

Right. They were trying to figure out-- they were trying to get as many German speakers that had experienced in OSS to commit to stay at least for a while in Germany after the war. So I was recruited actually by Dick Helms--

Oh, my old boss.

And Frank [PERSONAL NAME]-- around Christmas of '45 in Paris.

And what had you been doing at that time? So Christmas of '45 in Paris you're recruited--

Well, I was actually at the Seventh Army, at that time stationed in Saverne in Alsace-- it was about the time of the Bulge-- recruiting German POWs and sending them into Germany as spies.

A-ha. This was in '44, then.

'44, yeah. Christmas was, you know. I got involved. I was actually not in the intelligence until the invasion of Southern France. I went into the-- I was a special funds officer with OSS. My responsibility was getting enemy currency in places like Beirut, and Lisbon, and wherever in order to supply the resistance groups and the spy networks. And I went into Southern France, actually, as a special France officer with the Seventh Army detachment of OSS.

But suddenly, everybody spoke French, but nobody spoke German. [LAUGHS] So they say, Peter, you'd better change jobs. [LAUGHS]

So at that time you were not yet in the OSS.

No, I was in the-- yes. I was an officer in special funds.

A-ha. So when did Dick Helms recruit you?

What?

Dick Helms recruited you in '44 or '45.

No, no, no. He recruited me for the German [CROSS TALK].

I see.

We were both in OSS. I mean, he had transferred as an interrogator in the Navy. He interrogated captured U-boat personnel. And he hadn't been noticed, probably even shorter than I had been.

So no, I was recruited for the OSS in '43 in probably March, April, as recruited actually in order to be sent into the Pyrenees to work with a resistance group, because I had lived in the Pyrenees before I left France in '41.

Yeah. And you had obviously fluent--

I knew the area.

--fluent French, fluent German.

I was fluent in French. I knew the area in the Pyrenees. I knew how to deal with the natives. And I was recruited out of the Army by OSS in April of '43, and the mission I was supposed to be on, I was never sent. Either the Germans got to the resistance group, or whatever. I don't know what happened. And they didn't know what to do with me.

And for a while, I was a confidential messenger between the different buildings in OSS. But I went to the personnel

office, and I said, look, they had recruited me out of the ESDP program at the University of Wisconsin. I said, you're either going to send me back to the University of Wisconsin. They sent me overseas to fight the war. [LAUGHS] I'm not going to spend the war in Washington delivering confidential--

Right. So you had gone. When did you join the Army? When were you--

I volunteered the day after Pearl Harbor. I'd been in the country only nine months.

Oh, really.

Yeah. Look, to go back a minute, you see, I graduated from high school in England in '39. My parents, in the meantime, had moved to France. My father took over the family company in Bordeaux. So I was in France on summer holiday intending to go back to England in September of '39.

The war broke out. The Brits renewed my visa. I had a German passport, after all, with the largest "J" in it. The Brits renewed my passport. And the French wouldn't give me an exit permit. So ultimately, the French interned me as an enemy alien.

This was after they interned you in--

They tried to intern me when the war broke out in September of '39. But we had some very good contacts, so my father and I were able to not be interned. It's not whom you know-- it's not what you know-- whom you know.

We were not interned until the German offensive through Holland and Belgium.

So, '40.

And then they no longer gave it any special consideration. And we were interned for-- what? A month and a half, two months.

But by the French.

By the French, yes. And we interned with good Nazis and everything else. And I went to see the commandant of the-- I mean, we were well treated-- not well fed, but well treated. And I went to see the commandant about two days before the Germans overran the camp.

And I said, you've got guys here who are going to be very glad when the Germans come. But if we're here when the Germans come, we have nothing to laugh about. And he gave us-- he released us and gave us a permit to travel anywhere in France.

So we ran through and went to the Pyrenees. And I-- my father, and mother, and sister, and I survived in the Pyrenees until March, April of '40, '41. And then got an American visa and came to the States.

So you were on the Spanish side of the border at that point?

No, no, we're in Vichy France.

You were in Vichy France, right?

Yeah. And interestingly-- now, my father had been sentenced to five years of hard labor for leaving Germany illegally. And we were always afraid that he was going to get caught because the Germans, in the armistice agreement, specified that any German national they could identify and ask for, the French would turn over. But fortunately, they were interested in political people, not criminals-- common criminals like my father. [LAUGHS]

Sorry, what year were you born?

'22. Yeah, a vintage year. [LAUGHTER]

I was just going to ask you a question, because I was in Iran for two years when Richard Helms was the ambassador in Iran back in the '70s. In fact, he had only been here just before I got there. And I met him, of course, several times, and of course, his wife, Cynthia.

And it was interesting to me, when you, in 1999, you were all at that conference, Burton Gerber, he knew me. And he told me, he said we were together in Iran. But I don't remember him.

You don't remember?

I didn't recognize him. He looked familiar, but I couldn't-- and when he came, he said, yeah, Mike, we were together in Tehran. And I went, I don't remember that. My wife said, yeah. I just didn't remember.

Well, Dick and I were very close friend. I did work for him in the CIA, et cetera.

So you left France in '41 before Pearl Harbor, or-- yes--

Obviously, yes.

Yes, obviously, yes. [LAUGHTER]

I left France before-- in April. We were trying to get out of France. I mean, there were-- basically it was impossible to get to the United States. But I had a aunt who was a close friend to a man named Ben Cohen, who was on Roosevelt's brain trust. So we got special visas. We're very lucky.

We got out in April of '41, and I arrived here. Got myself a job. And then, after Pearl Harbor, I volunteered for the Army. And they took about nine months to call me up. I guess they wanted to be sure I wasn't a spy.

Right, right, right.

I'd only been in the country for six month.

Right. And then, did you serve on the-- did you go the--

They put me into the Medi Corps, in the Medi Corps. And I was a medic. I ended up running a admissions office in a General Hospital in Brigham City, Utah. And then I was recruited for the Army Special Training Program, which you may or may know something about. It was a program whereby the people who had a high IQ were tested in order to be sent to university and learn the skills they were short of, which was medicine, engineering, civil administration, et cetera. And I was recruited for that. And I was to be sent to the University of Wisconsin. And that is when I was recruited by OSS.

Oh, I see. So that gets you up to '43, when you're recruited by the--

I recruited in '43, yes. Mm-hmm.

But you actually started at University of Wisconsin, and then recruited.

Well, I never did. I was actually-- [LAUGHS] I was actually at the University of Utah, because it was between the scholastic year. So they sent me to the University of Utah in order to sit in on some courses. So I was supposed to go to Wisconsin when the-- when whatever was registered for started. And I was recruited actually in Utah.

Yeah. Right.

Very beautiful. Beautiful girls and everything else.

[LAUGHTER]

That's what my son said. He used to take refresher courses at Brigham Young for language.

Yeah, I was there. I was at Brigham Young.

And he used to say--

Beautiful.

--he liked it. There was no smoking in most of the places, and no alcohol. But they had beautiful girls--

No alcohol. No smoking. [LAUGHTER] But gorgeous girls. Gorgeous girls.

But you took a girl out to dinner, and you brought her home, and the father wanted to know your intentions.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, after one dinner, right? Yes, yes, yes, yeah. Yes. And will you have 17 children, right? [LAUGHTER]
Yeah. That's funny.

And then I was recruited. Actually, I was first sent to a training camp. And that's when the mission was scrapped. And I was taken back to Washington and put on a-- they gave me an allowance to get an apartment.

And after about a month and a half of--

This is in Washington.

--in Washington of-- taking the mail from the temporary buildings up the hill to the Naval-- former Naval Hospital, I went to the personnel office, and I said, you're either can send me back to the Army Specialized Training Program, or you're going to send me overseas.

So they sent me as a finance clerk, as a special funds clerk. The special funds had nothing to do with paying the troops, et cetera. They were entirely concerned with getting the currency, including gold coins, to supply agents. And I was then, as a staff sergeant, which I had already had been in the Medical Corps, to Algiers. And I was shortly thereafter, I was commissioned. And I worked getting foreign currency and supplying our missions.

And where are you based in?

In Algiers.

In Algiers.

Lovely place.

Speaking of that, Vernon Walters, was he with you at that time? Vernon Walters?

Yeah.

Yeah, that's what I thought. Because he mentioned that he, of course, he was in that-- the landings and whatnot when they went into Morocco. And I guess he'd been involved.

He was in on that. Yeah.

Right, right.

Is he still alive?

No, he died in '99, I think. Yeah.

Really?

No, I'll take it back. He was a little later. His-- Dick Helms's memoir, *Look Over My Shoulder*, was published, and his was shortly in that same time period.

So it was about 10 years ago.

Yeah.

And so how long were you in Algiers, then?

I was there from September of '43 until early July '44. And I actually was in charge of a very interesting operation. When the Germans left North Africa, they had an enormous amount of French francs. And before they embarked at Cape Bon in Tunis, they distributed these French francs to Tunisians. And we knew that, but we didn't know where they were. | we needed them very badly because the goddamn French wanted us-- wanted us to pay 50-- wanted us to pay \$1 for 50 francs, and on the black market you get 500 for \$1.

So I was sent to Algiers, to Tunis. The American vice consul in Tunis, L. Pitman Springs-- I'll never forget his name-- was sent on vacation to Lisbon. And I was the acting vice president. And I took over [CROSS TALK].

As a vice consul.

Vice consul. I took over his house, I took over his servants, and I took over his car, I took over his driver.

And I took over his contact, a man by the name of Max, who was a Maltese Jew who ran a bar called Shmutz on the main drag in Tunis.

Max, his name.

Max, yeah.

He was a Maltese Jew, you say?

Yeah, a Maltese Jew, yes. And he devised a program of getting the word around that somebody will be in the synagogue willing to buy French francs for gold. And if you get there between 6 and 9 o'clock on that and that date, you'll be there to do that.

So I installed myself in the synagogue. Had a lot of little bags with gold coins. The first guy who came, came with a orange crate. I said, how many French francs do you have in here? And he said, yeah, I have 50,000. I said, show it to me. So he opened it up. It was totally empty. Totally empty.

I said, why? He said, oh, we were convinced this was a trap. You see, it was illegal for them to have French francs.

But they were, at the same time, getting it from the Germans, right, at this point?

They got them from the Germans, but they-- it was supposed to turn them over to the French.

I see.

You see, the currency in Tunis were Tunisian francs.

Right. Oh, I see.

And the French francs were totally useless to them.

Mm-hmm. But the Germans were just distributing them just to get rid of them.

Yeah, yeah. Well, they told it will come back, and you know. [LAUGHS]

Oh, I see. That they were supposedly hide them for them or something.

And they kept them, because they said sooner or later, if the Germans are going to lose the war, those French banks are going to be currency, which was perfectly true.

Right, right.

So I ended up actually going from village to village with the introduction from Max through his contacts, and gathering ultimately something like 50 million francs.

Which was what in those days, theoretically?

Who knows? We needed them. We needed them, and we got them at a good price.

Yeah. For gold, right.

Yeah. And my wife still asks me from time to time, why didn't you keep any of--

Yeah, right, right, right, right. [LAUGHTER]

Well, so we ended up-- I ended up with a lot of French friends, but I also ended up with the seller of cognac and scotch. That was imported at the same time. And it was extremely useful, and it was my first really clandestine experience of operating. I mean, the things we did in Lisbon and in Beirut were on the money exchange, in the money exchanges. You put them through the money exchanges.

And so you left North Africa. And then where--

I then was assigned to go into Southern France as a special funds officer.

This is before D-Day or--

No, this was after D-Day. I tried to convince them I should go in before D-Day. I wanted to be a hero. But they didn't permit it. [LAUGHS] When you're young, you're very foolish.

I went in on D plus 1. I came in on a communications Navy ship. A more luxurious way to do an invasion I cannot think of. [LAUGHS]

And that invasion was the easiest of the entire war. The Germans didn't expect us. We lost, I think, 300 men, but the Germans were lucky in hitting a landing craft. But otherwise, we had no problems.

You came ashore where? In?

In Saint-Tropez.

Saint-Tropez. That's not bad. [LAUGHTER]

Well, the invasion was between Saint-Tropez and Saint-Raphael. And the weather was beautiful. The girls were beautiful.

Yeah. That's always true in Saint-Tropez.

Yeah, yeah. And then we went up the Rhone. And the Air Force destroyed the 11th German Armored Division. And we had a free van to Lyon. It was hard enough to keep up with the fleeing Germans.

And at that stage, I was more involved in collecting former agents, and debriefing them, and getting money back, and what have you. I was involved in debriefing them on what they had done, et cetera, because I was both a fluent French and German speaker.

And then about, I would say, about September. This was middle of August. By about middle of September we had almost gotten into Alsace. And that's when Henry Hyde, who was in charge of FI, came to see me.

And he said, Peter, you've got a perfectly good sergeant who can run your business. You're going to be recruiting German PWs and help train them. And I did. And I learned the business as an apprentice.

Well, you were in on the ground floor, that's for sure.

Hmm?

You were in on the ground floor, that's for sure.

Yeah.

Yeah, yeah.

And I was involved in 32 missions. We lost very few of them, some of them through our own foolishness, some of them through German triangulation. But we got some very good intelligence.

32 missions behind German lines?

Yeah, yeah. Some of them were tourist missions, people we send in to work their way back through the lines. Some of them were people we sent in as individual operators with a Joan and Eleanor, two-way voice communications where they're playing at certain times of the day and night.

And these were Germans who had been captured? These were German POWs, or--

It was 90% with Germans. We had a White Russian whom we had used before in France. And we had a couple of French women who worked their way into their good graces because they had collaborated with the Germans.

But by and large, they were German PWs. And some of them were extremely highly motivated. They wanted to do something to stop the killing, to stop the war. And they were very good at it. They learned the-- they learned order of battle identification. They learned all kinds of things. We were very, very lucky.

And it was fun. I mean, we worked hard. We got results. And some of us who weren't unlucky did not step on shmutz [LAUGHS]

Now at what point were you conscious was there talk of getting Nazi war criminals arrests? Were you at all involved or-

-

When the war ended, I ended up at the last head of the Seventh Army OSS detachment. At that time, I was a captain.

So where was that?

In Heidelberg.

And you were head of the detachment there?

Yes, which consisted probably of three people. [LAUGHS] Maybe four. And the OSS headquarters was in the champagne factory, in Wiesbaden, in the Henkell champagne factory.

And our mission was to find high Nazi officials, a member of the security service, of the SD, high SS officers, et cetera.

We worked with the CIC and with the German authorities at that time, the German police, on that. Don't ask me whom we called or what we called. I mean, I have no recall.

But was there a general sense that this is a time to settle those scores, or what was the mood like?

Well, I tell you. The extraordinary thing was that some people expected the Germans to have a-- to have resistance groups available and what have you. I never believed that. I never believed that.

As a matter of fact, when we had that conference in London in December of '44, and the entire subject of the conference was to weed out in Bavaria and Austria where the Germans were going to make their last stand. And I was a little captain. And there were colonels and generals in the conference. And I said, I don't believe the Germans are going to do anything once they lose the war.

It's not like the First World War. It's absolutely no doubt that they've totally lost the war, and they are going to be conscious of all the horrible things they've done, and they're going to be hiding, but they're not going to be trying to make life difficult to us.

What was this conference? This was an OSS conference?

This was a conference of-- I don't know. It was a conference to deal with the German occupation. And it had the Army. It had the Brits in it. It had probably the French in it.

I was sent there by OSS. I have no recall who else. There were some pretty fancy, fancy people there.

And what year? This was in--

It was December '44. December '44, yeah.

When we were-- started really, really seriously thinking about the end of the-- the after-war period.

Right. Right, right, right. So your feeling all along was that the--

My feeling was that the German-- the Germans do not lend themselves to individual fighting. As a group, yes, but--

And what were your own feelings about the issue of finding those who were guilty of the worst atrocities? Did you--

You know, I-- it's a horrible thing to say, but I really didn't care much. I really didn't care much. It was always my philosophy that the criminals ought to be shot, and then we should forget about the whole thing.

I believe that those people who were really bad should be gotten rid of, and everybody else was weak and what have you. Let's look forward and let's not look back. Because otherwise, we'll never end doing this. Be never-ending misery on both sides.

Well, I think you are correct--

Help yourself to some cheese. I mean, I especially put it out for you.

Oh, well, thank you.

[LAUGHS]

Let's just see. This looks like a good-- is this cheddar, by chance?

It's a Manchego, I think. It's one of those cheddar-like cheese. And if you want to, you have a plate.

Here we go.

And here's a knife. Would you like a plate here?

Yeah, absolutely. Yes, I mean, yeah, I think so.

I have a Greek wife, and--

Ah, she's Greek.

And in Greece you never serve anybody alcohol without something to eat.

My youngest son lives in Munich. His name is Peter. And his wife's name is Constantina. That should tell you something. She's Greek.

They make very good wives. Yes, yes, very good wives.

I'd like to have that.

So your feeling was, get, as in Nuremberg, get the big guys and move on.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And did you ever reconsider that, or do you pretty much all-- oh, that was your whole attitude. Yeah.

And I really was-- I never was involved that much in catching people. I was very much involved in denying people to the Russians, ultimately in Berlin. Protecting them and getting them out of Berlin.

And did that include ex-Nazis?

It must have included Nazis, but not-- but these they weren't-- they were scientists and technicians. And they were not involved in any of the Nazi stuff. They may have-- were in the industrial sense.

May I ask you-- this is a good question-- my wife works at Siemens right now.

I beg your pardon?

My wife works at Siemens right now. But her father worked for Siemens. And I was asking you about that business in London. And in 1944, my uncle was working out of London. But right in '45, in May, they sent him into Siemensstadt, at the Wernerwerk, and he became good friends with the chief of research at Wernerwerk. He worked at Bell Labs, recall. And interestingly, that guy ended up being my wife's father's boss. And that's probably somebody you might have had contact with, because he apparently established a lot of friendship with Americans.

So you came to Berlin then in-- not till '48, or--

Nope. I was assigned to Berlin on the 1st of October 1945. We had a situation in Berlin. Let me go back a minute.

When we planned post-war, OSS post-war, the plan called for having small, semi-clandestine units in Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Heidelberg, Kassel, Munich, et cetera. These were all called by men's first names. And there was a unit called the Peter unit in Berlin, which is run by a man by the name of Colonel Dups-- D-U-P-S. These units contained about, in the major cities, about six to eight intelligence officers, a couple of reporting people, some support people, a couple of coat clerks, et cetera, et cetera.

Parallel to that, you had a more or less overt OSS presence. They dealt with the Army, with state, with the high commission, and what have you.

In Berlin, there were two units. There was the headquarters with Allen Dulles and Dick Helms, quite overtly identified as OSS. And there were the Peter unit run by Colonel Dups-- Major Colonel, I think it may have been, Major Dups, with about 15 people all told. And that was not in the same place at the other-- at the other unit. And that unit became largely involved in black market.

So in the middle of September of 1945, Dick Helms asked me to take over that unit and clean it up. So I was-- Major Dups was kicked out before I got there, because it would have been embarrassing. But then I was sent in to, A, clean it up, and B, to make it a operating unit, which I did.

I gave five officers the alternative of either being court-martialed or going home. [LAUGHS] Guess what they picked. And we got replacements, and we started collecting intelligence.

And so this is where you dealt, for instance, with the scientists in protecting some of the-- what were seen as assets.

Two missions. Identify highly qualified technicians and scientists, make sure that they have somewhere to live securely, make sure they don't get taken away by the Russians.

But we still had a brief of finding, to the extent we could, members of the RSHA, Reichssicherheitshauptamt, what have you. But we never found anybody. [LAUGHTER]

I mean, the TIT was much, much better qualified. We may have found some. I don't know, because I had a deputy with X-2 who dealt with the police. And we may well have been involved in that.

You don't remember any case.

Hmm?

You don't remember any case. [INAUDIBLE]

You don't remember every case.

Right, of course not. Thank you.

Thank you.

Do you want to have one.

I should hold off. I'm driving. You're the designated driver, yeah?

Yeah, yes.

And then we very quickly, by December '45, got involved in-- well, in December '45, Allen Dulles went back home. Dick Helms went back home. And they merged the overt and the covert unit. And I moved into FÃ¶hrehweg, where the overt unit was. And we built up a rather large base.

And this is when we started to get an enormous amount of information-- It was through the former contacts of Allen Dulles-- about the political shenanigans of the Russians in the East-- in East Germany. And we started reporting on the political and economic picture in East Germany.

Yeah. So how long were you in Berlin, then, in total, how long?

'52.

Till '52. Wow.

Where were you located in Berlin?

FÃ¶hrehweg.

FÃ¶hrehweg.

About two blocks from police headquarters.

Yes. Yeah.

At first, was the acting head of that unit. And then there were two other people who were the head of that unit. And I was a deputy. The first head was a man by the name of Durand-- D-U-R-A-N-D. Dana Durand.

What was his first name? I'm sorry.

Hmm?

What was his first name?

Dana. Dana. D-A-N-A. Durand. Slightly crazy. [LAUGHTER] He tried to commit suicide.

Hmm. Wow.

I think in order to get sympathy. He had a very messy personal life. Between alcohol and women, it can get very complicated.

There was a fellow-- he just died this past year-- who had worked for Clay in that period. And then, later on, he was a-- after a number of years-- he must have overlapped with you-- named Teddy Mohr-- M-O-H-R.

Yeah, yeah.

Did you know Teddy?

Yeah, yeah.

Yeah, he just died about a year ago, and he was quite interesting to talk with.

And then the man who took over from him was a man by the name of Hugh Cunningham-- H-U-G-H Cunningham. A very nice, bright, and capable man who was, I think half Indian.

Really?

A Rhodes scholar.

Half American Indian.

Yeah, yeah. [LAUGHS] So he claims. Came from Oklahoma.

Well, that's possible.

He was a professor at Harvard. An extraordinary man. Extraordinary man. We had a very good career in the CIA afterwards.

And then I took over the unit in '49.

Now is that still OSS or was that CIA by that time?

That was by-- it was a long, long time already the CIA.

Yeah, because the CIA was in '47--

We went from OSS to SSU to CIG. And we who worked there were not conscious that there was-- that Daddy had changed. But I went back to Washington sometime in '46, at which time Colonel Quinn was the head of what I think was called CIG. Colonel Quinn, who had been the G2 at the Seventh Army, and later on became, I think, the commanding general of the Seventh Army. He was the acting head of CIG, one of the, and I went to see him, and I knew him very well from the war.

And I said, Bill, we need a mission. We can't operate without a definite mission. And at that time, we belonged to the Army, and General Sibert, who was a G2, gave us the mission to find to the-- to define and find the order of battle of the Russians, and also, obviously, to find out what they're doing politically and economically in the East zone. And that's what we ended up doing from then on.

Right. And so by that time, really, the mission of finding high-level Nazi officials had totally dropped off the map.

It had totally dropped off. But interestingly enough, the hardest thing in this business is to remember what happened when. You know what happened, but you can't relate it often in the time frame.

I remember recruiting a woman whose husband had been sent to Russia, a nuclear scientist.

A German woman.

A German nuclear scientist with the von Ardennen, von Ardennen, the head of the German nuclear project was a man by the name of Ardennen-- A-R-D-E-N-N-E-N, von Ardennen, a very-- an outstanding scientist who was taken to Russia by the Russians, set up a lab, and took with him a whole bunch of scientists.

They all came back to Germany, you know, ultimately. They all came back to Germany. They were extremely well

treated.

And one of those scientists was married to a woman who lived in Berlin, or East Berlin. And about two years after that, like '47, '48, the Russians approached her and said, you can join your husband in Russia, which indeed she did. And I worked with her to try to evolve a code for certain things, and addresses, et cetera.

So she went, and you were-- she was working for you.

Yeah, we communicated for a while. Very, very basic. But at that stage, it was also that the intelligence we were looking for, you could answer very quickly, are they doing that? Are they doing that?

But they all came back. They all came back. They all had a good experience. They were well treated.

When did they come back?

They came back in late-- probably late '40s.

As a matter of fact, I saw a German the other day who was related to von Ardennen, and told me he was-- he had been in contact with him after he got back. Who the hell was that? I see too many people. [LAUGHS]

Was there anybody in your unit, for instance, who was interested particularly, you felt was sort more interested in settling scores with the Nazis?

I don't think so.

No, no.

I don't think so. I think we had a number of former Germans. I mean, my head scientific intelligence officer was a man with the name Hoxter, H-O-X-T-E-R, who had been a professor in Frankfurt. He was a socialist. He was badly beaten up by the Nazis.

But none of these people really had a-- sort of a burning desire to even out scores.

So he had in-- he had been in exile, and then come back--

Yeah.

Yeah, yeah.

Yeah, and he joined [GERMAN], and was used exactly in what-- his field. Takes a scientist to brief a scientist.

Mm-hmm. So he was a scientist himself, and from Heidelberg University, you said?

No, Frankfurt.

Frankfurt University.

I think, actually, he was a mathematician. But I--

And he had been beaten by the Nazis?

Yeah, but many years before.

Yeah.

I'm sure he was a hothead as a young man.

Yes, yes, yeah. And his name was Hoxter.

Yeah.

Do you remember his first name?

H-O-X-T-E-R.

H-O-X-T-E-R, right, but do you remember his first name?

Sig. S-I-Gs. Stands for Siegfried.

Yes, yeah, yeah.

Do you mind if I take a picture of the two of you doing that interview?

No, that was--

I'll tell you the really amusing story.

All right.

I wanted to promote Sig Hoxter, because they'd done an outstanding job.

You wanted to promote who? I'm sorry?

I wanted to promote him.

Oh, him. Hoxter. Yeah, yeah.

I wanted to promote him-- double promoted. And Washington came back and said, he's never been-- he's never supervised other people. So I sent a message to Dick Helms, and I said, if he had supervised other people, he wouldn't be as good an intelligence officer. And the promotion was approved.

He was a womanizer, he drank like a fish, but he knew his business.

Yes.

Yeah.

Well, in those days, particularly--

We all drank like fish.

Right. Yeah, why not come over here, if we're going to do this?

If you want to--

I don't-- I don't know if this is-- it's really a photo opportunity.

Well, I don't know. It's Mike's photo opportunity here.

This angle's better. Trying to keep that mic down.

Actually, you're better off this way, because you're against the light, otherwise.

Oh, it's the lamp in the back.

Do you want me to turn off this?

Yeah, maybe that would help.

Yeah, that might. This is kind of a little bit [SIGHS].

Yeah.

Got it?

You can take it up a little more.

You want to get just Peter here?

Yeah. Huh? Yeah, I would like to.

Yes, yeah. You have the way.

I'll try it from this angle.

And actually, while I'm doing that, why don't I sign your book, Peter?

Peter, I really appreciate you letting us come and visit.

Yes, invading here.

Well, it's such a celebration. Columbus.

That's right. Exactly, exactly.

Well, I found your story when I knew about it. And that's why we invited you, if you were able to, to come to Berlin, because I'm the vice-- I think I left my cards at home. I was going to leave you a card. I'll look.

Oh, yes. I'll pull mine out.

Yeah, I don't travel much anymore.

Yeah, it's understandable.

Yeah, I went to Greece last summer, which was very easy, because I went from here to Athens, and I stayed overnight at the airport. Then I went to an island with my three daughters and five grandchildren. We had a ball.

But I find travel is a little difficult.

Yeah, my dad is 92. He'll be 93 this coming year. And he's had similar issues. He has some trouble. He's fine otherwise, but travel is--

Yeah, I can't deal with large groups.

Right. Today is the 14th, right?

He was in chemical warfare. He was a lieutenant out in Edgewood Arsenal, so he-- but his brother, my Uncle Dan, he was working, like I said, with Bell Labs part of the war. So he had a lot to do with that in similar areas, especially in the technical side of things.

And so afterwards, did you stay on in the CIA, or did you--

I stayed on until '59. I went from being chief in Berlin. First, I took over the German desk in Washington. Then I became head of operations, Eastern Europe.

And then I was sent to Hong Kong. And I left. I resigned in Hong Kong. They asked me to serve another tour, and I said, I can't serve another tour because I will become an alcoholic. [LAUGHTER]

It's unbelievable the amount of drinking in places like that. And do you know--

Five years ago I didn't know.

Oh, you know I think this is probably mine.

We all drank a lot at this stage. It was more than--

And that was the era where everybody--

I think it's-- yes, it was an era where everybody drank like fish.

Well, when I started in journalism, it was the same thing. Absolutely the same thing.

And a lot of people could not cut back.

Right, right, right.

It's a drug. So I resigned because I did not approve of some of the things that were being done.

I was involved in Berlin when the agency sent people into the Ukraine to so-called resistance groups. At that time, I warned the agency that these resistance groups were created by the Russians in order, A, to flush out any opposition, and B, to eliminate any people that could supply opposition from the outside.

After that fiasco-- because we lost-- every man lost their lives-- we then went into Albania and did the same thing. And when I was in the Far East, we were doing it in China. And I said-- and we had a conference in Manila of station chiefs.

And I said to Dick Bissell, I said, Dick, we learn nothing. I said to you, I'm not-- I can't stay in an agency that is so impervious to people's lives. And Dick listened to me. He didn't argue.

The problem-- did you know Dick Bissell?

No, I didn't know him. I knew Richard Helms. I knew Burton Gerber.

He was a brilliant man, a really brilliant man. But we have a disease in America that somebody who does an extraordinary job one way is supposed to be able to do an extraordinary job in any other way.

I mean, he had never been in intelligence. He distrusted intelligence. He was entirely on the action side. He wrote a

remarkable-- a remarkable memoir in which he-- in which he admitted it, in which he said, had I listened to-- had I asked the counsel advice, I would not have done the many mistakes I made. And it takes a great man to admit--

To admit that.

--to themselves, yeah. It's a great tragedy. He would have been-- he would have been the director of Central Intelligence if he hadn't gotten involved with the Bay of Pigs.

He's the guy who thought-- thought up the plane. He's the guy who was behind it to get the photographic equipment to be able to monitor Russia, and see that we didn't have a ballistic gap. He was-- the man was brilliant. But he wasn't any good for that.

Well, I don't think that Richard Helms was necessarily treated very fairly in the '70s either.

I beg your pardon?

I said, I don't even think necessarily that Richard Helms was treated very fairly either.

No, he wasn't.

No. I mean, that was pretty shabby what they did.

Oh, yeah.

And you know, I just-- some of those things that make you cringe, because you know people did things out of a sense of loyalty and patriotism, and they were doing the right thing, and they couldn't tell people what they were doing.

I'll tell you a person I'm still irritated with, and that is Senator Patrick Leahy. And the reason is because of his trying to-- somebody once said that you never get between him and a camera. And that really irritated--

We will not discuss Colby, will we?

No, I don't want to discuss Colby. But that irritated me. That really irritated me.

No, it's the-- and of course, it's a different game now. I mean, they're different toys they play with.

Right, right, right. Quite different toys.

But human intelligence is still an essential element.

Yes. Yeah.

And the people who are best at it are the Russians. I mean, when you read what they did with the Brits, it's unbelievable.

Yes, yeah.

Unbelievable, both on the technical side and on the psychological side.

Yeah. That's true.

Yeah.

They've been at it a long time. And we have to realize, it is a long, long-range business.

Yeah. I'm concerned right now-- I don't know about the both of you. Andy spent enough time in the Soviet Union. And looking at the state of affairs right now in Russia, with the FSB, and Putin, I think, you can sometimes take a tiger and paint it, but the stripes are still there.

He was a very junior officer, you know.

Yes, yeah, yeah. He's a very junior officer.

I mean, they write about him all the time--

They make it sound like he was some big--

He was a very junior officer.

I think he was a-- he never made it higher than a major, maybe. I don't know.

Well, we've taken an awful lot of your time, but-- and I know you've got to drive [CROSS TALK].

Do you live here?

I live in Pelham, yes. Let me give you my coordinates.

I'm not sure if I have a copy.

And where I work in the city.

You work what?

I work here in the city. I'm in Pelham, just up the road. And-- all right. My home number 2 here.

Can I also get a your card, if you have one.

Yeah, you can get my card.

I want to--

It's not my card. It's a card that my daughter--

Thank you.

--dreamt up after I sold my last business. She said, Daddy you need a card.

Sure, sure.

No, not that one. The other one.

This one.

Yeah, I may have a card in there.

All right. And you have his card? Or-- sorry. Oh, sorry. I'm dumping your things here. Let me get them back here.

Junk in there. All kinds of junk.

Yeah.

And I hope I left it in there.

Oops. OK, let me-- here, I will.

I'll get it.

Here, I'll fold these things back in. That's everything, but I'll double check. I think these-- this is-- oops, sorry.

That's just where I'm pointing the camera.

Oh, god.

Sorry.

That's all right.

And this is yours.

Ah, thank you very much.

You've got them.

And Sichel Wine Works. So where is Sichel Wine Works now?

It doesn't exist.

It doesn't exist. So what was the last winery you were--

Well, actually, when my daughter left-- she was the marketing director of the Napa Valley Vintners Association. And she resigned in order to find a winery, to buy a winery. She figured out she can't do that and work at the same time.

Right, right.

She bought a winery. She bought a winery called-- let me see. A winery called Glen--

Uh-huh, Laurel Glen.

Laurel Glen.

Yes, I've even-- I've heard of that, yes. Yeah.

And in between, she incorporated a company called Sichel Wine Works, and did some consulting. You see?

Yeah, but you had a-- did you have a winery here in this country too?

I had a winery in Germany called H. Sichel Soehne, which I sold in 1995. I had a Chateau in Bordeaux called [FRENCH].

Uh-huh. In the Bordeaux.

Yeah, which I sold in 2006, the last wine I made. And I still do some consulting.

Yeah. Wonderful.

Some people foolish enough to pay me for advice.