

(02) Moses: 16 March.1999

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Jeff and Toby Herr Collection. Interview with Mr. Moses, conducted by Roswitha Breckner on March 31, 1999, in Munich, Germany. The United States Holocaust memorial Museum gratefully acknowledges Jeff and Toby Herr for making this interview possible.

Duration: 2 cassettes of 60 minutes apiece (ca. 110 minutes total)

Note: The interviewee slurs his speech a lot.

[Tape ½, Side A]

I: I'll just let the tape run. Well, maybe I can ask some short questions after you have finished your account, when you feel you've told everything of importance, then I will pose questions for the first time about what you have told us.

P: All right. Well, I am, ..... is that thing running now? Right?

I: It's running, yes.

P: All right, I was born on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February '29 in Silesia.

I: Yes.

P: My father at the time was employed as a master baker, a master pastry chef working for his father. That is to say for Karl Moses in Strelen on the "Silesian Circle" ("Schlesien am Ring") who had a bakery and pastry shop; it was a pastry shop, not for drinking coffee there but for selling pastries to take out. 19--, is it picking that up, is it working?

I: I'll check just in case.

P: Great, O.K., super.

I: Hm

P: (coughs a little) 1924 my grandfather died and my father took possession of the house, two of them (hesitatingly), on the circle ("Ring) in Strelen, Silesia, right? I had to use one for living and the other for business. And used them variously. Perhaps it would be interesting in this connection, I heard from my father that he applied for a loan from various banks and the first concrete proposal was from the Bankhaus Heimann. That was located in Breslau with two branches in Strelen, a Jewish bank and they completed the first transaction. The bank was very soon "aryanized." My father took out a loan for 80,000 Reichsmarks which was a lot of money at the time, and he paid it off and what is macabre is that he made the last payment on the loan in December 1944. And then it was

gone. He got some restitution from the German bank, two payments. Then I entered elementary school in '35 until '39. We had ( ? ) about the name "Moses" which really sounds Jewish. My father ( ? ) to change the name to an Aryan one. Other relatives changed the name. My father didn't want to give up the name. The reason was that the family name on his father's, grandfather's (Friedrich) side came from the Hussites. They came from Bohemia and settled in Silesia around 1740. They received permission from the Prussian king to buy farms, ..(?) land . They had to pay but it was very little. The original family name was like Motsches (phonetic) or something similar. In any case my father traveled around a lot investigating the origin of the name back to 1713. They came originally from Pomerania. I had problems with the name in elementary school and in the first two grades of high school. They would frequently call me "Pinkus" or "Abraham." In addition I was not adept at sports which was considered a big deficit in the Third Reich. They stopped doing that around '41. But the parents had problems with the name, in '38, '39 when kids from out of town marched through the streets and dumped excrements in front of our store, thinking that it was owned by Jews. But that finally stopped sometime later. There weren't any Jews any more in Germany then; they were all in work camps. And at high school I no longer had any problems. As for my father it really bothered him. First of all, he was very proud to be a member of the Nazi party. In any case he had party membership number 110,000. Up to 100,000 you got a gold party pin. The next 100,000 received a book which, as much as I can remember, was titled "The Knights" or some such, from the Kaiser to the Reichskanzler. It had the Nazi symbol and my father was very proud of it. He was also an elected city counselor ("Stadtrat"). He had joined the Nazi party before 1933. The city council was abolished in 1934. They claimed that it was "anti-fascist." That really upset him, that they accused the council of exploitation. He said they didn't think the old members who built the party had any further say. Nevertheless, he thought that all that was a good thing---he was a very convinced party man. And I still remember after 1933 when I was still a child, either five, six, or seven years old, there were all kinds of people who came to our house in the evenings and he gave them vouchers to spend, for food and things. So he was very interested in social welfare. He thought that what Hitler did was good. It is false to presume that everybody who was in the party was involved in murders, that they wanted to start a war. They had good motives, I have to say, and that within the family he really began (a drink is pored) having some doubts when the Jews were deported, and also when handicapped people disappeared, you know. In earlier times there had been, everywhere in the cities some kind of, ...well today we would call them local crazies. In our town we had crazy Marie. She always yelled (.....). And then there was a person who had "goose paws" (?). He would always stand in front of the stores and hold his arms out to beg. He always got something. And there was another person named "Kalle" (.....) right, and there were three or four, they were kind of everywhere. And I only know when my mother said to my father at that time, "Konrad, the man with the goose paws, I haven't seen him for a long time," and he said, "They've picked him up too." Well, that was, ..(?) a person knew what had happened, you know, this euthanasia, the deportation of Jews, all that which had happened but (emphasizes) no one wanted to know it (....) didn't look into it, that was never investigated, you know, they put it out of their minds then; people excluded it from their minds. And actually in the process...(?), our family was, because of this Jewish

name,....we were somehow more sensitized, you know (my father had a conflicted opinion). Well, I will never forget it; it was on the occasion of one of Hitler's birthdays, before the War. My grandmother, she had in a simple way a bit of a poetic streak, you know, and then (.....) our store window on the "Ring." (Laughs slightly) Then my father draped the store window in black velvet (.....). In Strelen there was the largest (.....) in the world, still to this day. And they set up a large container there with candles on the right and left of it. That must have been perhaps '37 and my grandmother wrote a poem entitled, "I'll be as firm as a rock." I'll never forget ....(amused) "My faith in the Fuehrer will be as firm as this rock." This conflicted opinion and the..., well, but they were, the people were so..., well and then my grandmother had a business selling used furniture, used things. That was more prevalent then than now because people didn't have so much money, and they then had....when the deportations, the deportations of the Jews began, they traveled to Breslau and bought furniture, household items from the Jews. And they had to put the money for that, they had to sign a sales contract and deposit the money in a state bank ("Reichshauptkasse"), in other words in some kind of account belonging to the state. The Jews did not receive the money, you know, and my grandmother, she always said "father" to my father, "Konrad, you know I always write a sales contract for a low price, I know it's not over 200 Reichsmark, and then I still give the Jews money because they don't get any of it at all." And one day she came back from Breslau, well, they....when people were talking about the Third Reich and about the Jews my parents would talk about it privately, you know, and I was also curious and listened in, and one day she came back from Breslau and told my father, "Well, Konrad, you know, I was standing on the station platform, number 4, platform 34 (sic), (that was the platform for trains to Strelen, on platform 4), there was a person, stood there alone and was waiting for the train and then a very long train arrived with many women and children in it, you know." And you know how it was in the past at train stations; we used to say they were equipped with "water pumps." That was a kind of water pipe with water continually running and with paper cups next to it. And she said, "You know, there was a woman who called out of the train window, 'Dear lady, please bring me a glass of water.'" Well, she went and got the water and then brought it to the woman and then an SS man came up who was patrolling back and forth next to the train, knocked the water out of her hand and said (emphasizes), "Watch it, those are Jews," and then the train left the station, she said, and the woman rolled the window down again and shouted out loud in the dead silence of the train station, a curse on all Breslau children. And then my grandmother asked, "My God, what are they going to do to us in the future some day." She wanted to somehow, (wanted to take revenge) or something, you know. And then in my home town there was a store for iron wares, the owner's name was Geiger, and he really wanted, my grandmother told my father, the Jews had come to Upper Silesia as a consequence, to the Polish border, and they were killed there. You know, and my grandmother told my father that and my oldest sister was there at the time and she screamed at my grandmother (louder), "That's not true at all. The Fuehrer wouldn't do that. If I hear that one more time, I will report you." My sister was thus a..., was thus, well, that's how it was at that time. And since then my parents and grandmother only talked about these things very privately. My father also listened to foreign broadcasts. He fiddled with his Telefunken radio for a long time until he found the station and then at the end (.....) when Stalingrad (battle)

occurred and so listened. But you have to be very objective in considering the full extent, the full extent of the murders we hadn't known about. We only knew that something had happened, but this selection, such perfection, I don't think that was known, the mass of people, only a few of them knew, you know, but the fact that people knew about it, you can conclude from small things like there was a certain kind of soap, you know. A soap that was so big, like this piece, like a pack of cigarettes, perhaps, a bit smaller, like terrible gray-green in color and stamped with the initials "R I F" which meant "Reich Industrial-Free (?)." And the meaning most people used was "Rest in Peace" because it was made out of the fat of Jews. Well, I mean when something like that was spoken, "Rest in Peace" there has to have been something to it..., some had to have known. And when we got married later,-- my wife is from Vienna--(I learned) that there they referred to the RIF soap simply as Reichs Jewish fat. So now people are supposed to say that they didn't know about it, right? That is the proof, you know (.....) very macabre.

I: Hmhm

P: ..and the jokes which went around at that time, there were jokes that were made, well, I mean, they had..., the following happened then in Breslau. There was a monument to Hindenburg, and someone had placed a long ladder against it and had written on it, "Climb down, you great warrior, climb down on this ladder, you great warrior because over in the East there's a corporal who doesn't know what to do next (trans. note: the lines rhyme in German)." Well, they searched for that person but didn't find him.

I: Hmhm

P: I included that in my book.....

I: .....

P: Yes, ah, there was this joke which really, really said it all. An old lady goes to the office of the district leader ("Kreisleitung") and says, "Heil Hitler, district leader." (He says), "Well, granny, what do you want here?" She replies, "All right, you have this ball, you know where the earth is." He replies, "You mean the globe? Well, just show it to me" And he goes over to the globe. And then she says, "Where is Germany?" He says, "Germany is there." And she says, "Where is America, where is Russia, does Hitler know that?" Well, I mean, excluding that, war is a crime, you can win it, but also it's stupid.....there is no justifiable war, you know..... completely nuts, he was completely nuts, you know, and you realize the extent of the crimes only afterwards. I survived the bombing of Dresden, the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, and had to wade almost through bodies. The bodies were there on the meadow next to the Elbe river. The bodies were hauled away to the "Opel-Blitz" (trans. note: presumably a nearby area) with their legs dangling out the back and where I learned afterwards as a matter of fact, I don't know if it's connected or if it's right that the English and American pilots before they flew their mission over Dresden were given photographs of the liberated KZ

Auschwitz to relieve any moral restraints they might feel dropping bombs there. And that.., and despite that, it is so crazy, people saw that all that was insanity and nevertheless they believed that now a (new) wonder weapon would appear, people believed that now a big wonder weapon would appear and we would still win the war. So somehow in two directions, no, crazy, so crazy you know, but do you think perhaps I am... We left on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> of February for Austria, to my relatives, my uncle who was a state-certified (agricultural diploma) farm manager and was responsible for a state farm.....belonged, and he came.. Then I went to the Gymnasium (preparatory school), and then the order from Berlin came in April. He had to move his model farm into the Alpine fortress area. Then we drove the cows and horses every day for twenty kilometers on county roads like in the wild west, in the direction of the Alpine fortress area. And in the process we saw something terrible. Along the route we took to drive the animals was "Melk", a sub-camp of Mauthausen KZ. We traveled one time on a different schedule and they passed us, it was at night (because we had started during the day) and we passed each other alternately and you saw then these emaciated forms in striped clothing, black-blue, black-white, I don't know any more, with a Jewish star above and they had kind of boards, you know, and from trees they had cut pieces, bored holes in them and thus had wheels. So in that manner they transported their belongings. Sometimes you heard shots and when we then, when we passed them, when they were in front of us, there lying at the side of the road were blue gray blankets, these terrible blue gray blankets, like gray green, you know, and there were always Hungarian-Germans there who removed the blankets and when they removed the blankets you saw underneath corpses of people who had been shot. And I worked in Simbach.....after coming to Munich.....and then.....And everywhere in the evenings in Bavaria there was a radio program on between five and six o'clock, I think, about what was happening in Bavaria. And there was a report of a trial of an SS Sturmfuhrer, whatever, named Kreischner (I will not forget the name) charged with crimes committed against this column of people. In other words the man was called to account for it. And nevertheless I have to say, you have to certainly..... Well, looking at it carefully the way it was. We came to Bavaria in April '45.....with this cattle drive (no one gave us directions and told us where to go and Uncle Toni, the farm manager, somehow had found shelter for his cows and horses....., We were in Eckstaetten near Simbach on this cattle drive and stayed with people who were awfully nice. And we went back to them and they took us in immediately. And we used to go to a neighbor's house in the evenings who had a radio. We listened to the radio there (and I was very proud of it) which announced that Breslau had become a fortress town and had held on until the 8<sup>th</sup> of May, I believe, until capitulation and perhaps even longer (softly, confidentially), and we still believed that a wonder weapon would arrive.....it was a double meaning, on the one side everything was terrible, on the other side the "NC" (?) was coming or when Hitler was dead; we were totally blinded. ....We only saw one single country. As uninformed as we were at that time we were proud that Hitler brought Germans back home from all over the world. ....on camels. We didn't know even where Arabia was, Germans were everywhere. Just before the outbreak of the war my grandmother had a store in the .....street, on the circle ("Ring") And one time she cussed at a car, calling it belonging to those lousy Poles because on top of the car were the letters "POL.". It was a police

car. The people couldn't even tell the difference in the license plates. You have to place people in perspective for that time. They didn't have the world perspective we have today. You shouldn't forget that. There was no TV, you know. Today there is Vietnam, the horrible Yugoslavia now (emphasizes). That didn't exist then. The press was not free and was also not, was also probably not so widespread. To listen to an enemy broadcast would be punished by death or at least imprisonment,... you could be hanged for that, you know,.....to listen to an enemy broadcast. And who (of us) had traveled outside the country then? That didn't happen (whispering). I know, I had a friend who was two years older than me and who had volunteered to become a military frogman, and was trained for that, to use some kind of dynamite, as far as I know, to swim to an enemy ship and blow it in the air. (they're all crazy). For the Fuehrer, the People and the Fatherland ("Fuehrer, Volk, Vaterland"), well, to summarize, I want to say whoever wanted to know could have known. A very small group had.....were involved, and everyone else simply didn't want to know, they just looked away (whispering), they just looked away. My father reversed himself significantly in his attitudes; he was then against it, even earlier (when he returned home from the Polish campaign); he was inducted in the army the middle of August '39 as a World War I ex-soldier, a veteran you could say. He was assigned to a reserve unit with horse and wagons and even received a citation because the unit was fired, ...was fired on by Germans because they were ahead of the front line. And then he was assigned as part of the occupation of Michow in Poland..I have found a postcard from there.....(and now located on the current border with White Russia, I believe, or Ukraine.) He was part of the occupation force there and my mother, she somehow succeeded, my father was 41 years old at the time, she succeeded in getting him designated draft exempt ("UK") as an essential worker. And then he came home shortly before Christmas '39, came home and told my mother then that there was a top sergeant in his company,, a master sergeant, named Styra, (spelling it) "S T Y R A." And he was somehow a guard for a farm in Strelen County ("Landkreis") and a master sergeant. And there was a curfew at that time in this Michow. That was a town, a Polish town with a high percentage of Jews. The curfew was for six o'clock and afterwards no one was allowed on the street. He told my mother, "I was walking along and there was Styra with a bull whip, that is, a piece of wood with a kind of leather strap attached. And he was walking along the street and then he had.. a child like our Fritz, (like me, you know, ) he chased him off the street by beating him." "What will they do to us if we lose the war?" So when the Strelen people, my hometown neighbors or brothers as you may call them complain about their expulsion, then I say when you see what happened to the Polish Fritzes, when this Polish Fritz returns in 1946 to Strelen or wherever in Silesia as a 16 or 17 year old, (emphasizes) he wouldn't love us or would he? Or when they then complain (I have made them really mad, that's why I don't go to expellee ("Heimat") meetings any more.) They curse about how in 1946 they all had to stand in the sun and be searched and then expelled. But they went at least to East or West Germany. The Jews went to the KZ's and were killed. You shouldn't forget what happened but that..., the older people just don't see that. They are too narrow-minded and my father, I admired that of him, I had (coughs slightly) a client, Doctor Bornstein was his name who had written a book entitled "The Long Night" about how he survived the KZ. He was a medical doctor and a doctor of dentistry, a dentist and a psychiatrist, a funny combination. He had written a book

called "The Long Night." I loaned it out and unfortunately never got it back. In the back of it is a kind of family tree. And there are 80-90 family names. All were killed (in the KZ); only three survived. (In any case) my father read the book and then had false teeth made by Doctor Bornstein. And then discussed it with Bornstein. And he didn't want all that to have happened and then broke out in tears. He wanted to justify himself in that way but also added that as a former party member he had intended it to be a good thing, that it was terrible what happened and so in this fashion he apologized to Bornstein and Bornstein had.., well, the Catholic church gave him absolution. My father was really glad that one of the victims enabled him to free himself from the knowledge of it. But I..I don't know if the others hadn't seen that or that we had seen more because of my grandmother who dealt with the Jews, had bought furniture or I don't know any more what else. Well, our family in any case (emphasizes) had foreseen a lot more than the others who today pretend to have known only a little. Well, I think many people also pushed it out of their minds.....I then learned a lot afterwards actually, helped by my Jewish name, I had, my client list, well, the Jewish clients are over-represented on it. And indeed it all began with that. Before at the treasury department ("Finanzamt"), that has to have been 1965, I had...., there was a Jewish businessman, who sold chocolate machines. That was Leo Bodstein who had a chocolate factory in Kattowitz. He had survived the KZ and had then gone to work in Germany when the economic miracle ("Wirtschaftswunder") occurred in Germany. The German chocolate factories had all bought new machines and he bought old ones, repaired them and exported them. He needed a tax advisor. That was my first Jewish client. And he loved me, loved me dearly. "Always, Herr Moses, when I now...go to Shabab, go to the Synagogue..." My client...., Well, I have twenty Jewish clients, all very, very correct business people, correct tax payers (so to make that clear now) and then the following happened to me. I will never forget it. When we were living in the Heer (phonetic) street. My Alex, he was at the time, well, 13-14 years old...., no, he wasn't, he was 11. This blond boy walked in, you know (softly, intensely), and all of a sudden Rotstein began to cry. I said, "But Herr Rotstein, (you know, people at the time always had hesitations about Jews because of feelings of guilt and feared to say something the wrong way.) have I said something wrong?" "No, no," he said, "you know I'm reminded of my wife and child."

I:       What happened next?

P:       Then he pulled out a photograph, a black and white photograph about as large as a cigarette pack, that was yellowed, and in it was a picture of an attractive blond woman with a blond child. "What happened?" "Well," he said, "They were killed in Auschwitz or incinerated there." "Well," I said, "are you sure?" "Yes," he said, "because a colleague of mine stood there at the oven as they were incinerated." In my opinion that is the worst thing a man can experience in life. "Well," he said, "but I don't know what could be worse. Do you think there is anything worse?" I said, "Is that even possible?" "Yes," he said, "do you know that when the Russians wanted to capture Auschwitz, wanted to liberate it, they (Nazis) could no longer keep up the pace of executions and so they evacuated as many of the people as they could. And then we were put in cattle cars, we were packed in cattle cars (emphasizes) such so that we couldn't fall down. So many

people were in the cattle cars. We traveled for three days without any food or nourishment to Mauthausen and we stood for three days, had to let our excrements fall to the floor. Both the dead and the living stood there. Almost none fell down.” And then he said, “if someone after two, three days pulled out a piece of bread from his pocket, and ate the bread and pieces of the bread fell down in the excrement, every one of us would try to get to this bread, and he said then people lost their last (vestige of) human dignity.

I: Hmhm

P: “So you are no longer a human being. If you then tried to get to the bread,” he said, “you were trying to get to the excrement.”

I: Hmhm

P: And in any case my son, Daniel—he also has a Jewish name; my father-in-law wasn’t pleased at all that I named him Daniel. O.K.? And he attended the local Gymnasium (preparatory school). “I want to choose the names for my family; I don’t know if you like that.” And there was..., he was there together with a Jewish girl and her father had survived Auschwitz.

I: Hmhm

P: And he was born the same year as I was, 1915. Well, he was in a barracks at Auschwitz, and you have to imagine the barracks. It was built on pilings and underneath it was open with mud and refuse. And a half year before liberation this fifty year old became ill, he had the flu, a cold or whatever, I don’t know. And so his fellow inmates in the barracks knew that if they reported him sick, he would be killed. So they then pulled up some planks and hid him underneath the barracks. And they provided him with food from above. And when they were called together to be counted, they created such a chaos that one missing was not noticed. And that was the father of one of my son’s fellow students. (Emphasizes) And he lived down there until the KZ was liberated; he was very fearful and passed blood in his stools whenever the SS guards passed by. That they would discover that someone was living underneath! And actually he survived fairly well, as well as one can. Having been born in ’26, ’27. (sic). He must have been fifty-seven years old then. So thirty years later. After thirty years he relives this event and has to undergo psychiatric treatment.

[Tape ½, Side B]

and the man had..., his legs grew together in the wrong way, you know. Well, he had a printing business, and I drew up a tax declaration for him. I never asked for money for that. But he only wanted confirmation of it by a professional, you know, and he told me that he had to watch as his father was beaten to death and they chased him for such a long time through the tunnels, the concrete tunnels that caused injuries....., well (softly), and then there are people around who say that there weren’t any KZ’s. That’s certainly nonsense, crazy, wouldn’t you think?



I: Hmhm

P: O.K., and among other things do you hear probably something similar from other people? Often it's bad enough, probably even worse things.

I: Like now? From the...

P: Thank God there were only..., well, it's perhaps badly expressed, onlookers. I was of the age that I was only an onlooker. In any case I had a lot of luck to escape being a soldier. (Laughs) Yes, it was in January 5... (The telephone rings). Well, and then I was just....., perhaps that's also very interesting. I was a bad student at school, very bad so that it was with great difficulty every time I was promoted. I only concentrated on mathematics, physics and chemistry. I got top grades with them but terrible ones with languages. In any case in 1944 there was a research center established in Germany and part of it was a research site in Weinloch near Breslau. And for this research site they searched throughout Germany for students who had a special gift for mathematics, physics, and chemistry. And so I was supposed then....., to be sent from my school to there. And they wanted to establish a technical curriculum like they have today at the technical universities, only for mathematics, physics and chemistry, and to study that. And my father was really happy that I would escape, that I would finally escape.....with my bad grades. And so I arrived there in Weinloch near Breslau at this research site on the same day my sister had her birthday, the 10th of August '44. And the first task we had there was to build up the site, to construct barracks. And so to my chagrin I was then, I believe on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August, after only three weeks there sent back because I had already reached the sixth grade at the Gymnasium and I didn't have the sufficient background for it, and then I had to return to Strelen. I was really very unhappy. And then on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, my mother's birthday, I was assigned to dig trenches, you know, on the Eastern Front, on the Silesian/Polish border. I was assigned to a group, and we dug trenches there and wove fascines together; those were wooden posts with branches in between them, pine branches put between them to form mats which were then installed in the trenches so that they wouldn't cave in. And I was there until Christmas, just before Christmas '44 and then was sent home, in which case I was perhaps supposed to return to this enterprise. Luecke is what this research site was called. Strangely, no one in Germany knew about it after the war. But I had been working in the Sevenner Street since 1951 and had a secretary there, Frau Binder who is still there, and her brother looked her up there. He came in dressed in leather short pants, his name is Hoppe.....said, "We've seen each other somewhere.....  
..(whispers).....Let me see your resume; I read the resume and discovered that he had been part of the military in command at Weinloch near Breslau, a sergeant, and I didn't have any bad memories about him there. I ask what happened to this research site? Well, he said they are all dead. When Breslau was converted into a fortress they were deployed there. (Louder) Then why did you live? He said he and a member of the Hitler Youth just before Breslau was sealed off were sent to the "Alpine Fortress" to establish living quarters there for the time when the research center was supposed to be transferred there. So if I had stayed there, I probably would have died.

I: Hmhm

P: And then he came back and in January '45, in the first days of January, we had there a large recreation center, the "Skubin," it was called with large sports field and firing range. So there we fifteen year olds were given military training for four days. One day was for anti-tank grenades, one day for the '42 machine guns, one day for automatic pistols, and one day for '98 automatic rifles. We were trained in four days. And then the front came closer. My father then had the..... we never left with an organized flight or transportation. On the contrary, my mother and my little sister—my little sister was unfortunately killed accidentally, but only after the war. And then we went to Bunzlau. Well, my father then said, you know, the apprentice named Just who was with you for this training has just been inducted into the Volksturm and they go according to the alphabet.....will get to you too. You'll go with your mother. No, I said, I have to defend the Fatherland and that was the first time in my life that my father boxed me on the ears. So I went to Bunzlau and the induction notice never arrived and because of my father's punishment (laughs softly) my life was saved. And the trip to Bunzlau..., it was really a funny trip. We had to transfer trains, you couldn't go via Breslau but had to travel through the Sudetenland and Bohemia, I think through Reichenberg. I just remember sitting in the waiting room at the train station in Reichenberg and it was full of people and there were two soldiers sitting there. They looked exhausted and were sleeping in a sitting position when their heads fell and hit together. That was Bunzlau, and then we saw that the front was approaching when rear elements arrived to install cables. My mother was there, my aunt, and my older sister; my father in the meantime had been obligated to work in the bakery part of an army field kitchen. And then we were in Dresden on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February when the planes came. We were bombed out but survived.....how bad that was! And then to Austria and then to Bavaria. And what else I experienced which was dangerous? My uncle was... I went to the parochial high school in Melk. I biked there for fifteen kilometers, and I always passed this concentration camp which had built the bridges..which you can see, the Mauthausen concentration camp. There were planes flying over Vienna, and they were accompanied by fighter planes. They had two fuselages, two cockpits or double fuselages. They were called "Leipny" (phonetic). And we were fired upon from above, like shooting rabbits, but..... they couldn't harm us. That's a long time ago. I'm seventy now. I've continued to live. We were very lucky. My mother was very clever. By the middle of October '44 my mother couldn't deposit any more money into the bank. She put 80,000 Reichsmarks in cash into a large bag and with it we fled the area. And everything was rationed at the time. And it was a question of making bread, what they called "travel bread." That was for traveling salesmen etc. for all of Germany and it would last for six months. So my mother's 80,000 Reichsmarks and a bag full of travel breads. And she delivered this bread to various places and we lived off this until the economy broke down. We had money, so she would go to a bakery, have them make more travel breads. We had money and bread, so we didn't suffer. After the war, there was no luxury but....with this 80,000 marks that became 40,000 and then was exchanged first at 5% (?) for 2,000 marks. Well, we also sold gold coins, on the currency market,

10 or 20 mark pieces. We had three pieces of 30 gold marks. We used to have 80. At the currency market they said we thought you had more.

There was a camp for displaced persons, in other words, for people who had been persecuted; it had been abolished, and there we engaged in black marketeering, and in Simbach exchanged suitcases for Reichsmarks. And a person would come there and want to exchange..... for Reichsmarks. And there I sold 30-40 thousand gold mark pieces And exchanged them for Deutsche Marks. Life's strategy. It wasn't bad. But now for questions from you.

I: I have a couple of questions if you.....the most important for you...

P: I'll just light another cigarette.

I: O.K.

P: What didn't kill us and only was much harder.....

I: (laughs) You have said that you were born in Strelen in Silesia, 1929. Right?

P: '29

I: '29. And what were your earliest memories?

P: Well (coughs a little), it's very curious. Whether or not that's my first memory or what I remember from being told, that's possible...I can't judge. My grandfather died on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 1934 and was buried on my birthday, the 20<sup>th</sup> of February. I mean I remember my grandfather when I was a child, went walking with me along with a Shep...a Dobermann dog. And there is a river, it's called the "Olin" and at that place there was a bulwark which encloses a millrace and the bulwark was so narrow that I was always afraid to walk on it and my grandfather put me on his shoulders and then ran around it. I mean I can remember it, but it could be from...that it was told to me when I was very small. My grandfather loved me a lot and when he did a cash count in the evening, he always counted the money at the writing desk and, I don't know how, he always put a hundred coins into a roll.....in addition in our house, whether that is my own remembrance.....but I have one memory of my own, I am very sure of. On my birthday, the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February, arrangements were made for the dead. My cousin and I who was one year younger than me sat at the window on the second floor of our apartment on the Ring and we sat opposite one another on the very broad bench next to the window and the thick wall and looked down as the burial cortege passing by. And then my cousin said to me, "My God, now I don't have any grandfather at all any more." (Softly) I said to him, that's not so bad, I still have a grandfather and we will divide him between us. So that is my first conscious memory. About my own experience, you know. And then I remember my first day of school, the time period at my primary school.

I: Can you tell a little about that? In other words about your first day at school?

P: Well you know I was brought there along with my school cone (trans. note: traditionally on their first day of school children are given a large cone filled with sweets and school supplies.) I had short pants on and some chocolates. And then I remember that I always attended the Stein school and that they liked to always beat me up just because I was a coward and didn't participate in sports. I was beaten up by the quarry workers' kids who were so robust and it was a quarry city. (Laughs) And whenever anyone is beaten up, he still remembers it.

I: Is there then any one special experience that you remember?

P: Actually not. Not during the primary school time. When did I get my German shepherd? I know my father bought one then, a German shepherd, well..., it had to have been later, 1940. He was named Bendix from the.....gorge. He came with a pedigree and then I went walking with the dog and they couldn't beat me up any more because my dog was there. I still remember very well the entrance examination for the Gymnasium. There was an entrance examination at that time and our teacher, Herr Raschdorf..., he wanted us to pass the exam with good marks. So there was Riedel, Manfred, Christian Steinbeck and I, and still a fourth one whose name I have forgotten. And he (the teacher) drilled us for the entrance exam and we completed the written part of the entrance with such good results that we didn't have to take the oral part. And since that time I haven't learned anything more in school because I thought I could do it. I remember vaguely in primary school that we had a Jewish student, Fritz Jacob. Fritz Jacob was his name, also a Fritz, but he suddenly disappeared. And at the Gymnasium we didn't have any Jewish students any more. In '39 it was all over. I naturally still have a good memory of my Gymnasium days. We were in the quin..., in the Sexta, and next door was the senior class (trans. note: Under the old Gymnasium system, no longer used today, the grades were designated by Latin numerals in ascending order, culminating in the senior class, or the "Upper Prima.") There were only nine grades, and at one of the first days of school there (laughs a little) one of the upper classmen grabbed me and set me on top of one of the closets in which..... I didn't dare say anything and they all laughed in the upper classroom as I sat there and the teacher had to lift me down and bring me to my class. That was the "Sexta" and in the "Quinta". In the second class we had a Doctor Lorenz. That had to have been '41. Doctor Lorenz who taught biology, biology and religion. We didn't like it much. And he let himself be distracted, you know. And then we always said, "Herr Doctor, Herr Doctor tell us about the Jews" (because we knew that he had to tell us about the Jews.) And he cursed about it and then as a result the class ended quickly. (Loud, emphasizes) and I will never forget it. He said but there are also good Jews. And somehow he must have told us something or other and all that was very unpleasant for him. And he said there are also good Jews. Well, at the school, I mean, I really had difficulties because of not being involved in sports.....It was terrible when, I don't know, there was the five thousand meter run, you know, around the track. I was the last one and the coach, Friedrich Paul, when everyone else had finished his run, I still ran for another quarter hour until I was.....at a attention, thus and he was a submarine captain or I don't know what, on a submarine in any case and he was an unpleasant person.....was

afterwards told by the mother of one of my fellow students who was in my class  
.....to Australia and who was over there again after '45, you  
know.....became friends....

I: Hmhm

P: There wasn't any more talk about socialism. And our music teacher Muecke, you know, he must have been a strict Catholic in the past, then a Nazi, and finally a communist. In any case during our school days we said.....one hand was balled up into a fist while the other hand gave the Hitler salute. And we said praise be to Jesus Christ. That was Muecke to us at that time. The people who were not politically involved—actually none of our teachers were politically involved, I have to say. The English teacher certainly was a Nazi but the others were really....And even the older people. The young ones were all indoctrinated. And the only young teacher was Doctor Dietze and because he was such a complete Nazi, he then became head of the school after the former head died. And then the mathematics teacher..... who had lost a leg during the war.....those were good people, you know. I haven't yet told you about my time with the Hitler Youth. I joined them therefore in '39. Is it still running?

I: Yes.

P: So I joined the Hitler Youth in '39 and had a lot of fun. And one of the Hitler Youth squad leaders was named Puff (trans. note: slang for a bordello). His nickname was "bordello." And we played a lot of games on the athletic field (emphasizes), it was really nice, like playing "pathfinder." But then it was always with a military aspect. And because I wasn't very good at sports, it wasn't bad for me.....  
.....lived in a house. They were called Lamprecht. One of them was kind of..., he had a white band, the other one had a green one or something like it. They were friends and then I became a squad leader in the Jungvolk (trans. note: the Nazi youth organization for boys too young to join the Hitler Youth). That was like a sergeant. I didn't have to drop to the ground for cover but could command others. And when you are fourteen years old, you can go from the Jungvolk into the Hitler Youth and after I had done that, it was funny, the rank, the office was..... like a green/black band and the rank was for a senior squad leader ("Oberjungschaftsfuehrer"), with a red/black band, I can't remember any more, or a red/white band. Well, and then I became friends with Dieter Nuschler who is now in Australia. And he had.., his parents didn't think much of National Socialism, and his brother went into the service and was persecuted., you know, and he influenced me greatly. And so then I went into the Hitler Youth and there I was supposed to get the same rank and then a step higher or more, I can't remember. In any case I was one step lower and I said, I don't want to do any of that any more. And then I was sent to see the youth commander ("Stammfuehrer") Nehle. I will never forget it. And then there was first a discussion about it but then he asked why since "your father is an old party member." "And I won't, I won't"... (coughs slightly) Then he wanted to force me to accept that. And the high school ("Gymnasium") was built with several wings, with long corridors. In the back was the principal's office, in front was the "Quarta" classroom with a water basin.....And there I had to leap over it with

the gymnastic pole in his direction...I don't know what, to become a Hitler Youth leader or more, no.... I did it two or three times and then suddenly I asserted myself and threw the pole at him and said kiss my ass. And I went home and told my father and then my father went to the Hitler Youth leader ("Bannfuehrer") and caused an uproar  
.....In the Third Reich the middle classes somehow commanded respect and my father was well known in town. And so I didn't have to do anything. And I then went into the motorized Hitler Youth. The motorized Hitler Youth was again a bad bunch. There were all those people who didn't want to do anything, who didn't want to have anything to do with Hitler and.....and I didn't feel comfortable with this bunch in the Hitler Youth. And then I went through training there as a medic, qualified for a driver's license for motorcycles without ever having ridden one. That was the class four license at that time. ....Well, you know, I had.....there were, sometime in connection with my book I read a statistic that four or five thousand fanatics, really full-fledged fanatics were sufficient who for tenfold, forty-five, fifty thousand reliable fanatic soldiers were sufficient to suppress a whole nation. So I figured out that in my hometown of Strelen three would have been enough, you know, and we had them. There was a man by the name of Hoffmann, Walter Hoffmann. He was a shoemaker and he was the district leader ("Kreisleiter"). And there was Nehle, of course. And this, this Hoffmann, he was just..., this Hoffmann, he was a Nazi official ("Bannfuehrer") and juvenile judge. He was a very bad, very bad person. And I located him after the war; he had become a judge again in Krefeld. (With emphasis) This Walter was a judge in Krefeld. He was a judge when he retired. And this Walter Hoffmann.....up to the capitulation in May acted very badly in Strelen. And during the war he had.....the father of Christian Steinberg. Dr. Steinberg was a very well known internist, even outside the city. He was head of the local hospital and had a lot of problems with Hoffmann. The people who were wounded he wanted evacuated and Hoffmann wanted them admitted. Dr. Steinberg cursed him for this. "What are you doing?" etc.. And this Hoffmann after the war wrote a letter to Dr. Steinberg who was living then in Weimar wanting him to confirm that he had acted correctly at that time. And then in Strelen there was a ..... peder who is now living in Hamburg or somewhere, I don't know where. And this ....peder's name was on the list of those involved in the assassination attempt against Hitler on the 20-th of July, 1944. He was a member at the time of the State Council (Landrat), representing Strelen. And he was arrested and was tried in the "People's Court (Volksgericht)" in Berlin presided over by Judge Freissler. (trans. note: the same judge who presided over the trials of most of the major 20<sup>th</sup> of July conspirators.) And he sought an affidavit from Strelen, it was from Bieler Firmann (phonetic) who said .....peder was always an opponent of the Nazis and in '33, '34 defended Jews which actually was allowed at that time. So on the basis of this affidavit he was sentenced to death but shortly before the judgment could be carried out he was liberated by the Red Army. And this Bieler received a letter from Hoffmann certifying that he had also been correct during the period. It's difficult to believe, isn't it? Chutzpah, right!

I: All right, you have said that..., I would like to return again to your primary school time when you had a Jewish friend there.

P: Actually no, I, I could say now he was a nice-looking dark boy, I don't know, he had, his name was Jacob in any case. I know that he was in my class, that I know because in the course of researching my book (coughs slightly) I found this Jacob in Guatemala..... Jacob (the names of the others I have forgotten, and they ask if I could somehow help with the plan for reconciliation, and they had written that this same Fritz was living in Israel in a kibbutz and that they didn't have any contact to him. He refused to give his signature to any reconciliation and said he wanted nothing more to do with the Germans. And they needed him as a third person, as heir to his family and he was living in a kibbutz and didn't want anything more to do with them. And that had to be this Fritz Jacob. But I don't know anything more.

I: You said before that your father inherited the houses from your grandfather he also received money.

P: The Heimann bank

I: From the Reimann bank?

P: H E I (spells it out)

I: All right, Heimann

P: Well, that is interesting. In Breslau they had a Jewish cemetery which still exists and there is where presumably Doctor Heimann is. I was there one time at the cemetery.....in order to sell my book from there. Do you know why the Jewish cemetery in Breslau was not destroyed?

I: Why?

P: It's crazy, really crazy. It's just German pedantry. Perfectly so. It was.....the Polish official in charge of protecting monuments in Breslau told me—I can't judge whether it's true or not—that in 1936 or '37 the cemetery was leased to a gardening business for ten years and because the lease ran for ten years until '46 the cemetery couldn't be destroyed or leveled.

I: Hmhm

P: (Laughs out loud) that matches the German mentality (such contracts), don't you think?

I: Do you still have any personal memories of this bank?

P: I don't know. You know you mix things up with your own fantasy. I could imagine....or I know where it was, that Heimann bank was located perhaps directly across the street. In any case across from the Heimann bank was a monument, some kind of a monument where they have water running out of it, a fountain, you know. And on

top of it was a rifleman that a Jewish artist had supposedly made. It was still there but I can't remember it.

I: Did you hear anything at the time about the aryanization of the bank? Do you know anything about it?

P: No. (the most I heard was from my father). Well, in that respect about businesses because they just were also subject to aryanization.....there was in Strelen a small department store which sold pots and pans and I don't know what all. It was called "Quick ('Schnell')," "Quick on the "Ring" (the street name). And this.....Sometime in '31 or '32 it held a big celebration for 100 years or so in business. I know that from the Schnell's son who told me. He is now in an Old Peoples Home in California. He has to be dead by now. And then in '34 at some time (was the campaign) "don't buy from Jews." And then the Nazis sent SS people to stand in front of these businesses. In Strelen they didn't send SS people who were from Strelen but instead they brought people from Muensterberg. That was because the Strelen SS was already standing in front of the businesses in Frankenstein. They did that so that no one would recognize them. And Herr Schnell became very angry about it and went to the mayor. "Three years ago you praised me and today that happens. Please help me." And the Nazi mayor turned around and walked out. (Well, he couldn't do anything then.) And this man Schnell was put under pressure to have to sell his business to the shoemaker Keger. He was a bad Nazi in Strelen and the son (Schnell's?) wrote me that it was too little, I don't know what the sales price was any more.....But I know, in any case that only a third was ever paid, or a fourth and the rest was never seen.....and a commercial establishment in Strelen.....that was also aryanized. There was a baker.....located directly across from my father's, the whole block was Jewish, and he bought the business, and my father always cussed about it, that it was cheap trick to chase the Jews out, or something like it.....corresponded he said that everything had been handled in a correct way. Well, good, I wouldn't know to say the contrary. But at that time it was still, well, it was very funny that in Strelen there were 11 or 12 bakers. There were two-thirds Catho...protestant, one third was catholic. There was..... was Catholic, you know. My father had always complained about the Catholics. They sold cheaply, he said. My father always gave a breakfast bun with the bread loaf he sold. There was a reserved table (trans. note: traditionally many restaurants and bars reserve tables for their regular customers) for Catholic bakers and a reserved table for Protestant bakers. (.....) My mother went to a girl's school, the red school which was both Catholic and Protestant. And the Protestants were richer, so the school courtyard had a hard surface, whereas the surface of the courtyards in Catholic schools was dirt. And the two groups had a common toilet and my mother told me that the Catholics had written there that here in this butter lies buried Martin Luther. Then the Protestants wrote in return, "you didn't look closely enough; here lies Saint Nepomuk (Trans. note: actually St. John of Nepomuk, the patron saint of Bohemia). (Laughs) At that time I went to the Protestant minister's school.

I: The primary school?



P: The primary school, yes, and in high school (“Gymnasium”) the Catholics were separated from the Protestants. One of the students there was from the “New Apostle Church” and we envied him because he didn’t have to take religion class.

I: You indicated before that you had a few incidents concerning your name, that you were teased about it.

P: Yes, well, they used it to call after me.

I: And a nickname, right?

P: Yes.

I: And can you still remember in that connection..... [End of Tape 1]

P: Well, I am just, you know, a witness to the time, and also, you know, what others have said. That should be absolutely clear, right?

I: Yes, but that doesn’t make any difference; it’s also interesting. I have to ask myself now and also earlier about your direct experiences. In other words you said you didn’t like going to school?

P: Naturally not. Naturally it was very painful.

I: Painful?

P: Also painful, it finally stopped at some time.....”Lamp.” I mentioned that before. I got that as a nickname. “My friend lamp was the boil” (sic). I was.....don’t ask me why. I was the “Macke.” So I was the Moses Macke. And then it was all over.

I: That happened in high school (“Gymnasium”) or was that.....

P: In high school.

I: And afterwards did you have any further experiences like that?

P: No, no, absolutely not.....Basically no further problems because they knew that a business with the name Moses in 1941 was not a Jewish one. Those had already been stripped of their Jewish affiliation or aryanized. But I have to say that in my parents’ house we didn’t speak badly of the Jews, actually more positively of them, that they had helped us.....a person from Stargard who went.....two years older to school and.....so we were in Germany, other people from Strelen have reported that the Stargard (trans. note: another town) people, when things were bad, the inflationary period, one was a land baron who set up a soup kitchen and helped the people who were very...they were really

charitable people, the Jewish people in Strelen, charitable people.....whose son told me.....Helbig during the bad period, the inflation period, or....., no in the thirties, he had built a work shop and didn't have any more money and had to stop and then the owner of a brick factory, Herr Hoelzle, came who was related to us, I don't know the name any more and he came and said why don't you continue building and he said I don't have money any more.....I will deliver bricks to you and you can pay me when you can without interest and delivered bricks and the other one paid when he could.....somehow exploited, everything was stupid, really stupid. They were really people very well off. And I must tell you that it really doesn't fit. I have a Jewish client, a Jewish lawyer and he told me a story. He is a criminal defense attorney. He has an office in the justice department in Munich and was in the middle of two trials and was drinking coffee. A young man was sitting there at a table and reading the evening newspaper and another married couple came there. Well, and there it says in the evening newspaper that Rosenthal has died, this same Rosenthal who was involved in some funny business, you know (raises his voice, calling). "well, that was a great TV program and whatever and such." He was a Jew. And then he began saying, "you could see that the way they look." He knew that he was a Jew, and these three whom he didn't know, a married couple...this anti-Semitism.....Tell me, doctor, where do they get this anti-Semitism? You know, I can tell you because you are objective but look, when the Jews were persecuted in the Middle Ages the synagogues were burned.....they took off, they knew. Look, ..... they knew about it.....We were allowed to become physicians, lawyers, money managers—those were the good professions. And these professions were inherited. And as far as anti-Semitism, it was always around in a latent state. For example, I have a client whose name is Leo Bodenstein, was head of a large poker house here. He came to me one day and told me the following. Before he came to me, that had to be at the end of the Fifties, he went to the tax office in the East to discuss some kind of tax problem and the young tax man there .....and he had his tax file there with notations for every three years which is customary.....and there was a letter from the RSHA or SS or such, to the bank in Luebeck. "We are notifying you that the Jew, Bodenstein, (his father) all the money that he has is to be deposited with the Reichsbank in Berlin. ....when he emigrated to America. This letter from 1937 was still in the file in '53, '57. What do you think Bodenstein did? "I would like to discuss this letter with your boss." He went to see him then and he said he was terribly sorry and tore up the letter before his eyes. But you can see that some young finance officials, when they have to make a decision, the files in the cellar, took this letter along. Can you just imagine that, and that in the Fifties. It's really impossible to believe, don't you think? That doesn't belong perhaps but it's maybe interesting, you think?

I: That is interesting, naturally that is interesting and it belongs. I understood that you heard a lot of similar stories from your clients whom you have had in the fifties and sixties.

P: I was also in Israel.....once. One of them had a travel bureau and mainly dealt with travel to Israel.....

Tel Aviv. "I have two tickets which I have not sold and before they expire I will give them to you as a gift." And then I spent, when was that.....think again,'75, '76, a week in Israel.....To me it was like being in Italy, in other words I have the best memories from it if you subtract the horrible trash that goes on in Jerusalem around the Via Dolorosa, the sale of souvenirs etc. Well, they are really nice people who are very friendly and helpful.

I: Can you remember your first encounter with someone, do you remember when you knew that he was Jewish?

P: That was Leo Bodenstein. Yes, that was Leo Bodenstein.

I: Can you tell us in more detail about your first meeting with him?

P: I was completely inhibited, completely inhibited, and my God how do you have to treat these people, well, not on the basis of curiosity or inhibitions.....to the generation, to this race which they have annihilated, I already had a very big problem...

I: Can you remember the situation in regard to him?

P: I was kind of completely stunned somehow.

I: All right and how did the situation change, what happened next?

P: Well, we established a relationship and in the end we really deeply liked each other. So that people have huge inhibitions, there is also another example that I have (clears his throat). That would lead now much too far if I told you. I only know that my grandfather's brother was also a baker and emigrated to Australia between the first, before the First World War. And he deserted his ship, the cruiser Scharnhorst, deserted it in Australia in 1912. So he was the first military deserter in my family if I can say that (if you can exclude children). And we looked for him by means of letters (a friend of mine in Australia had sent me the telephone book pages from Melbourne/Percy. .... And we found his son, with the exception (coughs a little). Among things a Fritz Moses wrote me from Melbourne. He is a German Jew from Waldenburg, thirty years older than me. And we developed a close friendship, and his son Ruben made a trip to Europe at the time and came to us, visiting us for three weeks. And then spent a year with us. And this Ruben Moses was born in 1963 (mumbles) 1963. He was 25 years old then, you know..... with us. And he told me later that you know whenever I am in Germany and meet Germans of a certain age I think, my God, did they kill my grandfather? I'll never forget that. From the Jewish standpoint....I'm sorry....he spoke fluent Hebrew, English, German, Spanish. But about the first encounter, full of inhibitions, but it eventually disappeared.

I: Did you talk about that in this situation?

P: No, no. I was much too much of a coward to talk about that. The only thing that was really done was that my father, he had.....had spoken, you know. It was perhaps another generation.

I: And did your client also talk about that or is that...

P: No, actually we have,...the whole matter came up when he showed me a photograph, that his wife and child pictured there had been killed in a concentration camp, in Auschwitz, you know.

I: That was the situation when for the first time the story....

P: Yes, when it was discussed for the first time. And this...not even then, what exactly he had experienced but often it happened, resulted out of our conversation. But that is indeed the theme....that is indeed the problem, no, you avoided such themes, you know. You avoided it for understandable reasons, you know. They wanted to forget and we didn't want to know, am I right?

I: You said earlier that you had an argument with your father shortly before the end of the war because you wanted to join the militia ("Volkssturm"). And he prevented it. Can you talk about this situation in more detail?

P: Well, it was a big argument and I gave in after getting a boxing on the ears, I gave in, you know. Well, I really wanted to defend my homeland. It's crazy, I know. Well I have already said my children were raised, both of them to be against military service and today I defend the standpoint that I would rather have a dead hero as a child or a dead coward as a child than a dead hero or a living coward is better than a dead hero, do you think or is the whole thing clear to you?

I: Yes, when did the war end for you? Can you still remember?

P: Yes, well there we were in Lower Bavaria living with these people on their farm or small property, a small property. That was the end of April.....(Eckstaetten). That is about five kilometers from Simbach in a Western direction. And suddenly there was an alarm sounded for tanks. The sirens sounded then without interruption, and suddenly you could see tanks coming from the East, from the East with red scarfs on top. We thought they were the Russians but they were Americans. They were moving in a so-called pincer formation.....made this pincer operation in order to ...everything. Then for us the war was over. We thought now it's over. And Eckstaetten was situated next to a mountain, a small mountain, you know. And they wanted to head for Braunau.....and the nutty mayor of Simbach.....had blown up the bridge and the people over there in Braunau had, ....the SS had shot across with machine guns and then..... They are smart people and they stopped right away, and dug in for the attack in Eckstaetten with heavy artillery. No one risked anyone, no one, and they sent a few shots against Braunau and then the SS took off. And then they built a pontoon bridge and traveled across it to Braunau. . But I still want to

say something about Braunau, you know.....forget. My sister was very nationalistic. She had always written letters to Hitler and gotten thank you notes from the Reichs chancellery in return. And she would congratulate him on his birthday, that's the way she was and in April '45 as we passed through Braunau on a horse drawn wagon she then.....saw Hitler's birthplace and the Austrians without delay almost, I won't say lynched, cussed her out.....(laughs). I don't know, they didn't want to at all....My sister had said "you must be proud (laughs) that Hitler was born here, you know, and my father, he was as.., I have said, we had renovated our bakery in 1939, modernized, put in steam ovens and such and our bakery during the last weeks of the war or months before it was requisitioned to make army rye bread. Because it was a modern bakery and my father was supposed to go into the militia ("Volkssturm") and he got along with the army bakery chief and so he was inducted into the army instead and was assigned to field bakeries and was sent to Freiburg in Silesia. And in Freiburg in Silesia there was one of our cousins, Eckhard Kusawe and he lived with him there and he didn't know where we were and he had written to all kinds of addresses where he thought we were and then found out that we were in Austria. And then he had himself somehow—he must have been a clever fellow, he had himself issued transfer orders from Freiburg in Silesia in the "Riesengebirge" to Melk. (Stretches) to us, and we came to this farm at 12:00 o'clock and we had started our cattle drive at 7 in the morning, and they didn't know what direction we were heading and so he then headed in the general direction, asking along the way whether anyone had seen children, even offering a 50 mark bill for information and then they would find us. But in Steier (phonetic) at the bridge over the Ems river at the train station there was the usual game.....and would pick it up at the train station in Steier.....he is the father of the SS.....without a valid travel order. And nothing much happened. I went into the Linz barracks and they gave me a driver's license for trucks and then the following happened. The Americans came nearer and suddenly people were saying the war was over, the sergeant and such and whoever wants to can go home, they would receive discharge papers, my father and his friend, Gotthard Wasner, they didn't know where else to go so they stayed there (emphasizes), and Thank God, then the SS came in, the SS entered and when they found out that the Austrian sergeants had revolted and locked their officers in the cellar and declared the war ended, the sergeants were shot immediately and had to stand in formation for a regulation firing squad, they all had to step forward..... And at that moment an American jeep appeared with a white flag and they negotiated with the SS. And my father thinks that they agreed that this area would be excluded from the battle and if the Americans won, then the war is over but if the Germans win, then they can do whatever they want. And so the Americans occupied Linz and nothing happened to my father. He became an American POW and put into a (emphasizes) huge, huge, huge POW camp, across the Ems River in the Russian zone. There were 20,000 people there, he told me. And suddenly they heard that they as POW's would be handed over to the Russians. Well (laughing, speaking louder), the whole camp to a man revolted and marched in the direction of the Ems Bridge. And the GI's didn't know what they should do, so they just let them run and my father got across the Ems Bridge and soon behind him tanks were stationed on the bridge.....became Russian POW's. And my father got through to the West and then had us...Well, he still had the gold watch which he had hidden under his foot (sic). The Americans had taken everything, watches,

and cameras. But my father had rescued the watch and I have it today. And then he was in a POW camp.....'45,'46, '47. They released them when they could say where their family was. And my father knew therefore that we were in Bavaria, perhaps in Munich. ....He had then said to Gotthard Wasner that his family was in Ebenhausen near Munich and he received a release certificate for Ebenhausen near Munich. Via the Red Cross he found us in August 1945 and he then came to us, you know.

I: Now everybody was together again. What was the situation then?

P: Well, we couldn't believe it, we were living with these farm people and all of a sudden we saw these beaten up people and there was our father. Naturally there was a huge celebration. He hadn't known where he was and he had written at the time I don't know how many postcards to all kinds of communities in Germany.....you know, and we had registered ourselves with the Red Cross in Munich. He then went to Munich by foot and to the Red Cross and then had.....found that he didn't have to send any more postcards. The mail was no longer working then.

I: When you were finally together again, can you still remember how you spoke about your experiences.

P: Yes, then he told us what he had experienced.

I: You told each other your stories?

P: Yes, each one did.

I: And then was it discussed about the current collapse of the Third Reich? Did you talk about it?

P: No, actually not. Well, we then had...There was then in Munich "Die Neue Zeitung" (meaning the new newspaper) which was the predecessor of the "Sueddeutsche Zeitung" (meaning the South German newspaper, now one of Germany's leading dailies). There we saw pictures and at first we couldn't believe that all that had happened, and then we of course read about the Nuernberg trials. ....were surprised about their fairness and how fair they were conducted. We couldn't believe it when aside from death sentences there were some sentenced to prison like Doenitz. And innocent verdict like Fritzsche's. Innocent verdicts, prison sentences and hangings so that that was such a...that it was, so to say, possible to hold a public trial fairly so that people weren't just hanged. That was something that we were somehow used to in the Third Reich, that it was something that existed..., you know.

I: So were the Nuernberg trials for you and the family a point in time when there was a lot of discussion about what was happening?

P: Yes, yes. We judged the trials very positively. The trials were judged very positively. In other words accepted them as right. And in that manner that there were even innocent verdicts and also even limited prison sentences were judged good also. It was much different, certainly fair., you know.

I: And in your serious analysis of the past was there also a turning point? Was there a point when you judged the Nazi period which you had experienced completely differently?

P: Yes, that was certainly the time of the Nuernberg trials. I would say at the time of the Nuernberg trials, the first thing we believed was that the horror photographs were fakes. But then we said that there was still some truth behind them, that they weren't just bad propaganda. And then it was really, I would say the turning point, it was during the Nuernberg trials, were....

I: Well, could you, is there any special event, an individual event you still remember which really impressed you at the time?

P: I would say what has already been reported; it is this lack of judgment by Goehring, you know, who was the source of a lot of grand speeches and then escaped the chaos by taking cyanide. And we also found it very bad that Hitler had killed himself, that he didn't take responsibility, well, that he really only extended the war in order to live a few days longer. In other words then, we then have, seen somehow objectively...,

I: You mentioned earlier that you had named your son Daniel.

P: Yea.

I: How did that happen?

P: There's actually a very simple explanation. We really had expected to have a girl and we wanted to name her Nicole. And then we had a boy and my wife was lying in the hospital—our first child was brought into the world at home, the second in the hospital. So what should we call him? She said, "I don't know either." "Well, look we're going to...." My wife's family belonged to the Austrian nobility, the von Wielemanns.....and she had a copy of the family tree and I had one from my father. So I said we will look immediately for a name from them, a first name which is in both family trees. And the only one there was Daniel, a first name which was in both family trees. And so there was only Daniel. "Would you like to eat your cake now?"

I: Yes, very much.

P: Which one would you like, the cheese cake or the one with crumbs and I don't know what all.

I: I would like to try the crumb one. Thank you.

P: Yes, and my father-in-law was really unhappy about the name.

I: About Daniel?

P: Yes, he wrote me a very angry letter about it at the time. "What are you going to think when the world is anti-Semitic again. How could you give such a name to the boy which is added to 'Moses.' But he didn't say that because of anti-Semitism then, only because of concern that the child shouldn't have any problems with it.

I: So he was worried?

P: But my father-in-law was not anti-Semitic in any way. On the contrary his family came originally from Austria. His father was an architect and builder. There is still a street in Vienna named after him (von Wielemanns Gasse) and all his siblings were..., one was born in Lemberg (trans. note: now called Lvov and a Polish city), another in Chernowitz (trans. note: now called Chernovtsy and a Ukrainian city) and one in Graz. My father-in-law had renovated the city hall in Graz, the famous city hall, you know. And he was born in Lemberg and his father, the father of my father-in-law, went to Chernowitz and Kaiser Franz-Josef, and after the second wor....after the First World War....Rumanian, and his family was artistically gifted. My father-in-law was a fashion designer, had made designs for Rumanian royalty, and made a pattern, also for madam.....

I: What was his name again?

P: Von Wielemanns.

I: Von Wiedemann?

P: Von Wielemanns. They were given a title in some war between Austria and Italy. So they were named von Wielemanns already..., actually Willemans, they came originally from Flanders and one of them was an officer during some war and ordered a retreat contrary to the Kaiser's orders and saved lives that way. He was honored for that in Austria. In Prussia they would have stood him against the wall and shot him. And he could select a name, between von Starkenberg or von Monteforte, and since there already was a Starkenberg, he took Monteforte. And later they were supposed to be elevated to count status but they didn't do that because they didn't have the money for it.

I: And how did you meet your wife, (laughs slightly) if I may ask that?

P: Yes, naturally, you may. 1944.....it had never occurred and my wife then went, she came originally from Rumania and was incorporated into the German Reich (trans. note: part of a Nazi campaign, called "Heim ins Reich or Coming home to the Reich" which attempted to integrate German colonies which had been established outside the German borders.). .....soldier and lived in Breslau. And then the Augusta



School, the high school or girl's school was transferred to Strelen, to our high school (Gymnasium) and my parents had taken some children in—we had a large house. And she came with another girl, I don't know any longer what her name was. And they lived with us on the fourth floor, you know (softly, confidentially) and she was sixteen and I was fifteen and then we fell in love a little but it was platonic, you know. And we wrote to each other and looked for each other when I was in Austria and found myself in Vienna. And then after the War we saw each other a lot and then got married.

I: And she was part of the “Coming Home to the Reich” movement?

P: Yes, for those coming from Bessarabia.

I: From where?

P: From Bucovina (trans. note: formerly belonging to Rumania, now split between Rumania and Ukraine), Chernowitz (see note above).

I: All right, I understand.

P: But they weren't living any more in Bucovina but in Bucharest. And my father-in-law had had a great many Jewish customers.....in Bucharest he said there no anti-Semites even though he didn't like my son's name Daniel. That had nothing to do with it.

I: Did you then in you parents' house..., well, as I understand it, they spoke more positive about Jews in your parents' house. Was there then

P: No, I would say thus, that it was neither positive nor negative. They were human beings like us. You had of course, there were, you know, Jews, there were Protestants, there were Catholics, Adventists, Hussites and I don't know what all.

I: Was it one religious community among others?

P: In my hometown among those there were five, six religious communities. The majority were naturally Catholics and Protestants. Then there were the Reformed Church.....Hussites, like my grandfather. My grandfather was a reformed Protestant afterwards and a very rich man. He then gave money to the reformed church for almshouses and for housing the poor, before the First World War. And somehow they treated him badly. My father was in any case baptized in the reformed church but never confirmed there. And he left the church and joined the regular Protestant congregation, the St. Michael Church (softly, confidentially), we even had our own pew, you know when we went there, for instance for Christmas and the church was full we always could (laughs).....but it was soon cancelled, I believe it was in '39 that it was cancelled, this pew fee that we had to pay. My grandfather up to '34 was a translator according to my father for the Bohemians at the district Court (Amtsgericht) in Strelen because these people didn't speak German. They

have...under Hitler the Bohemian or Czech language was forbidden. They had to then....[End of Tape 2/1]

[Tape 2/2, Side A]

I: Well, I still have a few questions so I can picture life in this, in this city, Strelen and also your life there, in the time before the War and also during it. You have said that you had a friend who became a combat swimmer. Could you tell me a bit more about that?

P: Well, we're still friends today. He lives in Hanover, was trained as such but never served in combat.

I: And how was it for you then that he had gone into that?

P: I admired him.

I: You admired him?

P: Yes, naturally, that's a great guy, don't you think? I also volunteered at the time as an officer candidate for the navy, in the summer of '44, together with friend and classmate Hageloch and another one. We then went to Gotenhafen, Gdingen (trans. note: both cities are in Denmark) now but earlier also such and then we were.....looked around and we inspected a submarine. Then we went on commercial steamships; one was called the Zellewes, the other one was called the Sumatra. They were ships which had somehow been confiscated to sail in the Baltic and then.....

.....I was stupid then, you know, I had the worst spot because I didn't know anything. I stayed in the hammock, way forward in the ship, in the bow which caused me to get sick quickly. And then we were issued field glasses and then were supposed to, that there was a submarine and we practiced being on the attack and we had to try to spot a periscope.....

...then we passed by Bornholm and were in a fog and then I can still see the sun rising over Bornholm and the sheep herds which this green island of Bornholm had. I still remember that. I thought it was terrific. And then I dropped my desire for the navy because I suffered somehow from this swaying, because I just didn't like it and suddenly we came into bad weather and it was reported that there were really enemy submarines present and then we had to evacuate the ship for the.....Sumatra.....and then I had to, I'll never forget it, climb down a rope ladder as the ship was sinking, you know, and then jump down into a little boat and then we were transferred to the submarine supply ship Grobhammel. I don't know who Grobhammel was, some former submarine commander from the First World War. And then we headed back on the Grobhammel to Gotenhafen or Gdingen. And there I cancelled my navy

application and then applied to the tank corps as a candidate officer. (Laughs slightly). We were really stupid, we were, isn't that true? (Laughs slightly)

I: And nothing happened after that?

P: Nothing happened after that. Thank God. I was lucky that I was born in '29, not in '22. Those born in '22 and '23 are mostly all dead. Or they were assigned as KZ guards. Who would put his hand into the fire for someone else? .....Kohl (trans. note: presumably the former federal chancellor) made that claim, because of his later birth. He didn't make that claim himself, that came from Guenther Gaus, you know. Well, that was the way it was then. I mean you are now forty years old, right?

I: Hmhm.

P: Maybe you could have been a Hitler fan.

I: Clearly.

P: We don't want to tell anyone what to do, you can't do that. You can't condemn someone for that. Whether they committed a crime or not, I don't know. The only certain thing is that you didn't have to do that. Well, do you know the book called "Police Battalion?"

I: Yes, by the historian Barning.

P: There it is described in detail that those people didn't have to come forward and commit these massacres, that they could simply come forward and become completely normal soldiers and either survive the war or not. But not because of a penal battalion. That didn't exist; that's not right.....had to be subordinate so that people didn't know what was going on, or not? My client Dr. Lechleitner who has been a commentator here on "Bavarian Radio,," He had made a film about it.....there is a film about the police battalion in any case including crimes there in..... in which I could still help him during the time I was in Poland. I know the.....President of the Chamber of Commerce and he even produced an eyewitness.....it's a purely Polish city now and before it was a purely Jewish city. The Poles, you know I had something to do in Poland; I was in what is now Galicia (trans. note: the area next to the Carpathian mountains dividing Poland and Russia). These young people in Galicia.....these young people (emphasizes) are completely unaware that fifty or sixty years ago the Jewish population there was twenty to thirty per cent. They know nothing at all about it. It is completely unknown. Even in Silesia there are young people who know nothing about the fact that it was German before. You can't believe that at all. ....right?

- I: When did you after the war.....No, another question first. Now you said earlier that you were still, when you were in Bavaria, you heard on the radio and you were proud of it that the Breslau fortress had held out for so long. When was the point for you when you felt (hesitating) that what you had believed in earlier was dead, that it didn't exist (coughs slightly), that it didn't exist any more.
- P: Well, when the Americans came.
- I: By means of the Americans then....
- P: yes, when the American tanks came (emphasizes), when we also believed that they would harm us..... for curiosity went out and there they had tossed cookies and chocolates down to us. Children, we were still children and then at first we weren't sure it was safe to eat, that it had been poisoned perhaps. And then the Americans came to the farmer's wife and I still knew a bit of English from school.....  
....and they were standing around and said, "do you have you eggs, do you have you eggs." And she said, "What does he want, what does he want?" "Eggs." I said (laughs out loud) and then he gave us kids chocolates and I don't know what all.....
- I: But you had
- P: the first time I had seen a Negro in uniform, you ask?
- I: You certainly had.....
- P: And how. Yes, naturally
- I: They were black.....
- P: Black and white
- I: How did the situation then continue?
- P: Well we saw that they were so angry at us or
- I: And was that, that was of consequence to you?
- P: .....I only know that  
then.....the entry of the Americans into the village. My grandmother died, old Frau Loher, she had been, so to say, laid out to rest in the house for the first time..... seen

corpses, seen the people from the KZ. But.....seen grandfather, grandmother, so seen a corpse there during the whole day and then we prayed the rosary day and night. As is customary, you know. And at the burial no gathering of people was allowed. Only a maximum of three people all together was permitted. The coffin was then carried and (followed) then in three-man groups to the burial. I still remember that.

I: And what happened then? In other words, did you then stay there or did your family move on.

P: No, no. I started school again on July 1, 1946. I had to do something. ....in order to get food ration cards. I had the choice of learning mechanical drawing with.....in Toening. Or with the Auschlaeger firm. In Simbach there was a house construction company and because Simbach was closer I completed my business apprenticeship there. I completed it ahead of schedule in two years and then I was promoted fairly rapidly to chief bookkeeper and then chief of the accounting department. Then in 1951 they opened a branch office in Munich and then I went there and became head of accounting. Today they call that an accountant, but then it was called that. And I got married in '54 and then I thought.....really have to do something and the.....and then I had the.....registered for

I: Hmhm

P: and thought if you can take this course and then the examination and that's what I did. And then at the time the test results would no longer be valid if you didn't apply for certification (as a CPA?). And so I arranged with my boss to change my status to that of an independent contractor and today you would call that someone only superficially independent. ....and then I established an office as a side business, in addition to my work at the firm and in the end when I sold it in 1991 I had fifteen employees, an office with fifteen people, and now I have another office because it's only a hobby, but it's modest and I work alone with a part-time secretary and I am there in the office and can utilize the (CPA) infrastructure, more as a hobby. I don't have any other hobby.....and I think, I also know that when I give up my office.....stop working some time after the age of 63, 65, you'll be ossified after two years and senile. It happens to women, you know, because they don't have anything more to do, and I don't want to become senile, and so I continue to work for that reason. I still have.....Maybe I'm already senile, I don't know, but I have a client who is a psychiatrist and he told me, "I'll tell you when you become senile and an Altsheimer victim. Then I won't be coming to you any more and then you'll know it." (Laughs heartedly). (The telephone rings and he answers and has a short conversation.)

I: Is your visitor coming?

P: No.

I: I have perhaps a final question. When did you begin to be interested in this story?

P: Actually when my father died. And my mother got Parkinson. And as they spent their declining years with me. Parkinson affected her only physically. She still had her complete faculties. And she used to read these terrible publications by expellee groups and you know about them, you know, and I wrote angry letters to the editor and received in turn anonymous phone calls.....really still know how that was, my remembrances could be compared to those of my mother's.....plus research that I conducted. And so it resulted in the book. I simply wanted, in other words, I would say presumptuous that after a hundred years an historian would read my book and see how it was in reality.....

I: And can you still remember your conversations with your mother? How was the dialogue with you mother at this time?

P: Well, my mother was also..., had viewed this time period differently. She didn't agree with the expellee groups which believed that their history began in 1946. No, no. My mother was exactly the same.....as my father, I have to say.

I: And was that the turning point for her, for your mother?

P: Well, you know, with my mother I had.....in my father's case because my father was afraid in the last years of the war that everything would go wrong, you know, what would happen to us and what they would do to us.....and my mother from her grandmo....., from her mother who was a very open person who often talked about the Jews and so who had already considered things bad before. She had thus..., I would say in my mother's case everything happened much worse then they really were, that she had even predicted. Much, much worse than she had predicted, you know.

I: That is to say that your mother was no longer in agreement with things before 1945?

P: No, no (not in agreement). My father wasn't either. But my mother was even more so., like.....it was bad and my father was afraid they had already made plans what to do with us.

I: And what was for your,.....what was the turning point for your father?

P: Well, that was certainly the time when the Nuernberg trials began here which was really astounding. I mean that my father had indeed, he had lost a lot of property. You could say he had been very well off. My mother had married him. My mother came from very modest circumstances..... so

my father, he wasn't bothered at all (the telephone rings and a short conversation follows). Well, where were we?

I: With that, with your father who had property, he had property and he had married your mother.

P: My father had then, then nineteen hundred and....., when was that? "51, '52 he received credit from the government as reparation ("Lastenausgleichskredit") and with that he had.....he signed a lease for a bakery in Karlsruhe in return for 35,000 marks, I'll never forget it. And he began, he noticed that it wasn't successful and then he became inhibited that he would fritter away the 35,000 mark and so he took the money back or didn't accept it (the lease). And that happened in Karlsruhe and then in Karlsruhe he worked for the Americans. My mother worked as a cleaning woman for the Americans and my father worked as a butler. And in the building where they were an installation firm moved in and my father worked for them in the warehouse. And within a half a year he was head of the warehouse and did this and that, electric motors and all that, (coughs) ....and then early, worked up to '57 and then retired because in the First World War he had been (buried) in a cave-in so that he had a tremor, and then he retired with a pension in '59. And they had driver's licenses from before and had owned a car earlier, 1924, and because my cousin was a driving school teacher they took lessons and then bought a Fiat immediately and drove around and then.....my mother always complained about what they.....he said we have our pension, we have our income and pension which began with 147 marks and when he died in 1975 it was a thousand marks. I tell my clients whenever you complain about social security, I say the state will pay even when it is a little amount. I would never opt out of it. Inflation ruins everything. You know of course.....only don't forget, that there is something like that. Well and he we really satisfied.....just imagine if we still had the bakery, we would have to concern ourselves with all the problems there, about the bakery. No, we certainly had a nice life, had a nice two-bedroom apartment. My father was very satisfied, whereas my mother complained.....it's so bad, in Lower Bavaria.....there she always said that we had had a big bakery and such and then right away, I see the children playing in Lower Bavaria, one of them saying we had a big bakery and the children there made it a game, the complaints of my mother (they both laugh resoundingly). Yes, we had a big bakery and I will never forget it.

I: And it was like holding a mirror.

P: Like a picture.

I: Yes.

- P: Yes and they made one game after another about it. Refugees would come and talk about it (laughs).....and my father actually put it out of his mind, had put it out of his mind, I must say.....
- I: Well, so you said earlier that the mother of your mother, that I now understand...
- P: Grandma, yes
- I: So that the mother's side of the family was such that they also bought items from the Jews, bought them all up from the Jews.
- P: Yes, yes.
- I: And that you secretly listened to the conversations that took place then. Can you remember any occasion when you, in other words, a specific example when you listened in?
- P: Not really, as I stood behind the door
- I: Yes, yes.
- P: I only know that they talked about this..., well my sister was there with them when it was said that they were coming to Upper Silesia and would be killed.....But probably.....told coming from the train station.
- I: Yes, yes and can you remember how you felt about this news?
- P: Well, I was;... no it's funny, I was really a person, you know. I believed that and accepted that somehow. I would never have thought to say, Oma, if you say that again, I'll report you. And my sister was a completely different type, you know. She was such a fan of Hitler. You wouldn't be able to understand how such a person could hound another one. "He wasn't even a real member of the German race, despite his 'Germanic' tick, don't you think.?"
- I: How old was your sister then?
- P: She was three years older.
- I: Three years older. And were things strained within the family when political topics were discussed?
- P: No, no. They weren't discussed at all. I really don't have any contact to my older sister. She has lived mainly alone, whereas I had more contact with my younger sister who was born in '35. She died unfortunately in a car accident in 1971.
- I: And with your children, did you ever discuss this time period with them?



- P: Yes!
- I: And can you remember a situation when that became important for the first time, this topic?
- P: I don't know, it certainly resulted in...
- I: Aha.
- P: Gradually in any case when I observed the air attack against Dresden and the front in Silesia; then I also saw things like the bombing of Breslau (that is to say, Strelen), the sides changed there three times. I was still there when we saw the firing at the front..... I have raised my children to refuse military service, both of them and because one of them didn't have to be inducted because he.....and the other one was able to serve his time in a civilian capacity....
- I: And can you tell me a little bit how this discussion turned out. What did you discuss and what kind of questions did the children ask you?
- P: I am a bit domineering, in my opinion. So I probably talked more and.....got questions, but the discussion would have been led mainly by me, I would say.
- I: So you told your children of your experiences?
- P: Yes.
- I: And did you tell them the experiences that you had?
- P: In other words I told them everything that I have told you, perhaps also things I have forgotten. And we then also talked about the book. They found it great that I had done that.
- I: And they supported you, the children?
- P: Yes, yes, naturally yes. It was not a question at all. Also friends of Daniel's. Daniel had many friends in.....We have a second home; and they formed theatre groups there, often up to twenty or thirty friends of his there. And they often discussed the matter. They were all people who refused to serve in the military. They were very good friends. Most of them were boys naturally....
- I: Yea.
- P: .....And the worst was nationalism. And of nationalism the most dangerous thing is the flag.

I: A flag.

P: A flag to me is the most dangerous thing there is, don't you think?.....(laughs).....you're a queer duck. When on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 1944 I was inducted into the Volksturm you had to take an oath.....if something happened at least I had taken an oath.....

I: That released you from your obligations?

P: Yes, somehow so that if something might happen to me or that I would perhaps take off.....I wouldn't be part of it. (Laughs). In that I was naïve.

I: You mean that you had thought about taking off in that moment?

P: (laughs) No, actually not. But somehow so....I'll never forget on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of September we were housed in the wash room of one of the pastors and I was lucky to be with a lot of boys whose parents were quarry workers. And their parents sent them cakes and we also got these Polish sausages called "Jentsch" (phonetic). And one day we were marched to work at a site and a Protestant minister came by and we had to sing the song, "The pope is on his throne and what does a German mother have to do...." I thought they were idiots. That's nonsense. And it didn't work using this.....And they began with a group of fifty people which included the sons of quarry workers.....they can return home and they couldn't do much..... And then some kind of Hitler Youth leader came and asked if they were finished and then said you will come with me to do some more work. And I witnessed their solidarity.....That impressed me. Hopefully you have enough of what I experienced.....

I: Yes, that's right.

P: .....You know you can be someone who stands apart from the whole subject and says nothing now. You know, naturally they are, what the Yugosl.....what the Serbs are doing there is a terrible matter. But people don't know.....what they, how do you say, Kosovar or how do you say that? What they have done, they are orphan children. It's not probable. The whole war has been conducted without any forethought, right? In other words I think it's done without any planning. They begin then, initiate a bombardment and they don't know how to continue on somehow. That is, although Milosevich is certain, in other words, he's a little Hitler, you know.....Hitler he is not. Now you can only hope that the world is knowledgeable, that it won't spread. Just think if the Russians had mixed in, indeed I don't believe they will...They will pay for it. Now the World Monetary Fund has extended I believe five billion dollars credit. They know exactly if they make any trouble they will not get their five billion dollars back again. (The telephone rings).

[End of the Interview]