

**Interview with
RG-50.834*0013**

Red = Interviewer

Green = Translator

Black = Male survivor

Blue = Female survivor

Und etliche haben mich gebeten, können Sie mal ihren Onkel oder ihre Tante besuchen für eine Nacht. Selbstverständlich, aber am Morgen [indercipherable]

I would like to know about your ... during World War II.

Tell me about yourself when you were ... were where you born?

Ihre Geburtstag...

Auf deutsch oder auf englisch?

English.

I'm born in Berlin. 5th July 1918. Now I am 70 years old.

How long did your family live in Berlin? How many generations?

My family lived ... my father and grandfather are born in Berlin and me, too, in Berlin. I have a brother, an older brother. 16 years older. He is deaf and I am. When I have been a child hard hearing was growing. I lost my hear ... my hearing.

What street did you live on in Berlin?

Straße in Berlin.

Where I lived in Berlin? In Berlin in [indercipherable] near of the now Bundesplatz. In former times it was named Kaiserplatz.

Kaiserplatz. That was a good section of the city? Was that a well to do section?

War das eine gute Gegend oder eine arme Gegend?

Rich people I will not say but wealthy.

Wealthy. Upper middle class. Okay. What did your father do?

My father was a businessman. In earlier times he had learned tailor and changed his profession and became businessman - clergyman.

Clerk. Die Engländer sagen "Clark". In Amerika sagen wir...

Ich würde sagen "Kaufmann".

"Kaufmann" - "Merchant". Clerk ist einer, der schreibt. Ein Kaufmann verkauft.

Nono, he was in a big buero. His boss was a Czechoslovakian man, a rich man. He walked with colds.
[indercipherable]

Wagon motor.

Und ihr Vater als Kaufmann. So he was a merchant.

The man of the boss was Karl Petcek [indercipherable] .

Karl Petcek.

Karl Petcek. Yeah, I remember. A well-known name in the Czechoslovakian.

All right. And so your childhood was comfortable?

Als Junge, ihr Leben war bequem?

Na, da muss ich etwas sagen: Mein Vater war Jude. Als er meine Mutter heiratete, hat er seine Konfession gewechselt. My father had been Jewish when he married my mother. My mother was Christian and came from an agriculture family. [indercipherable].

Yes, farmer?

No, more as farmer.

Landowner.

Well, you say in Germany "Rittergut".

"Rittergut". Ritterhof.

Rittergut. Ist schon mehr. Mit Park, ja.

Wenn I tell grandfather (my mother father)] had a we would say a farm...

We would say state, wouldn't we?

A state. Ein Farmerswerk, wo man Kartoffeln...

Ein state ist ein großes...

We had men to walk for the cows, for the pigs, for the horses and for their mother and father. Weizen, I don't know the English word.

"Weizen" is "wheat".

Now, I know the word: plantage.

Plantation.

English word "plantation". This was grandfather. When my father wanted to marry my mother say both were deaf [indercipherable]. Grandfather was deaf. Grandmother said OK. He shall turn his religion. My father was Jewish and my grandfather said he shall become a Christ.

Christian.

Because the family of my father was [indercipherable] konservativ.

Stur.

Sehr liberal in her with her religion, with her behavior and [indercipherable] said OK, you shall change your profession. And so it happened. And so when my brother and me were born, grown up, we became education into the christ form.

Catholic or...

Evangelisch. Protestant. We had contact to the Jewish family and we had a good contact to the Christian family. And the both also good contact. There were not against. The both families were rich. And we rich people speak together no problems. They had the same cultural level.

Geld versteht Geld.

It happened. I remember the holidays to Christmas. We went to the Jewish family when there was Hanukkah and we went to our family to celebrate Christmas. And the other family came to us and we celebrated together. Wir haben immer gemeinsam gefeiert: jüdisches Hanukkah und christliches Weihnachten. [indecipherable] When 33 Hitler arrived and it became difficultier. I was a pupil in a

hearing school. It was ... we say in Germany "Gymnasium". I don't know the English word. It was not elementary school, it was a higher up school.

We say high school.

Yes, high school is in Germany the Universität. Not Universität.

In America we have elementary school, we have college or university and in between is high school.

Yes, between. We learned language there, I know.

College is [indiscipherable] and Gymnasium is high school.

Because my hearing was not good. In the earlier time I got education by private teachers.

At home?

Not at home. We went to him. The teacher had small classes. 4 or 5 pupils, not more. And my father had to pay. And there I got the education from for the Gymnasium. At the first three years, then we must go out because there came new education. There came Biologie, there came Chemie. This was not able by this little classes. And I came to a Gymnasium in Berlin: Grünerwald Gymnasium. Well-known Gymnasium. They took care for me. I got a place between pupils and teachers. It was not good. The idea was [indiscipherable] but it was not good. I could [indiscipherable] nobody ask. I could not look into the books. If he would be my neighbor I could read ah this happened and I understand. But I [indiscipherable]

Because you were Jewish or because you were deaf?

Because the teacher and the director (master of the teachers) when I sat in the near of the teacher I could understand him better and I could on the mouth of the pupils. Yes, but it was not good. But it went well till 33, 34. Then they changed their behavior to me. No I'm Jewish. [indiscipherable]. It was no more good. And one year later I lefted school. I finished with Dokument. I finished my school and I went out.

Did you make your Abitur?

Nonono, no Abitur. Between them. We say Mittlere Reife.

Middle of grades.

I don't know if you do this also in America. No?

Wir haben das nicht, nein.

And Abitur: Who has the document for Abitur, he may go to Universität. Three or four years before we can also finish school. Also with a document. We say Mittlere Reife. I don't know the English word: Middle Reif. This is for finish for middle higher professions.

What were your training to be? What profession did you want to be?

Sie haben, Sie waren ausgebildet für einen Beruf?

Ja, was wollte ich werden? Ich wollte gerne werden Bibliothekar.

Librarian?

Librarian. Übersicht haben über alle die Bücher.

Ja, to get a job in the government. Bibliothekar is a job by the government or by main town. We say öffentliche Berufe.

Public Profession.

It does mean [indercipherable]. Öffentliche Berufe. These are paid by the government. It was not able for me to go to the government because of my father religion and because of my Abstammung.

Your roots.

And my uncle (brother of my father); he said: Go and learn a Handwerk. So I wanted to go printing. But I could not stand so long.

I'm wondering whether a Bibliothekar is a librarian or arc hiver.

A librarian.

So. Sie wurden empfohlen, ein Handarbieter zu sein...

Ein Handwerker, ja. Ich lernte Schriftsetzer. Ja, genau.

[indercipherable]. Aber sie konnten nicht stehen so lang?

Nein, konnte nicht stehen. Und dann hatte der Doktor, der Arzt gesagt, besser einen sitzenden Beruf. Und mein Vater had been tailor. Also when I will be also tailor and I learned tailor. I made my Examen - Prüfung.

Examination.

And after war end I became master. After war and between [indercipherable]. It was no so that we were always educated as to have written [indercipherable]

So that I was always verfolgt. No that's [indercipherable]

They will not have to go with me to people [indercipherable] let got. They are here. The other Nazi [indercipherable] Jewish. When I told I am not Jewish I must struggle for my life. My father he [indercipherable] doesn't matter [indercipherable]. So a Nazi theory became calm and did not say anyone. But by the workers between my colleagues I had no troubles. They were kind to me. They asked me what happened. I said [indercipherable] and I saw the Jewish were locked. One day they were not more there. I saw a lot of be the problem because a brother of my father, he was a well-known doctor. He was a doctor by ladies.

Frauenarzt. In English sagen wir gynecologist. Er war ein Frauenarzt. Wir verstehen.

When nun [indercipherable]. He were Jewish. He had also a wife. She was [indercipherable]. But they took no any problem by this. He had three children and my uncle was 23 years older than my father. Also his children were older than me. [indercipherable]. He had two sons and a daughter. Both sons have been soldiers in First World War. They have been officers and they have [indercipherable] and when Hitler came [indercipherable] nothing. My uncle were doctor in the military by the First World War. Nothing. And he lost his home and must go in a Jewish Ghetto in Berlin. A little ghetto. There he must live. And from his son there were two sons. He was also grandfather of these two sons. There were Quartians [?] and the both were soldiers in the Second World War.

They were both what?

Soldiers.

In the Second World War. You must understand that my uncle war twenty years older than my father. He had two sons. They [indecipherable] in the First World War. They have been soldiers. And one of them had also children. Also two sons. And his wife died very young. The children came into a house for children without parents.

Orphans.

The got good education. My uncle was rich. He could pay. Their grandfather could pay [indecipherable], this was no problem. They grew up and became soldiers in the Second World War. And at this time my uncle was verfolgt.

Persecuted.

Because he was Jewish he had to carry the yellow star and lived in his home. My mother sent me often to him to bring fresh food. We had a garden. Obst.

Vegetables.

Fresh fruit.

Ja, Garten. Obst ist die Apfel. Obst ist fruit.

Jaja, fruit. I brought often fruit to him. We lived not in Berlin, in the near of Berlin, 30 kilometers south of Berlin mother had a little ground and we had a little house there. The Nazis took nothing because the owner was my mother - not my father. We could change it meanwhile. It was difficult but we could change. And mother was the owner. And mother was Christ. This was a little problem but it ... we had at this point luck. And so I brought fruits. One day my uncle was not more in the home and his servant...

His servant told me that my uncle had to go to a center where Jewish people had to go. Not concentration camp, this not. It was a [indecipherable]. Jewish...

Community. Jüdische Gemeinde. Gemeinde bedeutet Community.

Ja, auf Englisch.

Community.

Jaja, jüdische Gemeinde. Had a house in Berlin: Große Hamburgerstraße. This was the name. This was the center where the Jewish had to go. And from there they were brought to the Nazi Camp. And my uncle was there. And I asked: Why? He had two grandsons the old were 12 years and I went to the Große Hamburgerstraße and wanted to look for him. This was in 1943. I can't remember the exact datum, I don't know. And there at the door a lot of people stand. There were two...

Signs.

Plakats. Schilder.

Where shall I go? The Jewish had to wait, wait, wait till all Arier are finished. And when new people came and stand by the Aryan they had to go first. The Jewish had to wait. I went to the Aryan line. My passport had no sign for Jewish. And [indecipherable]. And I asked that I want to see for my uncle who was a well-known man in Berlin. [indecipherable] and why are you here; he is my uncle. Are you Jewish? No, I'm not Jewish. [indecipherable] said I were half-Jewish. And why I stand here. I were frech.

Frech.

Frech. Where shall I go? There [indecipherable] and here is also not my place. Where shall I go? He kept his mouth. I must give him my passport and he said to me: Go upstairs and ask [indecipherable]. They lay down. They were so afraid, they did not know what happen, and then I saw my uncle. He was 80 years. What shall I do? Go to the Rechtsanwalt? What's the name for Rechtsanwalt?

Rechtsanwalt is the attorney. For justice.

He said we had two Austrian names. I was young. 43 my age was 18. Two years later. When I remember. I told you in my letter I have written we have ... I became afraid and [indecipherable]. This [indecipherable] my uncle go to the Rechtsanwalt. I went down, I wanted my passport. [indecipherable]. I went. And I went to the Rechtsanwalt. Three, three, all three were afraid to do something for my uncle. Then I said to one of the Rechtsanwalt remember my uncle had to grandsons both are soldiers and one have fought at [indecipherable] in Africa. And lost one of his legs. He shall come return the next days. Said the Rechtsanwalt: When will he come? I don't know. He will come every day. He is coming from the hospital. And he has to learn to go with one leg and with one Prothese. He arrived. He is my cousin, my grand cousin. I told him what happened with his grandfather. What? He took his uniform, went to the Großhamburger Straße with me. He said: Heil Hitler. I am the grandson of Doktor Professor Chempin. What happened? They were a little bewildered because [indecipherable]. They said they will look what to do. One day later my uncle came out free. He was so bewildered and so shocked of this what he has seen that two or three days later he finished his life.

He killed himself?

Himself. Not with [indecipherable]. Pills.

Poison?

He was death. And my cousin called me: grandfather dead. And then he was graved in the Jewish...

Buried in the Jewish...

He was gravd. My mother, my father, my cousin and me and my brother. We five persons were there and not more. And also his servant. In Berlin Weißensee there is a big cemetery.

What is the name of the cemetery?

Weißensee. Berlin-Weißensee.

Weißensee?

Weißer-, nicht Weizen.

Sag du das mal.

Weißensee.

W E I S S E N S E E. Diese waren Jewish Cemetery. He was gravd, a rabbi was there and so it was not holy. All were afraid. When he came down we went out and the [indecipherable].

Kein Rabbiner?

Doch, doch. I can't say. I don't know. I could not ... I have never seen this cemetery because when the wall was finished Berlin was part in two parts. This was the eastern part and we lived at first also in the eastern part - not of Berlin; in the eastern part of Germany. We lived not more in Berlin. In the near of Berlin. And this district belonged to the eastern part of Germany and not of Berlin. Do you understand? I had no occasion to go to Weißensee. And the time was hard. 45 and 49 we left the eastern part of Germany and went to Wiesbaden. It's in the near of Frankfurt. There I lived 25 years with my wife. We married in 1944. This is a [indecipherable]. The other part. They were needle picks; let them go. Das waren Nadelstiche.

Wir sagen auf Englisch...

[indecipherable]. My idea was another. If politic was spoken I kept my mouth. And by the [indecipherable] I am not in a [indecipherable]. They are communists; they were Sozialdemokraten. Some of them spoke against Hitler. I was afraid.

What did you saw in wartime?

Ask..

Wo haben sie gearbeitet?

In Berlin. I worked in Berlin.

In a factory?

In a factory for tailors. We have made uniforms. There I was safe. This was a ... I don't know the English word. Kriegswichtig.

Important for the war. Wichtig is important. War materials.

Ja, I wouldn't know that they wouldn't pick me up out to Mutionsfabrik or into a concentration camp. I did not know what happened with the concentration camps Dachau. Auschwitz. This name were unknown to me I must say. It was unknown. Wee didn't know. Will know that Jewish friends were going off to Warschau, Warsaw. Into the towns in the east Poland. Did we know? We did know. [indecipherable]. We heard nothing. One time in the newspapers were shown pictures of the Jewish who are living there but we know that these were pictures were not true.

These were propaganda?

Diese Fotos, waren Progapaganda?

Propaganda-Fotos, ja. But we did not know how cruel they lived I must say. We didn't know. Wir haben es nicht gewusst wie wie schwer sie dort leben. Also her father fo my wife had to go to Theresienstadt. Also her father was Jewish and her mother was Christ. This was the ability to marry her. Also we [indecipherable]. And we had an occasion to marry. She was a Mischling and me, too. We could marry. The second problem was in the Nazi Theory Erbgesundheit...

Erbgesundheit is hereditary.

The hereditary health. Erbgesundheit.

Because my parents are deaf my brother is deaf. He wanted to marry and he was not allowed to marry. Because he is deaf. Me I wasn't deaf and at this time I could hear a lot better than today. So I have to go to the office for healthy. Gesundheitsamt.

Hereditary. Hereditary health...

Erbgesundheitsamt.

And I asked to marry her. The papers were shown she is Mischling and the papers have written I am also a Mischling. No problem for marrying but problem was my family ... in my family deafness is strong. Deafness is strong. Father deaf, mother deaf, brother deaf, a lot of people are deaf. Erbkrank sagten wir.

Erbbelastet.

But your brother could not marry because of Erbkrankheit?

In this time not but later when Hitler was off he married. I wanted to marry her. No, I am a young man. I want to. And I said before I am fresh. I don't know the English word.

That's the word.

[indecipherable].

Yeah, but fresh is good.

Ist das die Englisch-Wort?

Fresh ist auch eine gute Wort. Man spricht...

And I wanted to marry. And the Gesundheitsamt man he was kind. Not all were so, a lot of people were kind. Freundlich. He said and your father, your mother are deaf? Not. And I said: Me, I hear. And your children? I make no children I said. I play I make no children. So on this level I have spoken with him and he was also a young man. And he was not so fanatic. He said: I will try what to do. I shall come the next

day. I arrived the next day. He took the map with my name opened was called to the neighbor room - telephone. I don't know why. He was called. And I looked what he had written. There I saw the paper with my name. I try to speak to English. There was written Wolfgang Chempin is coming from erblich belastete Familie.

Hereditary ill family.

But he is hearing and the girl he will marry is also hearing. We will give him free.

Give him permisson. Erlaubnis

Erlaubnis. And I sat down and was happy. I know then he came and spoke a lot of this oh this is impossible and, and, and. Let him speak. I have written the paper. He did not know that I have written the paper.

Read the paper.

Read, natürlich. I have read. And because in the meantime when he was in the neighbor room I have read this. And I know what happen. Let him speak. He spoke ten minutes and said to me [indecipherable]. Ok I will do this, I will make this and then I got the paper, the permissions to marry.

What was the speech that you should not have children? What was he telling you? This official?

Dieser Beamte, was hat er gesagt?

Er hat furchtbar viel erzählt. Ich soll ein guter deutscher Staatsbürger sein, [indecipherable].

Und tut mir leid, ich kann Ihnen das Buch nicht geben, mein Kampf.

Das kommt noch, das kommt noch.

Hat er über Kinder gesprochen? Dass sie so kein Kinder haben...

Nein, hat nicht gesagt.

Hat nicht gesagt wegen Kinder bekommen.

Der Standesbeamte nicht, der andere, der sagte mir: Sie müssen unterschreiben.

Dann der Standesbeamte...

In the main hall putting contract between man and wife. Standesbeamter.

To make the marriage?

By the marriage.

Ceremony. Er kann...

This comes later.

In the [indecipherable] Gesundheitsamt...

Health office.

... this man [indecipherable] and me spoke. I give the permission. Think you are a German, your family is deaf. They say deafness is illness.

Is hereditary illness.

Look, you shall not get children. I noted: I will not make children. This we both spoke. We were alone. I became ashamed for my... Ich habe mich geschämt.

I was ashamed.

He, the man you was older than me but I was a young man I could speak of this affair. It was a little too hard for me. But I know: If I keep my mouth and said Yes and looked into his eyes and said Yes this will be better for me. I got the permission and we both went to the Standesamt.

Wo man...

Standesamt. [indecipherable] You cannot marry he said. I have the permission I said. And when he saw the permission it was a document. Okay, said he. In that time there was no copy. We have two or three...

Documents?

Durchschriften. Es waren keine Kopien, das gibt es ja...

Durchschrift is mit Carbon, mit blauem Papier...

Ja, ja. Duplikat

Duplicate.

One for the Standesamt and one for the church. We wanted to marry by Standesamt and also by church. And there it was so I must give the [indecipherable] paper of the permission to the priest.

Nono, he is catholic. I mean protestant. Minister?

Vater.

Minister?

Wir sagen minister. In evangelische ist der Vater ein Minister, bei Katholiken ist er ein priest.

Father, father. Pastors.

I went to him and told I want to marry. Impossible, he said, impossible. He are the paper.
[indecipherable] had we made two times marry auf Standesamt. This was on 8. Juli 1944 - September?
8th September 1944. We married by Standesamt. One day later - 9/9/44 - we married in the church.
[indecipherable] 9th day, 9th month, 44. And now...

Der Beamte bei Standesamt...

You said you [indecipherable]

He was an older man. He last a little and said this is the ceremony my wife had spoken when marrying it finished by Standesamt. The man, the Standesbeamter, had to give a book to the young married family: Mein Kampf. This was obligation. When you have married the Standesbeamte said: I am sorry I cannot give you this book "Mein Kampf" it is gone out and we wait till the war is won. Yes, he said we will wait till the war is won.

When the war is won? He thought Hitler would win the war?

He knew the same as me. The war will never be won. But we must speak in that time in double shades.

Double speak, yes.

This was the time [indecipherable] spoke [indecipherable] blue eyes and the [indecipherable] was [indecipherable] till the war is won. So this was [indecipherable]. And ten months later - on the 9th of July 45 - our son was born and the war was over.

When was he born?

9th of July. Exactly ten months later. We are an honored family.

You didn't have a book to read on your wedding night [laughter].

We had cruel times and we had also good times.

What is your son's name?

We named him Hans-Jürgen. And we the Russian came in our... in the part we were living we must go out from our home. Because the street where we lived was parted in two ... only for officer. Russian Officers. And our people had to go out of the house in the meantime of two hours. We were married and my wife was expecting a child. We had a trunk, with baby, clothes, money, little Schmuck.

Schmuck is jewelry.

We did not know what happened. This time was so ... what bring the next day? The Russian came in and in the meantime of two hours we had to go out from our house, father and mother. German people were there. And they knew our problem. And there we are the hero problem. We did not like this but in that moment when Hitler was [indecipherable] we became the hero in the village. We lived in a little village near Berlin. You understand what I mean? We are the heroes. Our Jewish. And I said I have never been Jewish and I am also not Jewish now. Not against them but I will be correct. We lived there and I fell my favorite [indecipherable]. Jewish or not Jewish [indecipherable]. And I hope to understand me both. I had never been against Jewish, I cannot. A part of my family was Jewish and I feel with contact to them but I lived in a Christian world and there I had also good contact to the Christian family. And there... they both have helped me to grow up. This is the line where I lived. So now we are the heroes. So the German partners of the Russian took care to get home for my parents. They got a home from [indecipherable]. My wife and me went to in another house. There was a woman. Her man was high ranked officer in the German Wehrmacht.

Wehrmacht is army.

[indecipherable] was a very good woman. A woman from world.

Woman ist Mutter, nicht?

Achso, ich verwechsel das immer. Du bist mein wife? This is a woman? Du bist auch eine Frau. Aber im Englischen... [indecipherable]. And this lady was a very kind lady. Also in the darker times when Hitler was living she always coming to our house had spoken with the father, the mother, the brother with me. The other neighbors did not do it. They are afraid. They did not know what it is: Are the Jewish, are the

not Jewish? They did not know what happened. They spoke nothing with us. They were not against us, they were cool. And wait up what will come. But this lady, of her I spoke, was so open and so frank with us. When [indecipherable] she said: My husband is not here. He is in the Tschechoslovakei. He is General. General. A high officer. She said come to me in my home I have free, I have room free. Wife and me went there. We lived there 14 days and then we looked for another house. Found another house the government had helped. And there had been... I was a tailor. The Russian came and asked me if I will make little work for them in the Kaserne.

Kaserne. Camp.

The German government asked me if I will make needle boxes for them the new police. Because the Nazi police were off. They had no police uniform, they had nothing. And if I will needle for them. And I said I cannot needle.

Soar. Needle ist Nadel.

Achso.

Aber sie haben genähnt mit einem Nadel.

Maschine.

Nähmaschine.

Sie haben mich gefragt, ob ich organisieren will eine Schneiderei.

Jetzt, die Russen haben gefragt und auch die Deutschen? Die neue deutsche Regierung? Beide haben gefragt?

Aber die Russen dachten, ich könnte in die Kaserne gehen und bekäme auch noch etwas zu essen. Und die Deutschen sagten, ich kann dir nichts bezahlen, aber ich gebe dir Maschinen. Da habe ich mir gedacht, gehst zu den Deutschen. Und wir holten... Ihr könnt zu mir kommen.

Aber Sie haben entschieden, mit der Regierung...

Ich habe... Sie sollten aber zu mir kommen.

Mit der Regierung. Mit der Gemeinde.

Also Sie haben nicht zu den Russen gegangen?

Nein. The world was broken down. Berlin is far, far... We are living in the village. The village must build up his own community. And they asked me: Will you work for us? And I said Yes: I will work for you. They gave me a broom, they gave me Maschinen.

Nähmaschine. Soaring machine.

Then the woman asked if they can walk with me. Because in the Russian zone was so: Who is walking who gets the Lebensmittelmarken.

Food stamps.

Who is not walking, he gets nothing. He must die. And the Russian part it was very cruel. So I said: I will work for the government. For the little [indecipherable] for the village government [indecipherable]. They gave me [indecipherable] The women brought their own Nähmaschinen. The government also gave a machine and we walked... And to the Russians I said: Come to me. And they came to me. I was master in this time. I had made the Prüfung.

Test. Examination.

Meisterprüfung.

Meister ist master. Meisterprüfung is master examination. Sie waren ein Meisterschneider?

Schneidermeister. This was the highest level for the workers. And there it was able to get boys and girls and to educate them in the profession. Only [indecipherable].

Sie waren Meister und...

Ich durfte Lehrlinge ausbilden.

That's apprenticeship?

Sie waren der Meister. So sie haben organisiert.

Das hab ich lieber gemacht als selber nähen. Needle work not my affair. Organisation...

26 Angestellte.

What was the name of the town?

Diese Dorf, Namen des Dorfs?

Frangdorf.

Sie können ja sogar deutsch buchstabieren. Das ist schwer.

A B C D ...

Adolf Beta Cäser ...

[laughter]

It was totally ...

If you can rechnen in the same language you can speak well.

If you can rechnen.

Reckon?

Rechnen.

Oh, ja das ist...

In the head: 2 plus 2 = 4. If you can make this good you are a good speaker.

Das ist...

So I had my job. We earned Reichsmark plus food.

Was haben sie auf Stadt gearbeitet als Angestellter oder als Beamter?

Nein, nein, ich war selbstständig.

Selbstständiger Besitzer?

Eigenes Geschäft.

He set up a private business.

Sie haben - wie sagt man - Anträge von Staat...

Ich habe die Erlaubnis... I got the permission to make a job. In Germany it is so: If you will make a job in earlier time you must ask. There is an official who says Yes or No. Yes, because I was master. I had the [indecipherable] and so it was allowed. And you must always remember the wartime was over. And in this moment we Jewish were the heroes there. It is not beautiful to say but it was so.

Could you please talk a little bit more about that please?

There were other Jewish Heroes. Andere Juden haben den Krieg überlebt und...

Ja, ja [indecipherable] Dorfjude. [indecipherable]

Nur, ich möchte auch ehrlich sein: Ich habe es versucht auszunutzen. Wir haben ja eine schwere Zeit erlebt. In this time when we left our home mother, father and brother got another room and one night my mother was killed by a Russian soldier.

His mother was killed. I don't...

It was night. The Russian soldier cried and our little dog woof woof. Mother could hear this. We opened the door and looked what happened. She saw wife or me are there because me and my wife expect the baby. I never have spoken with her. My father had told the dog had made woof woof. My mother [indecipherable] from the bed and said to him the dog...

Barked.

Barked. [indecipherable]. We opened and just in this moment the Russian had tooked his pistol and mother was death.

Es war ein curfew? Wenn alle müssen in Hause bleiben.

Alle mussten fort und bekamen andere Räume zugewiesen.

Wie sagt man das auf deutsch, wenn alle müssen in Haus...

Mussten die Wohnungen räumen.

Nein, nein, nein, falsch verstanden. Der Befehl war, es muss jeder zuhause bleiben und darf nicht abschließen.

Doch, doch, abschließen schon. Nur...

Nicht auf die Straße gehen.

Nicht auf die Straße gehen.

Wie sagt man das auf Deutsch?

Sperrstunde.

Sperrstunde.

Wir sagen curfew, das ist eine französische Wort. Curfew.

Ja...

Das kommt von die Feuer...

Wie schreibt man das?

Curfew.

Jaja, Curfew. Das ist Sperrstunde.

Die Sperrstunde war von abends um 10 Uhr bis morgens um 6 Uhr.

Sperrstunde ist was anderes. Es war...

Abends ab acht Uhr, ne. Ist verschieden.

Ja, ist verschieden.

Auf jeden Fall am Morgen um sechs Uhr kam mein Vater und sagte: Mutter ist tot. Es gab natürlich auch ein großes Aufsehen im Dorf, wo jeder jeden kannte.

So sie hat die Tür geöffnet, vielleicht in den Garten gegangen und er hat geschossen.

Durch die Tür.

Durch die Tür?

Sie hat nicht mal aufgemacht, der Russe war besoffen.

Just after opening the door.

No, he should trough the door.

Hat er gesehen durch die Tür?

Einen Moment: Die Tür hat oben ein kleines Fensterchen und da hat der Vater glaube ich gesehen, dass es ein Russe ist; hat die Mütze gesehen. Und da war schon spät. Durch die Tür.

[indecipherable]

[indecipherable]

They saw the father. Der Vater hat die russische...

Mütze gesehen, ja.

Nachdem die Mutter tot war.

Wir haben doch im Garten die Soldatenmarke gefunden, aber daraus ist nichts geworden. So eine Erkennungsmarke.

Erkennungsmarke?

Erkennungsmarke ist das mit Nummer, was die Soldaten haben. Auf dem Fußboden gelegen. Das haben wir abgegeben, aber ist nichts draus geworden. Sie haben gesagt: [indecipherable]. Deutsche russische Kamerad kaputt und umgekehrt genauso. Das war die Antwort. Wir haben doppelt erlebt - schwer. Erst die Hitlerzeit und danach die Russen. Und kein Pfennig bekommen, nichts. Nichts.

Und deshalb war bei meiner Selbstständigkeitsmachung... because mother's death had made me so popular. Hat mich so bekannt gemacht.

Sympathetic.

Bekannt gemacht. He became well-known.

Well-known, ja. And this helped me in the foundation of my job. This helped me to get the machine, to get the women work in my [indecipherable]. The women know our affairs. They know the affair with my mother. I say we were well-known. And we had a little baby, also well-known. The People were kind they wanted to work. There it was a Symbiose.

Symbiotic. It is the same. In English sagen wir symbiosis.

I want them and they want me to. It was a Symbiose, in the English word the same.

Kommt von lateinisches Wort. Wir brauchten sie als Arbeiter und sie brauchten mich, um bei mir arbeiten zu können. And this was a time it was so a cruel time and so unordentlich... Was soll ich da sagen?

Unordentlich... disorderly.

Unorganized?

It was more more than unorganized. Unsettled.

I have lived, I have erlived a cruel time with the Jews without knowing what will happen to them. I erlived...

Survived. Sie haben überlebt.

Survived.

Sie verstehen Latein?

Ja.

Survived kommt von Latein. Vivere is to live, sur is über. So survive is [indecipherable].

You know: überleben.

Aja, das ist interessant.

Die lateinische Sprache ist ja die Grundlage für viele Sprachen, ja. Roman, English, German.

Ich benutze das oft. Beispiel: überflüssig.

Overfloted.

über is super; flüssig is fluent. Auf English super-flues.

Ach ja, ja. Also this was my existence. Tailor in the little village and the Russian came. They brought their women. I should make clothes. I cannot make clothes. I am tailor for men. I said, well I know a girl she is a good tailor for women... for lady. I asked her: Do you want to work in my office? She said Yes. It's good

food. She could get food. The Russians paid with money and with food. But I cannot say I want 100 pounds potatoes or 5 pounds [indecipherable]. This I could not say. They did not know what they have. One time they brought [indecipherable]. A lot of [indecipherable].

You shared. Sie haben das geteilt...

Verteilt.

Shared.

Geld brauchte ich ja für die Steuern. For the tax. I had to pay tax. Food I could not buy. We had no food. And then another brought Mehl.

Flour. Um Brot zu machen.

Kuchen backen.

We parted between the people. They wanted to come and they walked [indecipherable]. One time [indecipherable].

Hirsch.

A part of and Hirsch. And me and my wife put into the glass.

In Dosen?

Eingelgt in Gläsern.

Konserviert.

Yeah, this was...

Preserved?

And then when they came [indcipherable] officer. We had often discussions with Russian soldiers. The officer Limpel could speak German. The officer who I [indcipherable] could not speak German. [indcipherable]. But it was so. We did [indcipherable] in the night, they brought wine, they brought Vodka. And there I learned to drink Vodka. This was a [indcipherable]. I before never had smoked. They brought cigarettes. This was not for me. But the Official brought Nazi cigarettes, long.

This part [indcipherable] of paper and one so. You know what I mean. I smoked them and have I must say not bad time. We were often afraid what happens if they [indcipherable]. We were young [indcipherable]. [indcipherable] And then we had cruel [indcipherable] from Dachau, from Theresienstadt, from Auschwitz. We got there. This was a time where we heard first of this. So the German people did not know. We heard a lot but it wasn't true it was spoken. [indcipherable]. This was a time were we discussed with the people: How was it able that a man wie Hitler could arrive? And one day, one day an officer, a high officer came with soldiers, asked me if we will make for the airplanes. Not paper, the Leinen.
Für den Rumpf mit Stoff überziehen.

Leinen.

The bolsters. This was the... Das war die ganz kleine Flugzeuge.

Ach, für heute ja. Aber früher waren normale Flugzeuge, Juncker. Stukkart. Wo wir gewohnt haben, da war ein Flughafen. Und dort ist der Herr Stauffenberg auch geflogen, wie er Adolf Hitler erschießen wollte. Bei diesem Flughafen, jaja.

Und die kleinen Flugzeuge hatten noch...

Die Tragflächen.

Hatten noch keine Bespannung. So sagte man, sie mussten bespannt werden. Bespannen. There were Russian Tailors. They had made but it was not [indcipherable]. It cost Flügel, Maske, Bespannung [indcipherable]. It was not allowed [indcipherable]. Airplane [indcipherable].

Is he talking about cover for the wing?

Yes. So it had to be tied. Because of the [indecipherable].

What fabric?

Sie müssen eine ganz starke Material...

Das nennt man [indecipherable].

Bettleinen. What you have in your bed.

Starke Stoff [indecipherable]

[indecipherable], das nennt man [indecipherable].

When they are finished...

Out-, Inside.

Wie sagt man? Die Flügel?

Under the Flügel the soldiers take a [indecipherable]. [indecipherable] and just became.

Wenn man wäscht Stoff, geht er auch fest.

This was not my affair. My affair was to make the Flügel. At first the Flügel. It was at coming wintertime. I said: I cannot work. I must finish my work [indecipherable]. I have no [indecipherable]. I cannot

[indcipherable]. Now said the officer [indcipherable]. Then I will work. And I wanted money, correct.
[indcipherable]

[indcipherable]

The dream to get coal. I made a correct price [indcipherable]. I must know how long to make
[indcipherable]. Look at a watch [indcipherable] two hours. Said: Okay. And so [indcipherable]. Only
one [indcipherable]. And so they brought coal. It was a track full with coal [indcipherable].

[indcipherable]

Ich konnte es garnicht alleine machen

[indcipherable]

They were happy. I cannot [indcipherable]

What was in the bottle?

[indcipherable]

Sie haben verteilt. Jeder hat immer eine...

Was haben Sie gesagt?

Jeder hat bekommen einen Eimer für Kohle und ging damit nach Hause. Das war doch etwas
Wunderbares, Kohlen, daran war überhaupt nicht zu denken. Und meine Weber konnten den Winter
durch arbeiten. Und als der Kohlenvorrat zu Ende ging, wenn. When the coal finished I called for new
coal and they brought.

[indcipherable]

Because in this time I had to make for the flyer. Flügel. The whole [indcipherable]. Also the Rumpf, also
the Ruder, also the Spitze vorne. Die beiden gingen [indcipherable]. And this was my job. I must take
measure. I must rechnen how many Stoff...

Stoff is material.

[indecipherable]. OK it was [indecipherable]. They brought Stoffe in Ballen. Ballen?

Balls.

In my earlier work I know on this balls are [indecipherable] a little from the [indecipherable]. How many meter, how many broad. A little Stoff. [indecipherable]. It did [indecipherable]. I took it off [indecipherable]. And number one or number two and kept this care for it. This saved my life. I did not know before. So a soldier brought 10-15 Ballen. And I made flyer. I cut it [indecipherable].

[indecipherable]

Pattern, ja. Wenn Sie [indecipherable] machen, steht immer Pattern drauf. [indecipherable]. I have made a pattern by myself. And I have for one flyer I had to use [indecipherable]. Because they said - one flyer - I had a clever [indecipherable]. One woman, she was Kaufmann...

She was merchant.

And she made financial affairs of my job. [indecipherable]. And with those [indecipherable]. [indecipherable].55 meter. Not my name. And changed into [indecipherable]. I had friends in Berlin, they went to the black market. And I wondered also [indecipherable]. [indecipherable]

He used this extra material on the black market to recruit and also materials [indecipherable] needles that [indecipherable].

Zutaten.

[indecipherable]. Nur durch Tauschen.

Die Russen haben das nicht besorgt gemacht.

Aber eines Tages kamen ranghohe Offiziere. One day three high officers came. [indecipherable].

Make what?

Lay out the pattern.

And I was prepared. The lady and me will take the pattern. And then I had to make the measure. 55 meter [indecipherable]. And then they asked how many [indecipherable] have you got? I opened the book and showed them the little [indecipherable]. Number. [indecipherable]. [indecipherable]. Charascho. Good, good, good [indecipherable].

Charascho ist gut.

Then I asked him: What's the matter?

[entire passage not understandable]

Another affair. I don't know if it is interesting for you. The Russian soldiers saw on the black market in Berlin the American soldiers. They have beautiful [indecipherable] shirts. Green, yellow shirts. [indecipherable] I remember. [indecipherable]

[entire passage not understandable]

Ja, eine Routaschka ist das, ein Hemd.

Ein russisches Offiziers...

Ja, eine Routaschka.

Routaschka ist Hemd.

Nein, nicht mehr Hemd.

[entire passage not understandable]

Wir sagen, die Frequenz ist andere. Das lohnt nicht.

Keine Gutmachung.

Herr Bisolt...

Kennen Sie Herrn Bisolt?

Wir werden ihn besuchen in Bremen, wenn wir Frankfurt verlassen, gehen wir zu Bremen und bleiben mit Herr Bisolt. Er hat uns eingeladen, mit ihm zu stehen. Die Geschichte mit dem russischen Soldat...

Achtung, ja diese shirts. Three shirts, one Kittel.

Aber diese russische Soldat, war er ein Offizier?

Er war Offizier.

Nicht er, aber viele Offiziere kamen und wollten immer wieder genäht haben, immer wieder, immer wieder. Und der Preis war ein Standardpreis, es war ja alles noch Reichsmark. Und sie brachten Lebensmittel. Darüber wurde mit mir danach viel gesprochen. Wir dachten, Marka und Produkte.

Marka und Produkte.

What...

How to pay? I said Marka and Produkte. Produkte is the Russian word for food.

Products [indecipherable].

So he took...

So die Russen hatten lieber diese amerikanische Stoff zu ihre russische Stoff?

Ja, die Qualität war gut. Und ihre Qualitäten waren nicht gut, das waren ja auch vier Kriegsjahre, vier Jahre Krieg; zertrümmertes Land. Und das, was sie an Industrie, Webereien und [indecipherable] hatten, war ja im westlichen Teil von Russland, das ja die Deutschen überfallen hatten. Weil im Osten ist ja nichts.

So, sie haben eine gute Geschäft mit diese Russen?

Jo, wir sind durchgekommen, der Bub ist gesund gewesen, wir hatten zu essen. Und wir waren auch rücksichtslos geworden. Als rücksichtslos... Do you know what I mean?

Rücksichtslos hmm.

First me, then the other.

Inconsideration.

Aber sie haben auch gehandelt, die Russen.

Ja.

[indecipherable]

I wanted to overlive... überleben.

Überleben - survive.

Survive. I wanted to survive. Because after war the time was hard. Who could not get food would be must die.

Haben Leute gestohlen?

War schlecht. Viele Menschen sind noch nach dem Krieg gestorben. Viele Menschen, auch bei uns. Alte Leute sind gestorben, wir mussten überleben.

Where there many people in your village that died from hunger?

Yes, there was no food.

It was worse than during the war?

Schlimmer als während des Krieg?

Wir haben während des Krieges ja nicht so hungern müssen. Wir waren ja nicht im Camp, im Nazi Camp. Das waren wir nicht. Wir haben nicht so hungern müssen. Wir haben vieles entbehren müssen, aber hungern mussten wir nicht. Nach dem Krieg war alles zusammengebrochen. Ja klar, das war eine schlimme Zeit. Bitte, Hitler. Die Leute haben ihn ja gewählt. Ich konnte, ich hatte nich viel Mitleid. Ihr habt ihn doch gewählt. Ich habe ihn nicht gewählt. Ich war ja noch zu jung dazu. Vielleicht wäre ich ja auch blöd gewesen und hätte ihn auch vielleicht gewählt. Ich weiß es nicht, habe nicht gewählt. Ich war noch zu jung dazu. Und die Nazi, die an ihn geglaubt haben, haben ihren Preis bezahlt. Diese Juden haben dafür bezahlen müssen, sie haben nichts dafür gekonnt. How many Jewish are that are died. It was not there culprit[indecipherable].

Aha, they were not to blame?

But the German who have elected Hitler they had to pay their prize. And the prize was death. I said we wanted to survive. And I looked not there and looked not there, I wanted to survive. This was the time to go high. Or to die. And we had a boy, we had a boy. This was our's. Mother dead...

Entschuldigung. Ich hatte auch Eheverbot gehabt vorher. Ich hatte einen Freund, war verlobt und durfte nicht heiraten. Verboten. Von Rudolf Hess hab ich ein Schreiben bekommen. Erst musste ich mich fotografieren lassen von der Seite, von vorne, im Badeanzug...

Im Badeanzug?

Ja. Und die Bilder habe ich dann einschicken müssen. Ich [indecipherable] schon übersetzen. Dolmetscher ist jetzt wie ich.

Gut Dolmetscher gibt.

Und da habe ich Eheverbot bekommen. Hab abgelehnt bekommen.

Abgelehnt? Aber später haben sie doch...

I willl try...

Er Mischling, ich Mischling.

The other friend, the third friend was...

[entire passage not understandable]

Arier heiraten. Aber mit eine andere Mischling...

Eben. Er war Soldat, er war Soldat. Dann ist er gerufen worden. Ob das stimmt, dass er mit einer Jüdin verkehrt. Sagte er: Meine Braut ist Mischling. Und dann musste man auseinander. Haben viel durchgemacht.

Es war ein Druck, ein Druck von oben. From up her it was...

She was engaged to a soldier who was [indecipherable]. She was first engaged (verlobt). Zu einem Soldat?

Ja.

To a soldier. And they asked who the bride was and he said he is going to marry a Jewish girl. No, she is a Mischling. And they refused that. She received a letter from Rudolf Hess. Ein Schreibung?

Ja, ja.

[indecipherable]. And she had to go and have a picture taken in a bathing suit. And then she was...

Sie haben ein Schreiben bekommen, Sie können nicht heiraten?

Darf nicht heiraten.

Wissen Sie, was aus dem Soldat geworden ist?

Er hat dann geheiratet eine arische Frau.

So this soldier had to break up with her and he married another woman.

Wir haben sehr viel durchgemacht. Sehr vieles.

They went through a lot.

In der Nazizeit und nach dem Krieg.

Und nun? And now?

Naja, was ist jetzt? Muss man auch wieder Angst bekommen.

Och, die Nazi-Partei kommt ja schon wieder, die NPD.

Ja, ja, wir haben gelesen, dass die...

Die Wahl ist unmöglich. Da nehme ich mir Tabletten ein, ich will das nicht mehr mitmachen. Unmöglich.

Warum?

The American look. Adolf Hitler will not [indéchiffrable].

Ich würde gerne auswandern, weg von Deutschland.

Jetzt noch?

Jetzt würde ich auch noch weggehen.

Jetzt, wie alt bist du. Nach Israel?

Egal. Nach Israel möchte ich nicht. Ist mir zu heiß.

Aja. We go to America.

Ja.

[laughter]

Und die NPD ist drinne.

Warum wählen diese...

Junge Leute. Die wissen doch gar nicht, was gewesen ist, die haben gar keine Ahnung. Die wissen ja nicht. Die CDU ist nichts, die SPD wissen ma nicht. Die Jugend wählt die NPD. Was soll das?

Sie wollen einen neuen Führer haben?

Scheinbar, einen neuen Hitler.

In der deutschen Mentalität ist es eingewurzelt: Einer sagt: Du machst. Und die anderen sagen: Jawohl!

Das ist die deutsche Natur?

Ja, die deutsche Mentalität. Denken, nono, too heavy.

Die kleine Kinder schon: Du bist Jude und es bleibt die Generation, es bleibt Zigeuner das selbe. Selbe. Wird nie anders werden. Ich bin froh, dass ich schon so alt bin. War kein schönes Leben.

What did she say?

She said that the small children still think in those terms about the Jews and the Zigeuner.

So die jungen Kinder, die jungen deutschen Kinder jetzt: Du bist Jude und du bist Zigeuner?

Heute nicht, nein.

Aber in alte Zeiten?

Ja.

Aber sie sagen, jetzt die Jungen, die wählen NPD, sie suchen eine neue Führer?

Naja, sie haben Nazi-Ideengut.

In Amerika haben wir nicht so schlimm...

Auch, auch, in Amerika auch.

Darum will meine Frau schreiben, diese Buch für junge Leute.

Ja.

Die Moral in diese Buch ist...

Frau schreibt für die jungen Leute die Moral.

Die Moral von diese Buch ist...

Diese Buch für die Kinder.

...dass ein Hitler, ein Führer, verspricht so viel mit Unterdrücken nicht nur Juden, nicht nur Zigeuner, sondern alle werden ähnlich unterdrückt.

Alles wird unterdrückt. Wie über alle das selbe.

Ja, es fangt an mit große Verspreche und große [indecipherable] und ich...

Wird nur versprochen und nicht gehalten. Alles anders.

Und später kommt...

Alles anders.

Vor der Wahl wird viel versprochen, nach der Wahl wird nichts gehalten.

Nach kucken wir mal nach Amerika, wo der jetzt abegwählt worden ist.

Reagon?

Nicht Reagon, der Nachfolger ist jetzt Bush und der wurde...

Aso, we have read in the paper, in the newspaper of the affairs of Mister Tower.

John Tower.

Ja, das hab ich mitkriegt.

We think a German man can make what he will.

Aber...

I don't know: If I think right I think so. The new president wanted to do something and the Nazis said No, not with us.

Aber ich finde... Warum spricht man dann über private Sachen in der Öffentlichkeit?

Hartmund Teuber wants to know how the Gauleiters for the deaf were chosen?

Können Sie mir übersetzen?

Give it to me in English.

I just said. The Teubers want to know...

But what "Gauleiter", what do you mean?

Gauleiter.

Oh, Gauleiter for the deaf.

For the deaf.

Wieso haben Sie... es gab in die Nazi-Zeiten Leiter, die gehörlos [indecipherable]. A leader what of the Nazi?

The Nazi deaf.

Es gab eine Nazigesellschaft für die Gehörlosen und es gab Leiter...

In der Nazizeit gab es kaum was.

Moment mal, doch doch.

Gib mir mal die Frage!

Ein Leiter für Gehörlose. Wer war das noch?

[indecipherable]. They are dead, they are dead know.

How were they chosen?

There have been Gehörlosen-Gauleiter, das Wort haben Sie doch gesagt gerade. You have said the word Gauleiter. The German deaf had an organization and now today it's the same, in the Nazi time the organisation were brought into one pot and it was namend "Reichsbund der Gehörlosen" - REDEGE. Do you know this word?

Ja, wir haben das gesehen in [indecipherable]. Es war geschrieben über REDEGE. Reichs...

Haben sie das Buch gelesen: "Klagende Hände" von Dr. Bisolt?

There it is written. This is true. There had been a Gauleiter. [indecipherable]. His name was Albrechts. I did not know him. I have nothing with him.

But the question is how was he chosen?

Die Frage ist, dieser Albrechts, wie hat man ausgesucht? Wer hat ihn in diese Stelle?

Den Gauleiter gewählt. Mit einer großen Klappe: Für Adolf Hitler, für Adolf Hitler! Wir mussten zusammenkommen und das waren die Nazi-überzeugten Gehörlosen, es gab auch überzeugte Nazis bei den Gehörlosen. Viele mit großer Klappe wurden dann auf Anordnung von irgendeiner hohen Nazistelle Gauleiter.

So he said there were Nazi believers among [indecipherable] hearing. And he was appointed by the Nazi officials. [indecipherable].

My brother perhaps can tell you if you ever visit him some points. He was member in the deaf club. And there are deaf Nazis who said to the Chef of the club: He is a Jew. And the Chef said: No, he is not a Jew, he was a good friend to my brother. And he took care to him. And my brother could stay a member. But he did not like to go there. He was also afraid. He was calm and went not to the Verein...

Verein - association.

He went not to the deaf society. We stayed at home. We did from lot of deaf friends into nach Rangsdorf. They visited us. We stayed home. It was a time where we had been calm. We were calm, still, unauffällig, wir haben uns nicht bewegt. Wir waren zurückhaltend.

As a Mischling could you go to the movies or to the library?

Als Mischling konnten sich zu Kino oder Bibliothek gehen?

Mischlinge, ob Mischlinge ins Kino, in die Öffentlichkeit...

Jaja...

The Differenz was we lived in a little village. There it's better not to go to the Kino. When we went to Berlin and I was every day in Berlin my working job was in Berlin and I was to go to Kino. I went in Berlin to Kino. And later when the war was longer and longer all this fell down. Everyone was happy to go home. Alarm, Bomben, our jobs were not beautiful.

Time is running out...