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Interview with Peter Kooy
Holocaust Oral History Project
Date: Tuesday, November 13, 1990
Place: San Francisco, California
Interviewer: Barbara Barrar
Transcriber: Jacqueline Y. Royal

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1 Q. TODAY IS TUESDAY NOVEMBER 13, 1990 AND I
2 AM BARBARA BARRER (phonetic) INTERVIEWING PETER KOOY
3 AND JOHN GRANT'S ON CAMERA.

4 PETER, WHEN WERE YOU BORN?

5 A. I was born November 19, 1936.

6 Q. AND WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

7 A. In Amsterdam.

8 Q. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FAMILY. WHO IS IN THE
9 FAMILY, YOUR BROTHERS, SISTERS.

(
10 A. Well, let's see. I have parents, of
11 course. My father died recently, Anton Kooy; and my
12 mother Alita is still alive. I have a younger
13 brother, Walter, who was also born in Holland and I
14 have a younger sister, Sonia, who was born in the
15 United States.

16 Q. HOW MUCH YOUNGER ARE THEY THAN YOU?

17 A. My brother's two and a half years younger,
18 my sister is enough younger that she accuses me of
19 acting like her father still.

20 Q. SO TELL ME WHAT YOUR FAMILY LIFE WAS LIKE
21 IN AMSTERDAM WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP.

(
22 A. We were a worker family at that time.
23 There were really pretty strict stratifications
24 between levels of people, and workers felt themselves
25 to be very distinct from the middle class. The

1 working people were those that took their paycheck
2 and as soon as it came, divided into 16 portions,
3 each dedicated to something, with nothing left over
4 at the end of the week, and that was basically our
5 family.

6 My father worked for a fine arts
7 auctioneer. He also got involved in things like
8 store liquidations and stuff during the years, the
9 depression years. And my mother was a housewife.

10 Q. DID YOU HAVE OTHER FAMILY AROUND? DID YOU
11 HAVE GRANDPARENTS, UNCLES AND AUNTS?

12 A. Yes. Grandparents on both sides, several
13 uncles, several of those I might mention later were
14 involved, as we were, in the resistance movement. It
15 was, to an extent, a family affair.

16 Q. TELL ME WHAT LIFE WAS LIKE BEFORE -- WHAT
17 YOUR NORMAL LIFE WAS LIKE, YOUR FAMILY LIFE, BEFORE
18 THINGS STARTED TO CHANGE.

19 A. I was, what, three years old when things
20 started, so that is really a time period that I don't
21 recall much of. I think the later years, the war
22 years, were really normal for me. That was just the
23 way things were and that was, yeah, in a way, a very
24 quiet time. Radios weren't allowed so you didn't
25 have that noise. People stayed home most of the

1 time, there wasn't much energy for anything else.
2 News was at a premium. Radios, as I said, were not
3 allowed but we had one hidden away; on occasion we
4 listened.

5 Q. WHY WEREN'T THEY ALLOWED?

6 A. I think basically any occupying power
7 wants to keep the population under control and that
8 means withholding information or managing
9 information.

10 Q. WELL, TELL ME WHAT YOUR EARLIEST MEMORIES
11 WERE OF WHAT WAS GOING ON IN YOUR FAMILY.

12 A. Probably the earliest memories was that
13 there were people quite often that came and went
14 away. Came in late in the evening and were gone the
15 next morning. That my father was gone sometimes
16 nights and my mother was very worried as to where he
17 was. A lot of that was related with the eight
18 o'clock curfew and danger if you hadn't got to where
19 you were going, being out in the streets at that
20 time. Quite a bit of it was also the excitement, you
21 know. "Look, there is a plane. Look, they are
22 shooting at it," that sort of thing. To a boy that
23 is fun, that is interesting.

24 Q. WERE YOU GOING TO SCHOOL, WERE YOU IN
25 PUBLIC SCHOOL?

1 A. Intermittently. School teachers being
2 troublemakers, I guess, the world over, very often
3 found themselves arrested or barred from teaching.
4 And toward the end of the war, schools were in
5 session less and less often. So it was a lot of time
6 spent at home.

7 Q. SO DO YOU REMEMBER TRANSITION LIKE FROM
8 WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO SCHOOL AND THINGS WERE NORMAL
9 AND THEN CHANGES STARTED TO OCCUR?

10 A. Not really. Not really. I remember times
11 in school, you know, sitting in school bench and
12 listening to that boring teacher, that sort of
13 thing. But as far as dividing it up by time periods
14 and such I don't think that is really memory. We
15 were a very bookish family. We had a lot of books at
16 home. I liked to read and I was really happiest when
17 I was at home with a book in a corner somewhere.

18 Q. SO THEN TELL ME ABOUT HOW YOUR FATHER
19 BECAME INVOLVED IN THE RESISTANCE AND WHAT HE DID.

20 A. Okay. He had been a member of the youth
21 organization of the social democratic party, and that
22 was a tight knit group. In fact, it is one that
23 still keeps contact through a newsletter 50 years
24 later, and a number of those people became involved
25 in resistance movement not necessarily as a group but

Spelling 1 as individuals who then sometimes would recognize
2 each other. My uncle Pete (Larow), was involved from
3 early beginnings in resistance and he was the one
4 that actually brought my father into the group where
5 he was one of the leaders.

6 Q. WAS THIS YOUR MOTHER'S BROTHER?

7 A. That is my mother's brother, yes. This
8 group was called literally translated the free
Spelling 9 groups, the (Friary groupy), and through that my
10 father became involved in a lot of their activities
11 which centered around things like moving people
12 around, particularly Jewish people that had to find
13 hiding places had to be brought from one place to
14 another moving documents around, that sort of thing.
15 He was essentially a courier a lot of the time.

16 Q. WHERE DID THE MOTIVATION COME FROM LIKE
17 WHAT INFLUENCED YOUR UNCLE TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS? I
18 MEAN THERE WAS A CHOICE TO BE IN THE RESISTANCE OR
19 NOT. WHAT WAS IT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY THAT --

20 A. Well, you know, we never felt it was
21 particularly unusual that uncle was involved. I had
22 another uncle that was involved, my grandfather was
23 involved, my father was involved, it seemed like
24 everybody was doing something. Now I know in
25 retrospect that was not the case, but in our circles

1 that seemed self-evident that something had to be
2 done. I have often thought that part of it was the
3 Dutch character that doesn't like to be told what to
4 do; and since the Germans were telling us to do one
5 thing, we obviously wanted to do something else.
6 Part, also out of the social democratic movement with
7 the feelings of worker solidarity and such, I know
8 that sounds kind of communist now but it wasn't then,
9 they stole that from us. And therefore the desire to
10 resist oppression whatever the source.

11 Q. SO IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WERE YOUR
12 NEIGHBORS DOING THE SAME THINGS?

13 A. We really didn't know. We really didn't
14 know. Because of security reasons you didn't ask and
15 you didn't volunteer information. We were in an
16 apartment house that held eight families and I
17 remember there was one family there that we were
18 really very concerned about, we thought they were
19 doing something off color. They might have been
20 collaborators. We didn't trust them at all and we
21 watched them all the time and talked to them after
22 the war. Turned out they felt exactly the same way
23 about us.

24 Q. EACH WAS SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THE OTHER?

25 A. Of the other family, yes, and because of

1 that suspicion and uncertainty, you tried not to know
2 too many people, you kept to yourself as much as
3 possible.

4 Q. SO DID YOU KNOW -- DID YOU KNOW ANYTHING
5 ABOUT THE PEOPLE THAT YOU WERE --

6 A. That came in and out?

7 Q. YES.

8 A. Certainly the ones who stayed with us for
9 a longer period of time, yes. There were three or
10 four that I could talk about. There were also lots
11 of people, as I said, moved in one evening, were gone
12 the next morning.

13 Q. WELL, WHAT WAS IT LIKE, A TYPICAL DAY, YOU
14 WOULD WAKE UP IN THE MORNING AND WHAT WAS GOING ON IN
15 YOUR HOUSE?

16 A. Well, since I was small, very often there
17 would be a new face at breakfast that arrived
18 sometime late in the evening, and we learned not to
19 be inquisitive. In fact, for many of those people we
20 never even knew their names. Occasionally you might
21 know that somebody had a code name, a cover name.
22 For example, I particularly remember one person
23 because his code name was V-2 and that seemed so
24 interesting to me that someone was V-2 that I
25 remember that particular name, but very often we

1 didn't even know that.

2 Q. WHAT DID V-2 STAND FOR?

3 A. Just a combination to preserve identity.

4 Q. SO WHERE WERE THESE PEOPLE COMING FROM AND
5 WHERE WERE THEY GOING?

6 A. Again, you didn't ask, my father as a
7 courier, often had the job to go to a certain
8 address, pick up a person of such and such a
9 description and take them to another address.
10 Sometimes there was a need that they couldn't move
11 directly from one place to another, it was too far,
12 it was too late, and they would come to our house,
13 perhaps wait until arrangements could be made to move
14 them on elsewhere and very much keep quiet.

15 In fact, I recall still very distinctly my
16 mother impressing upon my brother and myself that we
17 were not to talk to anybody about anything that went
18 in our house because if the Germans found out, they
19 would come and kill our mother and father. So that
20 really makes sure that you don't ask any unnecessary
21 questions.

22 Q. HOW DID YOUR PARENTS EXPLAIN TO YOU WHAT
23 THEY WERE DOING?

24 A. I think along the lines that these people
25 need help and we have to give it to them. My father

1 often said that he never really intended to start
2 doing all this. He said we just slipped into it.
3 Something needed to be done and we did it. There was
4 nobody else to do it. You know, he wasn't -- he
5 always said, "What is the use of talking about this?
6 It was so long ago. It is what anybody else would
7 have done." And as a mature person I know that is not
8 true. I know that is not true, but that is how you
9 saw it. And I think a lot of the people that were in
10 the movement at that time saw it that way too. That
11 it was self-evident that somebody had to do the
12 things, there was nobody else so they did.

13 Q. WAS YOUR FATHER WORKING AT THE SAME TIME?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- LIKE NORMAL LIKE KEEPING UP --

16 A. Not through the entire war. He was
17 subject to labor, call-up for forced labor in
18 Germany. And we had a cooperating doctor who was
19 providing medical exemptions. After a while it got
20 difficult to come up with medical exemptions. At one
21 time, sort of a family joke still, his exemption was
22 that he was a chronic bed wetter and therefore
23 couldn't go. Then in 1944 the Germans stopped taking
24 any medical excuses and he was ordered to report to a
25 train to take him to Germany to report there.

1 He was advised that the best thing would
2 be to do is to buy a return ticket to a town down the
3 line on the railroad. And the reason for a return
4 ticket is it was very difficult to get tickets to go
5 into the cities, they didn't want people coming back
6 in, and also it would have taken necessary time to
7 buy a ticket once he was somewhere and tried to get
8 off the train and come back. And he did, he bought
9 the ticket, got on the train, managed to get off the
10 train unseen there and had his ticket. So he hid
11 out. There was a train going back so he came back to
12 Amsterdam.

13 At that point on, on the German records
14 he was gone. They didn't know where he got away or
15 anything like that. Of course he didn't exist
16 anymore, he couldn't go back to work at his job.

17 And there is another factor involved too,
18 they had in the fall of 1944 they had something
19 called Crazy Tuesday. This was when the allies moved
20 into southern Holland and a lot of the German
21 occupying administrative forces panicked and started
22 burning records getting ready to move out. There was
23 a group of resistance workers hidden away in the
24 German administrative clerical structure who took the
25 opportunity to destroy other selected records

1 including that of my father, so that all record of
2 his existing disappeared at that time. He went to
3 work full time for the resistance and they paid him
4 the salary that he had been getting at the other job
5 for the rest of the year.

6 Q. WHERE DID THE FUNDING COME FOR THE
7 RESISTANCE?

8 A. There were people with funds that would
9 support it that would not take the risk to support it
10 in any other way but would support it financially.

11 Q. SO WERE THE PEOPLE THAT SUPPORT IT
12 PRIMARILY THE WORKERS?

13 A. No. I say no because basically the
14 workers were living on a hand-to-mouth basis, that
15 class. So the financial funding would come from the
16 professional classes in the middle class, from the
17 well to do.

18 Q. RIGHT. BUT IT WAS WORKERS THAT WERE DOING
19 THE COURIER -- THE SAVING?

20 A. Mostly, yes. Yes.

21 Q. WHEN PEOPLE STAYED IN YOUR HOUSE WHERE DID
22 THEY STAY IN THE HOUSE?

23 A. Well, that was a point of contention.
24 When nobody was there, my brother and I each had our
25 own bed. When somebody came, then my brother moved

1 into bed with me and he always kicked when he slept.
2 It was always a problem, but that is basically how it
3 worked, we gave up one of the beds in the house.

4 Q. SO WERE THERE EVER TIMES WHEN THE GERMANS
5 CAME TO THE BUILDING AND STARTED KNOCKING ON DOORS?

6 A. Not in our section there. We were
7 prepared. We had two hides built to hide people and
8 we have even -- we tried them out. We had one boy, I
9 think about 14 at the time, and we built a hide for
10 him. Between our floor and the ceiling of the
11 apartment below, there was the bottom of a bookcase
12 could be lifted up and he could slip in there and lay
13 between floors. There was only about nine-inch space
14 and it was so tight a fit that my father always
15 maintained that you could see the floor move up and
16 down when he was breathing by the pressure of his
17 ribs against the --

18 Q. SO YOU ACTUALLY DID HIDE A BOY THERE?

19 A. It was a practice. We did do it again.
20 Because he got kind of bored, because he saw this
21 knob sitting on the floor and he started turning it.
22 Never thought anything about it. But then the next
23 day our neighbors below told us about this
24 metaphysical phenomena they had observed they were
25 sitting in their living room and their hanging plant

1 suddenly started rotating and kept going around and
2 around and they said they knew it was a sign of
3 something to come. It was a sign sent to them. And
4 of course we couldn't clarify things for them.

5 Q. GOOD THING IT WASN'T A CHANDELIER.

6 A. Yes. We had another hide in the back of a
7 deep closet where we built in a false wall where
8 somebody could stand behind. Fortunately we never
9 had to use either one. We weren't sure if there
10 would have been time to get people into these places
11 if there had been a raid.

12 Q. SO WAS IT NORMALLY ONE PERSON AT A TIME?

13 A. Yes. Except that we had some long-term
14 people with us and then there might be people in and
15 out.

16 Q. HOW LONG IS A LONG-TERM PERSON?

17 A. We had somebody for about eight months.
18 We had somebody else for about a year and a half.

19 Q. REALLY?

20 A. We had somebody else for a few weeks.

21 Q. A WOMAN OR A MAN?

22 A. Well, let me run through those. We had
23 one young man 18 years, old name of Wilhelm.

24 Q. WAS HE JEWISH?

25 A. He was Jewish. He showed up at our door

(
spelling
1 one day. He showed us the key to our house. He said
2 Professor (Vandeberg) (phonetic) was -- my uncle said
3 you would recognize me by this key. Now, this is a
4 person that my mother had worked for before the war
5 and he was Jewish and he was wanted always to be
6 ready to get away.

7 Q. THE PROFESSOR?

8 A. The professor. So we had given him a key
9 to the house. So this boy came and stayed with us
10 several months. Soon after he came he started
11 getting visits from a doting aunt, and as we found
12 out later, she was bringing him all sorts of luxury
13 foods. He was getting canned butter and canned
14 condensed milk and chocolate.

15 Q. THAT HE KEPT TO HIMSELF OR SHARED?

16 A. That he kept to himself. We found this
17 out when he simply disappeared one day. He left. He
18 just walked out and my mother cleaning up the debris
19 in that section of the room that he was using, found
20 all these tin cans and such that he had left.

21 Q. SO WAS HE LIKE STAYING IN YOUR BROTHER'S
22 ROOM?

23 A. At that time that was more warm weather
24 time and we had a rear porch. This was -- we were on
25 the fourth story in an apartment building that we had

1 partitioned off. So he had sort of a private place
2 there. Now, we heard later that where he had gone
3 next he had been picked up had been drafted into the
4 forced labor group and was shot by an allied plane
5 while working to repair a railroad and killed.

6 Q. HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT HIM?

7 A. I don't even know how that information,
8 you know, somebody tells somebody tells somebody type
9 thing.

10 Q. SO FOR EIGHT MONTHS WHAT KIND OF
11 INTERACTION WAS THERE WITH THE FAMILY MEMBERS? DID
12 HE EVER LEAVE THE HOUSE?

13 A. This particular boy was quite secretive.
14 He literally stayed in his room and got visitors. If
15 I said eight months for him that is not right. He
16 was with us perhaps six weeks, eight weeks, something
spelling 17 like that. We had a young boy (Flipya) who was with
18 us for about eight months, a six year old. That was
19 a case where the parents were hiding out in one place
20 that family could not take a child, and we took him
21 in and he was with us.

22 He was a very pleasant boy, bit of a
23 rascal. He developed the unfortunate habit of
24 disliking the old lady that lived on the bottom
25 floor, and leaning over the stairwell would spit on

1 her head from the fourth story and this old lady
2 began screaming "That God damn Jewish kid! You better
3 get him out of there." And we decided at that point
4 we had better move him on. Now, we do know his
5 family. His parents were caught. The father died at
6 Bergen-Belsen. The mother survived that, although
7 was subject to medical experimentation. And those
8 two were reunited after the war, so we know how that
9 came out.

10 Q. BUT IN THAT PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS HE WAS
11 ISOLATED FROM HIS FAMILY?

12 A. Yes. Yes. That was just too risky. He
13 didn't seem to mind.

14 Q. I MEAN HOW --

15 A. Yes, we were about age mates, yeah. As I
16 mentioned earlier, my favorite recreation was
17 reading, so I sort of hated to be distracted from
18 that for any such thing as play. I think a lot of
19 the time my younger brother played with him more, I
spelling 20 believe. Then we had Avert (phonetic) now he was not
21 Jewish. He was a resistance worker who had
22 participated in a raid on the city archives to
23 destroy files on Jewish families and Jewish
24 identities and they burned the place and he had to
25 hide out for a while until the heat was off so he was

(1 with us two or three weeks.

2 Q. HOW WERE JEWS IDENTIFIED?

3 A. There was an internal passport a
spelling 4 tri-portite (phonetic) as they say, a three fold
5 passport and the center of the passport had a big
6 Star of David in. My father, one of the things he
7 was involved with was alterations to passports like
8 that. He was involved in the sense that he would get
9 the passports from Jews, he would take it to a
10 certain address, they would alter them. He would
11 pick it up later and bring it back.

12 What they would do -- it was very
13 interesting. They would tease apart the paper fibers
14 in the folds so that it opened up, took the center
15 part out, put a new center part in without that star,
16 work those fibers back together again, press it
17 together and there was the correct identity papers
18 with the picture and everything and the signatures
19 but without the Star of David in the center.

20 Q. AT WHAT POINT WERE JEWS IDENTIFIED IN THAT
21 WAY? WAS THAT A DUTCH THING THAT THEY HAD?

22 A. Yes. I don't know this from personal
23 knowledge at the time, but I believe historically it
24 happened in the beginning of 1942 that they started
25 doing that.

1 Q. BECAUSE OF WHY?

2 A. Probably a part of the general attempt to
3 identify the Jews and remove them from society.

4 Q. BUT THE GERMANS MADE THEM DO IT?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. IT WAS IMPOSED BY GERMANY ON THE DUTCH
7 GOVERNMENT TO DO THAT?

8 A. Yes, there were a certain number of
9 individuals in the Dutch government that were quite
10 content to do what the Germans wanted them to do I
11 think there are even today people everywhere that
12 hate Jews and will take every opportunity to do
13 something to them. Also there were a lot of people
14 that were simply afraid to object.

15 Q. HAD YOU HAD ANY JEWISH FRIENDS AT SCHOOL?
16 DID YOU KNOW ANY JEWISH PEOPLE?

17 A. No. No. Most of the Jewish people by the
18 time I was of an age to recognize such differences
19 were already in hiding, I think. We did have one
20 other person that stayed with us that was Hans
spelling 21 Angress (phonetic). That is somebody we still know.
22 That is a rather interesting story. There was a boy,
23 he was German. German family had gotten out of
24 Germany in time. His father was a banker. They had
25 moved to England and didn't like England.

1 Q. THE WHOLE FAMILY?

2 A. The whole family and came back to Holland
3 and in the expectation that things wouldn't be all
4 that bad, it would blow over type thing. When the
5 Germans started turning Jews in Holland, the father
6 was arrested for exporting funds from Germany, spent
7 time in a German jail and from there was sent to camp
8 and died. When things started getting dangerous in
9 Amsterdam, the family split up different places and
10 the boy, Hans, was supposed to go to a family.

11 My father was assigned to bring him from
12 where he was hiding, he was hiding in somebody's
13 closet, to the new address was to take him. Those
14 people at the last moment sent word that it was too
15 risky, they wouldn't. So curfew was coming on, there
16 was nothing else for my father to do but to bring him
17 home, and my mother still recounts that arrival. My
18 father introduced him to my mother. The boy, having
19 gone to a military school in Germany, clicked his
20 heel and made stiff mole (phonetic). And she says,
21 "I want to talk to you in the kitchen," to my
22 father. She said, "What are you doing? Not only do
23 you bring a Jew into my house, but a German Jew."
24 Well, as it worked out, he was with us for the next
25 year and a half until the end of the war.

1 Q. HOW OLD WAS HE AT THAT TIME?

2 A. When he came to us 14. They arrived right
3 after curfew, so of course you don't want to make any
4 noise when you are on the streets after that time.
5 They were -- both had taken their shoes off as
6 opposed to the usual thing, and things like that, and
7 he lost one of his shoes. He came to us having only
8 one shoe. It was a major production to find another
9 pair of shoes for him. My mother still talks about
10 that. I think she finally found a place that would
11 trade a pint of oil for some shoes.

12 A lot of purchasing those days was by
13 barter. Anyway, at the end of May 1945 --

14 Q. YOUR FAMILY HAD TO FEED THESE PEOPLE, WAS
15 THERE ANY SUBSIDY FOR THE EXPENSE OF CARING FOR
16 SOMEONE?

17 A. Okay. The way that worked, everything was
18 subject to purchasing on the rationing stamps and, of
19 course, they failed to get rations you had to have an
20 ID. If you showed the Jewish ID, you cooperate, get
21 ID, you were arrested. So Jews couldn't get
22 rations. The underground, one of their functions was
23 to raid the warehouses and distribution centers for
24 ration carts. This had to be done periodically
25 because to prevent this sort of thing the Germans

1 redesigned the ration booklets that you had to paste
2 things in and redesign the stamps and they would raid
3 these places. And then either the ration stamps were
4 passed on to the families that were sheltering Jews
5 or we would go to a sympathetic grocer and get the
6 merchandise right away and distribute that
7 merchandise.

8 (Some sort of glitch in tape with no
9 audible response.)

10 When stuffs were directly found stolen
11 sometimes contributed and distributed that way. My
12 Uncle Hank was involved quite a bit in that and I
13 have heard stories about one event when a cart full
14 of apples was to be delivered to his house for
15 distribution and two policeman had just shown up
16 because they had heard rumors of something unusual
17 going on. So they had to at a last moment wave to
18 have cart and tell it to get out then they were able
19 to bribe the policeman with five pounds of flour.
20 Never did get the apples back. There is a lot of
21 incidents of that.

22 (No audible response on the tape.)

23 Q. WHAT DID YOU DO IN A HOUSE DAY IN DAY OUT,
24 WEEK AFTER WEEK?

25 A. That is an interesting question. You got

1 very restless. In the winter when it got dark early
2 my father would take him out for a short walk between
3 the time it got dark and curfew. He would go out the
4 front door and wait on the corner. Hans would go out
5 through the cellar, the back door and circle around
6 and they would meet in the corner and walk around the
7 block. My father used to call that walking the dog
8 and that was his principal physical activity.

9 The resistance later on found somebody
10 that was willing to come in as a tutor that came in
11 once a week and was tutoring him in English and
12 mathematics, I believe, and was giving him enough
13 assignment to keep him sort of occupied during the
14 week. It.

15 Was a restless period. In particular you
16 had to be careful so careful when the family was all
17 gone out of the house when there was nobody supposed
18 to be there. In these apartment houses you can hear
19 thing, you know. So you couldn't move around much if
20 he did he certainly had to have his shoes off. He
21 couldn't flush the toilet because everybody would say
22 "Hey, there is somebody there, there is not supposed
23 to be." Of course, these precautions would extend to
24 anybody that was staying with us.

25 Q. SO YOU WERE OFF AT SCHOOL MEANWHILE DURING

1 THE DAY?

2 A. We were really home a lot.

3 Q. HOME A LOT?

4 A. Partly, as I said, the lack of teachers
5 had got themselves in trouble. Partly in the winters
6 that had just got too cold to be at school.

7 Q. HOW DID YOU GET YOUR EDUCATION?

8 A. I read a lot. I was really a voracious
9 reader, still am.

10 Q. FROM THE LIBRARY?

11 A. Yes. My father and mother both were, how
12 shall I say, appreciated learning and spent a lot of
13 money on books, money that they didn't have to spend
14 really. And we had what at the time seemed like a
15 large library. I would estimate it is probably 800,
16 a thousand books at the most, but I was working my
17 way through them.

18 Q. WERE YOU EVER PLAYING WITH OTHER KIDS IN
19 THE NEIGHBORHOOD? OCCASIONAL?

20 A. Occasionally when I was forced to.

21 Q. WHO FORCED YOU?

22 A. My mother. "Get out of the house." But I
23 do remember I kept a book outside buried wrapped in
24 stuff so that when my mother kicked me out, I had
25 something to read. Because of that I think I was

1 probably not as much affected by a lot of the
2 privations and such as I might have been because I
3 was sort of off into that other world, you know.

4 Q. WEREN'T YOU EVER ATTEMPTED TO TELL ABOUT
5 WHAT WAS GOING ON IN YOUR HOUSE?

6 A. No. No. It was very clear to me. We
7 knew people disappeared all the time, we knew why, we
8 knew there were dangers all around.

9 Q. WEREN'T YOU SCARED?

10 A. No. I really wasn't. My brother, my
11 younger brother Walter, I think, was bothered a lot
12 by that. We all feel that he acquired habits of
13 secrecy and a difficulty in establishing trust that
14 still exists today.

15 Q. DESCRIBE TO ME HOW HE WAS AFFECTED AND
16 WHAT THE OUTCOME IS.

17 A. Well, we thought about the reason why. I
18 think I was old enough to understand that there were
19 reasons for these restrictions and prohibitions. I
20 think he, being two and a half years younger, just
21 got the feared part of it.

22 Q. YOU WERE HOW OLD AT THE TIME WHEN THIS
23 FIRST STARTED?

24 A. Okay. When the real resistance activity
25 started it was in '42, beginning of 1943, so I was

1 six. And I could sort of understand there was a
2 reason. In a way, it was a game, just be sure that
3 you win the game.

4 Q. SO THIS WENT ON FROM THE TIME YOU WERE SIX
5 UNTIL?

6 A. Eight and a half, nine. My brother was
7 three and while he was a bright little boy, I think
8 that the fear something will happen to your parents
9 if you say anything really impacted him much more on
10 an emotional level.

11 Q. HOW HAS HE BEEN AFFECTED AS AN ADULT?

12 A. He is still real secretive. He really
13 doesn't trust people. He double checks with
14 everything. He makes a wonderful mechanic because he
15 triple checks everything and measures everything to a
16 width of an inch, you know, very meticulous and
17 particular. And wants to be meticulous and
18 particular about people too, which doesn't always
19 work out very much.

20 Q. DO YOU THINK HE'S BEEN PSYCHOLOGICALLY
21 DAMAGED?

22 A. I think so.

23 Q. WHERE IS HE?

24 A. He is a nuclear power engineer, safety
25 engineer in Washington State. Which with those

1 traits, that is the perfect job for him.

2 Q. IS HE MARRIED, HAVE A FAMILY?

3 A. He was married twice, divorced twice. I
4 think because he could never establish that trust.
5 Two children both in college.

6 Q. WE JUMPED WAY, WAY AHEAD.

7 A. Yes, I know.

8 Q. I WANT TO HEAR MORE ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AND
9 THE TIME IN AMSTERDAM.

10 A. Well, let's see. I could -- you know, in
11 1944 is when things really become memorable to me and
12 also much different than before. 1944, for example,
13 was when the severe food storage started. 1944 was
14 when the severe power shortage started. My father
15 being --

16 Q. WHAT HAPPENED IN 1944 THAT MADE THAT
17 HAPPEN?

18 A. Basically the pressure of the allied
19 landings made it difficult for Germany and they began
20 pulling resources out of the occupied areas for
21 themselves. I remember in '44 looking out the window
22 over Amsterdam and seeing no lights at all. We had
23 lights.

24 Q. I WANT TO STOP FOR A MINUTE AND CUT THE
25 NOISE OUT THERE.

1 A. I was mentioning that we had lights when
2 almost nobody else did. My father had gotten an
3 airplane propeller somewhere, he doesn't even
4 remember from where, and he mounted that on the roof
5 and connected that to a generator and he was charging
6 six-volt batteries and those in turn -- and those in
7 turn would provide light from flashlight cells, lamps
8 in various rooms.

9 Q. SO YOU COULD READ?

10 A. Yes, with difficulty. And for the times
11 when the wind wasn't blowing, we had a bicycle
12 mounted and that was hooked to the generators and we
13 would get on the bike and around and around and
14 charge up the batteries on the bike and peddle around
15 and around and charge up the batteries that way. In
16 fact, that was one of the fun family events because
17 we would sort of compete against each other, you
18 know, how long could we keep that bike going.

19 Q. YOU MUST BE IN GREAT SHAPE NOW. EVERYBODY
20 HAS AN EXERCISE BIKE IN THEIR HOUSE.

21 A. You know, I don't think there was such a
22 thing as an exercise bike in those days.

23 Q. RIGHT. THERE WASN'T.

24 A. Particularly in Amsterdam because that was
25 the standard method of transportation for anybody

1 that was lucky enough to have a bicycle, you see.

2 Q. SO 1944 WAS THE TURNING POINT?

3 A. Yes. Not only was there no electricity,
4 the gas supplies were very intermittent too, and gas
5 is what people cooked with. I remember that we did
6 our cooking on a gallon paint can. We had a slit cut
7 in the bottom, a pot would go on top and we would
8 make a tiny little fire and literally put slivers of
9 wood to keep the fires going and feed it that way.
10 Of course there wasn't all that much food to cook
11 either, so it was relatively easy.

12 My father even worked out a way to cook
13 the potatoes first and then put the potato pot on top
14 of the vegetable top so when that was cooking from
15 the bottom, the potatoes were also getting heated,
16 you know. Makeshift things like that to get by. And
17 at that time too -- well, there were a lot of things
18 that happened.

19 I mentioned that my father had to start
20 working full time for the resistance because he had
21 ceased to exist as far as his job was concerned.
22 That was also the year my uncle, who was my father's
23 *spelling* contact in that organization, (Friar Hoopa), was
24 killed on the streets one evening. And there are
25 still some doubt as to who killed him. It could have

1 been German patrol, there is also persistent
2 indications a rival resistance group of communists
3 perceived him as a possible political threat for
4 after the war.

5 Q. EXPLAIN THE RIVAL RESISTANCE GROUPS TO
6 ME. I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

7 A. There were many, many resistance groups,
8 some of them were politically motivated. The
9 communists, for example, they saw the resistance
10 movement as a way to gain a following that they could
11 then apply to trying to get power in the government
12 after the war was over.

13 Q. WERE THEY DOING ANYTHING TO HELP ANYBODY?

14 A. Oh, yes. They were fighting the Germans.
15 All the groups were fighting the Germans, but they
16 were also intermeshing power struggles between the
17 groups.

18 Q. WHAT WOULD THE ISSUES BE?

19 A. Well, as I said, my uncle was somewhat
20 prominent in the Social Democratic Party, the
21 community saw the social democrats as a potential
22 political force after the war. They wanted to reduce
23 their influence and increase their own and eliminate,
24 you know, cutting off the head sort of thing. The
25 result of that was that my father lost his contact to

1 the resistance group that he was working with.
2 Because as much as possible you only knew one or two
3 people.

4 And he then wound up joining another
5 resistance group that was being formed which went
6 under the code name of Rolls Royce. Simply a code
7 name, didn't mean anything. And their principal
8 mission was the collecting of information
9 particularly on troop movements and passing them on
10 to England for future use in the invasion.

11 Q. SO IT WAS LIKE SPY WORK?

12 A. Yes, in effect. There is a network of
13 couriers and many of the couriers were young girls.
14 The reason being that they pedalling back and forth
15 across all of Holland were much less conspicuous,
16 much less likely to arouse thoughts of
17 underhandedness, and many of them really put on
18 hundreds of miles, developed good, strong Dutch legs
19 doing that kind of work.

20 We talked about food distribution. One of
21 the aims of the food distribution network was to get
22 extra food for these couriers because they would
23 literally bicycle hundreds of miles a day and, of
24 course, the food rations that were available were
25 basically suitable for sitting still and not doing

1 much, you see. So in 1944 then my father got into
2 this other branch of work, then sometime later he was
3 contacted and he rejoined the free groups from then
4 on he worked both these networks.

5 Q. WHAT DID YOUR MOTHER DO?

6 A. Well, she had probably the biggest problem
7 of all, that was feeding us. When the trains were
8 still running several times she went out to the
9 countryside to see farmers that she knew. She used
10 to go camping a lot, and being a very friendly
11 person, was on good terms with farmers on whose
12 fields we had camped and was able to get foodstuffs
13 and come back on the train with a suitcase of this or
14 that.

15 There is a few anecdotes. One time my
16 mother was coming back with a suitcase full of eggs
17 and bacon and walked right into a police control post
18 and they said, "Okay, lady, what do you have in that
19 suitcase?"

20 Q. ARE THESE GERMANS?

21 A. Yes, and she said "Oh, that is full of
22 eggs and bacon." She told the truth! They thought
23 it was absurd in those days. They had a laugh and
24 they said, "Move on." So she got to keep that.
25 While I don't remember in particular, I think a good

1 deal of that food was distributed elsewhere.

2 Another case she had a suitcase full of
3 foodstuffs also still moving on the trains and she
4 saw another check point that she had to move through,
5 didn't know what to do. And a German soldier, young
6 man coming up and he said, "Ma'am, can I carry your
7 suitcase for you?" And she said, "Yes, please." And
8 so he carried it through the controls for her. So
9 she was pretty lucky that way.

10 She also had several metal containers that
11 would fit close to her body and she would bicycle off
12 to farms in the neighborhood and get some milk and
13 bring it home.

14 People were pretty ingenious. My
15 grandfather, for example, had an aluminum belt, a
16 hollow aluminum belt and he would go out to the
17 farmers and they would fill his aluminum belt with
18 milk and he would bring it back. People would have
19 bamboo fishing rods which were really milk containers
20 and go off with their fishing tackle and come back
21 with milk.

22 A lot of the patrols were intended to
23 prevent the unauthorized movement of food from the
24 countryside into the city because the Germans knew
25 that a lot of that food was going to people that they

1 want to catch that they wanted the pressure on.

2 Q. DID YOU HAVE CONTACT WITH RELATIVES DURING
3 THIS PERIOD OF TIME? WERE THERE EVER FAMILY
4 GATHERINGS THAT YOU SAW?

5 A. Yes. We -- my father's brother -- that
6 uncle, my mother's brother, another uncle, and my
7 maternal grandparents, we saw each other quite a lot
8 and we were all involved in various levels of the
9 resistance. My grandfather's specialty was smuggling
10 guns from one part of the country to another. He was
11 a retired naval seaman already quite elderly and he
12 would go off with his fishing tackle and amble around
13 the countryside eventually get to where he was going
14 was never stopped.

15 Q. DID YOU PERSONALLY HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH
16 THE GERMAN PATROL? DID YOU HAVE ANY ENCOUNTERS WITH
17 THE GERMANS THERE?

18 A. That I myself was stopped, no.

19 Q. DID YOU SEE THEM LIKE ON THE STREETS?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION?

22 A. Watch out. Don't do anything unusual.

23 Q. LIKE WHAT WOULD SOMETHING UNUSUAL BE?

24 A. Like start to run, you know, if possible
25 change your direction so you don't go on in that

1 direction. One of the things that was often done in
2 a case like that, stop short of the inspection point
3 and ring somebody's doorbell and hope somebody lets
4 you in as if you belong there.

5 I do recall one case looking out the
6 window where some man -- we had an open field in
7 front of our house and there was a man running
8 desperately and policeman on him on a motorcycle and
9 they eventually disappeared out of view. That was
10 probably the most violent thing that I saw
11 personally. Except this was sort of, for kids,
12 exciting seeing the American planes coming over.
13 They were using Amsterdam as a guide point. They
14 would come across from England and turn over
15 Amsterdam and, of course, the anti-aircraft fire
16 would go and I have seen some planes shot down.

17 I have seen -- now, let me be sure. I
18 don't remember if I really saw this myself or heard
19 it. So I am kind of vague on that. In any case, saw
20 or heard of pilots coming down and parachutes and
21 being machine gunned, that sort of thing. The
22 collecting of shell fragments was a big thing for
23 kids. Sort of like baseball cards here.

24 Q. SO WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH THEM WHEN YOU
25 FOUND THEM?

1 A. You collect them, different shapes. There
2 were kids that could tell you from what kind. Mostly
3 from anti-aircraft shells. This is from such and
4 such millimeter and that is from a this, and that is
5 from a that. You had to go out while the planes were
6 coming over and they were being shot at and these
7 fragments would rain down and you had to have a pair
8 of pliers and a tin can because they generally were
9 too hot to touch.

10 Of course, my mother was violently opposed
11 to me being out there. At times like that I remember
12 I got out once, I looked around with my pliers and my
13 tin can and never did find any. But I traded for
14 some pieces. I forget what I traded them for. But
15 that is about the closest I really got to the
16 violence. There was always the background fear that
17 something really violent would happen, but the fact
18 that my family got to the United States shows that I
19 did.

20 Q. WHEN YOUR UNCLE WAS KILLED ON THE STREET
21 WAS THERE A FUNERAL OR DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED?

22 A. There was a funeral that his wife and two
23 children attended, but again, for security reasons,
24 nobody involved in the resistance movement would even
25 think of attending something like that. It would be

1 much to easy for somebody there to be watching and
2 identifying you. See, if he had been, for example,
3 shot by a patrol under suspicion of some sort, then
4 they certainly would have had somebody there to mark
5 down everybody that showed up and pull them in for
6 interrogation. There was always danger. There were
7 always people simply disappeared or people that were
8 known to have been picked up.

9 Q. HOW WOULD YOUR PARENTS EXPLAIN THAT TO
10 YOU?

11 A. Well, there were times when my father was
12 gone for a few weeks and they would say somebody's
13 been picked up and he has to go out and hide
14 somewhere else for a while until we can be sure they
15 didn't talk about us.

16 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER WHERE WE WERE WHAT WE WERE
17 TALKING ABOUT?

18 A. Well, let's see. Yeah, I think we were
19 talking about my observation -- observing real
20 violence and how close I had been to it, not really
21 that close. Certainly we knew people that, as I
22 said, disappeared. We knew people that had been
23 killed. We knew families that were suddenly not
24 there. But because everybody tried not to know, was
25 not smart to know, you know. Things sort of fade out

1 of memory pretty quick.

2 My father, when I talked to him about this
3 some years ago, also says that we did our best to
4 forget as soon as possible not only because of
5 security reasons, there were so many things that you
6 didn't want to remember.

7 Q. EMOTIONALLY?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. WAS IT SOMETHING YOUR FATHER DISCUSSED
10 FREELY WITH YOU OR DID YOU HAVE TO ASK HIM?

11 A. No. There have been one or two occasions
12 we talked about it. But he -- his feeling was what
13 we did was so commonplace it is not worth talking
14 about.

15 Q. THAT IS REMARKABLE, ISN'T IT?

16 A. I think his phrase was it was what anybody
17 would have done. And of course I would say no, I
18 don't think so, and he couldn't see that.

19 Q. DID YOU SHELTER ONLY MALES BECAUSE THERE
20 WERE TWO BOYS IN THE HOUSE?

21 A. Probably so, yes, because we would be
22 sharing sleeping facilities and such.

23 Q. WHAT KIND OF RELIGIOUS UPBRINGING DID YOU
24 HAVE IN YOUR FAMILY?

25 A. The closest that my parents ever got to

1 that was one time they said well we think there might
2 be something called nature. We are not sure about
3 that. So it wasn't a violently atheistic thing. I
4 wasn't even agnostic in a suspension of belief, if
5 anything, maybe kind of an (inaudible portion of
6 tape.)

7 Q. SO IT WASN'T LIKE THE CHRISTIAN ETHIC THAT
8 WAS MOTIVATING THEM TO?

9 A. No. I think maybe the key word there a
10 solidarity worker, solidarity. We, the oppressed
11 together. I think they might have equated the
12 oppression of the workers which was sort of a credo
13 of the social democratic party with the oppression of
14 the Jews.

15 Q. IS IT THE STATE OF THE WORKER IN
16 AMSTERDAM, ISN'T THERE?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. (LIGHT ESPLAIN)?

19 A. (Light esplain) yes, correct. Uh-huh.

20 And you know, in a society here most was a middle
21 class and that has a great many advantages but I
22 think there is something worthwhile too to the kind
23 of fellow feeling that you get when people are more
24 stratisfied where people know exactly who they are
25 and where they belong and how they fit in. That is

*spelling
spelling*

1 missing here.

2 Q. THAT IS INTERESTING. SO YOU ACTUALLY KNEW
3 VERY LITTLE ABOUT THE PEOPLE THAT YOU WERE
4 SHELTERING.

5 A. Yes. Except as I said for the people we
6 had on the long-term basis.

7 Q. HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE A SAFE HOUSE WHERE DID
8 THAT COME FROM THE IDEA?

9 A. We were a safe house because we were in
10 one of the last set of apartment buildings set on the
11 edge of Amsterdam, that meant that there was
12 relatively little traffic. Most of the police
13 patrols and such were in the inner city. There was
14 open land nearby and opportunity to get out of the
15 city without too much trouble. And so -- and the
16 anonymity of apartment houses okay? And those
17 factors together made that a safer place than say,
18 for example, something in the inner city like the
19 Anne Frank House which would have much more traffic,
20 many more people who would observe and see what was
21 going on.

22 Our neighborhood was a working
23 neighborhood and that meant the men all left early in
24 the morning and came back late at night, and the rest
25 of the day there wasn't much traffic. The woman

1 would go out shopping and come back and the streets
2 would be empty. And so there was much less
3 opportunity to observe unusual things.

4 Q. WHAT HAPPENED TO HANS?

5 A. Well, he -- well, when the war was over in
6 May 1945 --

7 Q. TELL ME ABOUT THE WAR ENDING IN YOUR
8 RECOLLECTION.

9 A. Very exciting. The most exciting thing
10 was when when it was over for us on May 10th there
11 was severe food shortages and the Red Cross planes
12 came over and made food drops. And I remember
13 running with a whole bunch of boys after every group
14 of planes coming over. Half hoping to get to the
15 drop zone, never did. And, of course, there was an
16 organized effort to collect these packages and to
17 hand them out.

18 Q. PEOPLE DIDN'T JUST GRAB THEM FOR
19 THEMSELVES?

20 A. No. Well, they weren't supposed to, let's
21 put that it way. I also remember in our part of town
22 the Canadians, the Tommies came in their armoured
23 cars and they were handing out bread, slices of white
24 bread and I remember I got a slice of white bread. I
25 carried it home like this. Look at this. You know,

1 it was really something I think we all had a little
2 piece, that sort of thing. And that just reminds me
3 of something. Bread triggers a thought.

4 Q. GOOD.

5 A. The one boy we had Wilhelm that was with
6 us for a while, he had a growth on his abdomen and we
7 were rather concerned about it. Of course we
8 couldn't take them to a doctor in the normal course
9 of events, but we knew a doctor that had been -- that
10 we felt was safe because he had been arrested several
spelling 11 times by the Germans (Dr. Skoon) and we had him come
12 in and he operated on the boy and sewed him up. And
13 my mother wanted to pay him back.

14 Q. OPERATE ON THEM IN YOUR HOUSE?

15 A. Yes, in the kitchen, I think. And my
16 mother wanted to pay him back in some way and she had
17 been out in the field and she had gleaned some wheat
18 kernels. She had ground them up in a coffee mill and
19 she had baked bread on top of an oil lamp. So she
20 gave him a loaf of bread as payment. And that was
21 such a tremendous thing the doctor broke down and
22 cried for getting a loaf of bread for his operation.
23 Wish it was that cheap these days.

24 Q. BETTER YOU DON'T NEED IT.

25 A. Anyway you were asking about then how this

1 went with Hans. In 1945 Hans' brother Tom (Angress)
2 showed up. He was the sergeant in the 82nd Airborne,
3 he had gotten out and gotten to America during the
4 war and showed up in front of our house with a Jeep
5 and a driver looking for his brother.

6 Q. WHAT LED HIM THERE?

7 A. He had contacted somebody who knew where
8 the boy's mother was and he found his mother and she
9 knew where Hans was.

10 Q. SHE DID KNOW?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. WAS THERE ANY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THEM
13 LIKE LETTERS?

14 A. No. And there was a very good reason for
15 that. She spent the war living as a retired German
16 lady in a hotel frequented by high German staff
17 officers.

18 Q. SHE WAS JEWISH?

19 A. That was hidden. She went totally
20 undercover and went through the war quite
21 comfortably.

22 Q. INCOGNITO?

23 A. Uh-huh. In fact, one of her favorite
24 stories I remember her telling me was that one of the
25 other people in this hotel in an adjoining suite was

1 the owner of a shoe store and he was Dutch Nazi and
2 of course she was being worth more than gold he kept
3 most of his stock in his apartment and she had
4 managed to get a pass key and once a month she went
5 in and stole a pair of his shoes and then got what
6 good things she wanted for herself. She thought that
7 was just perfect revenge. Anyway Hans' brother
8 came.

9 Q. WHAT WAS SHE DOING IN THAT HOTEL?

10 A. Living.

11 Q. LIKE A GUEST?

12 A. Yeah, like a guest. She passed herself
13 out as a widow.

14 Q. WHAT DID SHE DO FOR MONEY?

15 A. That family was quite well to do. Her
16 husband had been a banker in Germany, the kind of
17 situation where somebody else takes care of children
18 because the parents are too busy entertaining. Hans
19 came to the United States, went to --

20 Q. TELL ME ABOUT WHEN HIS BROTHER CAME.

21 A. Well, it was most exciting thing that
22 happened in our neighborhood was, for a long time,
23 just to see an automobile was unusual, to see the
24 American Jeep, I mean as soon as the thing stopped
25 there were 30 neighborhood kids climbing all over it.

1 Now that was the best excitement and of course the
2 reunion between the brothers and then shortly he had
3 to leave again back to his unit but he made
4 arrangements to repatriate Hans not back to Germany
5 but to the United States as soon as possible.

6 Q. DIDN'T YOU FORM AN ATTACHMENT?

7 A. Yes. Particularly because in 1950 having
8 established himself here he sponsored us to come to
9 the United States. And that is how we are here and
10 we have been in contact since.

11 Q. SO DO YOU FEEL LIKE A BROTHERLY KINSHIP?

12 A. Yes, I think so. It is sort of big
13 brother but I think one of the things the war has
14 taught us is not to become too attached to anybody.
15 So it wasn't really deep, I think probably deeper now
16 than then.

17 Q. NOW DOES HE LIVE A JEWISH LIFE IN THIS
18 COUNTRY?

19 A. Not orthodox but Jewish life, yes.

20 Q. BUT HE KNOWS THAT HE IS JEWISH AND HE
21 REMEMBERS HIS JEWISH ANCESTRY?

22 A. Yes. In fact, before -- I don't know if
23 he went back to Holland for this or before he came to
24 the United States but he married a Jewish girl in
25 Amsterdam and they went to the United States

1 together. Yes, it is interesting the way things turn
2 out. As a matter of fact, I will add one. They are
3 thinking that is really odd he wound up in California
4 working on a dairy ranch by a man by the name of
5 Strauss and got to talking and they got to talking
6 one time and it turned out they were second cousins.
7 He had absolutely no idea.

8 Q. HOW DO YOU THINK YOU PERSONALLY HAVE BEEN
9 AFFECTED BY WHAT WENT ON IN YOUR CHILDHOOD?

10 A. I think I suffered less so than my
11 brother. I think probably -- I am more personally
12 private than I otherwise would have been, okay. I
13 find it easy enough to talk to other people. I find
14 it easy enough professionally to talk to other people
15 like this. But I am not really talking about
16 anything deeply private or personal deeply held
17 convictions. It is sort of an intellectual
18 intercourse rather than an emotional one. There is
19 very few people that I form deep emotional
20 attachments to. Other than that, I don't know. In a
21 way things seemed normal to us. I know growing up in
22 that age range that is how the world is and so you
23 don't miss anything that you haven't experienced.

24 Q. WHAT ABOUT CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR MOTHER
25 ABOUT --

1 A. She told me, she says, now when you do
2 this interview, she says, point out that there were
3 all sorts of people.

4 Q. AND WHAT DID SHE MEAN?

5 A. She says some of them were not very nice.

6 Q. WHICH PEOPLE?

7 A. Particularly the refugees that we handled
8 with Jewish people. She said very many of them were
9 not in your home.

10 Q. WHILE THEY WERE IN YOUR HOME?

11 A. Unpleasant self-centered and I think I can
12 understand it because it is one of the things she is
13 unhappy about, except for Hans, who we have known for
14 a long time. We have never heard from any of those
15 people again but I know that we all tried to forget
16 things as quickly as possible and I think a lot of
17 people that were with us also tried to forget.

18 Q. GIVEN THAT EXPERIENCE WHAT WOULD MAKE HER
19 CONTINUE TO HELP THOSE KINDS OF PEOPLE?

20 A. Well, you couldn't just let them go, you
21 know.

22 Q. BUT THEY WERE UNGRATEFUL.

23 A. Yeah, I think it is a personal ethic that
24 really says well, I don't care what the rest of the
25 world does, I am going to do it right.

1 Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK IT WAS CAUSED YOUR
2 MOTHER TO HAVE THOSE ETHICS?

3 A. It is difficult to say. It could be that
4 youth movement that they were both in, because that
5 is something that started like when they were ten or
6 11 years old. That infused their life with
7 idealism. Really very idealistic people, my
8 parents. And I see myself a little more cynical than
9 that, a little less trusting, a little less
10 believing. On the level of idealism is all well and
11 good but there are times when you have to watch out
12 for yourself. My parents didn't think that way,
13 there was the right and there was the wrong and there
14 was no in between. There was the -- there were no
15 grays, it was all black and white. And I think a lot
16 of the people in the resistance came out at youth
17 movement and were infused with this ideal vision,
18 sort of like the ideal communist man, you know, if
19 all the bad economic influences were removed
20 everybody would be perfect and, therefore, the
21 willingness to see the good in people.

22 Q. WHERE IS YOUR MOTHER NOW?

23 A. She is now living in Morrow Bay in a
24 retirement home. My sister was a nurse, lives nearby
25 and sees her frequently. Her health has been poor

1 since we have been in the United States.

2 Q. DID SHE COME WITH YOU IN 1960?

3 A. Yes, she same. A number of doctors have
4 indicated that they think her continual poor health
5 is related to privations and stress during war
6 years.

7 Q. HOW OLD IS YOUR MOTHER?

8 A. My mother is 76.

9 Q. WHAT ELSE DID SHE TELL YOU IN PREPARATION
10 FOR YOUR INTERVIEW? WHAT DID SHE THINK ABOUT YOUR
11 DOING THAT?

12 A. Well, she said be sure you don't get it
13 missed up, get it right.

14 Q. JUST LIKE A MOTHER.

15 A. Yeah. And I talked to her about -- I had
16 taken some notes and tried to organize my thoughts
17 and I discussed that with her and she would say "Oh,
18 yeah, now I remember, yeah. But nobody's going to be
19 interested in any of that stuff." A lot like my
20 father too, "Why should anybody be interested in this
21 kind of thing? Why should anybody care?"

22 Q. WAS THERE EVER A POINT IN YOUR ADULT LIFE
23 THAT YOU PROBED DEEPLY INTO YOUR PARENTS AND ASKED
24 THEM QUESTIONS WANTING TO KNOW MORE?

25 A. Fairly recently, I would say in the last

1 half dozen years or so. Even when I was in college
2 one of my particular areas of interest was European
3 history and I studied that. It was more or less from
4 an intellectual point of view, never really relating
5 it to personal things. I mean there is a few family
6 things that we are proud of. My grandfather, for an
7 example, had a street named in Amsterdam -- a street
8 named in Amsterdam named after him in recognition of
9 his activity.

10 Q. WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE STREET?

Spelling 11 A. (Pete La Row), a short little street but
12 it is a street.

13 Q. AND WHAT WERE THE ACTIVITIES THAT HE WAS
14 IN?

15 A. He was particularly involved with weapons
16 transport and also did some other things. But again,
17 the nature of which we never discussed it, we weren't
18 supposed to know. I probably picked up more things
19 than I really should have.

20 Q. WELL, TELL ME SOME OF THEM.

21 A. It is hard to say. It is, you know, in
22 memory. This period of time was short, there is
23 flashing of this and that in memory and I think I
24 have talked about most of them. Now, of course,
25 being a lot older it seems to me five years is really

1 not that long a time you know.

2 Q. RIGHT.

3 A. And I think probably as far as my
4 perceptions are concerned, we are only talking about
5 a couple of years when I was really aware enough of
6 what things were happening around me to take notice.
7 And this in an atmosphere where everybody was trying
8 to be as discrete and private and uninformative as
9 possible. That is why when we started I said I don't
10 know how much of what I remember I really remember
11 and how much is family reminiscence.

12 Q. THE STORIES YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD. SO YOUR
13 INTEREST WAS STIMULATED AS RECENTLY AS FIVE YEARS AGO
14 TO START ASKING. WHAT DO YOU THINK STIMULATED IT AT
15 THAT POINT?

16 A. I think the thought that my parents were
17 getting old and there were some things I really
18 didn't know and wanted to know.

19 Q. SO WHAT DID YOU FIND OUT?

20 A. Some of the things we talked about, I am
21 sure. Some of their political ideas which I
22 immediately categorized as being rather naive,
23 unworldly. They were simple people. It was when we
24 came to the United States, for example, my father
25 wanted to know what political parties there were.

(1 Democrat and republican. Only two? Yes In Poland
2 there are like -- well, of course in Holland there is
3 like 15, 20 different parties. He said, "Well, which
4 ones has the rich people? Republican. Okay. Then I
5 am a Democrat".

6 Q. YOU CAME AS A FAMILY, THE FOUR OF YOU?

7 A. Yes, we came as a family in June 1950.

8 Q. WHAT ABOUT YOU?

spelling 9 A. The boy Hans (Angress) was working on a
10 dairy farm and arranged work for my father there.

11 Q. IN WHAT CITY, STATE OR --

spelling 12 A. In Marin County in (Tomalis Bay) way out
13 in the country. It was a terrific change for us from
14 the city, good size world city.

15 Q. AND HANS' MOTHER SURVIVED AND CAME TOO?

16 A. Hans' mother remarried an English man and
17 lived in England. So he was essentially on his own
18 here. My father milked cows for four years. He
19 never really liked them. He said he could figure out
20 which end to touch and which end to leave alone, but
21 that was about it. He then got a job working for a
22 Dutch contractor in construction and finished his
23 working years as a Teamster.

(24 Q. DO YOU THINK YOUR FATHER WAS EFFECTED BY
25 HIS EXPERIENCES?

1 A. He must have been, but not so that I
2 really saw it. My mother has more connected in that
3 regard but she remembers but she is the kind of
4 person that remembers slights and problems and things
5 that go wrong.

6 Q. SHE SENSES?

7 A. Yeah. My father is the kind of person --
8 was the kind of person that said, "It is past. It is
9 over. Why talk about it? Let's get on with life."
10 He bought a home here, was very proud, saw himself as
11 having reached a pinnacle of success, homeownership.
12 That would never have been possible over there, was
13 very content.

14 Q. WOULD YOU HAVE CONSIDERED STAYING IN
15 HOLLAND, YOUR FAMILY, OR WAS IT A PLACE YOU WANTED TO
16 GET OUT OF?

17 A. We wanted out.

18 Q. AND WHY?

19 A. Everybody wanted out. First of all, those
20 first years '45, '46, '47, '48 were very hard years,
21 very bad weather, cold winters, lack of food. The
22 whole infrastructure had been destroyed. I didn't
23 even go back to school right away after the war was
24 over because a lot of teachers didn't come back.
25 There was a shortage of teachers. In fact, when I

1 came to the United States the first question they
2 asked is well where do you start in school. We have
3 got the elementary school here. Let's get the high
4 school. I said let's get it over with, let's go onto
5 high school which was a little challenging at first
6 particularly because I didn't speak any English, but
7 I adapted pretty quick I think.

8 My father had learned a little bit of
9 English in preparation which got us into trouble the
10 first day we were in the United States. We were out
11 to eat in New York, our plane stopped in New York and
12 we were looking for a restaurant and we saw this
13 restaurant and this big sign and my father read it
14 and translated it. He said "Hot dogs. They have
15 cooked dogs here, let's go back to our hotel." And
16 we did we didn't eat super that night.

17 Q. PETER, DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN?

18 A. No, I don't.

19 Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS IMPORTANT TO TEACH
20 THE NEXT GENERATION LIKE CHILDREN AT SCHOOL AND
21 THINGS LIKE THAT ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES?

22 A. About my experiences? Well, I could say
23 that most things can be survived reasonably well with
24 a little bit of intelligent effort. Never give up.
25 I think a lot of the people that didn't survive World

1 War II didn't survive because they gave up. They
2 followed orders, they didn't struggle. I think that
3 whenever there is a tyranny of any kind, it is
4 everybody's responsibility to resist as best they
5 can. And I think, for example, one reason why the
6 Jews in Israel are successful as a nation is because
7 they have been winnowed out, they have been the ones
8 that did struggle and resist and fight.

9 Q. WHAT HAVE I NOT ASKED YOU THAT YOU THOUGHT
10 I WOULD HAVE OR THAT I MISSED?

11 A. Gosh, I think you have asked every
12 conceivable question. I really can't think of
13 anything else offhand. There are probably little
14 snippets.

15 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER ANYMORE STORIES?

16 A. Nothing came to mind.

17 Q. MAYBE NANCY WHO HAD BEEN TAKING NOTES AND
18 FOLLOWING IT HAS SOME THINGS.

19 NANCY: I WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR
20 GRANDPARENTS.

21 A. Well, they survived the war quite well.
22 My grandfather, as I recall, when he was nearly 80
23 fell off his bicycle and broke his hip and went to
24 the hospital and died not long after that. He was
25 very active to the end. My grandmother on -- these

1 are my maternal grandparents -- lived quite a bit
2 longer. In fact, she visited us in the United
3 States, gave everybody a lot of trouble. She had
4 never been out of Amsterdam before. These again were
5 very simple people. And the plane went on and on and
6 on, eventually it landed in New York and she insisted
7 that she had to be there by then. She wanted to get
8 off the plane and they kept her on the plane and then
9 it landed again in Tucson, I believe, and she made
10 such a row about certainly her children were waiting
11 for her there, that a soldier was flying on a plane
12 took her into the terminal, showed her there was
13 nobody there and got her back on the plane again.
14 When she finally arrived in San Francisco she gave us
15 absolute hell for not picking her up in that other
16 place.

17 Q. THAT YOU WEREN'T THERE?

18 A. Yes. And she survived a few years after
19 that. I mean my grandmother was the kind of a person
20 when she visited I was in my 20s and I remember
21 saying "Now, Peter, three rules, remember that.
22 Don't drink, don't smoke and give all your money to
23 your parents." Does that characterize my
24 grandmother?

25 Q. GOING BACK, WHAT DID YOUR PARENTS TELL YOU

1 ABOUT JEWISH PEOPLE? HOW DID THEY EXPLAIN?

2 A. About Jewish people as such? Nothing
3 really. I mean we didn't do this because they were
4 Jews, okay. It wasn't we have got to save the Jews.
5 It was there are some people here in trouble, they
6 need help.

7 Q. NO MATTER WHO THEY WERE?

8 A. I think so. The fact that they were
9 Jewish was coincidental.

10 Q. DID YOU HAVE ANY CONCEPT OF WHAT IT WAS TO
11 BE JEWISH OR WHY THEY WERE IN HIDING?

12 A. At that time -- well, we knew that the
13 Germans wanted to get rid of them, we knew they went
14 somewhere and never came back. All the information
15 has come out about the camps and such wasn't really
16 available until after the war was over and those
17 camps were opened up. There were rumors, you know,
18 something bad happens. We knew that a lot of places
19 where Jews were found with families, the families
20 were shot and the Jews were shipped off. So we knew
21 it was very dangerous.

22 Q. DID YOU HAVE ANY IDEA ABOUT WHAT WAS
23 DIFFERENT ABOUT THEM THAT MADE THEM DIFFERENT FROM
24 ANYONE ELSE?

25 A. The Jewish as a people, I don't think so.

(1 I don't think so. I think I was even too young at
2 the time to really have absorbed any of the
3 stereotypes of the Jews. Since then, of course, we
4 have had a more personal interest. I know I myself
5 have watched development of Israel as a nation with a
6 lot of interest. I am getting a little impatient
7 with them now. I think things are getting a little
8 repressive there. You know, I see a fanaticism
9 surfacing that disturbs me and so I don't feel that I
10 support Israel as a place as much as I did in the
11 past. I admire them. I see them as survivors. I
12 see now a generation coming up there that is less
13 admirable. Not having ever been there myself it is
14 difficult to say how accurate I am, it is just from
15 news reports.

16 Q. SURE. THAT IS WHERE THE INFORMATION COMES
17 FROM.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. I WAS WONDERING IF THERE WAS EVER ANY TALK
20 ABOUT STOPPING THIS ACTIVITY WHEN YOUR UNCLE WAS
21 SHOT. WAS THERE --

22 A. No. No. We never thought of any reason
23 why we should stop. There were a number of
24 occasions -- there was -- I don't know if I mentioned
25 this. There was at one time an attempt to break

(

1 resistance prisoners out of prison before they could
2 be made to talk and it was not successful. A friend
3 of my father's was involved in that and he escaped by
4 floating down the river holding onto the side of a
5 row boat. There were a few events of that type that
6 would say to any reasonable person, I suppose, give
7 it up. It is getting too dangerous. But it was just
8 sort of accepted as well. These things happened, you
9 might as well be run down by a street car.

10 Q. AFTER THE WAR WAS IT EVER REVEALED WHO WAS
11 IN THE RESISTANCE AND WHO WASN'T?

12 A. No. As a matter of fact, because you knew
13 most people by code names only and tended to forget
14 eventually what those were, because they are
15 arbitrary symbols, people often lost contact. A few
16 years ago, for example, my father received
17 correspondence from somebody in Holland who was
18 applying for a disability pension based on his work
19 in the resistance and he needed my father's
20 testimony. And he said my name is John Smith, I
21 don't know what it was, and such and such, and my
22 father wrote back and said I am sorry, it was only
23 code names. I don't remember what your name was. I
24 don't know. You are going to have to give me some
25 particular more information. And then the guy wrote

1 back, it was such and such a night this happened and
2 that happened. In fact, it was something connected
3 with notifying people when my uncle died, was shot.
4 And then my father remembered, "Oh, this was R-17" or
5 yes, then he could testify that this person had been
6 in the resistance. But for most of the resistance
7 people, the war was over, things fell apart, there
8 was no contact.

9 Q. LIKE YOU SAID YOU KNOW AT ONE POINT THE
10 NEIGHBORS TALKED THAT THEY THOUGHT YOU WERE --

11 A. Right. That was oh, I thought you were --
12 yeah, okay. Well, that was sort of the end of it
13 then.

14 Q. NOBODY SORT OF SAID -- IT WASN'T LIKE THE
15 NEIGHBORS CAME OUT IN THE HALLWAYS AND REVEALED WHAT
16 THEY HAD BEEN DOING AND NOT BEEN DOING. YOU HAD NO
17 IDEA --

18 A. No. I thought perhaps just because the
19 war was over the ingrained habits of secrecy and
20 privacy that people had developed to survive didn't
21 just go away. And by the time those conditions had
22 become milder, people weren't thinking about talking
23 about it anymore, you know, it just sort of faded
24 out.

25 Q. YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO. WELL, I

1 GUESS OBVIOUSLY YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE IF YOU DIDN'T
2 THINK IT WAS IMPORTANT TO RECORD FOR FUTURE
3 GENERATIONS.

4 A. Well, you know, history is the recorded
5 information, the selected recording of information of
6 what happened. And in the end peoples viewpoint of
7 what the world was like depends on recorded
8 information. So, yes, it is important.

9 Q. THIS IS YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO IT?

10 A. I would hope so.

11 Q. NANCY, DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

12 NANCY: THE PEOPLE WHO STAYED IN YOUR HOME, DID
13 THE ONES WHO WERE JEWISH, DID THEY KEEP ANY RELIGIOUS
14 HOLIDAYS WHILE THEY WERE STAYING IN YOUR HOME?

15 A. I don't believe so. They may have
16 privately. Certainly there was no possibility of any
17 dietary considerations made or anything along those
18 lines. Certainly you wouldn't want to have any
19 evidence of special garments or anything, along those
20 lines, that would be incriminating, or
21 paraphernalia. So if there was any celebration,
22 certainly would have been on a very limited basis.
23 Also there was really nothing to celebrate. Each day
24 was taken as it came and forgotten, and the next day
25 it was taken on.

(1 It was -- I don't know if I expressed how
2 deprived of information everybody was. There were no
3 permitted newspapers. At the end there were -- there
4 was the (stroke) my father was with, started
5 circulating an underground newspaper. At that point
6 there was no information from newspapers, there was
7 no information from radios, they were not permitted.
8 There was no information from talk of other people
9 because you didn't trust anybody, you see. So there
10 is very little sense of what is actually going on.

11 Q. SO WHEN PEOPLE WERE IN THE HOUSE, DID THEY
12 PARTICIPATE IN HOUSEHOLD TASKS, CLEANING UP OR
13 PREPARING MEALS? WAS IT A COOPERATIVE EFFORT?

(14 A. Mostly not. Mostly not.

15 Q. THEY REALLY KEPT TO THEMSELVES?

16 A. See they were mostly younger people. They
17 had a 18-year-old, a 14-year-old and six-year-old and
18 some men.

(19 The 18-year-old certainly could have
20 assumed some responsibility, but he was sort of
21 spoiled rotten, and he was from a better part of
22 society and really didn't feel, I think in
23 retrospect, feel it was incumbent upon him to do
24 anything. There were worker families there that
25 would take care of things.

1 Q. SO DID YOU SIT DOWN AT MEALS TOGETHER?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. DID YOU TALK?

4 A. We talked, but again, there is no
5 information sources as such so the things we talked
6 about I might ask questions about something I had
7 read, you know. My mother might talk about something
8 is wrong in the kitchen, that sort of thing.

9 Q. SO HOW WOULD YOU PASS THE EVENING, WOULD
10 YOU BE TOGETHER?

11 A. Well, mostly in bed. Certainly in the
12 winters it was cold and dark you went to bed.
13 Eventually the blackouts, even if there had been
14 power, would have prevented us from burning much in
15 the way of lights. Daytime, as I said, I read a
16 lot. My little brother was always technically minded
17 and he made little things, machines and stuff like
18 that. My father worked quite a lot in the
19 resistance.

20 When he was home he worked at things like
21 power set up of the generators and such. There were
22 always things going -- for an example, I just
23 remembered something in our wood pile downstairs. We
24 had a piece of wood, firewood painted off to identify
25 it. It was hollowed out and filled up with silver

1 and gold of a Jewish family that had asked us to keep
2 that for them. It was always a problem when we had
3 to get firewood to see that piece there, because if
4 that went in the stove we would be in real trouble.

5 We had a wash tub sitting in the back of a
6 cellar with our junk thrown on top that had a quality
7 set of china from another family we were keeping and
8 some necklaces and bracelets and things like that. We
9 did quite a bit of safekeeping of things.

10 Q. DID YOU GET THOSE?

11 A. Yes. We had given all the things back to
12 the people who had given them to us.

13 Q. DID YOU EVER RESENT THE PEOPLE WHO STAYED
14 WITH YOU?

15 A. I don't think so. I don't think so.

16 Q. IT JUST SEEMED NORMAL, HUH?

17 A. It seemed normal because it was just a
18 constant coming and going. It wasn't also there is
19 somebody there and there wasn't something there
20 before. There was always somebody there, you see, so
21 that was part of our normal universe.

22 Q. CAN YOU ESTIMATE HOW MANY PEOPLE CAME TO
23 YOU?

24 A. It would be a wild guess. I would say 40,
25 50, something along those lines. We don't even

1 know. Sometimes they were the same people coming
2 through again and again like on a route, like a
3 courier route. That was quite possible.

4 Q. SO SOMETIMES IT COULD BE A RESISTANCE
5 WORKER WHO WAS BEING HELD?

6 A. Yes, that's right.

7 Q. WERE THERE OTHER NATIONALS? YOU SAID A
8 GERMAN JEW. MOSTLY PEOPLE FROM HOLLAND OR --

9 A. Mostly Dutch. Yes, there was the one
10 German Jew. We know that there were other families
11 that, for example, were a part of a network shuttling
12 shot flyers that had been shot down through the lines
13 but we were never involved in that.

14 Q. WAS YOUR FATHER A UNION MEMBER IN HOLLAND?

15 A. Oh, yes, very strong union.

16 Q. WERE JUST MEMBERS OF THE UNION?

17 A. There was nothing to prevent them from
18 being that, but the position of Jews in Holland was
19 one, I think, that they had often in Europe. That
20 is, a small business class, entrepreneurs,
21 professional people, and I think relatively few were
22 really working class. But again we are talking from
23 a perspective of 50 years ago so.

24 Q. I HAVE A COUPLE QUESTIONS. YOU MENTIONED
25 THE ONE INCIDENT OF THE LITTLE BOY WHO WAS SPITTING

1 OVER THE RAIL AND THE NEIGHBOR HOLLERING UP AND
2 SAYING SHE WAS GOING TO BLOW THE WHISTLE ON HIM.
3 THAT INDICATES TO ME THAT YOUR NEIGHBORS KNEW WHAT
4 YOU WERE DOING. I WAS CURIOUS TO KNOW THAT FOR A
5 SECURITY ISSUE.

6 A. Certainly none of our neighbors were
7 informed by us what we were doing, they might have
8 suspected. We were, I think, not really sure whether
9 that was just an epithet that she was just was
10 calling the kid names, that she didn't know whether
11 she was Jewish or not. Or she looked at him and
12 decided his physiology was Jewish in some way. We
13 thought it was a good time to move it on.

14 Q. SHE KNEW HE WASN'T YOUR KID A MEMBER OF
15 YOUR FAMILY?

16 A. Right. But remember during war time there
17 is a lot of emergency housing. Maybe some house gets
18 bombed out, the kids stay with somebody else or
19 such.

20 Q. ACTUALLY ALL MY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN
21 ANSWERED, I THINK. EXCEPT PERHAPS YOU MENTIONED 40
22 OR 50 PEOPLE PASSED THROUGH THE HOUSE?

23 A. Pure guess.

24 Q. ARE THERE ANY OTHER -- COULD YOU MENTION
25 ONE OR TWO OTHER OF THESE PEOPLE FOR US OR HAVE YOU

1 GIVEN US -- WELL, YOU HAVE GIVEN US FIVE OR TEN.

2 A. Not really. Sort of shadowy figures
3 passing through, nothing particularly memorable.
4 These people certainly, when they came, just wanted
5 a place to sit down, eat and go sleep. They weren't
6 interested in communicating either because they were
7 very tired or because of security factors. And,
8 of course, who talks to a five- or six- or
9 seven-year-old.

10 Q. PETER, DO YOU WANT TO LOOK IN YOUR NOTES
11 AND SEE IF THERE IS SOMETHING YOU HAVE PUT DOWN THAT
12 WE MISSED.

13 A. I could.

14 Q. HOW IS IT THAT YOUR FATHER COULD MOVE
15 AROUND SO FREELY?

16 A. Well, my Uncle Hank had been in the fire
17 department and he had his knees hurt badly in an
18 accident and was disabled and was no longer able to
19 be a member of the department. He still had the
20 uniform and so my father took the uniform and wore it
21 and was in effect masquerading as a fireman. This
22 had a couple of advantages.

23 First of all, you know, there was no such
24 thing as fire trucks driving up and down their
25 street, but the firemen on their bicycles would

1 respond and try to deal with fires as soon as
2 possible. So that gave them a reason to be moving
3 around. And such people that were keeping civil
4 orders were not very often stopped by patrols and
5 checked on. And what was most important, firemen
6 were permitted to have bicycles. The average
7 citizen, his bicycle was subject to confiscation
8 whenever the German troops wanted one. So he was
9 able to keep a bicycle, ride it around rather freely
10 and that certainly helped.

11 There were times they told me once that he
12 had a lot of trouble because the uniforms of the
13 inspectors of the various branches of the civil
14 service looked a lot the same and he was never able
15 to distinguish, for example, the uniform of the
16 inspector of the fire department and the inspector of
17 the garbage department. So he never knew who to
18 salute and not to salute. That was sometimes a
19 problem. And he says those cases when he got called
20 out he would pretend sorry, he hadn't seen him, you
21 know.

22 Couple of times going on his way.
23 Somebody would call out to him they had a problem
24 with a fire, hot stove pipe or such. Well he had to
25 do something about it, you know. In fact, one time

1 there was a lady that she had been feeding paper into
2 a stove and got it so hot that the stove pipe was red
3 hot and it was beginning to scorch the ceiling and so
4 forth. And she looked out the window and saw the
5 fireman coming by and said "over here, help." You
6 know, he said "I had to do something. I got some wet
7 rags, took the stove pipe off and laid it in the
8 sink. Then she wanted me to go up in the roof and
9 see if the chimney was all right. I told her that
10 wasn't my district so I couldn't really do that but I
11 am sure it was okay." So then the lady gave him a
12 two ounce jar of liver paste as a thank you. And so
13 when he brought that home he said to my mother, he
14 said, "Well, here is my pay from the fire department
15 for the day."

16 Q. THAT WAS A VERY GOOD POINT TO BRING UP.

17 A. Yes, I had forgotten about that.

18 Q. WHEN A STREET WAS NAMED AFTER YOUR
19 GRANDFATHER WAS THERE A CEREMONY?

20 A. Yes, there was. We were no longer there
21 at the time, but of course, we had some pictures sent
22 and a letter. It was sort of a proud moment.

23 Q. YES, CERTAINLY. HAVE YOU BEEN BACK TO
24 AMSTERDAM?

25 A. Yes, we have been back several times.

1 Q. DID YOU TAKE PICTURES OF THE STREET?

2 A. No. I once looked it up and it was such a
3 miserable short little street I thought, well, I
4 don't want a picture of this. We were disappointed
5 now going back to Amsterdam, it is simply not the
6 place that we remember. It's become so
7 internationalized that a lot of what I think of Dutch
8 virtues are buried amongst all the expatriots from
9 all the countries that bring their drug habits and
10 thievery over there.

11 Q. DO YOU HAVE FRIENDS OR FAMILIES STILL
12 THERE?

13 A. I have cousins and I have an uncle still
14 there. I remember some years ago I went back to
15 visit my grandmother and she warned me not to have a
16 wallet easily visible. I said what? Oh, yeah, these
17 people will come up and slit open your pants and take
18 your wallet. That kind of change. That never
19 happened before, but now with such a concentration
20 there of people that they are living by their wits in
21 essence.

22 International, I don't know what you call
23 it, groupies of the drug culture. I suppose there is
24 an atmosphere there that is disappointing. A lot of
25 graffiti on the buildings for example which you would

1 never see before.

2 Q. LET ME ASK YOU THE RESISTANCE THAT WAS
3 TAKING PLACE IN AMSTERDAM, WAS IT ALSO TALKING PLACE
4 IN OTHER CITIES IN HOLLAND?

5 A. Yes. I mentioned intelligence network,
6 Rolls Royce, my father worked with that, that was
7 national and --

8 Q. SO IT WAS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY?

9 A. Um-hmm.

10 Q. SPECIFICALLY IN CITIES?

11 A. No, that was throughout the country. There
12 were many people involved. This was all through a
13 network, you know. One person knows three persons
14 who know three persons who know three persons type
15 thing. And information would filter in through these
16 networks, well on such and such a road we saw eight
17 German trucks go by and they had the No. 816 on the
18 side. And that would go to people that would collate
19 that and eventually everything would feed into a
20 central place that would broadcast on radio free
21 Holland clandestine broadcast system to England
22 because we wanted them to know as much as possible to
23 get the invasion going as quick as possible.

24 Q. WHAT WERE THE REPERCUSSIONS FOR A FAMILY
25 THAT DIDN'T WANT TO HOUSE SOMEBODY?

1 A. Well. I think they probably never really
2 approached anybody that they weren't sure of. It was
3 much too dangerous so.

4 Q. IT WAS TIGHT SECURITY?

5 A. Yeah. Right. You didn't really approach
6 anybody unless you had known for quite sometime or
7 knew people you had known.

8 Q. OR YOU WOULD BE REVEALING YOURSELF?

9 A. That's right, yeah. So I would say
10 generally when they asked they asked for was either
11 yes or it was oh, I would love to, but I can't.

12 Q. WAS THERE SOMETHING ELSE WE MISSED?

13 A. I can't think of anything right now, no.

14 Q. THAT WAS AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION. IS
15 THERE ANYTHING ELSE FROM YOUR NOTES?

16 A. No, that was the one thing I neglected to
17 the mention. I am sure ones I am out in the street
18 driving away three more things will come to mind.

19 Q. AND I WILL THINK OF ASKING YOU THREE MORE
20 THINGS TOO. IT'S BEEN WONDERFUL HEARING ABOUT YOUR
21 BACKGROUND AND YOUR EXPERIENCES.

22 A. Thank you.

23

24

25