not discussed. As a matter of fact, very interesting they just had-- I was watching Rose Kennedy on television talking about her family, and it's true there: In the Kennedy family they talked about other things, but money was never discussed. I never knew how much money, you know, my father had and made and so on and so forth. Actually my wife and I do the same today. We never talked money in front of the kids. Anyhow-- what did I start to tell you?

Q. ABOUT YOUR FATHER DOING AN INTERESTING THING YOU SAID.

A. Oh, so I remember him saying that, when he liquidated the business-- you couldn't sell it. If you sold it to, you know, a non-Jew, you didn't get anything. As a matter of fact, I remember when he was forced to move out of that Hunser Haus, like I say, the city building and move to another location, somebody else went in there and started a similar business.

Q. BUT HE WAS SUPPOSED TO MOVE OUT BECAUSE THE CITY WOULDN'T RENT TO HIM?

A. That's it. The Hunser Haus incidentally had a-- it had the courtyard that I mentioned in the back where people came in the back. That was where they assembled the Jews in '40, '41, '42 to deport them in the middle. That was-- it was handy, and that's-- they were put in there. So as an interesting sidelight, they-- that house became a hotel. And when Krefeld invited the Jews back two years ago, they took pains not to put anybody into that hotel 'cause they eliminated-- eliminated that. This particular thing Krefeld was organized by a minister and his wife so they, you know, were very-- very thoughtful of how it was done and so on. But getting back-- let's see.

Q. LIQUIDATION.

A. Liquidation, he sold all the stock. And how to collect the money from the accounts that were owed to him.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. And he wrote to them. He says, Well, we are leaving because we are going to emigrate to America. And he said a lot of people would say-- you know, wish them good luck and wish they could go with him. But, of course, I can't talk about it in public, see. Germans tended to talk more openly with

Jews than with other people knowing that they probably wouldn't get turned in by them; you know, talk about their feelings if they were anti-government.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. So he wrote to them. And he said, Well, when I leave-- you know, it was-- I have to turn in a complete list of people that owe me money to the government, which meant that if you were known that-- you know, if it was known that you bought from Jews, who knows what would happen to you, you see?

Q. OH, REALLY.

A. So he got most of the money. People paid up, even people who were slow paid up, because that way the name would not be on the list because-- but you couldn't take any money out. So what we did is my-- we bought a car here.

Q. INTO THE UNITED STATES?

A. Into the United States. We had a little German Ford.

Q. YOU BOUGHT A CAR IN GERMANY.

A. We bought it-- we had it-- well, we had it. It was used. You had to-- see everything that you took out --

Q. UN-HUH.

A. -- you had to pay a tax, an export fee. Extortion. I mean we had to pay three times what the value was. So you had to have-- you had to have it appraised. And if you bought-- you know, if there were old things, they didn't charge you. But if you bought new clothes-- see that's-- otherwise people would convert all the German currency to goods like Likers and take them out. And, you know, that's how you can take your fortune out. So they made sure-- so they made it very tough to take-- money you couldn't take out at all. And goods, if you took them out, you had to pay them to take them out.

Q. SO YOU BOUGHT A CAR--

A. So we bought-- we had a car. It was fairly new, and we brought that out. And I remember my dad having-- having to have it appraised. And then the man said, Well, you want it. What for? And he told him what for, so he gave him a lower appraisal, see. And we brought I think 24 boxes, crates. They were the shelves in the business.

And my dad had some carpenter build them into boxes. You know, they were this high, this big (indicates), and put all our possessions in there, and we-- they were shipped to Holland. I remember they were painted gray and, you know, the whole

thing. The name was put on there stenciled.

And we left by-- we came on a Dutch freighter that had I think 20 passengers or maybe less. Below a certain amount you didn't have to have a doctor on board, and so there was a limit to-- I think it's 21. Below that you had-- above that you had to have a doctor.

So this freighter went from Rotterdam-- actually went through the Panama Canal all the way up to the coast up to Vancouver. It was a Holland America line. See, they picked that because they could-- for every day they were on board ship -- you know, the expected travel time -- you were allowed to put in ten marks or whatever it was; money to spend on board. Then if you didn't spend it, you had-- got to keep it. And that's the only money you could take out. So they picked that because-- at least that's what I was told because that was the longest-- long trip. It's supposed to take a month, 26 days. It turned out to be much longer, but that's another story.

Q. HARRY, DID YOUR PARENTS-- WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD, DID THEY EVER DISCUSS WITH YOU EMIGRATION, THEIR INTENTION? WERE YOU INFORMED BY YOUR PARENTS AT ALL, OR DID YOU FEEL--

A. Well, they-- no, I think later on I think-- I imagine it came up, and certainly came up once it was decided in '30-- I guess end of '37-- you know, you could tell it was getting worse. And so then what we used to do, we lived-- you know, Krefeld is right near Fenrell. It's about 20 miles, not even that far to Holland. We would go over to Holland and for-- on a Sunday. And my mother or-- you know, they would write letters to the United States. That's how--

Q. IN HOLLAND.

A. In Holland because that way you wouldn't have to pass through the censor. That was fairly common among other Jews, too, from what I understand because my wife tells me her mother would take her from Hamburg, which is quite a ways to the border, she would go-- I don't know where she went. But she would take a train to Holland.

We just drove to the border. And on the other side we got on the bus and went to town into-- I don't think it's even Fenrell. I think it was Nemveg. It was a smaller town. And we had lunch there or something like that, and they wrote the letter, and then they came back. So I imagine that took place in '37. So that's when they decided to

leave.

You know, you could see it wasn't going to get any better. There was probably also going to be an all-out war in Europe so-- as a matter of fact, once we had the affidavit, then my dad wanted to leave. So once we got that, we got the tickets to come-- you know, prepaid everything. And so then we just-- we made arrangements to drive the car to Holland, bring it to the dock, and he decided the war was going to come because, you know, this was before Czechoslovakia I guess. Let's see, I don't know when-- anyhow Austria took place.

Q. IN '38.

A. '38. And there were more preparations around the border. There were fortifications and-- being built. And so we left about a month before the ship was going to sale, and we stayed in Holland.

Q. OH, I SEE.

A. See, the-- shipped the boxes ahead.

Q. BECAUSE YOUR FATHER DID NOT WANT TO STAY.

A. Didn't want to stay in Germany. Probably because things were getting worse for the Jews, but I think mainly on account of the war. I think they all felt there was going to be a war and-- and the non-Jews would say, I wish I could go with you. I

remember, you know, saying goodbye to everybody and so on, you see.

Q. AND YOUR FATHER WAS AFRAID, IF THERE WAS A WAR, YOU WOULD GET STUCK IN GERMANY.

A. We'd get stuck in Germany. Holland-- you know, during the First World War Holland was not invaded so they figured it would stay neutral and so on and so forth. You could still get out.

Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR PASSPORTS? WHAT KIND OF PASSPORTS DID YOU HAVE?

A. We had German passports.

Q. DID THE GERMANS--

A. It didn't-- no, this was before-- see all those things took place after. There was no J in there. Like I say, we-- we were lucky. I would say if anything was that thing that convinced my dad was-- I would say maybe that man did my dad a favor because my-- well, he could, you know, see what was happening and--'cause let's face it, the ones who got left, who got stuck, were the poor who couldn't afford to leave. You know, it took money. What money my dad had left over he gave to his mother who was-- still stayed there. See, you couldn't take the money out.

Q. YEAH, I WAS WONDERING WHAT HAPPENED TO

HER.

A. Yeah, he gave that to his mother.

Q. WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS MOTHER? WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?

A. His-- his mother died, you know, in '39. And his sister lived there and the less family-- those who didn't get out were shipped off to the east and died. The property eventually was recovered, my-- you know, my grandmother's house and some-- some other property that they had. And I think some of the cousins got it. There was-- you know, my dad didn't want them I mean over here. He-- he released it to some of the other family that-- well, the sister-- this is getting very detailed.

The sister that lived in Osterath had a daughter that was-- Zelma had a daughter who was married in '33 or '30, whatever it was. She became a widow at a very early age. She had like a two-year-old son. And she and her son left and went to South America. So she had more of a claim on that property because I imagine my grandmother left it to her. You know, her daughter that lived there, Zelma. So anyhow my dad didn't get any of that, see. I remember we were here in-- in El Cerrito. He released to the cousins-- you know, I think

certain family members.

Q. THIS WAS YOUR MOTHER'S HOUSE AND--

A. It was-- no, this was my grandmother's house.

Q. GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE.

A. Yes.

Q. AND YOUR FATHER DID NOT OWN THE HOUSE?

A. We did not own the house. They were going-- remember when I was little, they were talking about buying-- building a house, and something never came of it. In town there's more rental than here. We had a big flat, see. It was, you know, enough for a maid to sleep in and, you know, three, four bedrooms and living room and a dining room and another room and a kitchen, and I don't know what all. So as a matter of fact, I went back; and out of that flat they made two flats-- two-- two apartments. That house is still standing although I guess it had been heavily bombed, and I didn't go in. My sister went upstairs and looked at one of the rooms.

Q. WHY DIDN'T YOU GO IN?

A. There was nobody home. And she happened to go back later on, and somebody was there, and he let her in. We didn't have time, see. This was a couple

of years ago.

So anyhow we stayed in Holland, and then we came-- got on the boat and came to the United States, you know, when-- the ship was supposed to go from Holland to Bermuda and then on through the Panama Canal. It turned out there was a-- a change.

The Dutch government decided to get rid of the crown-- the gold that was in Germany-- was in Holland. Again war was coming. So the ship was changed, and they loaded I don't know how many million guilders of gold on this freighter. And the ship went to-- so we went-- oh, and-- oh, the gold was in England. That's what it was. The gold was in England so the ship first went from Rotterdam-- instead of to Bermuda went to England. And in England they picked up all this gold.

And incidentally I got to see my cousin, who had gone to England. You know, we was just there one or two days until they loaded this gold on board. And then that ship went to New York. And in New York they unloaded the gold, and I guess took it to Fort Knox, I guess.

Q. HOW DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT GOLD?

A. Well, they didn't say much. As a matter of fact, the strange thing is in England there was one

policeman on board. You know, one bobby. And when we got to New York, there were like 30 or 40 policemen around this ship, all around watching all this gold. And I guess they--

I guess the captain told-- you know, it's not that big a ship. And we-- you know, people ate with the captain and first engineer and so on, you know. And I-- as a boy I spent most of my time not with the passengers. I spent it with the crew, the engineers and so on and so forth, and went down in the engine room and went up to the radio shack and so on, see. There wasn't that much to do. You know, you could read books and so on. So then-- and then the ship then went on through the Panama Canal, and there was another change. That's why I think it took 30, 40 days.

Q. AND YOUR UNCLE WAS IN CALIFORNIA?

A. California. We landed in San Francisco. My uncle picked us up. He was there at the dock with the family. And-- and then-- and also some of the other family that had left Germany already, another uncle from Frankfurt who had come here -- he'd come to San Francisco-- not San Francisco, Oakland -- so we all settled in Oakland right in the middle of the Depression, you know. It was tough to get a job and

so on.

So then my dad-- you know, he was at that point-- '38, he was in his 50s. It was not that easy to get a job. So then he started a furniture store in El Cerrito because my uncle had a furniture store in Oakland. You could start a furniture store with not too much money because you could buy second-hand and start that way. That's it.

I had-- I have some pictures here that I might show you. This-- this was a picture taken-- these are the Gymnasium boys. In other words, the cap is what you wore in the Gymnasium. They changed colors every year. You could tell what year you were in.

This boy here, Gut Rosenthal, also left for the United States. I-- I thought it was before we left as a-- just as a single. He left as a student, came to Cincinnati. He eventually was drafted in the Army, and he died in the-- in France someplace fighting the Germans in the American Army.

Here I am (indicates). And this is the rabbi, Dr. Blum, who used to teach-- this was probably-- I remember later on we got kicked out of the school for the religion instruction. And he couldn't-- the Jewish instruction couldn't be held at

the Gymnasium anymore. So this was held in the-- in the synagogue.

So this is the courtyard of the synagogue, and this was probably one of the last classes. I assume in '37, maybe early '38. And here I am. There's the rabbi, who incidentally then eventually after Kristallnacht got out too and came to Texas, and he had a congregation in Texas.

This-- let's see. This boy here (indicates), his name is Henry Bach, and he stayed there, and he died. He went-- was transported to eastern-- you know--

Q. TO CAMP.

A. Well, actually-- you know, the Germans kept very active records. It says where he went. But what the place they put down was just a switching station in Poland, so he didn't survive.

Q. WHEN DID YOU SEE THE RECORDS? WHEN YOU WENT BACK?

A. No. There was a book published in Krefeld. The city of Krefeld commissioned a book like a lot of German cities have done since then. This book has all the records. I think it was a doctoral program or something. Somebody researched it. There's a complete list of all the Jews they

could find what happened to them. My name is in there showing that we emigrated to Oakland because, you know, you had to tell the Gestapo where you went or, you know, the authorities, whoever it was. So they know where everybody went.

So he was-- you know, it shows that he was taken out. And this boy here is Vanna Heimann. He also stayed there. His mother I think wasn't Jewish. I'm not too sure. Not Jewish extraction. But his grandmother was a Jew, so I assume his mother was-- mother was a Jew. He was blonde, blue-eyed. And he was also sent to the camps.

He survived the camp and came back to Krefeld after the war and found his mother had been transported or taken away by the Nazis. Why I don't know. He wouldn't talk about it or he couldn't find out. See, he still had a sister in Krefeld, a half sister. His mother was a-- I assume was a non-Jewish woman whose first husband died in the First World War. She was left with a girl. And then she married a Jew named Heimann. They had two sons. And this was the youngest. So he survived, you know, the camps. And he now is in South America. He's actually in Chile.

And I met him for the first time when we

went back to Krefeld. This was his first trip. He went back to Krefeld after the war and, you know, after he got out of the camps, survived. He somehow escaped near-- near-- in the turmoil near the end being transported from one camp to another. And where he lived, he lived with the Russians a lot. I don't know. Anyhow he survived. So that's one group of kids.

There is a group of other kids. I think these were more or less kids my own age, but they didn't have the caps. So these-- some of these did not go to the Gymnasium. See, these were the Gymnasium boys. These were the other kids. This boy Gunter Anschohe, he didn't survive. He-- I think-- I think they went to Belgium and then were probably caught then when the Germans invaded Belgium because they had left.

This next-- this is the Gat Rosenthal who-- you know, who died in-- in France. Here I am. I forget-- I don't know who that is.

This boy here, Kurt Zalvos I just met last in Hawaii. I hadn't-- he also was in the camps. His father was-- my father was 100 percent German. His father was 200 percent German. His father was an officer in the First World War, highly decorated, and

nothing would happen to him. You know, he-- and he-- he stayed there with his wife.

And he had two sons. One son got out and-- and ended up in Canada. He might have gone to England and then to Canada. And this boy here, who was actually my same age because we were bar mitzvahed together. And he went through the camps. He managed to survive. And, of course, his father and mother died. And he came to the United States and I-- nobody knew where he was.

As a matter of fact, when I went back to Krefeld, I asked about him; didn't know where he was. I asked another-- somebody-- somebody named Zalvos there, and they didn't know because it was a big family. And then the people in Krefeld-- this woman that I-- this Vonstada who organized this thing, also assembled a book of letters.

See, this woman was a teacher in Krefeld-- is a teacher in Krefeld. And she assembled a book, and she had her students write to whoever she could find. And some or other by word of mouth people found out about this reunion. And it just so happens that this boy--

Nobody knew where he was, but a close friend of his got the letter. And he had since-- in

the meantime he had died. And his daughter-- this is very involved. But his daughter wrote to him, and he wrote back to Krefeld saying that he could under no circumstances go back to this reunion. And I saw his name there so I wrote to him. He lives in-- in Pennsylvania.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. So he survived, but he went through the camps.

Q. YOU SAY YOU SAW HIM IN HAWAII?

A. I saw him. He happens to-- he has a second home in Hawaii. And last year we went to-- I had talked to him on the phone. He travels quite a bit. He is in the wholesale seed business. And once he came to San Francisco, and I couldn't go to see him, and he was just leaving and so on. So we have spoken for about two years now. And so I saw him for the first time. He was just coming into Hawaii, and we were leaving that afternoon so I saw him for the first time in 40-- in 50 something years.

Q. DID YOU RECOGNIZE HIM?

A. Well, he looked a little bit-- I knew what to look for, you know.

Q. HOW LONG THAT MEETING-- HOW LONG WAS IT?

A. It wasn't very long. It wasn't-- I would

say not that emotional. First of all, we were not that close friends. We-- you know, he didn't live near me. My main-- we did belong to the same youth group.

Like I say, after a while we were-- the Jews were cut out of everything so the Jewish community formed their own organizations. The-- the-- the Jewish war veterans had a-- I think I belonged to that. They had a sports club, and we had-- you know, put on performances and-- and so on and so forth. They bought a-- I think they rented or leased a sports field where we could play soccer and something like-- you know. And so after a while, you know, all the Jews were thrown together because nobody else would talk to you, you know.

Q. SURE.

A. So that's it. And then--

Q. BUT THAT MEETING, WHAT'S INTERESTING HERE IS HOW THE EFFORT TO FIND EACH OTHER AND TO--

A. Oh, yeah.

Q. -- TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO EACH OTHER. SO WHAT WAS THAT MEETING LIKE?

A. Well, like I say, the meeting was very short. We only spent about an hour together. He really didn't talk about what happened to him. You

know, most of the people I've talked to just like this other one, this Gert, didn't talk much about it.

The only thing I know what happened to Gert Heimann is because he wrote about it in one of the-- one of the letters to the students. See, this Heimann lived-- stayed in Krefeld in '38. He was there in '38 when the synagogue burned down and when the-- this community center that-- the other Jewish building, they were both burned down.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. He was there then. And his father had since died. His mother ran the butcher shop. And so he was there, the only man because they had sent his other brother out, in Krefeld. And eventually somehow he stayed out of the trouble. First of all, he didn't look Jewish and-- for years. And then one day he was arrested in a sweep where they were looking for war-- for people who tried to avoid the draft or maybe people who tried to get out of the Army or whatever.

And he was arrested, and he was put into a Gestapo prison where they pulled all his fingernails out and, you know, badly mistreated him. And then fortunately he says he was put into the regular

prison, the Gefendus; in other words, for the criminals of Krefeld or nearby. And then he was treated a little better, and then eventually he was deported to--

Q. WHICH ONE IS THIS?

A. That's this-- well, he's in this picture too here. This one (indicates).

Q. THE ONE WHO LIVES IN--

A. The one who lives in Chile now.

Q. OH, CHILE.

A. Yeah, Chile. And here's Henry Bach. He's the one that died. This one here is-- his name is Rosenzweig. That's the brother of this boy here. He survived. He got out. As a matter of fact, he went back to Krefeld. I met him there. And his mother survived too. They evidently got out and came to the United States in '39; went to Cincinnati. I think where this other boy had been.

This man in the back here was kind of youth group leader. He was-- had studied for the law and I guess passed everything, but being Jewish he couldn't practice anymore. He eventually went-- got out too and went to Australia. The German Jews were fairly lucky because '38 Kristallnacht happened, and they could then suddenly-- the emigration was like this.

And in '38 after-- in November when they were arrested and beaten and whatever happened, they could see what was going on. Plus they were told if you left, you got out of prison and the emigration went up. So of the 1,600 people in Krefeld about half survived because they all got out. They got out early.

Q. SO IN THIS PICTURE HOW MANY SURVIVED AND HOW MANY--

A. Well, I don't know. See, this one-- I know two that definitely died: This one here (indicates) and this one here. These two died in Europe. This one here died in-- you know, in France.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. I don't know what happened to him. I don't know. These might have died too, but I'm not too sure. I don't know-- I don't remember their names so I only knew these. You know, these I know definitely who they are. You know at 14 you don't make that wide range of friends. See this-- these were the Gymnasium boys.

Q. RIGHT. AND WE KNOW THIS IS YOU. AND WHICH ONE IS--

A. This one died in France. I survived and this one survived. And he died. See Henry Bach died

in Poland someplace. And the rabbi survived too. The rabbi left I think right at the end of '38, '39.

I have another picture of a friend of mine, probably my best friend over there. And that's him over here (indicates), and we went-- this was taken probably a year before we left. I had got-- it must have been after-- see these pictures were taken on my camera and the camera I got for my bar mitzvah, so they must have been taken after that. And his name was Rudi DeBeer, and he didn't survive.

Q. WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

A. He was sent off to the camps. He didn't survive. I wrote to him after we came to the United States. He's the only one I corresponded with. And after a while probably I guess I assumed-- in '39 or maybe '40 the letters came back address unknown. But by that time the war had started here, you know, and so there was no way to contact him anymore. So that's him there. He was, I think, six months younger than I was.

Q. AND HE WAS IN YOUR BOOK.

A. His name was-- yeah, his name was in the book, Rudi DeBeer. His parents had a scrap yard, scrap metal yard. The reason I was friends with him he lived about a block away.

Q. UN-HUH. WHAT ABOUT HIS PARENTS?

A. His parents all died. His parents didn't survive. He had-- at least the book says his parents didn't survive and his-- he had a sister who didn't survive. None of them got out. His-- book said his father was arrested and sent to the concentration camp and then was allowed out. I guess he went to Dachau I assume. I don't know where he went. And then he was allowed out so-- in order to liquidate his business; in other words turn his business over to non-Jews.

A lot of-- a lot of German Jews, you know, who still had businesses if they weren't forced out of it before then who had to turn over-- you know, after a while you couldn't have a business. So they were allowed out. They said that he had to go back to run the business so it could be turned over. And he--

As a matter of fact, most kids that age what-- what the parents did, because you couldn't go to school anymore, you couldn't-- most of them were forced out of apprenticeship programs or any trade schools they went to. They were also forced out of the Gymnasium. By that time nobody could go anymore.

This was all after-- you know, at the end of the year that's when the stamp was put into the passport, when all the women-- this all happened within three or four months after we got here so we were-- we just were lucky we missed everything. When the women had to have-- I think their name had to be changed to Sarah and men all had to be named Israel I think and, see, that all happened afterwards.

Q. SO YOU WERE TELLING US THE STORY OF HE HAD TO GO BACK TO LIQUIDATE HIS BUSINESS?

A. He liqui--

Q. AND THEN?

A. And then I guess-- I don't know what happened because I never heard anymore from him. It just says that he was-- see, the only thing that it says in the book it shows what happened. These are the official records that he was sent to-- you know, to Poland. Isbiska I think it's called. A lot of them-- a lot of them from Krefeld went.

The early transport were sent to Isbiska or something-- Isbicka which was-- like I say, it's just a switching-- switching station. I saw where once this Henry Bach-- his family-- he had a younger brother and his-- and his mother and father. I think they were substituted on one of the transports.

Somebody didn't go. They were short. You know, they had to have so many people so they put them in. And they were-- I don't know how many transports to the east.

The last transport from Krefeld took place I think it's September of '45. No, no, no. Would be '44. September '44 the Allies were in Holland already. And the-- the city was in ruins. I mean Krefeld was heavily destroyed. And the-- the--

The last transport were-- was made up of -- at least that's what this book says -- made up of people who had non-Jewish spouses. And then they were-- see, they were shipped out, and they had to walk down this rubble, walk down the middle of the street early in the morning -- the only people who saw them were people going to church -- and assembled again in this Hunser Haus, and then were sent out. I think a lot of those people probably survived because it was the end, see. But there were about four or five major transports out of Krefeld.

Q. BUT YOU WERE SAYING THAT-- YOU BEGAN BY SAYING THAT DURING THIS TIME WHEN THERE WAS NO SCHOOL FOR THE YOUNG--

A. Oh, that's right. See most-- see, they all went-- were sent-- a lot of them went to agricultural

schools. The-- there were a lot of training schools set up in-- in the-- I think eastern Germany or someplace. I don't know where-- where they learned what-- quote, Lundegeschaften in other words, because they were-- it was a way to train for Palestine. Some were along Zionist lines, but some were not, see.

And evidently quite a few of those were set up that way. And I think some of those boys had to-- for example, this-- this Kurt Zalvos had to come back. He was ordered back to Krefeld. I think he was arrested on the -- on this farm; I mean that's what they really were -- was transported back to Krefeld, and then he was deported with his family.

Q. NOW AS WE WERE LOOKING AT THESE PICTURES, YOU KNOW, SOME OF YOUR FRIENDS SURVIVED AND SOME DIDN'T. IS THERE A-- IS THERE ONE-- CAN YOU THINK OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ONES THAT SURVIVED AND THE ONES WHO DIDN'T? WAS THERE ANYTHING-- WAS THERE ANYTHING--

A. No.

Q. -- THE ONES THAT SURVIVED DID THAT THE OTHERS DIDN'T OR--

A. No, I don't know.

Q. -- OR CIRCUMSTANCE?

A. I would say it's mainly luck. And, you know, it depends on the-- I would say mainly lucky. I mean I was lucky because we left you might say four months early. You know, that's really what it amounted to and some foresight, you know. Because if we had left-- we still left. We didn't stick around in Germany, and we left. And I remember we spent, you know, that month or so in Holland trying to live as cheaply as possible. You know, we didn't have any money.

We stayed in I think it's called Sanfroid, which was-- this was a-- it was a-- it's a resort on the-- on the coast. And it was after the season, and we stayed in some fisherman's house. They rented us a room or so and I think allowed us to use the kitchen. And I don't remember exactly how we survived. You know, one or two rooms.

And then-- then we-- when we got all done, then we drove to Rotterdam and stayed in a terrible hotel; you know, some cheap little dive. I remember the stairs were going up. And again Dad didn't want to spend a lot of money; didn't have it. And then we got on board the ship. And from then on everything was taken care of, the food and everything was-- so that was-- from then on became a pleasure trip.

As a matter of fact, I did bring this book along, and these were some of the pictures that I took on-- on the-- on the cruise. It was not a cruise but on the trip. See, it--

Q. HAVE YOU GOT ANY OF YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER IN THERE?

A. Yeah, I do. Okay, that's an idea. Here's some of the family pictures. Let's see. Oops. Lose that. There's-- there we are. See, that's my father, my mother, my sister, and there I was in the proud cap. After all you wore that cap all the time. What is that?

Q. I DON'T KNOW.

A. Oh, that's my family now. That's-- see, you wore that cap because I mean that was an elitist feeling to go to Gymnasium, see.

Q. LIKE THE STRUDELS, RIGHT?

A. That's right. These were students' caps. You know, these were the-- and ours I remember had gold braid because it was a better school than the-- there was another school there called the Real Schule, which was not as academically oriented and so on. I read later on that this-- let's see. I don't know. Some of these-- oh, these-- these are the pictures that-- yeah, that's the same one.

Okay, this-- this was the entire population of the Volksschule when I went there.

VIDEO PERSON: CAN YOU HOLD THAT ONE UP? I'LL GET BETTER SHOTS OF THIS AT THE END JUST SO WE KNOW WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT. GREAT.

MR. KIEFER: Most-- these-- I am in there. And I must have been in the second or third grade or something like that. And let's see if I have any other pictures.

Q. NICE PICTURE OF YOUR FAMILY THERE. YOUR MOTHER'S VERY HANDSOME.

A. Yeah, that's-- and these are-- oh, there's a picture of--

Q. I HAVE A QUESTION.

A. Yeah.

Q. WHEN-- A LITTLE LATER ON AFTER '36, CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LIFE BETWEEN '36 AND '38?

A. Well, the-- it was-- it was more and more restricted, you know. There was-- you couldn't go to certain restaurants because they had a sign there Juden ist advertische, see. Jews are not allowed, see, or not desired. And I think we still went to the park because, you know, none of the restrictions later on when you couldn't drive, couldn't get on the streetcar and all these things. Those all took place

after we left. But when we travelled, you couldn't go to certain hotels and so on. And my folks would find a place to rent something from a farmer, you know. And-- but then we didn't travel that much.

In the summer we would be sent to-- well, the equivalent of summer camp. But they were also Jewish by that time. In other words, we were sent to-- I remember once we went to Aurich which was-- it's on the-- oh, it's up in Friesland. And there was a Jewish farmer, I guess, who had quite a bit of property and had a big house and started-- and the Jewish community somehow-- I don't know how that was organized. I know my folks paid for it.

And we got on the train and went there and came back and stayed there a few weeks. And they put beds in the rooms. You know, there were five, six beds in one room. And there were girls over here and boys over there and so on. I have a picture in this album that was taken there. So our life was thrown together, you know, more with Jews.

We once-- the-- the Jewish boys would get to go on bicycle trips, and we once took a trip with this-- as a matter of fact, this man here I think was in charge. Some of these boys, not all but some of them, went all the way up to-- from Krefeld up along

the Rhein to Frankfurt. We stayed again in Jewish institutions. We stayed-- I remember we stayed in Mainz. We stayed at the Jewish hospital. They-- they took us upstairs on the third or fourth floor, whatever it was they had where the old mattresses that weren't being used. They piled those on the floor and, you know, these kids -- 13, 14, 15, 16 -- older kids slept on it. In someplace else along the Rhein we stayed-- slept in a-- it was a little old synogogue building, and there was a loft or something. We stayed there. I don't remember where all we stayed. And then in Frankfurt we-- I had family and we stayed with them.

So we were-- you know, the community was thrown more and more together being more isolated from the general population. In school, as I started to mention, the boys all started wearing uniforms. Some of them didn't talk to me anymore.

There was one boy who stayed with me. His name was Kaylen I think. And he was-- his father was a minister of-- not Prot-- I don't know. One of the fringe religions. I mean not-- not the major one. It wasn't Catholic, and he wasn't Evangelical. And so he was the last one to put on the uniform. I remember one day, you know, here he was. The two

Jewish boys and this boy stood out. Everybody else was starting to wear uniforms on certain days. I mean not every day. And here, you know, the three of us. And one day he showed up with one. I guess they forced him into it. And so-- and then after that it was just about the time we left I think.

Q. WHEN YOU WENT BACK, THIS WAS 40 YEARS LATER?

A. Yeah.

Q. THAT THEY HAD THIS REUNION?

A. Reunion, yeah.

Q. I MEAN THIS IS VERY STRANGE.

A. Well, this was-- this was an unusual setup because to begin with Krefeld was a little bit more-- it was not as typical of some of the other German cities especially Bavaria and some of the big cities. German-- Krefeld had a history of more-- of tolerance. Krefeld after the 30 Year War and during the Reformation and so on was declared a-- a city where anybody could practice any religion. As a matter of fact, sometime in the 16th century they said we are papists and Protestants and Abraham and Mennonites could practice. And-- you know, their particular religion.

And it just so happened that a very large

Mennonite population settled in Krefeld. They were outcasts in a lot of other places. And they brought in the-- they were important in the weaving industry, and they lived there in the 1600s and so on. And a bunch of them came to the United States and landed in Philadelphia. There were 13 families landed in Philadelphia in a town in one part of Philadelphia was known as-- became known as Germantown. So the original settlers, German settlers, in the United States in Pennsylvania were actually Germans from Krefeld, but they were actually Mennonites who left for a more-- a freer religious life, and that was in 1680 something, whenever it was. And they had in 1983 or 300 years later they had a celebration in Krefeld or commemoration of this event --

Q. UN-HUH.

A. -- of these 13 families that came. And they renamed a street. Now there's a street in Krefeld called Philadelphia Strasse. And one of the persons that-- who was involved was a minister named Stalk and his wife. And he-- he said, Look, here we're talking about 13 families who left Krefeld. We honor them. We left Krefeld for the United States. But a much larger number of Krefelders left and went to United States much later, and we should honor

them. And that was-- so he started slowly trying to get money together to do something about these people, see.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. And it eventually evolved into this invitation to the people from Krefeld who they could find. They had-- at one time they had names of like 20, 30 people. That's all, all over the world. They didn't know where anybody was. And somehow they got some money together. I guess-- see, some of the other cities have been doing that. Berlin does it. Hamburg does it. Frankfurt does it. Big cities do it. They get money from the government I guess. And-- but you have to be in-- you know, you have to be in your 70s and 80s before they'll pay for your trip back.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. And so this was a little bit different. They invited anybody-- anybody they could get ahold of thinking maybe we'll get 30 people. Well, somehow-- you know, there was some interconnection. I found out from a friend of mine who lives here in San Francisco who all-- who left even before we did. His name was Paul Kann. And he gave my name. They asked, you know, anybody from Krefeld. He happened

to go back to Krefeld, and he met this Dag because somebody else-- that's how the network works. Somebody else knew this minister and said, You got to go see him. So he said hello to him. And somehow they got names together and went from 30 to 40 to 50, you know.

And so they had this thing two years ago and about 130 people I think plus, you know, one companion came. So it was kind of a get-together. Some people hadn't seen each other. Some of the girls hadn't seen each other or the boys. Like I say, I met this one boy from Chile. He-- as a matter of fact, he had not seen his brother, who lives in Israel, for 40 years or something like that or maybe less.

Q. HOW WAS THAT MEETING?

A. Well, it was very emotional. And again, you know, I was quite young. You don't get that attached. You know a 13-year-old, 12-year-old is still a child. But people that are older -- you know, 16, 18 -- have developed a wider friendship and a closer friendship. And I guess it was quite emotional for them. Some couldn't talk about it. It was-- you know.

There was one woman there who was quite

elderly. She left Krefeld, went to Holland with her husband and two young boys, who were hid in Holland for-- you know, once the Germans invaded, hid in Holland for some time, was caught. Two boys were- I guess the kids were like three and five or something like that or maybe a little bit-- maybe three and six -- were in a farmhouse. The Dutch farmer hid them. The parents were transported out. The boys survived. Now, mind you, this is a 6 or 7-year-old taking care of his 3-year-old brother. They all survived. The mother went-- went to Westerborg I think was the big camp.

Q. WHAT WAS THEIR NAME?

A. Oh, boy. I'll think of it. I'll think of it in a minute. See because she remarried and married again, see. And she went through the camps. As a matter of fact, she was together with Anne Frank at one time with the Frank family in one of the camps. Where I don't know. And she was off-- see, the one thing we didn't do this Faustalk or-- their name was Kamp, K-a-m-p.

So, like I say, this trip back to Krefeld was a little bit different. They asked us to, first of all, correspond with the high school children; and then they asked us whether we'd be willing to talk to

the classes about our-- about our experiences. And a lot of us said yes. And so they had like 30 or 40 different meetings among all the different schools, you know, usually in high school or under high school. You know, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade or 9th, 10th and 11th grade.

So this woman talked to some of the classes, and she was-- she couldn't talk about it. Her son, one of the ones who survived, talked about it-- read her statement.

I went to-- I think I went to three classes and talked about my experiences. And these were, you know, like I-- the kids I talked to were either about 15 or 16. It's hard for them to understand what went on. They all said, Look, our parents are too young so they don't know what went on, and our grandparents won't talk about it. They won't discuss it.

Q. DID THEY BEGIN TEACHING IN SCHOOL ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST AT THAT TIME ALREADY TWO YEARS AGO?

A. Oh, I think they had done it before that, yeah. German teaching from what I gather is quite-- there's a gap. They teach the history up until '33, and then the Allies didn't want them to talk about the Nazi time. And, of course, they didn't want to talk about it. So there's a gap between '33 and

'45. They won't talk about it.

You know, just I would say the last 10 years they have become more interested. Books have come out. All these books like the ones in Krefeld, that was written in-- in the early '80s, middle '80s I think. So there was a-- there is a movement now to fill in that blank spot.

Q. WHEN YOU WENT BACK TO KREFELD, DID YOU LOOK UP THIS YOUNG BOY, FOR EXAMPLE, WHO'S THE LAST ONE TO GET HIS UNIFORM? DID YOU FIND--

A. I tried to look him up in the phone book, no. See, I would say-- I gather a large percentage of my non-Jewish schoolmates became officers in the German Army and were killed. After all they were the elite. They were-- I'm--

The one thing I remember when I went to the Gymnasium almost at the beginning they cut off one year for the Abitur. The Abitur is the final examination. They cut off one year so you could have-- I don't know why, probably get more officer material because it was cut down already. So those kids were my age. See, in 1940 they would be 16, 17, 18. I don't know if they were officers or what they were, see. But I didn't have any more contact with them.

And I tried to look up his name. I tried to look up a couple other names that I remember. But I don't remember them either, you know. And over the years I would be switched from class.

Q. UN-HUH.

A. So--

Q. DID YOUR WIFE GO WITH YOU TO THE REUNION?

A. My wife went back. As a matter of fact, we then went back to Hamburg to her town. And since they didn't have to pay for her trip because we were there already, we looked up her-- you know, where she was raised. And we did go-- what happened is we tried to find out what had happened to one of her aunts. She had a grandmother and an aunt who lived in Lubeck, an old Hansa Stadt-- you know, old city. And we tried to find out what happened.

And we couldn't get much information. Her brother had written her, and we actually went to the cemetery in-- near Lubeck, cemetery called Moising, and found the grave-- took a picture of the grave of her grandmother. Her-- her aunt was also-- you know, was probably in her 50s or whatever it was. And she was-- she died. She was transported out. We never did find out exactly what happened because they had spelled the name wrong and I don't know what, or we

didn't have it right.

Q. WHAT WERE--

A. So-- well, my wife's name was Hautzner. I met my wife here much-- I met her here in '49, '48, something like that. And she lived in San Francisco, as a matter of fact not very far from here in the Richmond district.

Q. YOU WERE SAYING EARLIER THAT THE TWO KINDS OF JEWS WHO-- WHO DIDN'T LEAVE GERMANY: ONE WERE THE POORER BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T AFFORD IT?

A. Couldn't afford it, yeah.

Q. AND THE OTHER?

A. Well, some-- the wealthy ones-- if you had property-- if you had, let's say, rental property or if you had a big business.

Q. YOU WERE MORE RELUCTANT TO LEAVE?

A. Later on-- well, but you also couldn't. I mean how are you going to leave? Are you going to leave-- if, for example-- and plus the fact it depended on your trade. If you were a lawyer as an example-- well, if you were a judge, first of all, you had no choice. You got kicked out first-- right away. They got kicked off the courts so you lost your job. If you worked for the government, you lost your job.

You were trained in German law. You spoke German. Where could you go? You certainly couldn't practice law in the United States because it's a different set of laws. Beside that, if they even let you in. So they tried to maybe stay on as lawyers and so on and tried to-- until they were then further restricted. After a while they couldn't represent non-Jews and so on and so forth. They couldn't practice before the courts and so on.

If-- if you were an electrician or if you were an engineer, you could come in the United States or any country, go to South America. You didn't-- didn't need the language. If you were a physician, it was already more difficult because they have different-- you know, you couldn't just practice unless you were a very famous physician, you know. So it's not that easy to leave. Just put yourself-- I mean, after all, you weren't in-- in deathly danger.

Now my wife's uncle, who was a journalist -- very famous journalist in and writer in-- in Berlin.

Q. WHAT'S HIS NAME?

A. His name was Katze Klutzel. And he was liberal. He was Zionist, and he said things about

the Nazis before they came in. He was practically on the first train out when the Nazis came in. As a matter of fact, his family then left Berlin and moved in with my-- you know, the Hutzners in-- in Hamburg, my--

In other words, he then left and went to Palestine at the time, and he had a heck of time finding work. As a matter of fact, he had-- from what I gather in family talking he was quite upset because he had done a lot of work for the Jewish organization. I don't know if it was Heert-- I don't know which one -- in Germany as-- you know, as a writer and worked for them. And he couldn't get a job with them in Israel, in-- you know, in Palestine at the time. And it was difficult.

And he eventually got-- well, he-- I guess he spoke some English because he was a travel writer. He used to travel around a lot and eventually got a job writing for <u>The Jerusalem Post</u>, but that took years I guess. You know, probably money wasn't there to begin with. But most other people didn't leave. You know, the ones who left were the political-- people who were Communists, they went to Russia or-- you know, and--

Q. OR ZIONISTS.

A. Zionists left, went to Israel. But there weren't that many. And I remember when I was little Zionists were looked down upon.

Q. ESPECIALLY BY GERMAN JEWS.

A. By German Jews. You know, the Zion-- you know, Hertzel thought that he would be accepted by the central Europeans, the German and the French; and they did not accept him. The ones who accepted him with wildly open arms were the-- Poland and Polish and Russians because they considered themselves Jews. So I was-- you know, in other words mine was typically German Jewish. I didn't know what gefilte fish was when we came to this country. Never heard of it. I didn't speak Yiddish. None of my family spoke Yiddish. We were, you know, generations removed from that, see.

Q. (UNINTELLIGIBLE.)

A. We took lessons over there so I spoke a little bit. And then, of course, when I went to-- we lived in Oakland. They sent me to Oakland High because my cousins had gone there. It was near where we lived with my uncle. And I was 14 and we looked at what classes I had taken. They stuck me in with 16-year-olds. They put me in the 11th grade, way out of my age. And I was quite young. I was quite

immature.

Anyhow-- and so here I-- I graduated at 16 because they had stuck me-- see if you graduate in Germany with the Abitur, that's the equivalent of two years of college here which, of course, I had not done.

Q. YOU SURVIVED THAT YEAR IN A NEW LANGUAGE?

A. I survived-- oh, yeah, I survived, see. And, of course, it was difficult from an economic standpoint because, you know, they were-- I don't know, a very big percent of unemployed here so it wasn't easy to get a job.

Fortunately, we brought everything over, in other words. I remember we even brought shoe polish and soap powder and buttons because we sold buttons in the business. We got enough buttons to last-- we still have buttons. You know, boxes of buttons to sew on clothing. So we didn't buy anything for years because everything--

Q. YOU BROUGHT EVERYTHING WITH YOU?

A. Well, you either had to leave it there or you had to pay for it to ship it and-- so it was shipped. The only-- and we brought the car out. The only trouble with that was that somehow or another they fumigated the ship in New York or in San

Francisco. I don't know. They must have had a problem. And so everything smelled of the stuff; couldn't get rid of it. The car smelled for years because they had-- you know, had gotten into the upholstery.

Q. WHEN YOU ENTERED, WERE YOU (UNINTELLIGIBLE)--

A. Yeah, we were. My-- I was because my education was interrupted so I got some. My father got some money back. Well, first of all, he paid for years into the insurance. You know, these people paid into the Social Security-- you know, Germany had Social Security since almost-- I think almost since Bismarck's day. And he paid into that, and he paid into the health insurance. You know, he--

And plus they took-- you know, they-- they confiscated basically so many thousand marks from him for the automobile and the clothes we took out and-- you know, everything that you bought, if it was new, you had to pay three or four times the value. And so that's the way they got some money out of the Jews, you see. They refined that later on. They got even more. See, they just took it later on.

Q. SO YOUR FATHER GOT SOME MONEY?

A. So he got some money back. Not much, you

know. Nowhere's near what he lost, you see.

Q. WHAT DID THEY PAY, ABOUT A THOUSAND MARKS OR A THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR LOSS OF EDUCATION?

A. Something like that. It was-- it was-- it wasn't that much, no. And my father got-- he got a pension from Germany, which he was entitled to. He paid into it for like four years. Let's see, he was-- he started working when he was 14. And we probably didn't get much money-- probably didn't get any pay then. But he was 50 when he left, and he must have paid into it all those years. So he was-- he got money every month, I think $600 or something like that.

Q. CAN YOU TELL ME, WHEN YOU THINK BACK ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES DURING THIS TIME, WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS BEEN-- HOW HAS THIS EXPERIENCE AFFECTED YOU THE MOST IN YOUR LIFE?

A. It's hard to say. Well, I would say I-- it was harder for me to make friends maybe because it was a life of turmoil; you know, of constant-- of change, let's put it that way. And, you know, I wasn't-- I didn't grow up and go to school with-- you know, live together with friends and go through school with and so on. See, actually that's happened since then I was-- then I came to this country, and

then I started to go to college. Then I was drafted in the Army and so on.

So, as a matter of fact, in that respect my life is similar to my father's. My father, first of all, like I say he was-- he became an apprentice. Then he had to quit to go into the Army. Then he got out of the Army. Then he started-- I think he became a traveling salesman in the textile business. Then he's-- gave that up to be drafted in 1914, and he served for four years then.

Then he came back to-- you know, to the country with-- which was beaten and, you know, had economic problems. He started to build up a business. And then in '23 the inflation happened and wiped everything out. He unfortunately had money in-- I remember later on they paid some money back in the '30s if you had money in a savings account. But his money-- he was in business. His money was in a checking account so that didn't cover. So he didn't get that back.

Then, you know, he built up his business again. And in '35, six, seven, eight, then he had to quit, became-- you know, give up the business, come to the United States, and start all over again, see, at age 52 or something like that.

Q. AND HOW HAS YOUR LIFE BEEN LIKE THAT?

A. Well, it's-- hasn't been quite like that. But, like I say, we went to-- had to leave Germany, come to this country, and move around; from Oakland moved to El Cerrito, and then I was drafted. When I was in the Army, I was sent to college by the Army. Made friends there for a while, then we broke up, so on, see. And eventually I finished college here at University of California.

Q. HOW LONG WERE YOU IN THE ARMY?

A. Year and a half.

Q. ALWAYS IN THE UNITED STATES?

A. In the United States, yeah.

Q. SO--

A. So--

Q. -- YOU WERE-- THE DISRUPTION--

A. But I don't think-- I don't think that-- I was not affected like the ones who went through the Holocaust and so on. You know, we still had-- family was together all the time. There was no separation. There was no extreme hardships, no worse than anybody in this country that lived through the Depression like, you know, people my age.

Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR PARENTS? HOW DID YOU SEE THAT THIS AFFECTED THEM, THEIR EXPERIENCES, DURING

THIS TIME?

A. Well, it's social dislocation, first of all. Here's a-- that's what happened to a lot of German Jews who came to this country in the '30s, you know, before the war. They didn't have to leave. You know, they weren't-- it's not like the ones who came much later who survived these terrible-- you know, horrible events. They came to this country, and they were then socially displaced. They were looked down upon as foreigners.

For example, like people would say how did-- Mr. Kiefer, how-- you know, here he's come to this country and he's started a business and he's making a go of it. And here my parents came from Italy and they have-- you know, a lot of immigrants in El Cerrito, a lot of Italians around here.

As an example, they say, well, you know, here they struggled all their lives. They were just working for somebody. But my father had a business in Germany. He was a businessman. He knew how to run a business. He had 25 employees at one time. And so he was no stranger to business, and it wasn't like somebody just starting up on his own just starting going into business.

So I was-- I don't know how it was-- it was

tough on them. They left their families behind. My mother, of course, eventually, you know, got-- got all her family together. We were very lucky. We had here in-- in the Bay Area we had-- let's see one, two, three, four of her siblings, and there was some back East-- three of them back East and four of them out here.

But my father had his-- his-- left his mother; knew he wasn't going to see her again although she was 94 so she was up there. But left his other sisters and brothers. So I'm sure it was quite traumatic.

Then, of course, suddenly you're cut off from-- you don't know what's happening anymore. See, the end of '41, and that's just about the time the deportation started. So we didn't hear-- you know, didn't know what happened.

Q. YEAH.

A. And in a strange country with a strange language and already being advanced in years. Like my mother wasn't that old, but my father was.

Q. YOUR FATHER WAS ABOUT 37 WHEN YOU WERE BORN.

A. Yeah. No, he was-- he married at 37. See so 18-- he was 40 I guess, something like that,

yeah.

Q. IT'S ALWAYS HARDER ON THE OLDER ONES, ISN'T IT?

A. Yeah. And, you know, he was physically quite active and so on so he was-- he took some menial jobs here and-- but it's not like somebody who's 20 and 30 and came to this country. It was not-- not as easy for him. Just like it was quite demeaning for doctors-- you know, highly placed professionals to come here and having to go through the internship.

And if they were too old-- I remember I went out with a girl once. Her father was a doctor. No, I guess it was a dentist in Germany. But he was in his 60s, and he couldn't go through it again. So he worked in a lab down in San Jose State, see. So depending on the age. So it was difficult. But then I think as time went on you, you know, acclimatized yourself and got into things. And also with that came the knowledge that you were very fortunate to get out.

I think at first I-- my guess is that a lot of German Jews came-- you know, wondered if they had done the right thing; came here you know in, let's say, '37, '38 was very difficult to find-- find

work. You know, they had given up work over there. It wasn't that they were forced out. The ones who left once the Holocaust started I think felt differently. See, they were lucky to be out, to be alive

(Whereupon, closeups of pictures were shown.)

MR. KIEFER: Let's see. This rabbi, Dr. Blum, was the chief rabbi -- Ober Rabbiner -- the head rabbi not just in Krefeld but also for the district around it. He officiated in some of the smaller towns and so on. He got out I think in '39, came to this country, and got a post in-- in Texas. And I remember he was, you know, my hero. He was a good speaker. And when he taught us religion in school, he-- oh, he treated us as equals. You know, he played games with us -- ball games and so on -- during-- you know, we had like two hours, and there would be a recess in between.

He evidently was a very wise and good rabbi. And somebody in Texas in his congregation wrote a book about a fictional rabbi, but the whole thing--

End of Tape 1.

Begin Tape 2: No voice. Closeups of photographs only: Photograph No. 1 of rabbi w/boys (including Mr. Kiefer), Photograph No. 2 of two adults and eight boys, Photograph No. 3 of large school grouping.

End of Tape 2.