

## **RG-90.047.0058**

### **Summary**

Peter Pollak, born 1926 in Vienna, Austria discusses his Jewish father Josef and his Christian mother Pauline, née Margasinski; having an older sister Susanne; being the center of attention in his family; living in a villa in a suburb of Vienna; his parents being over protective; not having many friends; his father working at a Polish owned textile company; his paternal grandmother being religious and having a strong Jewish identity; getting a Jewish identity because of her; being circumcised; going to synagogue; in 1938, being beat up in school 2-3 times, because of being Jewish; remembering the Nazi songs the bullies sang; hiding in the school bathroom from the Nazis; once on his way home, barely escaping a group who he felt would have beaten him to death; later in life, being attracted to violent situations, believing it was a defense mechanism; his grandmother putting a bucket of water in the bathroom every night, believing it would protect them if there was a gas attack; in 1938, his father and other Jews being rounded up and forced to load coal with their bare hands, onto a freight train close to their home, to humiliate them; bringing his father food by the trains; his father not coming home and being sent to Dachau; his father being released after three months because the Polish firm he had worked for presented a ticket to a South American country; his father never talking about his experiences in Dachau, except about being counted for hours; his mother being pressured to divorce her father, but refusing and still being able to keep her house and job; his mother arranging for the children to go to Sweden with a Kindertransport while his father was in Dachau; his paternal uncle who lived in Sweden and had contacts in the Jewish community helping; traveling by train with 10-15 children the same age; stopping in Berlin and going on a bus tour to see the Reichstag; remembering the soldiers and threatening atmosphere in Berlin; going by ferry to Sweden and seeing a smaller motor boat with Hitler-Jugend on the way; arriving to Stockholm on February 13, 1939; staying with a Jewish family, Gottfarb, on Floragatan; starting Swedish school, at Engelbrektsskolan, after two weeks; not understanding any Swedish; joining the Boy Scouts; going to high school at Samgymnasiet; his parents never going to South America because the ticket his father's employer had arranged was fake; his father arriving in Sweden in 1940, with the help of his brother; his mother leaving her house to her sister and joining them in Sweden; getting their house in Vienna back after the war; living on Lilla Essingen in Stockholm; studying at KTH, the Royal Institute of Technology, in Stockholm; now feeling it is his duty to tell the world about the Holocaust; feeling that none of the murderers were punished; feeling more Jewish than Christian, but not believing in God.