United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Eva Edmands
October 18, 1990
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PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Eva Edmands, conducted by Joan Ringelheim on October 18, 1990 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Washington, DC and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

EVA EDMANDS
October 18, 1990

A: ...spoiled childhood until the Anschluss.

Q: Tell us about the spoiled childhood.

A: Well, we had a very large apartment. My father was an avid book collector. We had over 10,000 first editions. Uh...My mother and I would frequently go on vacations, and my uncle had a cabin on the Danube. We would go there. We would go on ski vacations in the Austrian Alps. We made trips to my mother's home country of Hungary and things of that nature. It was just a...you know, I had all...I had all the things that a little girl my age could want.

Q: Tell me about...uh...school and your playmates.

A: I don't remember...I don't remember too much about...I have very hazy...hazy memories about that, but...uh...everything changed with the Anschluss.

Q: Why...why is that?

A: Uh...Even though I was only 8 years old at the time, I...I did notice there were, you know, the changes I saw. Men with arm bands, SI and SS going through the streets of Vienna and I would...and they told me that these were bad people. And then I noticed that they would single out especially well dressed women to...uh...do menial jobs, clean out lavatories and work on the streets. And then a law was passed that all Jewish children had to go to a special school, segregated school if you will, and...uh...and I noticed there was a total change of attitude in my classmates. All those kids who had been friends of mine suddenly turned against me and started calling me names, started calling me dirty Jew. And I was not unhappy to leave, but then events...uh...happened so quickly that I never did get a chance to...uh...go to a segregated school. And the other thing I noticed that the....you know, the words ...the yellow star, and the word J appearing on the window shops, you know, shopkeepers and various doors. But it was all...it was all very bewildering. I just knew that something really bad had happened.

Q: What about your parents in all this? Did you see a change in attitude at home?

A: Yes. I did. They suddenly became very worried, and there were a lot of family hush conferences behind closed doors. And then one day the Gestapo came to our...it was shortly after the Anschluss, the Gestapo came to our apartment and took my father away for questioning. And all I knew...I didn't really know what was happening but my mother just said, "Those bad men came and took daddy away," and she was crying. And my father was gone for 3 days and we had no idea where they had taken him to or whether we were ever going to see him again and then he finally did come back and he look rather bedraggled. And

then there was another hurried conference and with my grandparents who lived in the suburb of Vienna and some close friends, we decided that...or my parents decided we had to leave Vienna and that our only chance was to go to France and it was really a last minute decision and very hurriedly we decided to leave everything behind and just pack a couple suitcases. And I remember the one memory that I have is my mother telling me that I was to go to my room and just pick the few toys that I wanted to take with me and to be fast about it. And I remember that I was started piling up a whole pile of my favorite dolls and mother came and she said, "Oh, no. You can't take all this." And she picked two dolls, and she said, "You can take two dolls. Period." And I was crying, you know, didn't really...I felt it was terribly unfair to do this to me. And so we just...they just threw some clothes in suitcases and...uh...we went and said goodbye to my grandparents and...uh...that was the last time that I...I was to see them again. We took a train at night and...uh...went to...uh...Paris. I remember the only recollection I have the train was stopped at the border in Germany and there was a period of anxiety. I could see that my parents were extremely nervous, but everything went fine and we actually made it safely to Paris about...was about the end of 1938. And we were trying to start a new life. (Sigh) And, of course, it didn't work out this way. We...we got to Paris and...uh...my father was...succeeded in finding some work again as a journalist and rented a beautiful apartment. Uh...My mother...my grandfather on my mother's side had succeeded in going to...uh...England. So he had invited us to come over and we made a one-month's trip to England, visited him and we came back to...uh...Paris. I was enrolled in the school which was correspond about the 3rd grade. Didn't speak French at the time and I...I was just thrown into a classroom with the other children. It was sink or swim, but...uh...within a matter of months I picked up the language and felt quite comfortable and

Q: Slowly down if you would a little bit.

A: Sure.

Q: I would like to know what those few months in Paris were like for you as a child.

A: Well, at first there was the sheer wonderment. You know, it's Paris. It was an extremely exciting city for me. It's a beautiful city. And there was so many...so many things to do. And there were so many sights and sounds, and also the fact that I really did not know the language and the way I learned it is my parents would send me to the grocery store and they would say what I was to say because they know...knew a little bit of French. And I would repeat it and it felt strange to...you know, I was saying things I didn't really understand. Uh...But in school, everything seemed to be going alright. You know, there are a lot of memories that are not so distinct from that period so there are just little glimpses here, you know, like little cameos here and there that I remember. I...uh...did find one good friend in my age and we used to pal around and just walked around in the nearby woods and went to the zoo. You know, things that kids our...our age do. But...uh...that's about all I remember until....until the outbreak of the war. And...uh...then again, we...we started hearing rumors of impending war 1939. And...uh...we started hearing about air raids, and I remember that at school...you know, we were told we would all have to get gas masks. And so they lined us

up and they fitted us with gas masks and I thought it was just horrible, horrible thing. They gave us a big long, lead box which we carried a mask in and we were to carry them with us at all times. And...uh...the one thing I remember is just the suffocating, real disgusting smell of rubber that emanated and the fact that I had a feeling that I was choking. And then...uh...we had air raid drills and my father had cautioned me and said, "You know, if you hear a noise and noise like a siren...if it should happen in the middle of the night, don't be frightened. Just get dressed very quickly. It means we all have to go down to the cellar." And...uh...one night I actually did hear the noise, and I went to my dad's room and I said, "Daddy, is the noise where we have to go to the cellar." And he said, "Yes." And I said, "Okay." So we...we did go and there was a...there was an air raid and, you know, and we were just sitting there in the damp cave and everybody wearing a gas mask. It was really a sight out of science fiction almost, and one time there was an air raid while I was at school. And all my teacher all herded us into the air raid shelter and the bombs started dropping. We could hear them outside and we were terribly frightened. And when we came out, you know, we were wondering, you know, was...was the house going to be there? Were my parents still going to be there? It was a very....you know, it was a lot of anxiety. Uh...And then as the Germans were approaching, you know, the French wanted to deny access so they...they blew up...they were going to blow up some bridges, but they decided against it, but they blew up petroleum tanks and the personal recollection I have that on that day when they blew up the pet...petroleum tanks the town of Sevran which is just across the river ___ Paris. My mother and I had been out shopping and it started to rain and suddenly the rain became down was a black gooey kind of rain very, you know, like oil. And so what had happened apparently is that the oil from the tanks had mixed with rain so it was falling down, was almost pure oil and when we got...our clothes were just totally ruined and when we got to the apartment, the curtains were all black and everything. And they cautioned us not to drink the water. And just as we came in, I had drunk a glass of water and then the announcement came over the radio, "Don't drink the water." And I was just terribly frightened. I thought, "Oh, my God. I'm going to die." And the little girlfriend who happened to be visiting said to comfort me, "Oh, don't worry. You're not going to die right away. Just in a couple hours maybe." (Laughing) And...uh...then at that period when the Germans were very close, you know, there was an exodus that we couldn't...we couldn't leave. My father was drafted into the...uh...an arm of the...of the French army which was four foreign nationals. And first they sent him to a camp, a labor camp in Normandy, and again he was taken away. We didn't know where he went, whether he would come back and...uh...we...we took us...we finally got word of where he was held and they had put him into another place...uh...in the hospital called_____, and he was working there I...we found out as a cook. And it took us...my mother and me several weeks before we were allowed to visit. We would go there early in the morning. We would stand in line waiting to be let in with the other wives and children, and then they'd say, "Sorry. Come back tomorrow." And this was going on for several...several weeks and we finally got to see him. And he was actually working as a cook because as a Viennese, you know, they thought he could make some pastries. (Laughing) And he said he'd been fairly...fairly well treated, but then he was transferred again to another camp and we didn't know again for a long time where we had...he had gone. And then...uh...we got news that they had put him to do...uh...street work, and he was working

with...uh... you know, an ax and a shovel and he had gotten blood poisoning from the friction. You know, dirt had gotten into it and he was near death at that point and a...uh...one of his fellow...uh...workers just took a kitchen knife and opened the wound and drained it and saved his life, so they did discharge him and he came back to us looking, you know, very, very bad. And then he got word that he would be transferred to a...uh...a camp, work camp in...uh... somewhere in south of France. We...we didn't know where he was going to be and just remembered that one thing, he took me on his knees and he said, "How would you like your daddy to be a soldier?" And I...I said, "Well, does that mean you're going to have to go away?" And he said, "Yes," and I said...and I started to cry and I said, "Oh, Daddy. Please don't leave me with Mommy because Mommy is so nervous." (Laughing) And..but he did...he did go and...uh...I remember that after he left, the...we were still...we had a pretty nice apartment in a nice area of Paris, but things were...had turned really bad. And then the Germans actually, actually came in to the...to Paris and on the day...just on the day that they marched in, I had gone out shopping and a woman came running over to me and she stopped me and she said, "Honey, don't go any further because." German _____ which was on the main street. The Germans are on the _____, and please we have heard horror stories. You know, they would butcher children and rape women and so everybody was just terrified. So I ran back in and told my mother and I wouldn't go out unless...uh...my mother was with me and as soon as they came, we noticed that things got to be extremely bad. All the food disappeared and everything was rationed. We could only obtain things on the black market, but we had no money so we weren't able to buy anything. We had...winter came. We had no...no heat and things just went from...from bad to worse. And at...at that period, you know...uh...the...uh...you know, after the Armistice was signed and France was divided into two regions...uh...we were in the occupied region and my father, when he was in Southern France, was in what was still the free, the unoccupied zone. And he start...he wanted us to join him. At first, of course, when he went there we...we didn't know where he was, and we finally got word that very... The news...news was scarce because news was censored. You weren't allowed to write letters, so all you could get were preprinted cards. And on the cards, you had to fill out....you know, they had preprinted sets of statements and they would say I am in good health; sick or dead. And you have to check off what you had. And then it said, "I haven't heard from...and there was a blank for that, and...uh..something like, you know, I don't...I forget, but it was very sketchy and so you had to use your ingenuity to kind of convey the message, so I just maybe my father finally managed to tell us where he was in case that we should try to...to join him. And then we got word that he had managed to get a visa for all of us to the United States and he said, "Please, just do anything to get out of there." (Sigh) But as fate would have it, I came down with the measles. And I was very ill, and by the time I recovered the visas had lapsed and already, and we had lapse...lost our last chance to go to the United States. I always think, you know, something a trick of fate you know. The...the measles. And could have avoided the whole thing. So that...so that chance was lost and by that time there were no more passages to the United States. A friend...some very close friends of ours had actually left on the last boat and we had gotten reports that the Atlantic was mined and it was just, you know, too dangerous to even attempt it. And then the Gestapo paid us another visit in Paris. When they came...and they came asking for my father and my mother said, "Well, I'm sorry. I don't know." And he said, "Well, how come?" You

know, she said, "I don't know." And he said, "Well, do you have any letters from your husband?" And she said, "No." And he said, "What kind of wife doesn't keep letters from her husband?" And she said, "Well, I just didn't keep them." And then they wanted to know the whereabouts of...uh...friends of...of my father's. And...uh...my mother said she didn't know anything and so they pulled out a list and she said, "We...okay, you don't want to tell us. We'll tell you." And they started rattling off name on.... "We've never heard of him." And then they started searching the house, and they just removed everything from closets. They took drawers, overturned them, you know, just looking for any kind of document. Anything that would have been helpful to them. Then they started going through the bookcase and they start throwing down books and my mother knew that in one book, she had actually kept the names and addresses of friends of ours which we would have needed had we...you know, if we were able to get away. We had a...that was our way to contact them. And they stopped short of that one bookcase where that particular book was. They just gave us their search, and just stopped short of that one bookcase. So my mother kind of breathed a sigh of relief, and then they almost apologetically said, "Well, you know, we had orders. We had to do this." And at one point I remember...it's just...a little child recollection, one of the officer's dropped his cap and well brought up child that I was, I picked it up and I gave it to him. And he looked at me and he said, "You...that child doesn't look too bad. We saw a little girl next door was a really Juden Cop." And so they left, but my mother was trembling, you know, with rage, everything. And she yelled after them, "You dogs!" And then she said, "Oh, my God. What have I done?" you know. But fortunately, they didn't...they didn't hear her. And so at that point, she started making inquiries on how to get to the unoccupied zone, and we knew first of all you had to have a guide across because the border was heavily guarded between the two zones. And you had to have money to pay a guide which we didn't have. And so she tried to sell our household goods, but she was told by the Consiers that there was a law that Jewish people could not sell anything. So she couldn't do that, but she managed to somehow, you know, sell her wedding ring. And that gave us a little bit of money and then through a grapevine that was in operation at the time, she found out the name of a guide in...near the town of Bordeaux, and made arrangements for us to go there. So, again, we just...just threw a couple of things in suitcase, left all our furniture, everything behind and set out. And I am not really clear on how we...you know, it's a distance about several hundred miles from Paris to Bordeaux. I think that we rode trains and sometimes we walked, but I am really, you know, sure but we got there. But, however, we had to be in the town called Mondinotso, which near Bordo, at a certain date to meet our guide. But because things were rather haphazard, you know, in traveling and delays, we got there...we were several days late. And by the time we got there, the guide had already left on another assignment, and there was no one there to help us across. And..uh..the ...uh...I guess it was the family of the guide told us, "Well, the only thing you can do is try it on your own." And she said, "Wait until about 2 o'clock when the border is unguarded. Because at that time, the Germans are away having their beers and their having their siesta. So at that point, you could probably risk getting across." Now we spent sometime in that town, you know, wondering around and we had gotten there early in the morning and then we waited. We tried to lay low. We went...stopped in a cafe and there was some German soldiers there and we pretended to be tourists...French tourists. And one of them started a conversation with my mother and she

kind of you know, laughed it off. And...and then we headed for the border. And we saw was just barbed wire, and there was no one in sight. My mother lifted a piece of barbed wire and crawled across and I guess she threw her suitcases over. She had two little cases. And I was to follow her. And in the process, the little dress I was wearing got caught on one of the spikes of the barbed wire and I was impaled on the barbed wires. And...uh...then my mother realizing what happened, she looked back and she came and she gave my dress a sharp yank and I was...I was freed, and...uh...but then as soon as we got across, you know, it seemed to me that I was hearing voices. It was probably the wind in the trees but everything was so quiet, but I kept hearing voices saying, "You are arrested. You are arrested." So I was so...you know, wrought my imagine was so wrought up. And sure enough, a few feet...we had gone a few feet and we were arrested. And those were the French police which in many cases were much nice than, you know, any...anyone else. They're the local police there and they asked us what we were doing there and why we were there and we..my...you know, my mother just made up a story...uh...but it turned out that they were only looking for smugglers, and contraband, cigarettes, and that kind of stuff. And so they weren't really interested in us, and we didn't look like very threatening types. And so they let us go and we managed to get onto a train and finally go across into the free zone, and we joined my father in a...uh...in the _____, France. He was...uh...in the...in the work camp in the town of Longglad, and he and his other comrades had been put to work doing odd jobs, working in the kitchen, working on the road, working in the soap factory. And... uh...there were people there from all walks of life, all nationalities, and they were called...they were called Prestetiers which was their term for, you know, those type of...those type nationals. Uh...My father had found a little...an abandoned house for us in the nearby town of Kalvison, and so we headed there and found the house and it was really dilapidated. It was something straight out of the middle ages. It had a stone hearth, it kept laying down. It had stone floors, and it, you know, clearly hadn't been lived in for many, many years and the first thing we saw was a scorpion just standing from the ceiling. And... uh...when...you know, there was hardly any furniture. It was sort of a kind of Charles Adam's type of house. (Laughing) And when we went to bed that night, we heard strange noises upstairs and I was terribly frightened and looked like somebody was bowling. And my father went to investigate and there was all those rats up there rolling things around. (Laughing) And then, you know, we figured...uh...and then suddenly, when we started sleeping, we started itching. And so we looked and we had only candles and we looked and there was all those bed bugs that were in...inside the...the woodwork of the...of the bed frame and we spent most of the night killing bed bugs, but we survived. The only thing is that when it rained there... uh...and we in kind of a low lying area, the whole place flooded downstairs and we had to bail out. But at least, you know, we were safe. We were in a free zone. We weren't hunted anymore. We had a roof over our head and that's all that matters. And so I resumed the semi-normal activities. I was enrolled in a local school system there. I made a few friends. And we were, of course, heavily indoctrinated at the time. We were made to march on the country roads, singing songs to the glory of Marshall Petain. And I remember that they had a contest for Mother's Day in that school, and we were all to do something because at that point, the words...the slogan was motherhood and you know, the church and the family. And they were trying to encourage people to have a large family, so motherhood was very big. And they wanted us kids to...to knit something

or crochet, and I was never able to do anything with my hands, so I said that I would write...oh, the heck with it, I'll write a poem for Mother's day. And it was very corny, but they loved it because the poem got first prize. I got a letter from Marshall Petain (laughing) which unfortunately I did not keep. And...uh...then my...my gift, the choice of the prize was I could have a book or I could have a sausage. And that was big deal, big choice because food was extremely scarce again. And I...I, you know, I debate...I said, "Well, now a sausage. After I eat it, it's gone. A book will last forever, so I picked the book." (Laughing) My mother didn't like the poem because it was very sentimental and she said it kind of nauseated her, but they like it so that was the main thing. We started really suffering from hunger. Uh...My father where he was, he got some kind of gruel and, you know, some anemic soup, but where we were there was just nothing to be had, and we lived on mostly ...uh...green peppers and tomatoes. There were no potatoes and on the one bright event in that part of our lives was that neighbors for our father's birthday gave us three potatoes, and that was a wonderful gift. And we figured out all kinds of of ways to...to fix those three potatoes so that they would last longer. And the only thing to eat were grapes because that country was abundant in grapes, and I would take part in the grape harvesting and in that way I would get to eat all the grapes I wanted. So during...that season that was something I had to eat. And I remember that because...uh...I was a school child. I was...by that time, I was 12 years old, and we would get a small ration of milk, a little container of milk for...for lunch. And I remember that on the way home I would stop by the fountain, village fountain and add water to it to give me the illusion that it was a little more. But it was the first time that we, you know, we really knew what it was to be very hungry, to go to bed at night hungry, to wake up hungry, and not to have any heat. In the winter, my father had heard, for instance, that there was some railroad trestles to be had so he brought these home, but they were covered with tar so they made a horrible smoke and...and scent with that. Uh...But you know, we, you know, we...we still managed to get along, you know, muddled by. And then came the bad news. We heard that all of France is going to be occupied. So again our last, you know, refuge was about to be gone. We...we were once again...we had, you know, we had the Gestapo breathing down our neck, and ...uh...again we thought, "Well, we're going to have to...we're going to have to leave." And my father was...uh...told by the commander of his work camp that he would have to report somewhere else and possibly be sent to Germany. So at this point he decided to go sort of AWOL. And he went home and he put on his pajamas and went upstairs and went to bed, had a local doctor who was very sympathetic to the plight of Jews, refugees, issue a certificate that he was suffering from a serious heart condition, and he could not leave his bed for under any circumstances. So my father did in fact stay in bed, and if anybody came to the bed asking, you know, my mother said, "That my husband is very, very ill, you know, and if they want to see for themselves they could." And the doctor who issued was also the Protestant Pastor of the town, and his wife was very active in the various philanthropic...uh...you know, types of organizations. And they tried to figure out a way for us to get out of here, and the first thing to do was for us to get IDs because if we were going to travel anywhere we needed to have IDs which all the French people had to have anyway but we could not have our real names. So they managed with the major of the town to issue us fake IDs and they changed our name to Sabier, which might sound French name and they changed our birth dates and the place, and they made us

citizens of Alvis Lorraine, and they did that because my parents, at least, still had an accent. And saying that there were from Alvis Lorraine, then they would be quite natural because they would speak just like people there. And so we...we had that, and then the...uh...the pasteur's wife figured out...she had heard about the children's camp ...uh...somewhere....I think there was...I'm not sure exactly....it was...maybe in the _____ or somewhere, that I could go to. And she thought that perhaps I should be sent there because we didn't know what lay ahead, and she thought maybe I at least I could be saved and so my family thought about it and we talked about it and then in the last minute, they decided not to, because they said, "We'll...let's...whatever comes, let's...we want to face together," and I didn't want to be separated and it turned out to be a very wise decision because we found out later on that all the children from this camp had been deported. The German...so it was just one of the things. Now, through the...uh...through the pasteur, again, the grapevine was in work, we found out...he gave us the name of another Protestant Pasteur in a town of Annecy which was about, oh, 10 miles from the Swiss border. And the idea was for us to try to find refuge in Switzerland, which had retained its neutrality and was still really the only place that we...that we had left to run to. But again we knew that the border was heavily guarded and that the Swiss were not exactly crazy about having that...that many people come, although they wouldn't necessarily turn them back. Uh...But it was difficult, and...uh...some people were...had been turned back. They would...uh...they would let children in, but people under 18 were frequently...if they were caught close to the border, they were turned back to the authorities. So we knew that was a lot of danger, but we had to risk it. And so the idea was, again, for us to find someone, a guide, who could lead us across to Switzerland. And we were given the name of a Protestant Pasteur that we would see in the town of Annecy, and he would kind of ____. So, again, we just left in a great hurry. We left all our belongings with the neighbors and saying that, "Okay, when we know where we are, you can send it to us," and we never saw them again. Uh...So we...basically, we just had the clothes on our back. Very little money, and our fake IDs. And that's how we set out. When we reached the town of Annecy, we looked up the pasteur. The pasteur had left. He'd gotten scared. That there had too many...you know, he had been turned in, and he just got frightened and he said, "Sorry, there is just nothing we can do." And they gave us the name of a very rich Jewish family that happened to live in that town and they said maybe they can do something for you. So we went over there. And they said, "Well, how much money do you have." We said, "We don't." He said, "You know we have to have money to get across the border." And we didn't have any money and I'm...you know, I'm sorry that fellow Jews didn't come off too well at that point, but...uh...the only thing they told us was to go to the Catholic church in the town and see if they could help us, and gave us a name of a certain priest who had been active in helping Jews. So we went to the church of the Notre Dame in Annecy, and we asked for the...the priest. But he had left. He was gone. So his housekeeper said, "Okay, well, we can give you the name of these people in the bordertown of, you know, it was just a very small town on the Swiss border. And they had a farm house and you go see them and...uh...they could find you a guide. Uh...So, again, we...we set out and we reached the bordertown and we got there with...early in the morning, and they said, "Well, you know, it's much too dangerous to try to attempt to do anything right now, and so this is what you do and they pointed to a fairly high mountain just behind the farm house and they gave us a

couple...some provisions and they said, "You climb up that mountain and you stay there." And you know, "under cover until night fall and at night fall, my husband will come and look for you and he will whistle twice and when you hear the whistle, you answer. You come out hiding and you identify yourselves and he will lead you down and he will lead you to your guide." So we went up there. We went...climbed on top and it was a very, very arduous climb and we weren't in the best of shape to begin with. And we finally got up there and we kind of sank down on the bare pine needles and waited and...uh...it was October and as, you know, in mountain country it gets cold very early in the season and it started getting cold, and we didn't really have anything to cover ourselves with, but we figured, "Well, the guide is supposed to come any minute now." And then it got darker and then suddenly we saw some lights go on, and there were...there was a whole mass of them down in the valley, and we figured it must be Geneva. We were looking right at Geneva. We were on the mountaintop, looking down on Geneva. It was the mountains called Mountain of the Salav, and we felt at that point, really felt like the...you know, Israelites looking at the Promised Land. It was so near. You know, we could almost touch it and yet it was so far and we wondered if we would be denied like Moses, you know. Say okay, you can look at it, but you can't go in. And then it got really dark, and my father finally said, "Look, I don't know what happened. There must have been something with the guide. Either we missed him or he didn't see us. We didn't hear him or something went wrong, but we can't stay because if we stay on this mountaintop, we're going to die of exposure or starvation. We have to do something. So we decide to climb down and try to find a farmhouse, anything, just to get out of there. And...but it was pitch black, and we really didn't have any idea where we're going so we decided to go Indian file, and just holding hands and marking and I remember the...it was like, you know, three people traveling in a nightmare. We were banging into trees. We were stumbling on rocks on the way, you know. We were falling and it was just...and we had no idea what directions we were going or whether we ever go down the mountains. We were just sort of following instinct. And then after awhile, we had gone for what seemed hours, we saw light in the distance. So we went toward the light and almost like by miracle, we wound up at the same farmhouse where we had started out the night before. And it was just providence, really. And we knocked. It was late. And we knocked on the door, and the farm wife came and she said, "What happened?" She was just aghast. She said, "My husband went to look for you and he whistled and you didn't answer, so he thought that something happened and so he left." And we said, "We never...we must have got our signals crossed, but we never heard him." And she said, "Unfortunately, the guide who was supposed to take you across has left. You missed the connection because you were supposed to leave, you know." So she said, "Look. Can't do anything now," so she pointed to a stable and she said, "There's some straw there," and she gave us a glass of milk and some bread and she said, "Go there in the stable where you be safe and...uh...in the morning we'll figure out what to do with you." And so very, very early morning...and she said, "You know, you've got to get out of here in a hurry because some guy has already come by, you know, and asking questions, and she said, "you've got to get out." She says, "I made up a story." And so she said, "Look, I'm going to send you"...she named the name of the next town...uh...Cologne...she said, "I lived...and you will look for a bakery there, and you go in and you tell the baker who sent you and he will lead you out his back door which is in Switzerland." You know, the other

side. You go out the back door and you're in Switzerland and you'll be safe. (laughing) And we thought, "Well, that sounds...that sounds good to us." you know. (laughing) So we...we set out for the town and we went around and we couldn't find the bakery. And...uh...as in any small town, three strangers with a suitcase wondering around are very conspicuous and we knew that, you know, at any moment, we'd be caught. And my father said, "Why don't you go," because we were right on the border and my father sent me and said, "Go look. Go check it out. You know, you're a kid. You know you won't be so noticed." So I went ahead and I saw the barbed wire and I saw the guards standing there and it was heavily guarded and I came back and I said, "No way," you know, "We're not going to make it." And next thing you know, a big limousine pulled up and a guy...guy got out and headed straight for the police station and then the next thing was two policemen came out and arrested us and took us to the station house, you know, because the apparently was a person who was, you know, a snitcher. The French have a cute name for it. They call it a Mooshab, but it's somebody who tells on people. And so again, the questioning started. They wanted to know what we're doing, and my father again made up a story. He said that they were going to put me in a home for children in the area, and that the priest had sent us, you know, but they didn't...just didn't believe it. And then they took us in. They frisked us. They took my...a matron took my mother and me in a room and told us to strip and...uh...and...uh... the matron said to me, "Aren't you afraid?" I said, "No." (laughing) And then...and then...uh...they asked to see our IDs, so my father produced our fake IDs and they said, "Who do you think you're kidding. Anybody looking at them can tell these are fake. I mean, look at that stamp there." And my father, "Oh No. No. I assure you." "Oh, come on," you know. And he said, "Look. Tell you what I'm going to do. I am going to call the mayor of the town where those IDs were made out. We'll see who's telling the truth." So by that time, my father started crying. We were all crying and we said okay, this is it. Goodbye. So we sat there and waited and the guy was gone for a very long time and he came back and he said, "Well, you pulled it off. The mayor of the town has confirmed your identity. You are free to go." And we never knew whether he had just pretended to phone, to give the appearance of...in front of the others of doing his duty or whether in fact the mayor of the town had, you know, sensed what was up and said, "Yal, Sure." We didn't know. All we knew was that he said we're free to go. And we just couldn't believe that, and their whole demeanor changed because actually, they didn't want to hurt, you know, people like us. They, you know, they had orders but by and large, our experience with the French police had always been extremely good. They did not like what was going on anymore than anyone else and they would try to help whenever they could within the limits that they were entitled. And so they turned to be very, very nice. They gave my father some cigarettes. They gave me a bar of chocolate, and...uh...they said, "Okay, you go. But please don't try this again. Don't. Don't because if you do, we're going to have to turn you over to the authorities this time." And so we figured, "Okay, but where are we going to go." You know, you hit the end of the line. Where...where are you going to go. We have to go home. We had only what we were wearing. We had no money. And there was no other safe place for us to go to, and so the only thing that we could figure out to do was to go back of this town of Annecy, go back to the Catholic church, and see if they could do anything for us. And so we started out on the road and then suddenly we heard somebody calling our name and there was a woman on the bicycle pedaling furiously and she says, "Are you the

people who just left the station house a few minutes ago." And we thought, "Oh, my gosh. Now what?" "Yal." And she says, "Well, I'm the wife of one of the officers there and he was worried about you, and he thought maybe you should come back with us and have dinner because you looked so starved and everything you know. Maybe you should give yourself a chance." But we just...we just didn't...even though she seemed perfectly nice, we just didn't trust her. And we said, "No, we really have to be going." And so she gave us a loaf of bread that she happened to have with her, and wished us good speed and we went on our way. And we found out that there was a train leaving for Annecy that day and so while we waited on the platform we saw a train with sealed cars go by. And one of the people who happened to be standing there said that these had contained the people who had been caught on the border and were on their way to Germany. And we thought, you know, we could have been, you know, it was so close. We could have been on one of those trains. We finally made it back to the town of Annecy. We went to the church and the priest, that same priest whose name we had gotten earlier still wasn't there. And we said, "Well, you know, what are we going to do?" And she said...the person who was the housekeeper there said, "Well, we having a visiting priest here, Father Lashora, and he's here to fix the...uh...the clock tower. Maybe you could...uh...you could talk to him. And so we sought him out, and my mother and I first, and we spill our story and he apparently felt sorry for us and he said, "Look, I have a little parish about 10 kilometers from here. It's a little mountain parish, and maybe you can come and stay with me until I can figure out what to do with you. And he asked my mother if she could cook. And she said, "Oh yes, I can cook and clean." And he said, "Fine, and you can help out." And my mother said, "What about my husband?" He said, "Oh, you've got a husband?" He seemed a little disappointed, but "Okay, let him come too. Let the husband come too." So he told us how to get there and...uh...we took a train and then we had to walk up. It was pretty steep. It was...uh...700 meters, so it was quite a good climb, and so we arrived at the parish house and it...on the mountaintop, there was only the church, the parish house, and the school. And then all around there were villages where the people from the community went and came to Mass and attended as children attended school. But there was just those three buildings on the mountaintop. So we found the...the Parish house and the priest gave us one of his guest room and he said, "Well, we'll try to, you know, to figure out something. Don't worry about it. Just rest for the timebeing." And...uh...he told us, of course, "Stay put. You know, don't go outside and don't even open the curtains because people are going to come up to Mass, and we don't want anybody seeing you." So we just stayed in that room all day long and met his housekeeper who was not very well disposed toward us. She was a rabid...uh...she wasn't exactly anti-Semitic, but she just loved Marshall Petain, and she just ...uh...and she just didn't like to have three strangers suddenly descending on her and she was worrying about all the extra work that was going to be and so on. And, as a matter of fact, she was so angry that she just refused to work, and so my mother took over. (Laughing) And there was also a law there: a priest cannot keep people as guests longer than 3 days without informing his bishop. You know, that was a church rule no matter who it was. So after awhile, he said, "Look, you know, I'm having a problem now. We're going to have to figure out...uh...what to do and...at that point my father said, "Look, you've been so nice to us and we really appreciate it, but we really think we ought to be going again and try to get back and cross into Switzerland again. And he wouldn't hear of it. He said, "I have made

inquiries and it's much too dangerous and I...I won't have it. I won't expose you to that kind of danger. What I have to do is find you a safe place somewhere in the village. Now to do this, he had to take some of the village people into his confidence because, obviously, half these people saw me there. And...uh...so they...some of them were told we were Jewish, but not that we were Austrians. He told we were French from Alce Lorraine, and we were Jewish. And those people had never seen Jews before in their entire lives, and later on I was told that they wondered what these people looked like and the only thing they had been told was that the Jews had killed Jesus Christ, and then later some little classmates that I had made friends, they told me that they had wondered what those Jews looked like. And he said, "You know, looked just like the rest of us." You know, very, very surprised. And...uh...but you know, so he had to tell some of the village people that he also told them, Please, you know, don't tell anybody because this is very dangerous for me and for everybody else." In...in a small French village, a priest has a lot of authority and people being very devout, I think he used a little bit of pressure and he told them, you know, threatened them will hell fire and damnation if they would denounce us. And so they figured well, they didn't want to take that chance. He was also well liked and respected so they didn't want to cause trouble for him. So a handful of people knew of our existence. And as their...the local grade school teacher, who was...he was a young guy and his wife, who ran it from a one-room school house there, and he...himself was on the lam, so to speak, because all the young men up to a certain age was supposed to go and do forced labor in Germany. And so those that didn't went underground and they were the start of the resistance movement, you know. And so himself, you know, was in danger and he was most helpful with issuing us ration cards and just identity cards and enrolling me in the school system.

Q: This is a good place. Let's pause and we're going to change tapes and give you a moment to rest.

A: Okay.

Q: Okay. Do you want to...to continue?

A: Yal. With the help of the...uh...villagers and priest, found a small house in one of the villages in the valley and so we...uh, you know, settled in there. Uh...then the priest made me an offer. He had an herd of sheep which he kept to supplement his meager income as a country priest, and he would sell the wool of the sheep and occasionally the meat of the sheep and he also did odd jobs for the villagers. We pay a job and that's why he was there that day fixing a car. And so he said, "Look, I have a little shepherd boy, who has just left. How would you like to keep my herd of sheep in exchange for room and board." He said, "This way, you wouldn't be cramped, all of you in the little house and you would have better nourishment. You would be out in the fresh air." And so it sounded like a really good idea to me and so I moved up to the parish and had a little room there and I would just take out the sheep to the pasture every morning and bring them home at night when I wasn't in school usually some nights when you go take the sheeps out and I kind of enjoyed it. By that time I hardly had any clothes. The clothes I had were in rags and any people who happened to venture up

there, they took me for shepherdess, nothing else. Couldn't possibly be anything else. And then I was...he turned over to me other chores like helping kids with the catechism, make them recite the catechism, and I would go and I was a little heathen. I was not really given any training in the Jewish faith because my parents were agnostic. I mean they just...they didn't believe in anything and this is a fact that later on I came to regret because I had a sense of...you know a loss of identity. I didn't know who I was. All my little school mates were one thing or another, and I just didn't know where I fitted in. And I had a...a spiritual hunger that somehow was never satisfied and if I had been given some training, it would have helped. So I started out really with a clean slate and I was very much impressed by the Mass, because it was very theatrical and very beautiful and I just really went along with it and I learned all the hymens and I was singing...I learned the entire Mass in Latin. I taught catechism, but I never...I never became a Catholic at the point and what is really laudable is that the priest himself never made any effort to convert us. Never! It never even came up because he felt it wouldn't be the right thing anyway you know. It wouldn't. It just...it wouldn't be right. What he was doing was he felt it was his Christian duty, but with any thought of, you know, recompense or anything, he was just doing what he had to do which so many other people in that period did. And I had all the little duties. They gave...they put me in charge of ringing the church bells and going to the cemetery nearby, watering graves. I enjoyed that life. It was the life on the pasture. It was close to nature. It was you know, as commonplace, you know. I developed a deep love for..for nature, and never really...uh...felt good about living in cities ever since then. Uh...So I had my room board and the priest shared everything he had with me. All the food, and so I wasn't too badly off, and he had a...he had some fruit trees and he had food and he had a vegetable garden and later on, he turned over to us little plot of ground where we could cultivate our own vegetables. And my parents were still downstairs...no...in the village, but then some trouble developed. Uh...There was a mill next door and where people brought grain to be ground and the grain was then made into oil. And somebody had broken in during the night and stolen the oil and so next thing we knew, the village was crawling with police again. And, you know, the ___ got really edgy and the...you know, they questioned us and we just got off, but it was...it was touchy for us, for my parents to stay there after that. And so when the priest heard what had happened, that things had deteriorated, he decided that they had to...they had to leave and he tried to find them another place to stay and he just...there was just nothing there...pretty sparsely populated and there was... So he decided...finally, he made them a proposition. He was a little bit embarrassed but he said, "Look, I have an unused bar room at the bottom of my...on the parish house in the basement, sub basement, and if you could be content with that, I would give it to you and you could be safe there." And my parents said, "Sure," you know. So they showed them bar room and he gave them a bed, an iron bed stand, and he put in a little wood stove and a table and chair and that was about it, but it was extremely small. They had no windows and just one door leading out to the...to the garden, and the woods surrounding there. And basically, for the next 3 years until the end of the war...uh...my parents stayed in the boiler room. Never left, except on very rare occasions to go to the nearby woods because...uh...the only way they could cook and heat the little room was to put some wood in the stove so that the...the priest showed them how to go and cut down trees so my father would go on a regular basis and just saw down trees and chop them up for wood. And then the priest also taught my father how to

look for edible mushrooms. And it really was a good supplement to a diet because they were high in protein and there wasn't much else around to eat, so that was one of the main staples in those days and occasionally he would slaughter a sheep and then we would have...he would share some meat with us and he did give us a little plot of ground so eventually I planted a little vegetable garden and we had some fresh vegetables. Uh...I as a child could go out because you know, I wouldn't be noticed so I occasionally went to the town of Annecy to buy a few staples that were rare, able to buy. And... uh...my mother occasionally went down when it was safe and in exchange for say a dozen eggs, she would do some sewing for the people of the village and make some hats, you know, or assist them. But that was only very rarely, because most of the time it just wasn't safe. The other thing was that we didn't have any shoes. My mother had risked somehow kept...I don't how she did it, but she had kept a pair of old ski boots from the good days in Austria. And my shoes wore out, so I wound up wearing hers but then if I was wearing shoes, she couldn't go out. So we kind of took turns doing that. And so I would say that although they did go out occasionally, most of the time they were confined...they were confined to this little room where I...and I attended...I attended the local school. And I was...I was 12 years old at the time, 13...going on 13, and I was supposed to take a test, a national test which signals really the end of grade school for most farm kids. After that point, they just stop and... However, even though I did all the preparatory work for the test, the teacher felt that it would be too risky for me to actually go because you had to go to the...uh...you know, nearby big town and you had to fill out forms and you had...uh...you know prove who you were. You had to have birth certificates. And so he decided no, I wasn't going to take the test. But he...he couldn't tell the other kids why, and so they thought that I couldn't take the test because I was too dumb. And at that age, it hurts you know. They were making fun of me and started calling me names. And then some of them started acting really nasty and called me dirty Jews and one little boy beat me up and then I...when I told the priest about it, he put a stop to that, you know, and there wasn't too much problem...uh...after that. Uh...There was another problem. The...uh...the priest had a nephew, his sister's son...uh... son who was in the French Miless, and that was a paramilitary organization, which in many instances was worse than the Gestapo in their cruelty. They were just totally ruthless. Now the nephew, who lived in a nearby town, occasionally came to visit his uncle and there was no way that he could keep his presence from the nephew and somehow you know he found out about it, and when he did he immediately threatened...he renounced his uncle and us to the Gestapo. And....uh...the priest said, "Okay, now if you do this, I will denounce you to the resistance which by that time was coming into its own and was getting quite strong. Right across the mountain, we could look at the famous plateau, the Glerair, where whole bunch, you know, resistance fighters were killed, and they were all around us in the woods. They would come down at night and villages would feed them so they were a very real presence. And then later on there was scrimmages. You know, they would put road blocks, prevent German tanks from going by and they were stopped. So the threat of turning him over to the resistance was real enough that he held off from doing anything, but he vowed that, you know, he would come back and have his day. So we...after...after that, the priest and us too, you know, we...we lived in constant fear. Uh...and then, you know, the Gestapo...we, I mean the German troops were all over Annecy and every time I went there I...I had to...a couple old friends I made there, and every time I went down

there, I...you know, I could see them and I really felt uncomfortable. I just couldn't, you know, get away fast enough. And we had very little news from the outside world. The only thing was that the...uh...the housekeeper had a...a radio in her kitchen and we listened to the BBC so we ....uh...and sometimes to ...uh...the newscast from Switzerland so we did get some news. My father...my father, having been a journalist, was especially deprived, you know, not being able to have access to any kind of a news. And we started hearing about the advance of the Russians and we had a map and we put pins there and so we knew that our deliverance was...was getting close. I mean we knew that much. And I think the one thing I remember from that period was that they had a code word for the landing in Normandy, and it was...uh...a friend will come tonight, and that one just absolutely stuck in my memory and the other one was Aunt Julie ate chicken for lunch twice, you know, and just...I think as long as I live I'll remember that. And so, you know, we were...we had a fearing that we would be rescued, but then things started getting really bad again. You know, there were maydays and they would loose some territory and my father became very, very pessimistic, and he started talking about our future, always in the conditional...if we survive, and he started telling me now, if you should be separated from your mother and father, I want you to try to contact this person and that person and he just...you know, he hadn't totally given up hope but he...he was getting depressed. And...uh...there were, you know, there were more incidents of run-ins with the...uh...with the Gestapo and the resistance movement which, for us, it was dangerous because they were always...they were always crawling around so that we had a...a kind of prearranged signal. Whenever there was some...uh...German troops nearby, somebody would give the alert and then the young teacher who was also in danger, and my parents would climb up to the clock tower and there was a bunch of hay there and they would just hide in the hay until the 'all clear' was sounded. And...uh...the priest had also by that time taken in another young man who was trying to get away from forced labor in Germany. He was that age, so he was not only hiding my parents, but he was hiding this young man who was not Jewish, but he just didn't wanta go to Germany. Uh...Finally...uh...one time, we...we were...bunch of us, with the teacher and I, were sitting outside and we saw tanks coming up the mountain and all these men in the distance. And we thought, "Oh, this is it," you know. "This is it!" And we started...I gave the alert and we all ran back into the house and I alerted my parents. They barred a door and....uh...late...and then we...I just went and stayed with my parents downstairs and we...we...we were sure it was the Gestapo coming up and the German troops. And then later, we heard them leave and then the next thing we knew, the housekeeper knocked on our door and she was in tears and she said, "No, it's not the Germans. It's...uh...the priest's nephew and his family. They were caught by the Resistance. They had torched their house and his wife and baby had been forced to flee so he had just come, dropped his family off at the priest, and left and later on, he was shot by the Resistance." So here were all these...all these people...uh...being with us, but ...uh...you know, when she first knocked on our door and she said, "Don't be afraid." For some reason, I...I was more afraid than I have been so. But at least, you know, it wasn't...it wasn't what we thought. And...uh...then...uh... we started seeing RAS, RAS planes going overhead and we knew they were on their bomb Curran. So we knew that, you know, something had to happen soon. And then one morning, that young man who the priest had also taken in, pounded on my door and said, "Eva, they have landed. They have landed." And I, you know,

this must have been the happiest day of my life. And, of course, that was only...that was only the beginning, and it took quite awhile before all of France was liberated and...uh...the part where we were in and but finally...finally came to that at the point where we, you know, where we knew it was over. Unfortunately, by then the news...we had been able to communicate with some of our friends, with relatives. We...we didn't know what happened. I had a...uh...my father had a sister and...uh...her sister had a daughter in Vienna and we had...we didn't know what happened to them. We didn't find out til several years after the war. But we got the news that my grandmother, my father's mother who was in her 70s, had been taken away in the middle of the night and taken to Theresienstadt where she succumbed shortly thereafter. And my grandfather, whom they had not taken at that point with all the, you know, excitement, everything, had a stroke and...uh...he remained at home as I was told later for several weeks and he was totally out of his mind and, you know, and he never really regained full consciousness and wind up dying too. So later on, my cousin submitted both their names to the Yad Vashem where they are on that roll with the rest of the others. So that was a terrible blow for my father, and I remember he went out in the woods and just wanted to be alone. He just didn't want to talk to anybody. And I know that later on, I had really, you know, guilt feelings about that, about surviving. Cause I loved my grandmother and I said, "Oh why...why was I...why was I left to live and...and not her," you know. And I really felt guilty about being alive, and it took me years...years to identify that feeling. I didn't have it in concrete form. I just knew I felt guilty and then I finally, you know, came to terms with it, but it took many years before I actually came to terms with that. So basically, we were free to go, but the priest had gotten attached to us and he wouldn't let us go. (Laughing) And he said, "Look, where are you go? You don't have a home to go to? What...You don't have any money? You don't have a job? What are you going to do?" So he talked my father into staying a little while longer. And he sent me to school in the town in Annecy and I attended the Letsa for...for a little while. And then finally my father, you know, he was getting restless and he went ahead to Paris to see what he could do and he did find some kind of work there and a place for us to stay, a furnished room. And so we did rejoin him and it was a very, you know, it was hard to part with the priest. And but at that point, you know, he promised...he made us promise that we would come back to at least to see him on a vacation and we did, and...and we kept that promise, but I also had made a vow to myself and that was to tell the world what he had done for us. I vowed that some day the whole world would know, and I did. It take many years, but it came to pass. But finally my father said he had found a place to live, so we came...we went back to Paris and we joined him and things were almost worse than they had been...uh...at the...at the beginning of the war. There was absolutely no food. And we depended on care rations from people in the United States and clothes that the people who had succeeded in going overhead was sending us. There was no heat, you know, and I became very ill because of all the...uh...being undernourished and had and pleurisy and I was ill for 3 months. And then my parents gave me a choice. They said, "Look, you still...our life is just half over, but you have your...I was barely 16 at the time, and you still have your whole life in front of you. So you decide. Do you want to stay in France or do you want to go to United States?" And, of course, I didn't have to think about it very long. "I want to go to the United States." Because I heard wonderful streets and, you know, the streets are paved with gold and everything which was

just, you know, I had by that time seen some Hollywood movies and so naturally I...I was no question in my mind. They put our name on the quota in 1946, and it took 2 years for our names to get to the head of the quota and but by the time they called us, we just had to leave....period...you know. Two days and go. We...you had to have a sponsor, somebody over on the other side guaranteeing that you would not become a welfare case and affidavits and...and we had...my mother had a brother who station who gave the affidavit in...in...so that was...so we...we came over by...by boat. Nine day trip. Landed in New York Harbor in May of 1948.

Q: Eva, where did you go? What was your adjustment to the United States like? Where were you taken first?

A: Well, it was bad because we were taken to a ____ shelter first, although my uncle couldn't have put us, he put us in a shelter, and then his wife, fearful that we might cost too much money, put my mother and me to work in a factory. So this was our introduction to the United States. Was not too pleasant and...uh...we didn't stay there very long. (Laughing) My mother's health started breaking down almost as soon as we got there. She developed high blood pressure. She had a series of strokes, and so really from that time on she was almost an invalid, very, you know, almost not able to do anything. We..the only place we could find was in a tenement on the upper east side, you know, east side bordering on Harlem. And...uh...my father had trouble finding work. Of course, I didn't speak English so I had to start all over again learning. I was 18 at the time, so I did..I did learn it, and...uh...immediately it was... really I had to go to work to...to support the family. But I had no skills. You know, I had no work experience, and I had to do a bit of fudging. I looked to the want ads, and I saw somebody wanting a bookkeeper and I had never done bookkeeping, but I figured, "Okay, well." Anyway, it happened to be a publishing company and I guess I convinced him to hire me and they soon found out that I really didn't know anything about bookkeeping, but they felt sorry for me, I guess, and they kept me and I stayed there for 5 years, and sorting mail and doing really menial jobs, but it was a beginning. And...uh...37 dollars a week. (Laughing) And from then I worked my way steadily worked my way up the ladder, you know. Uh..But my father finally did find...uh... some work. He did some writing articles again for French newspapers, and he sold a few stories and eventually he had his own advertising agency and then he and a partner wrote a series of books for pocketbooks and so. But my mother, basically, you know, was too ill to...uh...to do anything. So the...I became...I became a New Yorker. (Laughing)

Q: Eva, when did you get married?

A: I...I got married in 1959 and my husband had grown up in the Philippines so really was a totally divergent culture like opposite ends of the world. His father was an army officer in the Philippines. We met in New York City and...uh...got married in 1959.

Q: I want to thank you. Uh...I appreciate your being here.

A: I am very pleased to tell my story.

Q: Is there anything you want to add?

A: There is one thing, a kind of a happy footnote that I had vowed to...uh...you know, tell the world about the priest that saved our lives. And then I found out only 3 years old that the Yad Vashem in Jerusalem actually solicited testimonies from survivors, like me, about their rescuers and I was put in touch with some friends that I feel had kept in touch with in Annecy and I went through all the channels, submitting testimony and sent it off there and took it 18 months before I had a reply and they finally...uh...did inform me by letter that our priest had been accorded the honor of just among the nations that he would a have a tree planted in his name in the Garden of the Just at the Yad Vashem, and that he would be awarded a medal of the Just. And then the people who knew him in Annecy and others...and some of the members of the Jewish community in Annecy organized a commemorative ceremony which they're having from time to time recognize people who had been honored by the Yad Vashem, and so they had a ceremony on May 6th and for...for Father Lashora who was our priest. Father Lashora died in 1959, as a matter of fact, so this was all post humorously, and it was for him and for other priests who had been recognized only one of whom was still alive. And they had 400...400 people present there. They had representatives from the...from the Yad Vashem, the Minister of Israel, representatives from the local Archbishop and the Minister of Annecy, and the mayor, and it was a truly ecumenical kind of gathering. And then we...the current priest of that parish now accepted the medal in the name of the priest and the medal...on the front of the front of the medal it says to Father Lashora, from the grateful Jewish people, and on the back it says, "He who saves a life saves all of humanity." And then we...we decided that we put the medal in a glass case and put it in his old parish house to be preserved forever. And I was invited to give...you know to just briefly tell the story as the Father priest was involved in our rescue, and with that I felt that I had finally given him the proper recognition that he deserved.

Q: Eva, thank you very much.