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Interview with AGNES ANKAR

Holocaust Media Project

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Q. I AM SANDRA BENDAYAN. I AM HERE WITH EVELYN FIELDEN FROM THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF THE HOLOCAUST CENTER OF SAN FRANCISCO. TODAY IS DECEMBER THE 9TH, AND WE ARE HERE WITH AGNES ANKAR, WHO WILL INTRODUCE HERSELF.

WHAT IS YOUR NAME AND WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND WHEN, PLEASE?

A. Actually, I go under the name of Aggie Ankar.

Q. AGGIE.

A. It seems more informal and suits me better. I'm -- what did you want to know?

Q. WHERE YOU WERE BORN AND WHEN?

A. I was born July 31st, 1912, in Krustien, which is now Poland, which before the First World War was German and was called Krustien, is in West Prussia, and I was one of the youngest and first war refugees during the First World War because my mother, thinking that the Russians were moving in, wrapped me up as a two-year-old and took me to Berlin to stay with her brothers, two

bachelors who took, I guess, pretty good care of me, but couldn't replace mom and dad.

Q. WERE YOU AN ONLY CHILD?

A. At that time I was an only child, and I don't have any memories of this, of course. It must have been a pretty tough time to be with strangers away from home. My mother always said she cried bitter tears because I didn't recognize her, and I felt it served her right.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR PARENTS, HOW THEY LIVED THERE, WHERE THEY CAME FROM?

A. Well, my parents were born in west Prussia. My mother came from Strausbourg, which was then German and is now Bernitza. I mean Strausbourg, West Prussia. She was born in a small town close by. It was called Loudenbach, but I don't remember what it is now in Polish.

Anyway, that whole period is -- used to be Polish. Then after the Polish wars then in the late 18th century, it became German, that part of Poland; and then after the First World War in the Versailles treaty this became Polish again.

And we lived there for a couple years after it became Polish. I was then six years old and had to go to a Polish school and learn how to speak Polish, and again I've lost it all. When I hear Polish, it sounds

familiar. I have a good accent, they tell me, but I couldn't converse in it any more.

Anyway, my father was born and grew up in and they were -- they were big family.

Q. WERE YOU AN ORTHODOX HOUSEHOLD?

Q. No. My folks were what they call liberal, and actually (inaudible) influences that I went through. We had customs, but nothing regular. My folks were the three holiday Jews, like so many in Germany. My grandfather was rather pious, but also in the liberal tradition, and I remember some Passover holidays in my grandparents home in Strausbourg, or Bernitza, and that was a big household and a lot of people there. There were my grandparents had -- well, anyway. That goes too far and too long. We'll sit here tomorrow yet go into all that detail.

Anyway, my grandfather was very impressive. He was president of the congregation; and when I was there, then he would take me along to synagogue, and I was sitting on his lap right there, and so he was a VIP and that's very impressive on a grandchild.

But then my father was in the German -- had been in the German Army, too, in the First World War, and so life in Krustien became very uncomfortable for them, and we decided to move on.

Q. WHY WAS LIFE UNCOMFORTABLE FOR THEM?

A. Because of the Germans. My father was veteran of the First World War, and so in 1918, when this became Polish again, the Poles didn't particularly care to have any Germans around.

Q. Was there a lot of anti-Semitism already?

A. I wasn't aware of anything. I was a child. I was a very naive and innocent child, and even at nine years old when we moved into Danzig, my memories are pretty much blocked out from that time.

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And from the objective point of view, I can tell you that it was anti-Semitic. I do remember we had a maid to take care of the children. When my dad was in the Army, my mother had to take care of the business. So the maid took me along to church, to weddings in her family, and I remember those things. And then I remember the little shul in Krustien, things like that, where especially now since I am so sick; I remember the shamus in that congregation was very, very sick and thinking back to that incident now, I think he might have had the same illness I have now because of the way the woman took care of him.

He couldn't walk any more. He couldn't sit any more. She couldn't dress him any more. He was sitting in the wheelchair and with his bed clothes on because she

just -- and I, you know how children are, somehow curious and attracted to things like this.

Q. YES.

A. And I went over and looked and embarrased the couple and embarrassed myself and embarrassed my parents and heard about it.

Q. MADE A DEEP IMPRESSION ON YOU.

A. Negative things are often the deepest impression.

Q. WHAT WAS THE BUSINESS YOUR FAMILY WAS IN?

A. Oh, they had structural steel and iron and also household articles, and they also had a little farm where they had caretakers. And also my dad had a factory where they made fences, chicken wire fences, stuff like that.

So it was a big business, had been there for decades. My grandfather had the business. My dad inherited it. So they were well-respected citizens.

Q. WAS THERE A LARGE JEWISH POPULATION IN THAT TOWN?

A. Well, it's a small town, and there was a very nice Jewish community. You know, we had a Sunday school, but I don't know whether there was a Sunday. Anyway, some religions. I remember sonnestag thing. All kids were going to the sonnestag service. I couldn't go because my mother had company that afternoon, and I was strictly forbidden to come into the room, and I was sitting in the kitchen crying. I couldn't go. Everybody else went.

Until finally my mother came out for something. She said, What's the matter? So then, well, I was rushed out to synagogue so I could, still tears running. I think I walked along with my blanket. Those are the big problems when you are a little person.

Q. THEY ARE BIG THEN.

Q. YOU WERE NOW ABOUT WHAT, NINE YEARS OLD?

A. No, I wasn't yet. I was five, six years old. But then my folks decided to go to Danzig. I wasn't told anything. One day, the furniture was picked up and we were sleeping overnight in a hotel and next day to the train and we arrived several hours later in Danzig.

Q. JUST LIKE THAT.

A. Just like that. And my grandparents, for some reason, were there. Then I was left with my grandparents. I had a sister by then who was born six years later in 1918.

Q. WHY DID YOU HAVE TO STAY WITH YOUR GRANDPARENTS?

A. My parents went back.

Q. OH, THEY WENT BACK.

A. To sell the business.

Q. I SEE. AND JUST TOOK YOU.

A. They took us, and my grandparents took care of us, and I was put into a school. And then I was in a German school. And then I think it took maybe 10 days, I don't

know, my parents came, and my grandparents moved out.

One thing I remembered about that apartment is that before us the woman had lived in with nine dogs and it was full of fleas.

So, anyway, so much about our move to Danzig. We lived in a small suburb in the beginning and moved into -- my parents bought a couple of apartment houses and we lived in one of the apartments. And they went back into the same business, only this time was wholesale, not retail.

Q. SO YOUR FAMILY BOUGHT A NEW BUSINESS IN DANZIG.

A. They established a business, I think, established it themselves. And I grew up. I went to school. Actually, you asked a little while ago about anti-Semitism, and while I find through my school years I had very little problems with anti-Semitism, neither from parents, nor from fellow students or any other thing, we were socially friendly mostly with Jewish people, not non-Jews, but that was sort of an accepted thing, and that way we were more comfortable.

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But one day when I was in this new school, we had just enrolled and like nine-year-old or ten-year-olds we were playing on some game in a circle. One of the people in the circle asked me, "Aggie, I understand you're Jewish." The circle opened, and the hands closed in

front of me, and the circle went on, and I couldn't understand it. And couldn't for a long time understand it.

I just went finally back into the classroom, I suppose. But, again, it's one of the things that you remember because that is the first -- I don't think I even told it to my parents.

Q. I WAS JUST GOING TO ASK YOU IF YOU TOLD YOUR PARENTS.

A. I don't remember. I remember it now in retrospect even stronger than I did. At the time I think I blocked it out because the pain probably was intolerable, and it just made no sense. And as a child, you don't think about it so much.

There was a lot of peculiar things going on, but that's how my parents were little, there was always somebody there to take care of me. For instance, one time supposedly in Krustien I went away. The maids always had soldiers come and talk to them and sometimes they'd walk down a little bit to the corner to do what they like to do, and so then I woke up and I walked down the stairs of the apartment, and nobody was there. And so I walked across the street to friends who had a pharmacy in a night gown and they ran down my parents.

Q. YOU WERE AFRAID TO BE LEFT ALONE.

A. Well, that's right. A kid wants to know.

Q. AND YOUR PARENTS, THEY WERE WORKING A LOT OR SOCIAL LIFE?

A. No, they were at a party or something. So, anyway, they were preoccupied. So -- and in Danzig, of course, we had -- yeah, we had occasionally still people to take care of us because my mother went to help. At that stage she was used to working.

So she went into business with my dad, and the times economically began to get quite bad because it was '21, '22, '23 was inflation. By that time, of course, we lived in our own apartment house, but I still remember that I went with a three million mark in my hand to buy a quart of milk next door in the dairy.

Q. THREE MILLION.

A. And I knew I was looking at that. I told myself to remember that because at that stage I was beginning a little bit to have a little bit perspective. And I know that is going to sound funny when you grow up. And it does.

So, but in growing up in Danzig, it was really altogether quite a wonderful experience. Danzig is a beautiful city. They call it the northern Venice. It's built by the Crusaders. It's a very, very old city, has little streets. They call it gassa, which means little

alley, and very picturesque with little, what do you call it in New York, the stoops in front with this wrought iron things.

Q. DANZIG HAD A LARGE JEWISH COMMUNITY, DIDN'T IT?

A. Oh, yes, Danzig had a very large Jewish community. In fact, at the end of the 1920's Danzig's Jewish community was 10,000 strong. And then Danzig had -- well, let me start with -- well, I'll come back to that when I talk about the social, economical and things about Danzig. Let me go on a little bit about my own life.

So what was beautiful about Danzig was we were close to the Baltic Sea, and during the summer we went out by street car, by train to the seaside resorts and went swimming and playing to the concerts out there and tea dancing later on outside in the afternoon by the beach.

And the city was very, very picturesque. I'll show you some pictures later on. The church, the St. Mary's Church, had beautiful art, very famous art pieces. It was nice. You know, it was awe-inspiring. Nice to take friends around or relatives when they came to visit. And it also had beautiful hills and forests surrounding.

Danzig after the First World War, it through the Versailles treaty became a free state and was culturally German. I'm getting off the subject. Let me finish with

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my own thing.

Q. YOU TELL US YOUR STORY. THERE IS SO MUCH TO TELL.

A. It's so much to tell, and also it comes in the way. As I grew into my teens, I met -- there were three synagogues in the Danzig. At the liberal synagogue, we had a very, very well-known rabbi, Rabbi Kelter, and I got acquainted with one of his sons, and he invited me to come to a youth group meeting, and I joined a youth group. And that was a very lasting experience for me.

I guess I was open for the Jewish experience, and this was a group with neither Zionist nor the liberal assimilated. We were believing that Zionism, as well as the other liberal form of Judaism, is all part of Jewish life, and you don't have to be at war with each other just as long as you emphasize what is your Jewish heritage.

And so we met every Saturday afternoon, and we told Jewish stories and the stories from the Bible or modern Jewish literature, and we were learning songs. We were having discussions about what's going on in the world, in the Jewish world and the world at large; and my eyes were opened to a total new world of thinking, of appreciating the beauty of the world.

We were often on Sundays on hikes together, and during the summer often for a week-long hike into East

Prussia maybe or somewhere else.

But the companionship I found in that group of people and the mental and emotional stimulation was very -- well, it's deep in my heart still today. I mean I'm still in contact. One of the sons of this rabbi, the youngest one, a matter of fact, courted my sister, but they didn't marry. But he is now retired rabbi from the Long Beach synagogue, and he still calls me and keeps tabs on me, how I am getting along.

Q. A LIFELONG FRIENDSHIP.

A. Yes, right.

Q. HOW OLD WERE YOU THEN?

A. I was 12 years when I joined the group and was about 17 when I left. At 18, I guess, when I met -- I started going out and met my husband.

So there were other interests I had during that part of my life. I became very much interested in pacificism. Mahatma Gandhi was then in the forefront of politics and I admired the man. He certainly can arouse the fantasy of a romantically inclined young woman, and by romantic, I mean -- I think it means different things. Anyway, somebody who isn't interested only intellectually.

Q. THAT HAS THESE FANTASIES.

A. Yes. Anyway, it spoke to me. Pacificism spoke to

me. I have always been -- I've had difficult time with the Second World War being a pacifist.

Q. I CAN IMAGINE.

A. Yeah, and poetry by Tagore was one of my favorite things.

Danzig as a city was culturally German city, but 80, 85 percent of the people were German. Historically, Danzig had -- it was built in the 14th century by the Crusaders and those that followed them, the ones that had settled there. And it was built right there on the Polish border so that through the next several hundred years, in every war, that changed.

As a matter of fact, for 200 years I think, from 1500 to 1700, Danzig was Polish. And that was economically Danzig's most fruitful years. And Danzig was such an important city. It was one of the hinterstadter, one of the trading cities during those years in Europe, like Hamburg and Bremen and Statien and --

Q. Lubeck?

A. Lubeck, yes. Anyway, Danzig was one of them. And you can see it in the architecture, and certainly history tells it. During the negotiations in the Versailles treaty, the Poles insisted that Danzig needed to become Polish because Danzig is situated by the Vistula masis,

which is a Polish river, and the Poles needed that outflow of the vistula to the Baltic Sea to bring their agricultural product as well as industrial products to the oceanliners.

And to settle that like Solomon, I guess, that was one of the Solomonic results of the peace negotiation that Danzig would be an independent city, that it would have an open harbor for the Poles and that it would be under the protection of the League of Nations and would have sort of a governor there who was really -- they just took the office and had no powers whatsoever and that the Poles had all kinds of special privileges there for business purposes for their trade.

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And that was a very good arrangement. And it didn't satisfy the Germans, of course, because they wanted to be all Deutsch, but it was economically very advantageous for us, and trade was mostly done with Poland, import as well as export.

My folks, for instance, brought industrial products from Poland and again sold a lot of things back to Poland, but also imported things from Belgium and sold it to the different factories in Silesia. And my husband was in the grain business, and they bought all their grain from Poland and exported it to England, to Holland.

Q. WAS IT ALMOST LIKE AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY?

A. It was an independent country. We had our own constitution, made pretty much like the German. We had very similar parties. It was a clone of the German. The government was a clone of the German parliament and all that.

Only the people were different. And also they had certain obligation towards the people who the League of Nations put in for observation, but they were very uneffective.

Q. DID YOU HAVE OTHER RELATIVES IN DANZIG BESIDES YOUR GRANDPARENTS?

A. No, my grandparents didn't even stay there. They moved over to Berlin, and most of our relatives lived in Berlin or Breslau. As a matter of fact, my parents held on to -- kept their Polish nationality because, with their business, they had to do a lot of traveling. My father did a lot of traveling in Poland, and so it was necessary for him to keep his Polish nationality because it would be difficult for him to travel as a German national.

Q. SO LIVING IN DANZIG YOU EITHER HAD A POLISH NATIONALITY OR GERMAN NATIONALITY?

A. Or Danzig nationality. Now, the best thing would have been to become a Danziger, but I don't know, there was quite a big price of that, and I think you had to

live there so many years. I don't know. Anyway, for some reason or other, my parents never tried to become Danzig citizens.

Q. IT WAS SIMPLY POLISH CITIZENS AT THIS POINT.

A. Polish citizens living in Danzig, but they also kept their German passport just in case they needed it sometime.

Q. DID DANZIG ISSUE PASSPORTS IN ITSELF, TOO?

A. Yes. When I got married, I became a Danziger, and I still have as a relic, kept my Danzig passport.

Q. KEPT YOUR DANZIG. THAT'S INTERESTING.

A. Yeah.

Q. YOUR HUSBAND WAS DANZIGER?

A. My husband was a native Danziger. Matter of fact, I immigrated to America on a Danzig quota. Even though I should have -- no. No. I finally got a Polish quota. Yeah, I got a Polish quota.

Q. BY THE TIME YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT BEING 17 OR 18 AND STARTING TO DATE, HAD YOU EXPERIENCED ANY ANTI-SEMITISM GROWING THROUGHOUT THOSE YEARS, YOUR TEENAGE YEARS?

A. No, not particularly, because I lived not in a ghetto but in a spiritual ghetto. I ran around with Jewish kids mostly. In school I had some non-Jewish girlfriends; but when I was through school, I had mostly

Jewish -- through that group, youth group, I had mostly Jewish friends.

And I met my husband at a dance. Friends of my parents had taken me to a dance. I really knew him already before because we were all pretty much acquainted with each other through synagogue. So then he started taking me out and, well, for two years. And then -- and then we got married.

Q. THEN YOU MARRIED IN DANZIG.

A. I married in Danzig, yeah.

Q. THEN HOW LONG DID YOU LIVE IN DANZIG AFTER YOUR MARRIAGE?

A. We got married in '33, and -- no. Yeah. And we left in '38. So I was married five years.

Q. AND WHAT WERE THOSE FIVE YEARS LIKE FOR YOU?

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A. Well, before I got married, I -- well, during that time already the Nazis started to become strong. It followed right into the footsteps of the Germans. When the Nazis grew stronger in Germany, the Nazis grew stronger in Danzig.

Q. CAN YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOU FIRST NOTICED SOMETHING HAPPENING?

A. Well, oh, yes. There was no doubt about it. In the first place, we were getting the German newspapers. We were also getting Danzig newspapers. And they were

printed pretty much hand in hand. I mean it was at the most a year later that it came.

The only thing is, you see, Danzig, being under the protection of the League of Nations, had to be a little more careful about changing any laws about the Jews, but also they were a little more hesitant coming out in uniforms, but they did then. Maybe the flags came a little slower but they came.

And in 1930 there were Nazi troops walking through the city, a Nazi newspaper herkashabobata, was the Nazi party building, even der sturmer, if that means anything to you, outside and had pictures showing.

In the beginning it wasn't too uncomfortable, but the more arrogant they got, the more uncomfortable. I remember riding in a street car once and the street car was crowded with people, and we had to stand out from the platform outside, and there were also some Nazi troopers in uniform on there. And I was absolutely frightened to death that they would push my husband off the street car.

Q. BECAUSE OF BEING A JEW?

A. Yeah.

Q. DID HE HAVE TO WEAR THE STAR?

A. No.

Q. HOW DID THEY KNOW, THEN?

A. Oh, well, they did. They saw that in your face.

You weren't blond, and my husband looked pretty Jewish. Even I look.

Q. WERE THERE ANY SPECIFIC LAWS OR SEGREGATIONS THAT YOU REMEMBER?

A. Not in the beginning. Eventually, all these things came in, but from year to year, just a little more. The first election -- anyway, by 1936 we had a Nazi government, and we had -- before that we had a Jewish man, very intelligent, very fine Jewish man who was in the senate and was the treasurer of the government, like the secretary of the treasury. Well, he was asked to resign, of course.

And all these things were slowly turned over, but there were no racial laws yet here, and though the Jews were beginning to feel pressure. For instance, the Danzigers were reminded not to buy in Jewish stores.

Now, we had 10,000 Jews in Danzig. I was telling you before. We had three synagogues. The liberal synagogue was mostly German Jews. Then we had the conservative synagogue that were mostly Polish and Prussian Jews, and then we had the Hasidim stuber, who were also mostly Russian and Polish Jews.

They were just really small, small groups. We were just very familiar with it because our meetings on Saturday afternoon were always in those little Hasidic

stupels, and they always smelt from herring and I hate herring. So that's why we were familiar with these people.

Also, I became familiar through (inaudible) Polish and Russian immigrants because after Second World War, a lot of Russian and Polish Jews immigrated from Poland and Russia, and they were stuck in Danzig until they got in -- they were put there into a transit camp because they had to wait for their American quota numbers.

Q. SO DANZIG HAD A TRANSIT CAMP?

A. Yeah, but that had nothing to do with the camps. That was long before the Nazis. That was in the early twenties. But our group, when our rabbi took us out to those camps so that we could get acquainted with the so-called ausjuden.

Q. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

A. Eastern Jews, so we wouldn't have the old German arrogance and so that we knew what they looked like. We were learning to play with them and learning to appreciate them and were having our Passover and other holidays together, and then later on some of these people never got out of Danzig, became not necessarily citizens, but they had businesses.

Q. TOOK UP RESIDENCE.

A. They took up residence and opened little shops. They were very poor, so they had very modest little shops like in slums, like on Delancey Street in New York, something like that. And they were -- you know, the Danzigers bought there because it was usually much cheaper; but then, you see, they're the first ones to get the wrath of the Germans.

Q. CAN YOU REMEMBER THE DETAILS OF WHAT THOSE TRANSIT CAMPS WERE LIKE? I THINK THAT'S AN INTERESTING EXPERIENCE.

A. Like any camp, they are just really very, very, very simple. You know, we ate on wooden tables that were scrubbed like in jails, hard benches. There were no chairs.

Q. WAS IT LARGE COMMUNAL ROOMS OR DID FAMILIES HAVE THEIR OWN LITTLE PLACE?

A. I don't know. We were never taken to a room, but they had communal rooms, yeah. They were shacks, I'm sure, but they were not separated. They were not penalized. They just were not allowed into the city.

And sometimes when people tell me their families, they lay over in Danzig. Yeah, I was two years old, I was in Danzig.

So anyway, to come back now again to the Nazi period, they were the first ones to be boycotted, where

the windows were smeared or even broken. A lot of them had little stands in the market and then sometimes the Gauleiter, the head of the local party, would come in with his troops and just push down the horses.

Q. KICKED THE STAND OVER?

A. Kicked the stand over. And so the merchandise was all over the place.

Q. WERE THE PEOPLE BRUTALIZED?

A. Well, not then yet. Not in the beginning. That would have been -- that was much more subtly done, the brutalization. I think they were afraid to come right out and brutalize.

Actually, I wanted to tell you one experience during that when we finally decided to get married. My parents had some money in Germany, and they sent me to an aunt in Breslau to get myself some things to get ready for my wedding; and my aunt was working, so she could help me pick things out and get things ready.

And I was very fond of that one cousin I had there, and we were in the evening all sitting together, and that was in April of 1933. And the Nazis were pretty strong. Breslau was a German city. And so I -- we were talking, and then at 9:00 o'clock in the evening we always turned the radio on and listened to the news from Moscow and enjoyed the song, the Internationale.

And my cousin was a member of the social democrats and was in their youth organization. And we had that thing on, and we were singing, and we were having a good time laughing, and all of the sudden, fist on the door. Polizei. Polizei.

Q. POLICE. POLICE.

A. And we open up and, of course, was no police. Was the storm troopers. And immediately asked for my cousin, and my uncle just pushed me and my -- the other two kids into a room and said, "Stay there. Don't say anything. Just wait for me to come back."

And then he went around with people. They opened up all the closets and opened up drawers and so on. Then they came into the room where we were, too, and we were shaking, of course, opened the drawer and there was some red material. A seamstress was going to make me a dress.

He said, "Is that the red flag you have?" We said it was material. And then they left and took my cousin with them. And my uncle followed, and so we just huddled around the rest of the evening and, oh, about 12:00 o'clock at night they came back. I never saw my cousin then. My uncle just called a taxi and took my cousin somewhere to stay overnight somewhere else, and he came back then.

Q. I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU, DID THE GESTAPO OR THE

POLICE RELEASE YOUR COUSIN AFTER SEVERAL HOURS, OR DID YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED?

A. It was nothing official. This was just storm troopers. This was no police or anything like that. They were probably young men who had known him before who knew he was in a left wing organization and were just after him personally.

They beat him up and then let him go, and there was no use going to police or anything. We knew already that wouldn't help and just make things worse. What they did, I saw my cousin later on, because when I came back home he had been brought across the border and had gone to Danzig.

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From then on he was living with us for a few weeks until he could enlist in ault camp and get ready for the emigration to Israel, to Palestine then. He went from there on to Palestine, and he's still living there. And lives with his family there.

And so he was saved. But for us, for his younger sister and brother and for me, it was a terrible, terrible scare and trauma. This invasion of our privacy and this being searched and for several hours not knowing what had happened to him or whether he survived was an awful thing.

Q. SO WAS THIS THE FIRST MAJOR IMPACT ON YOUR LIFE?

A. Exactly, yeah. That was really one of the major traumas of the period. That then drew us into a sort of a nightmare of constant fear.

Q. HAD YOU EVER THOUGHT OF LEAVING BEFORE THAT HAPPENED AT ALL?

A. No.

Q. DID IT OCCUR TO YOU?

A. No, not at all. Not at all. Can you stop a minute?

Q. SURE.

(Brief recess.)

A. There were of course discussions whether I should return home immediately. I was frightened out of my wits, and anyway even before this happening my parents weren't very happy with the engagement. They thought times were too -- I was too young and the times were too difficult to make any lasting -- enter any lasting relationships.

And, of course, we thought that was crazy, and we were just determined to get married, and my folks gave in.

And this incident in my uncle's home that happened just around the 1st of April, which was nationwide in Germany the first day of the boycott against Jews.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER THE DATE OF THAT?

A. 1st of April.

Q. WHAT YEAR?

A. 1933.

Q. 1933. 1ST OF APRIL.

A. Yeah, and there were -- it wasn't like like Kristallnacht yet, but there were windows broken and writings on Jewish stores and people were picketing Jewish -- entrances of Jewish stores, but there were no laws that the Jews had to close their stores or anything.

It was just one of these scare tactics to intimidate the Jews. But with it also came some incidents as we had in my uncle's home with some people that were picked up at night and were never any more heard of. And we knew it had happened already several days before.

A physician, a friend of my uncle's, for instance, had gotten a telephone call saying that one of his patients was very, very -- no, not one of his patients. There was somebody very, very sick and he had to go and visit this person because he was so sick. And then when he got there, the address didn't even exist, but a pack of Nazi storm troopers picked him up and he was never seen again.

So those things happened, happened all over. That was sort of the beginning of it all. The people there

really singled out for one reason or another were taken care of, quote/unquote, in that manner. We hadn't heard of concentration camps yet. We hadn't heard of extermination camps certainly at that stage, but that was the beginning.

Q. BEFORE YOU WENT TO BRESLAU, IN DANZIG, WERE ANY OF THESE KINDS OF THINGS HAPPENING?

A. Not that any people were really picked up and beaten up and so on, but there were a few people who had been picked up and taken across the border and were never seen again. For instance, there was a man I respected very highly who was the commentator for the local newspaper, for the liberal newspaper, and he was picked up and taken across the border. Really kidnapped and killed.

Q. SO I ASSUME THAT THERE WAS ALREADY FEAR IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY.

A. There was beginning that fear, and we knew already these things were happening; but it was brand new, you know, it was being told this happened to this person. We knew practically every individual either personally or because it was a well-known person in the community, and it was an effort to see how much could they get away with. And especially in Danzig, we thought that they wouldn't get away with it, that the League would

interfere.

Q. DID YOU HAVE THE FEELING AT THE TIME THAT THIS WAS ONLY TEMPORARY, THAT HITLER COULDN'T LAST?

A. Absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. I thought the police would now step in, something like that. That my uncle didn't even go to the police was mind boggling to me, you see.

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Q. SO HE HAD A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW ALREADY.

A. Yes.

Q. THAT THE POLICE WOULD NOT HELP.

A. Right. They knew that already from experience. That was new to me. And, of course, I was so intimidated and so frightened, I couldn't sleep that night, and I was anxious to come home, but my folks said get ready with your stuff and then come home. I don't think my mother even picked me up. But then, of course, I was 19 years old. But it was a really frightening experience.

Q. SO WHEN DID YOU GET MARRIED?

A. I got married the 23rd of April.

Q. WHAT YEAR?

A. In 1933.

Q. AH, 1933.

A. And had a very nice wedding. My dad got up at the wedding and made a speech, of course. And he said, well, it's really not a time to celebrate, and all we are all

heading towards very difficult times, but we are here together and he wished everybody well.

Then my aunt, who was always a rascal in the family, and there was no wedding in the family without making a little ditty or making a little funny toast or whatever. She said, well, yes, we have difficult times, but so much more we have to celebrate, and this is a joyous occasion so then let's celebrate, and then let's make the best of it and send these two people on a happy road. And that lifted everybody's spirits. But that all was over us. It was just, you know, denying it.

And so it went on. As the years went by, we saw the Nazis getting more and more arrogant. Of course, in Danzig, the storm troopers were totally separated from the police, while in Germany that was already a little bit more wishy-washy. But usually when the Nazis did something, the police looked the other direction.

Q. DID YOU OBSERVE PEOPLE BEING BEAT UP, OR DID YOU KNOW OF PEOPLE BEING JUST SUMMARILY REMOVED OVER THOSE NEXT FEW YEARS?

A. Yes. Well, this went on all the time. Again, in Danzig not as much as somewhere else. In Danzig, they used more subtle means, and what happened, they actually didn't come to power until 1936. There was an election and the Communist party was forbidden; and before that in

Germany, the Communists could vote, and they were sitting in parliament.

But with forbidding the party, the Nazis had the majority in parliament, and so then they could elect their own senators, their own cabinet members, their own president.

And the first president, while he was a Nazi, was a very thoughtful person and tried to hold to the constitution as much as possible, and so much so that he made himself persona non grata with the Nazis and finally had to flee in the middle of the night because he was warned they would remove him, and what removing meant nobody knew for sure ever.

And he emigrated to United States immediately and lived for several years in the San Fernando Valley. He was a neighbor of an uncle of mine there, and they had some interesting talks, I remember, about the past.

And then, of course, another man took over and I forgot who did. Maybe Geisler. Anyway, somebody more, more --

Q. STRICT?

A. Well, more acceptable to the Nazis, and then they raided -- they did it with sweats.

Altogether, the takeover by the Nazis then was very difficult for the Jews. Number one, now all people

who work for government in any capacity lost their jobs. People in other organizations or businesses where Jews worked there was pressure put on them to let them go, and the Jews established their own labor group, for instance, because I think the labor organizations were just made uneffective and also in other things.

We were not allowed any more to go to movies, to go to theater or concerts. You felt uncomfortable in parks because they were patrolled; and to balance it, we created our own culture organization as all over in Europe there were artists who had lost their jobs with the opera, the symphonies. They would travel from city to city and present concerts. That was rather a pleasant part because then these things were much more intimate in smaller halls, and we had actually our own building.

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Q. DID YOU HAVE TO WEAR THE YELLOW STAR?

A. No, not yet.

Q. WHAT ABOUT GHETTOS?

A. There was no ghetto yet. We lived in our homes, but professionally it was difficult. The fear was always there, and then there were rumors, for instance, one night, that that was a night where the Nazis would come and break all the windows and steal from Jewish merchants.

And so we were all called, all the young men were

called, and we were all (inaudible)

because I didn't want my husband to go around, and we were getting together someone's home, and they were patrolling all night long the area. And I think that either it was a false alarm or maybe the patrols scared them. Anyway, nothing happened that night.

Q. THE AREA WHERE YOU LIVED, WAS IT PREDOMINANTLY A JEWISH AREA OR WAS IT MIXED?

A. It was totally mixed.

Q. YOU FELT COMFORTABLE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS?

A. Oh, no. You felt comfortable -- yeah, some neighbors. I lived in a small apartment house. There were five or six apartments, and there were I think about three Jews and two or three non-Jewish, and it was all comfortable. Yeah, there was nothing troubling. In my parents home, I think.

Q. WAS YOUR FATHER'S WORK AFFECTED AT ALL, YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER?

A. No, they had a wholesale business, was not affected in the beginning. Later on, yes, and the businesswise the pressure, that was towards the end. The government would send tax examiner out and would put enormous, enormous taxes on the Jewish companies that for all practical purposes made them unable to continue working.

So because it was Danzig and Danzig was involved in a lot of export, a lot of these companies didn't have any money in Danzig, but had it in international banks, and so they could leave just everything and run away.

And so, anyway, for all through these years private life became narrower and narrower because you couldn't go anyplace any more and because you were constantly fearful of what the development might be. We were hopeful that because it was an independent country that it would -- that they couldn't do what they wanted, and they had to be careful.

There were a lot of things that they didn't do that they were totally ready to do in Germany. But then it got really too much how they -- for the League of Nations, and they called the Danzig president on the carpet to appear before the assembly and explain what's happening, and he got up and just stuck his tongue out at them and left and went down and came back home and, of course, nothing happened.

And there were little things. Like, for instance, our apartment was sort of in the outskirts of Danzig, and there was a little forest up the hill of our street, and the storm troopers had a little camp there. And every morning at 3:00 o'clock in the morning, they would come marching up our street with their flags, their marching

boots and singing loudly, would walk up.

Of course, you would wake up, and it became a nightmare for me, for instance, that I suffered from for years afterwards. Even after you called me, I went through it again because bringing that together with the incident with my cousin was just more than I could cope with.

Q. EVEN THOUGH YOU SAY YOU COEXISTED WELL WITH YOUR NON-JEWISH NEIGHBORS, WHAT WAS THE GENERAL TENOR OF THE NON-JEWISH PEOPLE TOWARD THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN DANZIG?

A. I think maybe some were embarrassed, but generally people just let it go. There would be nobody ever coming up to you apologizing or anything like this if that's what you expected. I think it was too mind-boggling for them to even revolt against.

I mean, in the churches now nothing happened that we were aware of, and I don't think our own congregations really were capable of handling it until much, much later in the '30's; but in the beginning when everybody was just total not knowing, not knowing what to do, just coping with it from one day to another, and with the non-Jews, I suppose it was some maybe liked it, some didn't like it, some felt it was coming to us.

You know, I feel -- I personally feel even today under every non-Jewish hide is an anti-Semite. They grew

up with that feeling that the Jews killed Jesus Christ, and that directs their lives. And I think we've come a long way in America, but it's still there.

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Q. STILL A PROBLEM.

A. It's buried.

Q. DID YOU EVER HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE OF NON-JEWISH PEOPLE GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE?

A. Well, mixed. One I'll tell you in its continuity. As we lived through the '30's, our own personal life was fairly good. My husband had an excellent position. He had worked himself up from -- he started the job with the company 15 years old out of school and had been an apprentice and now would be, you know, by his post to become a vice president.

And so if it wouldn't have been for the political situation, our lives were secured. And in a way we couldn't wish it any better. Danzig was a pretty city. We liked it. We did love the cultural life as long as it was there. We had good friends there, and my husband had a good job and very promising job.

But, meanwhile, right and left our friends lost their businesses, lost their jobs, emigrated, and it became scary. And Bernie's best friend that he was friendly with from his early teens, he left for America. And he was in business for himself, but he said, "This

business -- this isn't going to last long. The Nazis mean what they're saying. I'm leaving, and you follow me," he said to Bernie.

And so we were talking afterwards and Bernie said, "I'm not ready to follow." Then we were discussing a lot of things. Do we want to go to America. He went to the United States. Or do we want to go to Israel, to Palestine.

And that was a long discussion because my feeling was I had the more stronger feeling for Palestine, and we were taking Hebrew classes just in case we had to make some move. And then we discussed it some more, and Bernie said, "This Palestine is no Jewish state, and there will never be a Jewish state."

That was in the '30's. And do we really want to live in a country where there is going to be always the fighting and where people feel that they have a first, a first right, and better, if we want to go, go to America where we will become full-fledged citizens again.

So we stopped Hebrew classes and took English classes. And, meanwhile, my husband didn't want to emigrate. He was just very happy. He was just being promoted in every (inaudible). He became how they call it a judge, but actually what they do is make -- well, there must be an expression for it. I can't think of it

right now. Where they have to resolve arguments.

Q. LIKE AN ARBITER?

A. An arbiter. That's the word. And that was a great honor for a 30-year-old, 25, 30-year-old man. Anyway, he just liked what he was doing.

Q. WERE YOU ALREADY AFRAID ENOUGH TO WANT TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY?

A. Yes. I thought we were going to be the last ones emigrating if we ever would be getting out, and then we had one friend who had been in the United States. So Bernie invited him over for dinner and he said, he said, "Dieter, tell us, what shall we do? Aggie wants me to emigrate and I can't see it. I have a good position. I can't imagine that it would happen here as badly as in Germany. The League of Nations will have to do something about it."

And he says, "Look it. I've been there. It's a very materialistic society. You're not going to like it. Make a lot of kids and stay here. Everybody else will be gone." By that time I was pregnant with my second child.

Q. YOU HAD ONE ALREADY THEN.

A. I had one already. So, anyway, we were not going. Then -- and, anyway, the pressures grew more and more. It was -- the night of the night watch was a terrible trauma for me.

Q. WHAT WAS THAT? WHAT IS THAT, THE NIGHT OF THE NIGHT WATCH?

A. Well, when we had to watch when the fellows were going around the city to see whether the Nazis were really going to beat up on the Jews.

Q. SO YOU TOOK TURNS WATCHING?

A. The men walked around at night, yeah. And nothing happened, as I said before. So maybe they were afraid. Maybe they were told by the League that the Poles were going to be let in if they do that or something like that. And maybe the Poles themselves said something that they needed to have a peaceful Danzig and for business reasons they kept it quiet.

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But individually there were more and more businesses threatened with these tax liens, and my husband's boss was very, very ill and was for weeks in the hospital, and then when he finally got better, he went on vacation. And all that time one of the businesses -- one of the -- one of the people in the same business was examined and had to flee before -- before they put a lien on him. And I was afraid it would happen to Bernie because he was the one who signed -- signed all the authorizations for the company.

So then it was about 1938, '38, early in the year, and then when finally Bernie's boss came back. And

Bernie after the first or the second day he was back, Bernie came home and he said, "Aggie, Bernard's leaving town," which was the signal. The old man was running. Didn't want to be put to jail and be pressured and getting his money back from loans.

Q. THIS IS THE BOSS.

A. That's the boss. And what do we do now. He says, "He's offered me a good job in Brussels. He wants to stay in the business and do the business out of Brussels, and he wants me to run it for him."

"So what do you want to do?"

"Once we leave here," he said, "we go to America."

Meanwhile, this friend of his who had gone had constantly written letters to us. I mean we get every week we get two or three letters. Come, come, come, come.

Q. TO AMERICA.

A. Yeah, come, but come quick. Don't wait too long. Come quick. So that was early 1938, and we just decided the same evening, we will tell him thank you, but no thank you. And other people had done it.

It was an awful difficult decision for my husband to make because he was then close to 30 years old. He had been 15 years with this company, started as an apprentice and started there because his uncle who was

his guardian -- my husband had no dad. His father died before he was born.

And he had taken him by the hand and said, "You don't learn anything in school anyway. You might as well -- you might as well work and support your mother." And so he took him to his friend. He says, "I don't want you to work for me. I'm sure you want to work in the same business like your father did. So that's the best thing for you." And Bernie loved it and was obviously very successful.

When I said Bernie had no father, Bernie was the sixth of six children, and his father had died the year he was born of influenza. That was an influenza epidemic.

Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR PARENTS? HOW DID THEY FEEL ABOUT EMIGRATION?

A. As a matter of fact, my dad said, "Hitler wants to get rid of us. I'm not going to do him a favor." People who couldn't make a decision on all kinds of reasons not to go. My dad felt, and it was always said, the Nazis always said people who fought in the First World War, they were secure.

My dad hadn't fought, but he was an active soldier. He -- my dad was in part of the service where he didn't go to the front. And my uncle was at the front

and had been wounded twice. He said he didn't have to go because he was a veteran of the First World War. And he was an attorney. For attorney it was most difficult thing to emigrate. He died in Auschwitz.

Q. HE WAS ROUNDED UP IN DANZIG?

A. No, he lived in Berlin, up in Berlin and died in Auschwitz. So this was all this talk, didn't mean a thing.

Q. HAD YOU HEARD ANYTHING BY THAT TIME ABOUT CAMPS AND DEPORTATIONS?

A. No. Yes, camps, yes. Deportations, yes. But not about extermination camps.

Q. BUT YOU KNEW THERE WERE CAMPS --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- WHERE JEWS WERE TAKEN TO.

A. Yes.

Q. WHAT DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM? DO YOU REMEMBER?

A. Well, yes. We knew that they existed, we knew that Jews were mistreated, that they were mistreated in jail.

Q. DID YOU KNOW THE NAMES OF THE CAMPS?

A. No.

Q. YOU DIDN'T KNOW.

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A. Where they were, no.

Q. HOW DID YOU GET TO KNOW ABOUT IT?

A. Through actually after we came to this country.

Q. YOU MEAN THE DEATH CAMPS YOU LEARNED ABOUT AFTER YOU CAME HERE?

A. Yes.

Q. BUT WHILE YOU WERE STILL IN DANZIG, YOU KNEW ABOUT CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND WORK CAMPS.

A. Yes.

Q. AND HOW DID YOU FIND OUT IN DANZIG?

A. By rumor. Just how we found out in Breslau that this man had been taken someplace and killed. These things were just happening, and it was just from word of mouth.

Q. HOW ABOUT YOUR SISTER, WHAT WAS HER FEELING AROUND THIS TIME?

A. Well, she lived this Berlin at the time, and I'm sure she knew as much as we do, we did, and she was as scared as we were, and she had a job there. And then my youngest sister, she -- she was a child. She was 12 years younger than I am. And she lived with my parents.

She was, later on after we left, she was sent to England to stay with a foster family, and then when we arrived in America, we brought her over to live with us until we got my parents out.

Q. HOW WAS LIFE IN DANZIG LIKE ECONOMICALLY? DID YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY GETTING FOOD OR CLOTHING OR OTHER

NECESSITIES?

A. Well, that was one of the last straws, but it came time and Bernie's boss decided to leave town and gave us a choice of what we wanted to do. You know, I had two children by that time, and I had a young woman helping me in the house, and she came home from doing some grocery shopping for me and she said to me that Mr. Joham said that he's not allowed to -- after that date you won't be allowed to sell any more groceries to Jewish people, but he said if I come after 7:00 o'clock to his back door, he would give me enough food for you so that you could make it.

And when I told this to Bernie, I said, well, how long will it be that she stays with us. And then I'm not going to depend on anything like that. And then also this business of what are we going to raise our children for, do we really want to raise them as slaves, as second -- always in fear, not being able to participate in the better things in life, certainly, and it was just at this stage it became nearly obsessive with us. We must go.

Q. HOW ABOUT RELIGIOUS PRACTICE? COULD YOU GO TO SYNAGOGUE?

A. Yeah, we could, but it was not pleasant because you would have groups of storm troopers sometimes

collecting in the area and so on. And you felt threatened often for one reason or another. They could say, "What do you look at me like this," and start an argument.

So one time there was they had sometimes a crock with fruit. One time I came by and there were some bananas on it. They were hard to get, and so I looked at the bananas, but they really didn't look so very good. And I put it back and I said no. "What's the matter? Not good enough for you?" You know. And he even ran after us shouting and cursing, and it's frightening.

Q. HOW DIFFICULT WAS IT TO GET PAPERS TO EMIGRATE AND TO TAKE ANY MONEY OUT?

A. Well, number one, we didn't have much money. The little bit that we had, we had sent out to our friend. By that time he had moved to California.

Q. SO YOU COULD SEND OUT SOME MONEY.

A. Yeah, we could send out money at that stage.

Q. YOU HAD DANZIG MONEY YOU SENT OUT?

A. Danzig money. They had their own currency.

Q. AND YOU SENT THAT OUT.

A. No, we could change that into dollars.

Q. OH, YOU COULD.

A. Yeah. And it was a regular currency. So at that stage Danzig -- the Danzig trade was all -- most of it

was import-export. So they had to have currency and Bernie's -- Bernie would have been a salesman in a department store. He would have had dollars and no -- he would have had Danzig gulden and no access to dollars.

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But since he was in the import-export business, he had part of his salary given to him in dollars and had it in a foreign bank. And then when his friend went to there and there was a cute saying. Well, that goes too far.

His friend was on a train in from Los Angeles to -- or to Los Angeles, something. And so he started talking to a family on the same train. He thought they maybe were Jewish. And so the gentleman heard in his voice that he was -- the way he spoke it was an accent. "Are you German?" "Ja."

"How is it in Germany? Where did you come from?"

"Oh, Danzig," he said.

"Well," he says, "I have relatives in Danzig."

So, Hans said immediately, "What relatives?"

"Oh, the Ankars." So this guy was the brother-in-law of an uncle of Bernie's.

Q. WHAT A COINCIDENCE.

A. I don't know you call them. So anyway, immediately my friend, our friend Hans, said, "Well, maybe you would give an affidavit for the family."

"You let me know when they are ready to come."

But we didn't want an affidavit. We had a little bit money left. Not much. We had a little bit money saved, I mean, and we went to the consulate, the local consul, and we had heard from other people that he had a secretary who enjoys getting little gifts. So we took along a little, it was nothing major. We took them a little gift. And said okay, if you can get your quota number, okay.

Well, Danzig at the time didn't have emigrants to America yet. There were only hundred numbers, hundred people and that people a year that could get to Danzig and this was about the end of March, beginning of April.

So there were my husband and the children got, I think, 94, 95 and 96. I was born in Poland and had to go on a Polish quota. And so the Polish quota was way oversubscribed. So there was a lot of negotiation going on whether they could give me a Danzig quota or whether they would give me a Polish quota, and then they finally said if I wait till the 1st of July, then they would give me first the Polish number that opened up. And they did that, and we left on the 3rd of July.

Q. 1938.

A. 1938.

Q. AND YOU WENT WHERE?

A. Well, we traveled -- we stopped in Berlin -- my grandmother lived there and aunts and uncles -- to say good-bye to everybody. And then we went, and it was very unpleasant trip because Berlin was very scary. Then we went across the border, and we were warned to keep awfully quiet because usually when they sense people who are emigrating they are being examined very thoroughly and their things unpacked and whatnot.

Q. EXCUSE ME. ACROSS WHAT BORDER?

A. Well, we went from Danzig up to Germany and from Germany across the border to France.

Q. UP TO FRANCE.

Q. YOU WERE ON THE TRAIN.

A. On the train. And, actually, I went to Paris with the children, and my husband went to Brussels to see some of the people he had done business with to get some letters of recommendation. And he had collected some letters of recommendation in Danzig, too, because he was well-known and so on, thought it might help.

And so, well, nothing happened at the border. We arrived in Paris and were received there by a relative and had a good three days in Paris. And my little Paul said, "Mommy, the people talk funny here." It was his first experience with a foreign language. And then my husband came a couple days later and then we met a ship.

Q. WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE BOAT AGAIN?

A. The name of the boat was Champlain.

Q. CHAMPLAIN. IT WAS FRENCH?

A. Yeah.

Q. HOW WERE THE TRAIN CONDITIONS GOING ACROSS GERMANY? HOW WAS THE TRAIN? WAS IT A REGULAR PASSENGER TRAIN STILL?

A. Yeah. Yeah, oh, yes.

Q. AND YOU SAID BERLIN WAS PRETTY SCARY. WHAT DID YOU SEE IN BERLIN?

A. Well, we just felt uncomfortable because the Nazi situation was so much more apparent. Danzig was nothing compared to it. More storm troopers on the way, more sense of being intimidated.

Q. HOW DID YOUR GRANDPARENTS -- THEY LIVED IN BERLIN, YOU SAID.

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A. My grandmother lived at that time in on old age home in Berlin, yes.

Q. SHE KNEW SHE COULDN'T GET OUT.

A. That's right, and she didn't want to get out. And she -- she had lost -- she was my father's step-mother, and she had lost her only son in the First World War. And that was the greatest tragedy in my husband's family. And -- but she felt like everybody else, the gratitude of the Fatherland will always be yours.

And so she -- she thought at least she would be able to end her life in Berlin, but she also was taken to Theresienstadt and ended her life there.

Q. SHE DIED IN THERESIENSTADT?

A. Yes.

Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR OTHER RELATIVES IN BERLIN? WHAT WAS THEIR FATE?

A. Most of them -- most of them just are gone.

Q. WERE THEY TAKEN TO THERESIENSTADT ALSO?

A. No, we don't think so, but we don't know.

Q. YOU DON'T. YOU NEVER FOUND OUT WHAT HAPPENED.

A. No, there is no way to find out.

Q. BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND AT TIMES THAT THERE WERE LISTS OF PEOPLE POSTED AFTER THE WAR WHERE THEY KNEW WHAT CAMPS THEY WENT TO.

A. Nothing.

Q. YOU NEVER HEARD ANYTHING.

A. Because all my cousins survived, but they never got their parents out.

Q. THEY LEFT? THE ONES THAT SURVIVED?

A. Yeah.

Q. THEY LEFT. THEY EMIGRATED.

A. Yeah.

Q. BUT THE PARENTS WHO REMAINED?

A. Parents never got out.

Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR PARENTS?

A. Well, I'll tell you when it happened.

Q. OKAY.

A. Anyway, we got on board ship and it's all naturally just very exciting situation. You're aware every moment that you are doing something tremendous with your life, and the ship leaves, and we stood on deck, watched the Continent disappear slowly, and my little fellow piped up and says, "Mommy, Mommy, the whole world is all gone."

And it deeply moved me. I held onto his hand and I said, "Daddy will talk about it right away." And I sat down.

You know, so far it was like a vacation trip, right? And I said, "Yeah, the world's gone, but we're going now into a new world and you will learn a new language and we just couldn't live there any more."

And it was the hardest thing for me to say, "But, you see, we lived in Germany and the Germans don't want us because we're Jewish." And he looked at me. He saw me cry, and so he just sort of cuddled and took comfort in my presence but didn't ask any more -- didn't ask any more questions. But I felt later just the fact that this experience happened gave him something to build on when we arrived.

Q. HOW OLD WAS HE THEN?

A. Four and a half years old. And he hadn't -- didn't have much or any basis in language at all. We were too busy with ourselves to try to prepare the kid.

And so we had a very pleasant trip over, and we arrived in New York, and now immigrating into the new country. And we had been warned that if you don't have your papers in order, you go to Ellis Island. That was a tremendous care scare for me, and so be friendly. The immigration officers can be awful, awful mean.

And so we were aware. And try and talk English, they appreciate that if you can speak English. And so -- and as we walk into the hall where the examining officers were, we were right away approached by people from the various committees and who said, "Anything we can do to help, please contact us."

So, anyway, you wait in line, and finally it's our turn, and we come and we show them very proud our passports and the little cards they have for -- the immigration cards for our kids. And he said that we have affidavits. We said, "Well, we don't have any. We have some savings and the consul gave us permission to emigrate on basis of our savings."

And so he said, "Well, where do you have proof of the money you have?" Well, we don't. "Am I supposed to

believe you that you have it?" He was unpleasant. He was very strict and business like. I can't say unpleasant.

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"Well, we have it in California. A friend of ours has deposited it in a bank and it's in our name and, well, we were traveling through Germany and we could not possibly have anything on us that because we would not have been allowed to leave the country."

And he says, "But I can't let you in without the proof. I have to put you in Ellis Island until you can bring me proof that this is really your money."

So back we went into, you know, and he says wait over there. There were several. We were not the only ones. There were about 20, 30 people standing there.

Well, I was beside myself. We had friends waiting down there and then they hear we have to go to Ellis Island, and the kids and another stop on the way, and at least you feel maybe here you're welcome. Then something like this comes up. It makes it -- it was terrible.

So, anyway, we waited then until everybody was processed, and he was just trying to get up, and I collected myself, and I knew a little bit more English than Bernie knew because I had had some English in school. And so I excused myself and I said, "May I please talk to you for a few minutes once more?" And I

said, I avowed this is true word we are saying. This is true what we are saying. Please don't let us go to, you know, the children are already so worn out and it's so difficult, and I don't know what all I said. But he said -- then he said, "Is anybody expecting you?"

"Oh, yes," I said, "a whole bunch of people."

"Do you think anybody will vouch for you?"

I said, "They all will."

And so we called the woman from the committee and said could you please get doctor so and so up. We though a doctor is always good. So I still see him bounding up and embracing me and I said, "Walter, I need your help. They won't let us out. You'll have to vouch for us." So then he was there already for a year. He knew part of the English and --

Q. SAVED.

A. Saved. But, anyway, that was a great relief because it was unpleasant. Anyway, we spent two weeks in New York. It was a very depressing time. Everybody was terribly depressed. It was -- '38 was a bad year. Was depression on. And most of our people had no job and, if they had a job, they made something like $15 a week. And they were menial jobs. They were not jobs that we were used to, we were hoping for. They were hold-over jobs so that you didn't have to eat up all your savings.

Q. DID YOU OR YOUR HUSBAND FIND WORK THERE?

A. Well, I wasn't even looking for work because I had the two kids, and I wasn't that much organized yet that I could work and, anyway, I really never worked. I got married right out of school.

And so my husband just went from committee to committee, from one company to another where he had been referred to and he says, "Aggie, when we settle down, the letters will be good for toilet paper."

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So, anyway, the committee people said, "Oh, you have friends in California. Go to California." They were so inundated with immigrants that they were glad to get rid of any family they could. And when they heard yet that our friend is in a small town, they said, "That's the best thing. The big cities are overrun all over with immigrants, but in the small town you still have a little bit of possibility."

So, anyway, we got ourselves a ticket to California.

Q. BY TRAIN?

A. By train, of course. There were no planes yet. And our friend picked us up in Sacramento and drove us to Modesto. He had moved to Modesto, meanwhile. And I looked Modesto up on the map, and it didn't exist. And I made Bernie promise me we won't stay in Modesto, that

town with 17,000 inhabitants. I don't want my children to grow up in a hick town.

So, anyway, we arrived in Modesto. We stayed three -- we stayed a week in a hotel. It was hot like Hades. There were these crickets by the thousands all over. If you walked at night in the streets, you stepped on crickets. It was awful. It was awful.

And we found a little house that we rented out in the country. We had no car. And we stayed in that little house. And my husband had a job as a strike breaker for the cannery, and he worked for a couple of weeks in the cannery, and he came home with his pants full of food syrup.

And then all of the sudden, the food dried up. There was no more food. They sent him home in the middle of the night without telling him ahead of time that there wasn't enough work and all dogs behind him and he said, "You know, I don't think there is anything for me. I'm going to quit this job."

And he was going to look for jobs in California. So then he went on a search for a job. He had looked for a job here in this area, too, and people weren't buying a foreigner. He had worked for a great, well-known overseas company in Danzig, but here a little grange company said to him, "Listen, man, you don't even speak

our language. I don't have a job for my own people." He says, "I can't hire you."

And he went to LA and somebody said, oh, yes, I know, it's bad and so on. He says, "What did you use to do?" He says, "Oh, I was a grain merchant." He opened up the telephone directory and the grain companies, he pulled it out and he says, "Here, go see them."

And then he went to San Bernardino to that man that Hans had met on the train who was a relative, and he stopped at the hotel and cleaned himself up and then called up Mr. Harris, the man's name, and he came over right away and, "Oh, Bernie," embraced him, cousin, and, yes, you come and have dinner with my family.

And so then -- and he says, "You got to move out of the hotel. You stay with us," and, well, the hotel didn't like that. He had used already the toilet and the bath. So but he was Mr. Harris, big man with a department store and so, all right, take your cousin out.

So he had very nice reception there, and then when he asked for a job, he said, "Bernie, I'd love to employ you. The only job I would have is an elevator man and I would have to fire the one I have. Do you want me to do that?"

And Bernie said, "No. I appreciate very much your hospitality," and there were some other relatives in that

town he visited who just made a living themselves. And so then he came home and said, "There is nothing."

So the two guys were talking. Meanwhile, while Bernie had been working in the canneries, Hans had bought a business. That's why he had moved to Modesto, because he had bought a little junk yard. And so he went. He had to drive to San Francisco frequently for -- to make business contacts, and Bernie would stay in the office for him and would try and help, help out as good as he could because he didn't know anything about that kind of business.

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So, meanwhile, they were talking a mile a minute and we were talking a mile a minute. So then one time then after a week or so Bernie came to me and he said, "Aggie, Hans offered me a partnership."

I said, "A partnership. For what?"

"Well," he said, "for one family can live, two families can live." He wasn't married, and he says, "We can get together and build up a business."

I said, "Bernie, but you don't like this kind of business."

He says, "Aggie, I don't. I hate it, but what am I going to do with my family? We can't spend any more time looking and being shifted from one end of the world to another."

And I could see that he was beginning to show deep wounds from the severance with his family, from the severance of his business, from the insecurity of traveling and not knowing where to turn or what happened; and I also felt that he had a lot of warmth and support from his friend.

And so he said, "We want to try it for nine months." This was in early September, late September, I think it was. We want to try it until the first of April. We want to make a contract.

Q. IT WAS '38, SEPTEMBER '38.

A. September '38. We make a contract with each other. We both invest so much money. As a matter of fact, the friend had much more money than we had, and he says he would invest that much and we were just investing a much smaller part, and they would try and see for the next nine months how the business will go, and then on the first of April, he says, all three of us will sit together and decide whether to go on.

And that's what they did, and they built the place up together and it worked. And they decided to -- in April to do more of it, and the following year a competition next door came over and wanted to sell to them because they felt threatened by them. And then we had to make more investments, of course, and I was scared

because Bernie's guardian had said to us when we said good-bye to him, "Never spend your last thousand dollars."

And so I said, "Well, Bernie, we'll leave those thousand dollars in the bank." Anyway, they built it up. They became known in town for what they were trying to do, respected, and after -- as a matter of fact, after three or four years, of course, it was already the war had started. They changed the business into new iron. They were able to buy a building and start a new business and built the business up.

I have to say two things about that. Number one, from the first moment that they opened the business that they went into business together, the Bank of America gave them credit, and I said how can they. And Bernie said the same question I asked him. And he said, "Mr. Ankar, or, Bernie, can I call you Bernie, Hans, we have good feeling for people like you, and we see where you come from and we want to help you, and we think it's going to be good for us, too, in the long run."

And I'm still working with the Bank of America. I mean as little as I have, my little savings account. But I've never forgotten it.

And not only did they do that, they did other things for us, too, and they were never sorry. They

always gave us credit. They always gave us more credit than we asked for. They always helped wherever they could.

Much later, you asked what happened to my parents. The minute we were settled and we saw business was going and the way the business was going, we didn't know how much or anything, we went to an attorney, a member of the congregation -- we had joined a congregation -- and sent out affidavits for the rest of our family.

And the bank gave us affidavits that we had enough money for all.

Q. TO SPONSOR THEM.

A. To sponsor them, and then gave us recommendations of other people who would help sponsor. And that was good. And the other thing -- and then later on, when the war -- when America entered the war -- no, America hadn't entered the war yet.

Anyway, all of sudden I didn't get mail from my parents, and, of course, I didn't know what had happened.

Q. WHEN WAS THIS?

A. That was in 1939. It was before America entered the war.

Q. SO FROM '38 TO '39 YOU COULD WRITE FREELY AND NO PROBLEM.

A. Yeah, I think must have been 1940 already. And

meanwhile my younger sister had arrived in England. My other sister had arrived in New York, and we didn't hear from my parents. Then I got a wire from my aunt, "Do everything possible for your parents."

Q. WHY HADN'T THEY GOT OUT WHEN YOUR SISTERS LEFT EVEN?

A. They were in business. They had buildings there. Anyway, that was '39. Now, I remember exactly when it was.

Q. BUT IN '39 DIDN'T THE NAZIS START TO TAKE THE BUSINESS AWAY AND MAKE THEM WHAT THEY CALLED ARYAN? WAS THAT IN DANZIG THE WAY IT WAS?

A. Well, it was not, it was not in Danzig yet. But, anyway, my folks were at the time probably trying to sell everything. And they also had made efforts to send some of their belongings to across the border into Poland. And then I got the wire from my aunt in Berlin, "Do everything you can to get visa for parents. Contact George Fisher in Havana, Cuba."

Who is George Fisher in Havana, Cuba? What does that mean? Well, I knew my parents were in dire danger. I wrote a letter to this man in Cuba and said, "I do not know what's happening, but can you help me?"

And he wrote back immediately, "Dear Aggie, I hope I still can call you that." And I said, "Damn it, who

are you?" Well, he was a good friend of mine who had changed his name, obviously, had immigrated to Cuba.

And he said, "I can't help you, but I have an uncle who I can put you together with. He's lived in Cuba many years and has connections and for 2,000 bucks he can buy your parents a visa."

Well, $2,000 was a lot of money for us, and matter of fact, it was one-third of our possessed, but we call -- we wrote to the man. You didn't make long distance calls like that at the time. And, yeah, he said, so much for this, his cost, for the service and so much for the price, so much for the visa. Came to $2,000.

And that visa was supposed to go. My aunt had written to the Cuban consulate in Berlin. So then, so that was done. That went pretty well without a hitch, and --

Q. WHY DID YOUR AUNT SEND THE WIRE INSTEAD OF YOUR PARENTS?

A. Well, you will hear. And then we didn't know, and then I guess I wrote to my aunt. I don't know. Maybe I asked the consulate to notify my aunt, and then we heard -- then we got another wire to try that -- no, I think then we got a letter from parents that they were in Berlin for some reason. And that they needed to get out.

They had gotten a visa, but they needed to get a visa for --

Q. CUBA?

A. Cuba. No. They had a visa for Cuba by then, but they needed a visa to get to Italy. They had -- that's what it was. We needed to send money for a ticket, and so then the bank started giving money, loaning us money, and also the Italian government demanded an affidavit. And so the bank gave us a guarantee over $2,000 that they would hold for our parents in Italy.

So then it was one month, two months, three months. Nobody. Finally, the president of the bank, he called up and said, "Bernie, I haven't heard from your parents-in-law. What am I going to do with the affidavit? I can't hold it any longer."

So Bernie said, "Well, cancel it. But if they do arrive in Italy, please contact us right away." So actually about three days after they cancelled he called Bernie and said they had arrived. And then it was most exciting day. And so I was absolutely overwhelmed.

And again, you see, the bank came through immediately, reinstated all the papers and it was just really fantastic. So, anyway, my parents when they arrived in Cuba, they were also put into the equivalent of Ellis Island because my mother had contracted a very

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severe disease on the boat; and while they were on the Italian boat on the way to Cuba, Italy entered the war. But they finally arrived in Cuba.

Q. BOTH YOUR PARENTS ARRIVED SAFELY IN CUBA?

A. Yeah.

Q. WHAT WAS THE DISEASE YOU MOTHER HAD?

A. It was typhoid. Typhoid fever. So then my parents lived in Cuba, and then we did the same thing for my sister-in-law who lived in Berlin. And we had tried to get her out, and the consulate, the American consulate in Berlin was very anti-Semitic. It was very difficult.

Q. YOU SAID YOUR SISTER-IN-LAW.

A. My husband's sister. Yeah.

Q. THE AMERICAN CONSUL IN BERLIN WAS ANTI-SEMITIC?

A. Yeah. Yes, as far as we understood, it was extremely difficult for Jews to make a contact with the consul and get visas, and when my -- when we finally were able to get a visa for my sister for Cuba, my sister-in-law for Cuba, she said she wanted to have from the American consulate her waiting number in Berlin because she's going to go to Cuba, and she's going to wait there for her American visa of entry.

And the consul said to her, "We give you the number, but it won't help. You go to Cuba and you stay in Cuba."

Anyway, she didn't stay in Cuba. She went to Cuba and she, as well as my parents, came to America within the next year, but they had to wait for these numbers. What do you call them. Quota numbers. Quota numbers to become free.

Q. DID YOU EVER UNDERSTAND WHY YOU COULDN'T GET MAIL FROM THEM DURING THAT PERIOD WHEN THEY WERE --

A. Well, my parents were in jail. My parents were jailed. They were accused of having smuggled money out of Danzig. By that time Danzig was German already. The Second World War had started, and so the war started in Danzig. The Nazis moved into Danzig. That was first thing on 1st of September, 1939.

We stayed up all night and bent over the radio and listening what was happening there. And a week before that, my parents had been taken to jail and been accused that they had smuggled money out of the country.

And during that time, all their furniture was attached by the tax people, and they had the house, their house and their warehouse was taken away from them. They were allowed to sell it for some 10 percent of its value, and then the money was taken away from them for Jew tax. And so they were destitute.

And when they got out of jail, finally they got out of jail, my mother just got hysterical. She was told

by the police that her husband had admitted already, she might as well admit it, and then vice versa. Those were old ruses. They knew that.

And so, anyway -- but, finally, they got to a policeman who knew them and who was able to exert some gentle powers, set them free, and they left the same night for Berlin. All in all, it saved their lives because under other circumstances, what had happened in Germany was that people had realized that the war would start any moment or that the Germans would enter Danzig. And by the hundreds the Jews that were still there had not emigrated yet and were leaving by car, by train, by bus to Poland. But the Nazis followed, and every one of them they found they killed right on sight.

Q. HOW THEN WERE THEY ABLE TO GO BACK INTO GERMANY?

A. My folks thought that in Germany they wouldn't be recognized. See, it was all Germans. There was no border any more. So they could -- and they were hiding out in my uncle and aunt's home.

Q. AND THEY DIDN'T WEAR THE STAR.

A. Well, yes, they did wear the star. As a matter of fact, I have it.

Q. YOUR PARENTS WERE WEARING THE STAR?

A. Yes.

Q. AND TRAVELED TO BERLIN.

A. Yeah. Well, maybe they took it off on the train. I don't know. But they would have traveled by night. Anyway, they got there, and that's why my aunt -- my aunt didn't have the food cards for them either.

Q. DO YOU KNOW HOW THEY MANAGED DURING THAT PERIOD?

A. They did manage somehow.

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Q. HOW ABOUT THE COMMUNICATION DURING THE WAR BETWEEN BERLIN AND YOU AND YOUR PARENTS?

A. Well, America wasn't at war yet.

Q. OH, THAT WAS IN '39.

A. And the communication wasn't very good because it was mostly through the consulate because it took weeks and weeks before a letter came.

Q. THIS INSTANCE OF THE POLICEMAN WHO HELPED THEM, WAS THAT WHAT YOU WERE REFERRING TO ABOUT A NON-JEWISH PERSON BEING VERY HELPFUL?

A. Yeah, that was one of the things. Also, the grocer saying that he would feed us even though it was against the orders. It was kind certainly.

But I want to come back then to our own life here in Modesto. As I said, we had by now established a business. We had also decided that we were not going to take any money out for the first year, that we were going to live on our savings. The only help we got was that Hans was going to eat with us and paying for his board,

which then, since he was always very generous, we had enough for all of us pretty much. I mean he paid about 50 percent, and I used the -- and we paid the other 50 percent. So we managed that way.

And we put our youngsters in school, a nursery school first and then into real school. It took a little while for them to adjust. And so our physical wellbeing was getting in some kind of an order, but then come the thoughts. You are in country, you are uprooted, you struggle with the language, you make new friends hopefully eventually, worry about the people you left behind, and you have some guilt.

My husband left sisters and brother there and his mother. His mother was too old to come by herself, and so then we heard that she would be allowed to enter an old age home which was partly created with funds from the Ankar family, which was a very wealthy family. We were the poor relatives. And they offered a free place that happened to have come up to my mother-in-law, and that then she would come with my husband's older sister whenever she was ready to emigrate.

And then comes the emotional thing. You have grown up as a German, and you were rejected. And you went through a time of fear, and you made your resolution and decided to emigrate; and here we were hopeful that we

came to the right country, certainly to a good country, but there is an emptiness. You don't wholly belong here, and you don't wholly belong there.

We had to discuss what language to use in our home environment, and for the sake of the children and for our sake, too, we decided to speak English, to force ourselves to speak English.

That was easy because our friend who had lived here nine months longer than we did wanted to speak English and encouraged us to do so. We felt it would be good for the children because they would learn English certainly faster if we talked with them. I thought also vice versa, and also I wanted those kids to make friends in this country as fast as possible and wanted them to feel that when they bring friends home, they wouldn't feel that they come to a strange family because they couldn't speak the language very well.

So we decided on the English language, and a little bit my oldest child was already prepared for that when I told him what was going on in our lives, and -- but then -- and that wasn't easy to speak.

Q. ENGLISH WAS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

A. Yeah, right. It took a while, but we managed. And then began to -- the other evaluation. What are you? We were not Germans any more, and we were not Americans

yet, and we were rejected because we were Jews; and so we decided that that was the positive thing in our life and that we had to follow it that the kind of life we were going to live by making it a positive feeling because otherwise I felt we would live forever with an inferiority complex because we were Jewish. And we thought that the more we learned and knew about Judaism, that the prouder we would be. And it was really an easy thing for us to do because basically we had a deep love for Jewish customs and Jewish ethics and so on.

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Q. ON THE EMOTIONAL THAT YOU SPOKE ABOUT, YOU HAVE REFERRED BEFORE THAT YOU SAW THE TOLL IT WAS TAKING ON YOUR HUSBAND.

A. Yes.

Q. AND I WAS WONDERING WHAT IT WAS THAT YOU NOTICED ABOUT HIM THAT TOLD YOU THAT.

A. Because he was very upbeat -- God, sometimes --

Q. IT'S OKAY.

A. He was always hopeful.

Q. OPTIMISTIC.

A. Optimistic. And all of the sudden, he lost some of that and was -- felt downturn health, listless and worried like he lost the whole outlook on life.

Q. IN RETROSPECT, COULD YOU SEE WHAT INFLUENCE IT MIGHT HAVE HAD ON YOUR TWO ELDER CHILDREN?

A. Well, Ruth was only a year old, and I wasn't so worried about her, but I was worried about the boy. But I think he had the strength of us all, and he took to the English. I took him to a nursery school, and it was a cooperative nursery school, and so parents were helping with the care of the children, and I had the extra opportunity to meet American mothers and learn American customs and ways.

And so Jerry played with the children and always was very quiet until after about three weeks, and I picked him up one day. The woman who was running the nursery school, and it was connected with the junior college, was at the same time the child care thing for junior college students and parents. She said to me, "You know, your son said a whole sentence today. That's the first time I realized he had a voice."

She said to me, "See, he wouldn't say anything as long as he wasn't sure he could say a whole sentence." I forgot what the sentence was but it had something to do with the wagon that he was sharing with some other kid.

Q. AND WHAT IS YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT HOW THIS HAS SHAPED YOUR LIFE, YOUR SUBSEQUENT LIFE?

A. Well, I think reason why I asked to be heard is because I felt that you never lose the scars. You never go through an experience like this without having the

scars; and I also feel that my children, even my daughter and probably even my American-born child is scarred because of the way the whole experience has influenced my life.

For me, it shaped me and my husband, and then, in turn, we shape our children. And my daughter just told me recently that there is an organization in the Bay Area now, Sons and Daughters of the Holocaust.

Q. SURVIVORS.

A. And she feels very strongly that her life was influenced indirectly through the traumas we had gone through.

Q. SO IS THIS SOMETHING THAT YOU HAVE FELT AS YOU'VE GONE ALONG THESE YEARS?

A. Yes, I have, and that's why I told you that if you want to interview me, that's fine, but don't -- I have no horror stories to tell. It's just a very normal life, but normal in that the kind of problems we had to go through in life were caused directly through the Holocaust.

Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS BEEN A GREAT SOURCE OF STRENGTH TO YOU IN GOING THROUGH ALL THAT?

A. Well, I don't know really. I think I think that the women in my family, number one, have a lot of strength, but for some people this is overwhelming, and I

haven't ended my life yet. I don't know how it isn't still influencing my life.

I am convinced that it shortened my husband's life. He was never able to cope with the loss of his mother, for instance.

Q. SHE PERISHED IN GERMANY?

A. Yeah. They were promised that the old age home was going to be allowed to exist as long as there was a single resident still living. This wasn't the case. They were just picked up one evening, and I don't think that anybody knows where they went to. And my husband was told that she was brought to Theresienstadt, and he accepted that, I hope.

We never discussed it any more with the exception of the day when peace was declared in Europe, and I exploded in tremendous joy, and he sat down and cried. And I said, "What is the matter?" He said, "Aggie, I can't. I lost her." He lost his mother and sister.

Q. LOST THEM.

A. Yeah, two sisters and their families.

Q. SO YOU THINK HE DIDN'T BELIEVE THEY WENT TO THERESIENSTADT?

A. I don't think so either.

Q. YOU DON'T EITHER.

A. No, because there was no indication. One of my

sister-in-law, the whole family went to Warsaw. My brother-in-law said to my husband, "How can you go to America? You don't know a soul there. Come to Warsaw. I'll help you get into business there."

Q. DID YOU EVER GO BACK?

A. No.

Q. NEVER WENT BACK.

A. I didn't go back in respect to my husband. He didn't want to go back. He couldn't. He was unable to. And I had a tremendous love for the city, and I wanted to see the city, but I haven't gone back after he passed away. I couldn't. I couldn't do that after he said what he did.

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Q. SO YOU'VE NEVER SEEN EUROPE AGAINST SINCE?

A. I've gone to Europe, but not to Germany.

Q. I SEE. NOT TO DANZIG.

A. Not to Danzig, not to Germany.

Q. AND YOU HAVE TALKED WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT THESE EXPERIENCES, I BELIEVE YOU SAID.

A. Yes, and with my grandchildren.

Q. AND WITH YOUR GRANDCHILDREN.

A. Yeah. There are some of these families more open to it than others, especially the kids. The son of my oldest son is very much interested and taped part of the story last year.

Q. AND HOW ARE YOU FEELING ABOUT DOING THIS INTERVIEW WITH US, REVIEWING IT ALL?

A. I did it because I felt I'm, for the first time, able to talk about it. And maybe it's healing.

Q. HOW ARE YOUR FEELINGS, SAY, TOWARD GERMANY AND GERMANS NOW?

A. I talked about this with a friend of mine, calls me occasionally and he said, Aggie, "We musn't have a sense of hatred and vengence into the next generation and on and on." He says, "We must make new efforts."

That's very well said, but it's difficult for me. And I succeed sometimes making an effort, not always. And I don't care which way it goes. I don't think I have to force myself.

Q. I SEE. YOU DON'T CARE WHETHER YOU FEEL FORGIVING TO GERMANS OR WHETHER YOU DON'T.

A. No, but I'm still interested how they react, and I also feel that sometimes I'm gratified when I hear reactions and sometimes I'm horrified about their reactions.

There was just recently an incident that I still don't know yet how to evaluate it. There are a lot of question marks in my mind, but I also feel that now that it could happen here, too, or any place in the world again.

Q. YOU DO. YOU FEEL THAT THE HOLOCAUST COULD BE REPEATED.

A. Yeah, maybe not quite in that manner, but that the insensitivity of people is enormous and that the cruelty, the violence is horrendous, and it's mind-boggling to think that anything as medieval as that was capable in the 20th century, but I see such a turn towards violence in our age, in the '80's, that I'm frightened.

But I think inside of me I have made a little more peace with the whole thing. I think I started that already being a docent for the Danzig center, and I think that this helped in a way, too. Maybe just talking about it, thinking about it. If you leave it alone, it just sort of festers.

Q. YES, FESTERS IS A GOOD WORD. DO ANY OF YOUR CHILDREN OR GRANDCHILDREN HAVE ANY INTERESTS OR HAVE THEY VISITED GERMANY?

A. No. Maybe my daughter and son-in-law. I don't know. No, I don't think so.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING MORE YOU CAN THINK OF YOU'D LIKE TO ADD?

A. No, I can't think of anything really. I felt -- I really felt that I needed to put the evaluation on tape.

Q. ABSOLUTELY.

A. But otherwise, I can't think of anything else.