

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
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AN INTERVIEW WITH HUGO LANG  
FOR THE  
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INTERVIEW BY  
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KURT PIEHLER: This begins an interview with Hugo Lang on March 19, 2001 in Newton, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler. Let me thank you very much for participating in this oral history interview. Gilya Schmidt spoke very highly of you.

HUGO LANG: You're quite welcome.

PIEHLER: Let me begin by asking you some very basic questions. When were you born, and where were you born?

LANG: I was born in Arnsbach. Arnsbach, near Erlangen, in Germany [on] April 27, 1923.

PIEHLER: And, what were the names of your parents?

LANG: Leopold and Eva. E-V-A. Eva Lang.

PIEHLER: And what did your father do for a living?

LANG: He was a cattle dealer.

PIEHLER: And your mother, did she work outside the home at all?

LANG: No, she was a housewife. She raised three children. She was a housewife.

PIEHLER: So, you had—growing up, you had how many brothers and sisters?

LANG: I had one brother and one sister, and both of them passed away. I'm the only one left. My sister passed away in December of last year.

PIEHLER: And, you mentioned your father was a ...

LANG: Cattle dealer.

PIEHLER: Cattle dealer. Was he in his own business or did he work for someone?

LANG: No, he was in [his] own business.

PIEHLER: Who did he sell to, and how big was his business?

LANG: It was pretty big.... On average, we had about a hundred and fifty cows. We had six horses. He sold to all the farmers in the area, in the district, and they made a nice living. And my uncle, which is his brother, worked with him. In other words, the two brothers owned the business.

PIEHLER: And how did the business fare during the 1920's? In the ...

LANG: Very well, very well. After 1938, then you couldn't deal anymore with anybody.

PIEHLER: Did your family have a car growing up?

LANG: Yes.

PIEHLER: What about a radio?

LANG: We had two of them. My uncle had one, and we had one. *Blaupunkt*; a good radio. We listened to the United States, too. Even though it was against the law. We found a way of doing it. We went down the cellar.

PIEHLER: So, the radio was a pretty important ...

LANG: Yeah, very important instrument. We knew what took place. Oh yeah.

PIEHLER: How active were your parents—did you go to the synagogue at all?

LANG: Oh yeah, oh yes. In Göppingen, that's ... between Stuttgart and Ulm. Göppingen.

PIEHLER: Was your family reform, or, I guess, orthodox?

LANG: No, reform.

PIEHLER: Did you keep kosher at all at home?

LANG: No, but we had every Friday night, we had the traditional ... ceremonies, but my mother had *Milchtig* and *Fleischtig* separated at home.

PIEHLER: Oh, you did separate them?

LANG: Yeah, but we weren't that ...

PIEHLER: You didn't ...

LANG: I should say [not] that strict.

MRS. INGE LANG: That strict.

PIEHLER: Like my wife says, "sloppy kosher."

MRS. LANG: Yeah. (Laughter)

LANG: Exactly. You got it. No, we were not that way. We went to *Shul*, we went to the ... *Shul*, twice, three times a year. You know, other people go every week, every Saturday, but we don't. We didn't.

PIEHLER: What about your religious training? Did you go to religious school growing up at all?

LANG: No, we had—we were seven kids in the house, between my uncle and my father's families. And seven kids—we had lessons once a month, and the teacher came to our hometown, and gave us lessons. We didn't go to Göppingen.

PIEHLER: Did your father ... or uncle serve in the First World War?

LANG: Yes, they did. And I got pictures of it to prove it. [Laughing]

PIEHLER: What units were they in? Were they in ...

LANG: That I don't know.

PIEHLER: Were they in the army [or] navy?

LANG: Army.

PIEHLER: Army?

LANG: Yes.

PIEHLER: Did they see combat at all?

LANG: Oh, yes, a lot. My father and my uncle went to Russia and fought in Tannenberg with Hindenburg, which was a major battle in those days, and then they got transferred to France. And they fought there, too, during the war.

PIEHLER: Were they wounded at all? Either?

LANG: Yes, yes. I have it on pictures. Yes, sir. I can show you that if you're interested.

PIEHLER: What did they ever tell you about the war?

LANG: I was only a boy, and they said, "War is hell. And I hope we don't have to go through another one." But, but things changed and they went through more than that, even. And my uncle got hurt and my father got hurt. They both got wounded in the field. Shrapnel, but they survived. There's a story behind that, too. I want to come to that later on.

PIEHLER: Okay.... Did your parents—did your father or uncle ever join a veteran’s organization?

LANG: Not that I know of. No, not that I know of.

PIEHLER: Growing up, what did you do for fun?

LANG: For fun?

PIEHLER: Yeah, particularly when you were a young boy, before ‘33.

LANG: Before ‘33?

PIEHLER: Because I imagine it’s a very different life after ‘33.

MRS. LANG: [You] played football. Soccer.

LANG: What fun did we have? We had a bicycle. (Laughing)

MRS. LANG: You went skiing. You went skiing.

LANG: Well, that’s sport. We went skiing, went ice skating, but strictly in the village. We never went out with girls.... That wasn’t heard of in those days.

MRS. LANG: Soccer you played a lot.

LANG: We played soccer in school, and later on they changed it. I managed to be a good football player, a good soccer player, and then my last year of school, I managed to get some goals in. And one of the men, one of the boys, I should say, said, “That doesn’t count. It’s a Jewish goal!” So my teacher says, “It counts, and you keep your mouth shut.” In plain German, you know. “*Halt die Gusch!*” That means keep your mouth shut. And they counted my goal. And the second time, after this happened, I shot another goal and he said the same thing again. “It doesn’t count. It doesn’t count.” “*Halt die Gusch!*” It counts. They counted it. So, he was a pretty good school teacher, let me tell you this. But otherwise, I belonged to a *Tunverein*. That’s a sports club. But after ‘38, no more. We had a really good teacher, too. He was very, very firm with everybody. And he treated everybody nice. And as a matter of fact, we’re in touch with one of his relatives. We’re still in touch with him. We write every so often. And that was my youth. Then ‘38 came, and ...

MRS. LANG: You couldn’t go to school anymore.

LANG: They threw us out.

PIEHLER: What year did you—in terms of your education—were you able to continue to? What year were you thrown out, in terms of ...

LANG: In 1937.

PIEHLER: [1937] was your last year of ...

LANG: Last year of school. 1937.

PIEHLER: And what level was that?

LANG: That was the sixth grade. Sixth grade. And my cousins, they went to college in Frankfurt and they got thrown out, too, the same year.... Yeah. So, my youth was, you know, we had fun. We had the bicycles and we rode around, this and that; you know, when you're kids. We had toys, plenty of toys, at home. So, we had a good youth, I would say. We didn't know any better in those days. We don't have what they have here [in the United States]. They buy you toys every year. We don't have that. We had wooden blocks. That's what you played with. Made a castle, or you made a house.... Nothing fancy, just plain.

PIEHLER: Did your family travel at all, while you were growing up before '38?

LANG: My parents traveled once in a while. They went on vacation to Baden Baden; that's a spa [in the Black Forest].

PIEHLER: Yes.

LANG: A very famous spa in Germany. But before '38, naturally. After that we they couldn't even go anymore. And, they had some other relatives which they took along. And they had a good time for a week or ten days, whatever they stayed. We have pictures of that, too, yet. But we never saw Baden Baden. In other words, somebody that took care of us, in those days. We had a baby-sitter. (Laughter)

PIEHLER: So, they didn't take you. They went off on their own.

LANG: On their own, yeah, on vacation.

PIEHLER: Did your father have university training? Was he ...

LANG: No, no. No, just high school.

PIEHLER: Do you think you would have gone to university?

MRS. LANG: He definitely would've.

LANG: Oh, yes.

PIEHLER: Yeah, you were on that track?

LANG: But they threw us out in grammar school, you know, and we couldn't go to school anymore in those days. They didn't want any Jews in schools anymore.

PIEHLER: You mentioned the one ... teacher who said, "That goal will count." How did your neighbors treat you, particularly after '33?

LANG: Believe me when I tell you that the neighbors were so good to us [that] you could say they were relatives, in my hometown. Everybody knew each other. Everybody talked to each other. My father talked with everybody. We had no problems at all in our hometown. The hometown was nine thousand people only in those days. Today it's twenty-two thousand. And we had plenty to eat, and if we needed something, you go to the butcher store and they gave us anything we needed. There was no separation, because we are Jewish, you know. They ... helped us out. At nights, I'm talking about '38, '39, '40 now, the neighbors came over at night and dropped eggs off, or flour, or sugar, because we couldn't go to the stores any more and get that stuff. You had to have—what they called it—a *marken*?

MRS. LANG: Yeah. A *Judenmarken* [a coupon]. It has *Jude* written on it.

LANG: So the neighbors helped us out. They came in the middle of the night, twelve o'clock, one o'clock. They didn't ring the bell, they just left it on the back step ... and helped us out. Sometimes a little note with it, you know, sometimes nothing. But we knew where it came from, anyway. But, we had some Nazis in the city, too. But they never bothered us. But they turned out to be real Nazis. Big ones.

PIEHLER: Had you had any dealings with them growing up?

LANG: With the Nazis? No. No, never.

PIEHLER: So, your father didn't have people who he dealt with for years, and then they turned their back on him?

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: Or went after him? You didn't have that experience?

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: In fact, it sounds like you had very—people really did stick by you.

LANG: We had, yes, and one thing I'd like to tell you, which you don't hear all the time. One of our neighbors had a horse and a wagon, and when the SS came and took them [the family] away, he came over with the wagon and [the] SS told him, "You can not take them, otherwise, we take you, too." The man was in his seventies. Elderly man. "You put your luggage on my wagon. I take you to the railroad station." And they walked behind the wagon, and they went to the railroad station. All the neighbors in the area, in our neighborhood, came out and wished them well. Said good-bye, that's the God's honest truth. That happened in my hometown. It's all documented. Yeah. So those were the bad days in our hometown. When they took them away. And my father was at Dachau, too. That was in '38 when they took all the Jewish, Jewish men, and I happened to be in Ulm when they came back by train. I went to the railroad station, and we gave them whatever we could get. Hot dogs, anything to hold them over to get home, you know. Anything, and, uh, those were bad times. And speaking of Dachau, I took my whole family to Dachau, a couple of years ago. It was '89, right?

MRS. LANG: Yeah, that's right.

LANG: It was '89, yeah. A couple of years ago. My God! (Laughter)

MRS. LANG: You went to Europe on vacation and we went and the kids were with us and we were close to Dachau, so we took them.

LANG: Close family. My father was there [during the war], and the kids wanted to see the ovens and everything and we took them there and they couldn't believe it.

PIEHLER: That was their first trip to Germany, and [to] Europe?

LANG: Yeah, yeah.

MRS. LANG: Their first trip, yeah.

PIEHLER: After '38 you mentioned [that] obviously, your father couldn't continue in business.

LANG: Oh, no, no.

PIEHLER: Was he able to keep the business going until '38?

LANG: Yes. He did some dealings in '38, and my uncle, too. And then they couldn't deal anymore, they took their license away from you. That's all documented, I have it all here, but you want to know only about the army, but I have some other things I want you to ...

PIEHLER: No, no, I actually—whatever, in a sense—because some of this ground Gilya Schmidt

probably covered with you, in terms of hometown, but whatever is important for you to tell me, you should tell me, and particularly—there will be a transcript of this, so don't—there's no need to rush.

LANG: Okay.

PIEHLER: So, you mentioned your family survived in part because of neighbors and friends provided you food.

LANG: Very friendly, very friendly. You couldn't ask for better neighbors.

PIEHLER: ... How else would your family survive? Did you live off of savings?

LANG: Yeah, we had savings. We had enough money in the banks, but then [the] SS took that away, too, naturally. They took away the furniture and everything away after they got deported. And, my sister, which came back, which I didn't tell you yet, she came back from the camp [and] they got some of the furniture back, that's why I'm mentioning it, and they got their house back.

PIEHLER: When did they take the furniture and the house? When did they confiscate that?

LANG: They confiscated that in '41. That's when they got deported. All of them. The whole town.

PIEHLER: Now, when did you leave Germany?

LANG: 1941. August 1941. I had a overcoat on in August, just to have a coat over here, when I get here.

PIEHLER: How were you—you were the only one from your family able to leave?

LANG: Yes, in those days, my brother was in England. He left earlier than I did.

PIEHLER: When did your brother leave for England?

LANG: Left in '39, and there's a reason why he left. He worked for a Jewish company in Eisligen. That's near Göppingen. They had a big factory which manufactured all kinds of papers. All kinds of papers: envelopes, this, that, sheets, big rolls. And the owner of the company had a big branch in England, near London. And he said to my brother, he called him in the office, "I want you to go." That was in 1938, the end of '38. "I want you to go to England within a month. Tell your parents I told you so, and let me know." And naturally my parents agreed to it, and he got a visa right away from England. And he took him over there to save him. That's why he transferred him. And he got there all right, and he came to the States a year before I did, in 1940. He made it from England to the States.

PIEHLER: What was your brother's name?

LANG: [Laughing] Well, in German, it's Manfred, but we called him Fred. F-R-E-D, Fred.

PIEHLER: But Manfred was his ...

LANG: Manfred was his original name, yes.

PIEHLER: Did your brother also join the army?

LANG: Yes, he was in the army also. [He] was in the engineers, yeah.

PIEHLER: And he's the brother who went to the University of Frankfurt?

LANG: Yes, yes.

PIEHLER: What about your cousins? You said you lived with cousins.

LANG: I have cousins. One of them is still alive. She lives in Florida. And one of them is in Englewood Cliffs, and the other two passed away. One of them lived in Texas, but she passed away, and the other one passed away two years ago.

MRS. LANG: He lived in Florida.

LANG: Yeah, the youngest one.

PIEHLER: How were you able to get out in 1941? Because that was very, very late.

LANG: Yes, it was a story in itself. We went to the consulate in Stuttgart, the American consulate in Stuttgart in Königsstrasse, and gave me the visa, which my uncle gave me from him.

PIEHLER: So you had an uncle here in ...

LANG: Yes, in Staten Island. He had a big a department store. And he gave us the visa, but only me, not my parents or my sister. He wanted young blood in the house, so if anything should happen to you, he doesn't have to worry about you, you know. In those days that's the way they figured, even though he was an uncle of mine. And I arrived here. I went from Süssen to Stuttgart, from Stuttgart to Berlin, and then they have the HIAS in Berlin. You know what the HIAS is [the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society]. I'm sure you heard of it. And we had about two hundred twenty people which had gathered in Berlin, and then they took us to the railway station, and soon everybody was in there. The train started up and the doors were locked. Nobody could go in, nobody could go out. One soldier in each car. German soldier. So, we went to Frankfurt, then we

went to France, we went to Spain, and then Lisbon, Portugal. In Portugal we laid over for two weeks. We finally got a boat, a banana boat, and we came over here, in '41. I arrived here September 2, 1941.

PIEHLER: Where did you arrive?

LANG: In Staten Island. Yeah, yeah.

PIEHLER: Your uncle—what was his name?

LANG: Isadore Lang.

PIEHLER: ... Do you remember the name of the department store he owned?

LANG: That I don't.

PIEHLER: Yeah? No, but it was in Staten Island.

LANG: It was in Staten Island. As a matter of fact, I can show you the papers if you've got a minute.

PIEHLER: Okay, yeah.

(Tape paused)

PIEHLER: So your uncle sponsored you and he was ...

LANG: Isadore Lang.

PIEHLER: President of Angold Holdings. And he had real estate [worth] over \$10,000 and a personal [estate], at that time, of over \$5,000.

LANG: Uh huh.

PIEHLER: After you came to the States, where did you [go]?

LANG: My brother picked me up on the pier, and he lived in Jersey City. [He] had one room, and the lady took me in, too. She said, "We can put another bed in there; your brother can stay here, too." And those people originally came from Hungary. [They] were Jewish people, very nice people, and they took us in. And we went to work every day and paid our rent, and then later on we separated.

PIEHLER: Where did you work initially, when you first came here?

LANG: I worked in the city.

MRS. LANG: Excuse me. You should tell how in Germany, how you couldn't go to school anymore and of course, you are ... bitter.

LANG: I told him that already.

MRS. LANG: Oh, you did? He did?

LANG: Yeah.

MRS. LANG: Then of course here you really ...

LANG: Then I went to forced labor. That's immaterial.

MRS. LANG: Okay.

LANG: Anyway, my brother worked. He was a top-notch machinist. He worked in Jersey City. In '41 you needed—he worked in an aircraft factory. And he talked to his foreman, and he told him, "My brother just arrived here, but he doesn't speak the language, and can you help him? Can you give him anything to do? Anything?" Because I didn't speak the language. I don't speak it now! (Laughter) And they took me in. And I worked from six in the evening to six in the morning. And, what I did, if there was a part to be made, I made it oversize. In other words, I didn't finish it. I worked on a turret lathe. You know what a turret lathe is? That's a big machine where you make parts. Huge parts for aircrafts. And they gave me a blueprint, and I followed the steps what they told me, and sure enough, every part I made was oversize, and they could use it. Somebody else could finish it then.

PIEHLER: Mm hmm.

LANG: Twelve hours I was standing with a rubber apron on in oil, because you needed oil in order to cool the tool bit. And it worked out very well for a year and a half, then I worked myself up. I got away from the (turret lathe). I went to school in the evening, to learn the language.

PIEHLER: Where did you go to school?

LANG: Jersey City. They had the night school. High school, and they had night classes, and I went there. And the best thing I ever did, I went to those movies [laughing]. From eight o'clock in the morning in Jersey City, 'til six in the evening. I had a sandwich with me, and an apple or a pear, whatever the lady gave me. And that helped me a lot, to learn the language and to see the words ...

PIEHLER: And, so, it doesn't sound like you got much sleep.

LANG: Hey, when you're young, you can do anything. You can work twelve hours and go to school in the evenings, too, yet. And that's what I did. That's how we built ourselves up. I had four dollars in my pocket when I arrived here. My brother asked me on the way home, "I'm out of gas. I don't have any money. Can you help me?" [I] says, "Yeah, I can give you the money." And I gave him a dollar and a half and he filled the tank up, with a dollar and a half, in those days. He had a little Ford, and he got me off the pier, and we went to the city. And that's how I arrived here.

PIEHLER: Your wife did remind me. I did not ask about your—you wanted to be a waiter.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And you couldn't become one, a head waiter.

LANG: They closed the restaurant in Ulm. '38.

PIEHLER: That was a Jewish owned restaurant?

LANG: Yes, Max Moos.

MRS. LANG: Well, he really didn't want to become a waiter.

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah, I know. (Laughter) I know. Then, you mentioned you did forced labor. How long were you ...

LANG: Two and a half years.

PIEHLER: Where were you a laborer at?

LANG: At a company, I can't give you the name of the company, but it's immaterial to you. It was away from our hometown about ten miles. And the only way they could get there was with a bicycle, because we couldn't use the trains anymore. And my uncle and my cousins went with me in the morning, together, with bicycles. And they manufactured all kind of ... wood, boards, blocks, beams, you name it. And actually they manufactured stuff for the war effort, too. A lot of it. And they started 7:30 in the morning 'til 5:00 in the afternoon, forced labor. They told you what to do, and you done it, you didn't know any better. And that saved me, too. I didn't have to go to the camp.

PIEHLER: So if you hadn't been a forced laborer you would have been deported, too?

LANG: Sure, sure. 'Til the last day I worked, and the following day I went to Stuttgart and went to Berlin, and went out. I got the permission from the community. I gave you a copy of it. That's why I gave you that copy.

PIEHLER: You had permission from ...

LANG: That I could leave. That's in there.

PIEHLER: And how hard was that to get?

LANG: Oh, for me it was nothing. I could do the work. I was young, I was strong. I didn't mind. I mean, you didn't know any better, you had to do it. And my uncle did it too, and he was much older than I was in those days, but he done it. (To Mrs. Lang) Metzger did it too. Alfred Metzger.

PIEHLER: After, after you came to the States, how much contact did you have with your family?

LANG: I got ... two postcards and a couple letters, which I also saved. And we knew exactly when they got deported because my mother—actually, my sister had a girlfriend which came originally from Poland. And in the letter she writes that this girl went back to Poland. Then we knew exactly that it meant then, because all the mail was censored. You couldn't write that they're leaving tomorrow for a concentration camp, so that's the last letter we got, and I got the letter saved upstairs. But I knew exactly when they got deported. It's all confirmed with the community when they took us away.

PIEHLER: When were they deported? Do you ...

LANG: They were deported in 1941. I think it was November. I don't know what day, though.

PIEHLER: But November of '41?

LANG: Yeah, I got out in September. August, September. I arrived here in September, like I told you before.

PIEHLER: So, just a few more months and you would have ...

LANG: That's it, yeah, and they took my sister and my cousins. You know, whoever was there, they took them. You know the story.

PIEHLER: In America, you mentioned you worked at night, and then you also went to school for English ...

LANG: Absolutely.

PIEHLER: ... and then you also went to the movies a lot.

LANG: On Sundays. Only Sundays.

PIEHLER: Only Sunday. Sunday was your movie day.

LANG: The movie was two miles away from where I lived, and there was a trolley going to the theater. I didn't take the trolley. It was a nickel for carfare! I walked, and back again.

PIEHLER: Was it the theater in downtown Jersey City?

LANG: Yeah, the Stanley and the Lowe. I know the name of the theater, yes, there were two of them.

PIEHLER: The theaters were really—I've been told, and I've seen one of them [that] is still there.

LANG: Probably.

PIEHLER: It's really grand. I mean, they're really huge movie houses.

LANG: Yeah, yeah, that was the Stanley.

PIEHLER: Did any of the movies—did they stick out, [that] you remember?

LANG: No, we watched, we watched the news, we watched the Looney Tunes. (To Mrs. Lang) Get some more of that stuff.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, definitely.

LANG: Looney Tunes. We watched two movies. Every week they had different movies on; you know how that is. The name of the movies I forgot already, because I saw so many, but I stayed there all day on Sundays. I would not leave. I wanted to learn the language in the worst way. And it helped me a lot. You know, the spelling and all that, you know. So it was tough in the beginning, but when you're young, you can do it. You can do anything. Just like you going to Russia, or to Germany. Here I am. What do I do? You know?

PIEHLER: Did you, did you join any groups or were you active in any—for example, did you go to *Shul* at all, or ...

LANG: ... Only on holidays. Because the parents took me. We couldn't walk that far. They took us by car.

PIEHLER: In America ... did you get help from any agency at all?

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: Was ... the language school, was it a ...

LANG: Public school.

PIEHLER: Public school.

LANG: It had night classes. Evening classes. Anybody wants to learn the language, you come. They let you come.

PIEHLER: So, you didn't get any help, say, from Jewish Aid Society, or ...

LANG: No, no, the only help I got is from the (Hiass?) to come here.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: To get here. That was it.

PIEHLER: Yeah. And after you got here, did you have much contact with your uncle?

LANG: The one in Staten Island?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: No. I tell you why. My brother and I went there—that's a story by itself—because we wanted to pay him back. He sent us a bill, itemized items, which he spent on me, including the stamps. That's the truth.

PIEHLER: You mean the postage stamps?

LANG: Yes. (Laughter) Itemized bill and the postage stamps. A list that long! It came to a couple hundred dollars. We went there, my brother drove out to Staten Island. We went there and knocked on the door, and he answered, and we introduced ourselves: "We are the Langs. This is Hugo and I'm Fred." And he says, "You got the money?" [We said,] "Yes." My brother pulled out the wallet; gave him the money. He says, "Okay, I wish you luck. Good-bye." We didn't even go in the house.

PIEHLER: Well! That was ...

LANG: And he was a relative of ours, an uncle.

PIEHLER: Not even a distant relative. (Laughter)

LANG: No. That's the last time I saw him. Naturally, he's passed away in the meantime, too. But

that's the guy that gave me the affidavit, so I'm thankful for that already.

MRS. LANG: Yeah.

LANG: The sons got an affidavit from him.

MRS. LANG: Oh, yeah.

LANG: ... Yeah, that was the uncle I had here. But, I was thankful he gave us the affidavit anyway, you know, in those days. But my brother couldn't believe it. He said, "That son of a bitch, he wouldn't even let us come to the house," he said in English. [I said,] "Yeah, I know, but we don't need him. We'll make it." Oh, I'm sorry, I cursed! (Laughter)

PIEHLER: No, that's okay.

LANG: You better take it out! (Laughter)

PIEHLER: I've read [that] by '41, the German-American Bund at least was being suppressed here. Do you have any memories of the German-American Bund in ...

LANG: Yes.

PIEHLER: Yeah, could you ...

LANG: But I never went there. I mean, I have memories. I saw pictures.

PIEHLER: Pictures, but you never ... remember any rallies or neighbors in the neighborhood ...

LANG: No, no, no.

PIEHLER: What, what section of Jersey City did you live in, do you remember, when you first came?

LANG: Yeah, Beacon Avenue. That's Beacon Avenue. That's about twenty minutes from Journal Square. It's not far. You can walk it. That's near Kennedy Boulevard. I could take you there if I had to. (Laughter)

PIEHLER: Yeah, I have a relatively good idea where it is.

LANG: Yeah, that's good.

PIEHLER: I used to live in Newark, downtown Newark. And so, I've been—we actually bought our car in Jersey City, before we moved to Tennessee.

LANG: Okay, so, you have a rough idea.

PIEHLER: I have a rough idea.

LANG: Okay.

PIEHLER: What struck you—your first reactions to America? What were they? What did you think was very different? And what was ...

LANG: Oh, everything, of course. I come from a village, from a small village. We never saw so many cars. We never saw so much food. We never saw so many lights, even though it was '41.... And the biggest impression I had is the Statue of Liberty, when we first passed it by boat, and then we can really say we made it because in '41 the Germans were in war with Poland, already, in '41.

PIEHLER: Yes.

LANG: It started in '39. But we made it alright, so that was no problem there. But we couldn't believe the food, the displays in the stores. Anything and everything, you know? We couldn't believe it.

(Doorbell, tape paused)

PIEHLER: I see, so, you thought America was a much more prosperous ...

LANG: Oh, my God!

PIEHLER: We were just coming out of a Depression, so it was even ...

LANG: Oh, yes, yes, you're right.

PIEHLER: It was even, with that said, from the outsider's perspective ...

LANG: I remember in '41, you had to know somebody to get a job. But then when the war started, they needed all the help they could get. But ten dollars a week is all I got. And I was thankful for that, already.

PIEHLER: That was your first job. [It] was ten dollars a week.

LANG: I can show you the bankbook. I put a quarter in the bank a week. And then fifty cents, then seventy-five cents, as I worked myself up. My wife had the same thing. When she came over here, she went through the same thing.

PIEHLER: Is there anything that you weren't crazy for in America? You liked the prosperity and the bright lights ...

LANG: Everything, I liked everything, and I still like everything. And I would fight for it again if I had too. Believe me.

PIEHLER: How did you feel—were you reluctant to leave Germany, at all?

LANG: Sure, because I knew I wouldn't see my parents anymore. I knew that ahead of time, before I even left.

PIEHLER: That that was it?

LANG: And my sister, too. She was there, too, yet. Yeah, and my uncle and my aunt, you know the whole—but I figured I have to go. That was a godsend, as far as I'm concerned, because I got out. Anybody who could get out, [would] get out. I mean, that was the thing to do, in those days, because you knew what's coming.

MRS. LANG: They could have gotten out. They had money. I mean, they could've gotten out, many years before the war started. But his father thought it never will happen, anything.

LANG: "Nothing will happen to us, in our community." He was so stubborn. The only thing he knew was cattle dealing. He didn't want to know from politics or anything else. "That nothing will happen to us, we will survive. We have enough money in the bank. We'll make it." And sure enough, money didn't mean anything in those days. You had to go, that's it.

PIEHLER: Well, in some ways, in many ways the community sort of added to that sense, that he'd be okay, because in fact in his own community, things were okay. It was the larger country, that ...

LANG: Yeah. That's right, but the Nazis didn't want to know anything about that.

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah, no. I mean, in the end it didn't matter, but ...

LANG: It didn't matter at all. They took you like everybody else. And he ... was heartbroken, when he had to give up his business. Heartbroken. That was a display. He won first prize in 19—...

PIEHLER: For his cattle ...

LANG: In 19—let me tell you, it was 1929 or '30. And near the town near Stuttgart, Esslingen. And he was a heavy man. He was a normal man going to war, First World War. After the war, they ate anything they could lay their hands on, and he never lost the weight again. He weighed three

hundred pounds.... Six foot four.

PIEHLER: And he smoked cigars.

LANG: Cigars! He took the end of the cigar, took a toothpick, put it in the cigar, and he smoked it until he practically burned his lips. Then he lit the next one with that little piece what's left. Thirteen cigars a day! (Laughter)

PIEHLER: Oh, yeah.

LANG: I told Gilya about it, too.... She must have told you.

PIEHLER: No, she hadn't, no.

LANG: Ask her about it. I got pictures of it, believe it or not. And there is, speaking of sports, just a little memento.

PIEHLER: That was you skiing with ...

LANG: With my brother ...

MRS. LANG: He's a good skier.

LANG: And sister. That's me, my brother, my sister, my mother.... So, we got nice souvenirs from our childhood, so to speak.

PIEHLER: Do you remember where you were when Pearl Harbor occurred?

LANG: Pearl Harbor? That was in '41. December 7, '41. I worked. I worked, I got inducted later, which I will give you, too. Oh, you got it already; you got it with the army papers. It's in there.

PIEHLER: You mentioned it became easier to get a job after Pearl Harbor.

LANG: Yes.

PIEHLER: How long did you stay with first job you ...

LANG: With this company? I stayed 'til I got inducted in the service. It was in 1943.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: You probably have it on there.

PIEHLER: Yeah. It says, "Date of Entry: January 4, 1944." You mentioned you worked at this one company for a year at ten dollars [a week]. Did you leave? Because in one of your records that you gave me, in fact, it's here ...

LANG: I left for the army, then.

MRS. LANG: Then he came back from the army.

PIEHLER: You were at the Stuart Machine and Tool Corporation, Newark, New Jersey, from [October 20, 1942 until December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1943].

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: So, I guess it was in 19 ...

LANG: Go on, go on.

PIEHLER: "Brought stationary cutting tools into contact with rotating metal parts. Used grinders, machine drill press, and shapers in producing metal parts for airplanes."

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Worked at this for one year.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: So, I guess before January '43 ...

LANG: I worked for different machine companies. I can give you the name of those, too. That was in Newark. One of them was in Newark, Stuart Machine and Tool Company.

PIEHLER: Yeah, this is one ...

LANG: The other one was Manhattan Tool [Company]. That's immaterial. Manhattan Tool. They were on Edison Place in Newark.

MRS. LANG: One was in Bloomfield?

LANG: That's Charm's Candy Company; that was in the fifties.

PIEHLER: That was later.

LANG: That was after.

PIEHLER: So ... you ended up at Stuart, but you had worked at two other—was it at two other ...

LANG: Right.

PIEHLER: What led you to move, better pay or ...

LANG: Better pay, better working conditions, and one of them had a union shop, which I didn't like. So, I improved myself as I went along.

PIEHLER: Which one was the union shop? Do you remember?

LANG: Uh, it was Stuart Machine and Tool.

PIEHLER: That was [a] union job.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: What was the problem with the union job?

LANG: Well, they wanted to organize, and a lot of people said "We don't belong, we don't want to join the union." And they left the company and I decided to leave, too. And my brother helped me find another job. And I found one. That was in Edison Place, in Newark, near the railroad station, near Penn Station. Since you know Newark.

PIEHLER: After Pearl Harbor, and after the German declaration of war, you were still a German citizen. I guess, how did that go, because in terms of ...

LANG: Now you're coming into the army picture.

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah.

LANG: That's what I wanted to explain to you. I got inducted in Jersey City, and that's all in the book here. And, went to Fort Dix. Took my basic training in Fort Dix, three months, like everybody else. And before they ship you overseas, what do you do? They collect all the people which are not citizens and you raise your hand and you become a citizen.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: That's how I became a citizen. In other words, I didn't have to wait seven years.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: Because when they ship you overseas—lucky for me, because I was an American citizen, but I didn't have the dog tag anymore, I threw it away. And that's how I became a citizen. That was in ... 1943. Yeah, after basic training.

PIEHLER: Oh. Your papers say 1944, that you entered.

LANG: '44?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: I forgot already.

PIEHLER: 1944.

LANG: Good thing I gave you—I thought it was December '43. Okay, '44. This paper won't lie.  
(Laughter)

PIEHLER: ... If people listened to you, they would hear a German accent.

LANG: Sure.

PIEHLER: Did you have any problems? Suspicious people?

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: No.

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: You didn't have a problem.

LANG: You had all kinds of people to raise their hands, when they raised their hands.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: Of course, they needed you in the army, you know. From all over. From Italy, you name it. A lot of Jewish people came over from...

PIEHLER: Oh, yeah. No. There [were] a lot of refugees.

LANG: All different countries, yeah.

PIEHLER: You were drafted into the army.

LANG: Yes. I didn't volunteer. I was drafted.

PIEHLER: Had you thought of volunteering?

LANG: No, no. I thought of making a living and helping my sister, but everything turned sour. I couldn't do it.

PIEHLER: You thought you'd help your sister by getting enough money to sponsor her?

LANG: Yeah, but I couldn't do it. Nor could my brother do it, in those days.

PIEHLER: What did—you mentioned [that] you knew when your parents were deported in November of 1941. And that was the last contact you had with them?

LANG: Yes.

PIEHLER: What was your sense of what was happening? When did you have a sense during the war?

LANG: I knew right away that I wouldn't see them anymore. And that they would be murdered.

PIEHLER: Why did you think that at the time? We know now ...

LANG: We had experience from the Nazis over there, and we heard different stories from different people. And we knew exactly what took place.

PIEHLER: What stories had you heard when you were—because you, at the time ...

LANG: To start out with, I go back to Dachau, '38, where my father was, naturally. They told a story after they got out, which were unbelievable, how they got treated over there. And they served. They served their country! They were in the war, fighting for Germany, but that's the thanks they got in the end, you know, like everybody else. And we had, we had a rabbi in Göppingen, which got the highest order [that] the German Army would give out.... I even got pictures of him here. And it didn't mean a thing. His wife got murdered, too, in the camp. Didn't mean a thing, no matter what you had. They didn't want the Jews anymore, any kind of Jew, and the Gypsies, and they all got killed. Most of them, ninety percent of them. So, I knew. I know exactly what took place after I left. My uncle said, "Make the best you can, and we're not worried about you, I know you will make it." That's the way I said goodbye to him, you know? Brings back memories.

PIEHLER: Well, joining the army meant you were going to be—you became a citizen.

LANG: Before you get shipped overseas, they make you a citizen.

PIEHLER: Where did you report initially? Was it Fort Dix?

LANG: First, I went to the draft board.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: Since you know a little bit about Jersey City. (Pause) You gotta excuse me with this one. This is sixty something years old, this book. No, I bring it over to you. If I can find it now. It might be in the other one. I know it's there. It wasn't Jersey City. There, the last postcard from my parents. My niece wanted the stamp. This is Hindenburg. That was the last postcard, and they were stamped, '41. November '41. And she wanted the stamps, so I cut the stamps out. That's the camp. Let's see if I can find this for you. I know I got it. (Pause) It wasn't Jersey City. I forgot where it was, though. I don't give up so easy. I know I got it. That's the division. Keystone Division. That's the emblem.

PIEHLER: Oh, it says here you were [assigned to] local draft board 27, school 6.

LANG: That's the one.

PIEHLER: That was your draft board.

LANG: That's the one I'm looking for. Okay, you got it. You can have this if you want a make a copy of it.

PIEHLER: No, actually, let me, let me ...

MRS. LANG: That's it, huh?

LANG: That's the one I was looking for. I passed it.

PIEHLER: So, you were ...

LANG: Jersey City, inducted, and then I went to Fort Dix with the rest of the boys. That's what, that's what happened.

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE-----

PIEHLER: What was it like to be in the army when you first reported to Fort Dix? What are your memories of being at Fort Dix?

LANG: Fort Dix. I liked the place. They had good food. The boys were good to us. All the Jewish boys, we had quite a few in the company. We had no problems as far as religion or anything goes in Fort Dix. We did KP like everybody else. That was understood. And we took our basic training, and that was it. Five-thirty in the morning, you get up, do what you have to do. Go out and report for duty. So, I was a young boy, so I didn't mind it.

PIEHLER: How old were you in 1944? Do you remember?

LANG: In 1944? I was born in '27.

MRS. LANG: '27? '23!

LANG: '23. Yeah, she's right. So that's twenty-one years old.

PIEHLER: So, you were twenty-one, and how long were you at Fort Dix?

LANG: Fort Dix? Five months.

PIEHLER: Five months. So you did your basic training—you actually did basic training?

LANG: Oh, yeah, oh yeah.

PIEHLER: You mentioned you had a lot of Jewish boys with you.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Any other ethnic groups that stick out, Italian-Americans ...

LANG: We were a mixed group.

PIEHLER: A mixed group, mainly from New Jersey?

LANG: No, no they were from all over Jersey. From the state New Jersey, I should say, not from Jersey City.

PIEHLER: No, yeah, from the entire state.

LANG: From the entire state. Yeah. And they reported to Fort Dix, and from there, after the basic training, we went to Fort McClellan, Alabama, for additional training. That's probably not recorded in there. And from there we went overseas.

PIEHLER: What do you remember about your sergeant or your drill instructor from Fort Dix? Is

there anything?

LANG: From Fort Dix? Well, we had to do certain things in order to get promoted, right? And uh, I qualified for different things, shooting and basic training. I had high marks going through the courses and everything else. And that's how you get promoted.

PIEHLER: Because, you were initially—it says here you spent four months in basic training.

LANG: Yeah, then we got, then we went ...

PIEHLER: [To] Fort McClellan.

LANG: Fort McClellan, Alabama.

PIEHLER: Were you there for a month, or longer?

LANG: I think it was a month and a half. Yeah, and then from there we went overseas.

PIEHLER: Because here it says you were heavy weapons man NCO [noncommissioned officer].

LANG: Yeah. That's where they trained us. That's the training they gave us. But when I went overseas, they changed my status and they wanted me to be an interpreter on account of the Germans, and I served as an interpreter. I think it was a year. A year, might be thirteen months. And I had a colonel which was in charge of the whole group. And I threw the letter out a couple years ago, I didn't need it anymore. But he was fair; he was good, and he would take me back any time. After the war they asked you if you wanted to stay on, and I decided I had enough and I came back again. If I would have stayed on I could have been with my sister after she came back from the camps, but I didn't figure she was alive yet, believe it or not, so that's why I went back to the States.

PIEHLER: But if you had known your sister was alive you might have just stayed on.

LANG: I might have stayed on, yeah. And he sent me a letter stating if I ever want to come back or join up again he would take me anytime. The colonel.

PIEHLER: What was the colonel's name?

LANG: Thompson.

PIEHLER: Colonel Thompson. Do you know his first name?

LANG: Oh yeah. It was Richard Thompson.

PIEHLER: Colonel Richard Thompson. Where was he from?

LANG: That I don't know. That I don't know, where he came from, but that was his name.

PIEHLER: You said the food was very good in basic.

LANG: Yes. Oh yeah.

PIEHLER: What did you like about—is there anything you particularly liked about military life, and by the same token, what were the things you weren't ...

LANG: I liked everything! I had no objection to anything, I mean ...

PIEHLER: The marching or the ...

LANG: No, on thirty mile marches I went like the other boys. I mean, you take that for granted. You can do it when you're young, with a full pack.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: Full pack. Like you would be overseas. You gotta wear a full pack and you go. Thirty miles, and if you didn't make it, you had to do it again, 'til you make it in those days.

PIEHLER: It mentioned that you got trained in heavy weapons. What ...

LANG: Mortars.

PIEHLER: Mortars.

LANG: And machine guns.

PIEHLER: Uh huh. So would you have been a mortar man or a machine gunner if you hadn't been pulled out of your ...

LANG: Right, I could have done either one. That's the thing, I ...

PIEHLER: And your brother, where did he go, and when did he ...

LANG: He went to engineering camp in [Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri].

PIEHLER: Was he drafted or did he enlist?

LANG: Oh, he [was] drafted. He was drafted too, yeah. And they found out that he had a heart

problem. In the army they found that out and they just discharged him.

PIEHLER: ... So he never went overseas?

LANG: No, he never went overseas.

PIEHLER: What did he do for the rest of the war?

LANG: He worked in the aircraft factory.

PIEHLER: He went back to the aircraft factory?

LANG: And he was a full-fledged machinist and a tool and die maker. That's what he learned in Germany. Yeah, he was a good man.

PIEHLER: Did you stay in touch with your brother? How did you—during the war, did you stay in touch with him?

LANG: Yes. I sent him a couple of postcards, but I gave him the wrong name. He knew my handwriting, though. Yeah, that's the way I protected myself.

PIEHLER: Protecting yourself from ...

LANG: From not writing too much on the corps postcard, and I gave him the wrong name. I said William Johnson, even though I had the right address on the postcard, obviously.

PIEHLER: And you were protecting him?

LANG: Well, he was in the States. I didn't have to protect him.

PIEHLER: You were protecting yourself.

LANG: I had to protect myself.

PIEHLER: And you were concerned [about] what, why? In terms of writing him without using ...

LANG: I didn't want him to write at all.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: Because Lang is a German name, and the Nazis would pick it up and they'd look for me and that's it.

PIEHLER: So you were very concerned that if they knew you were German ...

LANG: As long as he got mail I was satisfied. I told him, "Don't write."

PIEHLER: Don't write at all?

LANG: No. No, and he didn't.

PIEHLER: When you were—I'm jumping ahead—when you were a POW, did you have an opportunity to send a card out through the Red Cross?

LANG: Yes.

PIEHLER: So you sent him ...

LANG: I sent cards out through the Red Cross, but I gave him the wrong name.

PIEHLER: Okay, but you ...

LANG: I gave him the right address, naturally.

PIEHLER: Right address, wrong name. Okay. What about—did you do the same when you were still in the army? So you always used a different ...

LANG: Yeah, yeah. It wasn't easy, but you do what you have to do, you know.

PIEHLER: So, in other words, you had no idea how he was doing.

LANG: Oh, I knew he could make it.

PIEHLER: Yeah. You weren't worried about that.

LANG: No, no way. No way.

MRS. LANG: You worked yourself up in the army as well ...

LANG: That's not important.

PIEHLER: You said after Fort McClellan you left. Where did you go after that? You went aboard ...

LANG: We went to Jersey City to the ... not the rail station. They had [rail] yards in Jersey City.

It was the military trains only, and the boat was waiting right next to the train.

PIEHLER: You left from Jersey City, then?

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Did you stop at Fort—Camp Kilmer at all on the way?

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: No. After Fort McClellan, you went directly back to Jersey City?

LANG: With the rest of the gang, yeah.

PIEHLER: And then shipped out.

LANG: Yeah, they formed a division in Fort McClellan.

PIEHLER: ... You mentioned you were made an interpreter. Were you made an interpreter on the boat ride over to ...

LANG: No. No, only in Germany.

PIEHLER: Not until later in the war?

LANG: That's right. They took me out from the division and assigned me to interrogation work, but you kept the patch anyway. You know, you just worked there.

PIEHLER: So you were detailed out of your division?

LANG: Right, right. They detailed us out, but you kept the patch because we took the basic training in the division.

PIEHLER: When did you—do you remember when you left from Jersey City for Europe?

LANG: That I don't, to be frank with you, but it was ... during the winter. It was cold. We had the overcoats on. It was—let me see now. I think it was in '44, the early part of '44.

PIEHLER: And where did you land?

LANG: We landed in Scotland.... On account of the U-boats they made detours going over. We landed in Glasgow, Scotland. That I remember.

PIEHLER: What do you remember from the voyage over?

LANG: (Laughing) Well, you're on a boat! You get three meals. You didn't think of anything else. Danger, anything else, you know. In those days, if we get killed, we get killed. What can you do?

PIEHLER: How large was your boat? What kind of boat?

LANG: Large boat. It was—fifteen thousand people were on there. It was like the Queen Mary.

PIEHLER: Okay.

LANG: *Mauritania* is the name of the boat.

PIEHLER: Did you go with a convoy or did you go alone?

LANG: Only convoy.

PIEHLER: A convoy.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: You weren't cramped? I've been told by people who were aboard the troop ships ...

LANG: It's a little cramped, but that's nothing. You get used to it. Double-deckers.

PIEHLER: That didn't bother you?

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: What about seasickness?

LANG: Yes, I was seasick. Coming over here, too. And going back.

PIEHLER: Coming back.

LANG: But what I did, I went on top of the boat, upstairs, up above on the deck, and I went to the center. Because it doesn't rock in the center as much as in the front or the back, you know. And I got away with it. I was sick for two days. But I ate very little the third day or fourth day. One of those things. I never went fishing here in this country, because I know I get seasick. (Laughter) No.

PIEHLER: Would you have preferred to be fighting against the Japanese as opposed to the

Germans in the war? Because you mentioned concern about, about if you were captured, what would happen to you. Both as a former German and also as a Jew.

LANG: Well, I was afraid of that naturally.

PIEHLER: Yeah. Would it have been easier, you think, if they had sent you to the Pacific?

LANG: I didn't want to go to the Pacific.

PIEHLER: Not that you had a choice.

LANG: I had a choice—I told them when they drafted [me]. They could tell what you are [a German] ...

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: Because they knew the language at the draft board. I told them I came from Germany in '41, and I want to go back again as a soldier. And they stamped it and they okayed it. And that's what happened. I didn't want to go to [the] Pacific, got no business there. I had people, you know, friends, this, that, and I figured that's the best thing to do, so that's what I wanted. And I got it.

PIEHLER: So, you mentioned landing in Scotland. How long did you stay in Scotland?

LANG: A day, one day. We got off the boat; they put us up in a camp which they had for arrivees and the next day they shipped us to England, to Salisbury. That's in England, so we went by train back to the ferry, across the river to England. And from England they boarded us on a train and all the way down to Salisbury. And from there, there was a holding camp. From there we went to France. I came in D+20 [twenty days after D-Day] in '44. And it wasn't that bad on the beach. Everything was cleared up already, but we fought all the way through France, Belgium, and Luxembourg. And I got captured, as I want to show you yet, in Luxembourg.

PIEHLER: Where was your first experience of combat?

LANG: In France.

PIEHLER: Do you remember ... you said D+20 ...

LANG: Bastogne. Bastogne.

PIEHLER: Bastogne. Not in France?

LANG: That's France. Bastogne. That's the name of the town, a big town. We had a terrific battle with the Germans there. Tanks and airplanes, and you name it, they had it there. And then

they broke out of that section and they went through France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and then Germany. But I got captured in Luxembourg, therefore I didn't go to Germany. Only as a prisoner of war.

PIEHLER: Just to go back, which was your ...

LANG: Bastogne was a bad place to be.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: In France, very bad. And General [McAuliffe] was in charge.

PIEHLER: And this was the famous breakthrough. Was this the breakthrough where General McNair was—I believe was ...

LANG: [General McAuliffe] called them “Nuts” because they asked him to surrender.

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah.

LANG: He was the general in charge of the division. That was in France.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: He wouldn't give up Bastogne.

PIEHLER: Going back further, before Bastogne. I mean, had you seen—you said you had been in the battle for France ...

LANG: We went through the hedgerows. Bastogne is in France.

PIEHLER: I think Bastogne is in Belgium. Yeah—I don't have the divisional history ...

LANG: I got it over here documented. I can look it up.

PIEHLER: How many casualties did your unit experience?

LANG: Well, during the fighting, some days which we had light casualties, maybe five or ten, depending on the firefights and whatever we had. Then we had some days we lost more men. But they had replacements, the next day they sent up replacements to form the company again, you know, and the battalion. So, we had casualties, no two ways about it. I was lucky I didn't get hurt.

PIEHLER: What about—did you have any buddies in the unit?

LANG: Buddies?

PIEHLER: Yeah, people you were particularly friendly with [or] close to ...

LANG: Sure, sure, people I trained with.

PIEHLER: Yeah. How many of them made it through the entire war? At least, until you got captured?

LANG: We lost four of them, from my company. One of them came from Bayonne, I forgot the name, though. The next one came from Union City; his name was Hone, H-O-N-E. And, another one came from Jersey City. Yeah, was a good friend of mine. Four altogether. I can't remember the fourth one now. Yeah, Jimmy. I think he came from Union City, too. Four men, I was very close with, they were right alongside of me, so to speak. One of them slept above me during training. But they didn't make it. Let's put it that way.

PIEHLER: None of the ...

LANG: No, they're buried over there, naturally. We didn't bring anybody back.

MRS. LANG: How many were under you when you were a sergeant?

LANG: Thousands, thousands of them.

MRS. LANG: No, I mean when you were a sergeant. How many have you got there ...

LANG: Huh?

MRS. LANG: You were a ... sergeant, correct?

LANG: What about it?

MRS. LANG: How many did you have there? How many boys?

LANG: Oh, [twenty-five in] the same company.

MRS. LANG: Oh.

LANG: Yeah, that was, that was hell, in plain English. War, I wouldn't recommend it to anybody. I hope we don't see another one, believe me. And the way things are going right now, you don't know what's in store for us, with those atomic bombs and everything else. So, that's the story.

PIEHLER: Your records—you were part of the campaign for northern France, and then the

Ardennes.

LANG: That's right. Ardennes, I got captured. St. Vith, that's in Luxembourg, and what happened there is, we had orders from headquarters. We had rifles. And they came with the tiger tanks, which is the biggest tanks the Germans had. And a rifle is no good against tiger tanks. So we had orders from headquarters that the whole division gotta lay down their arms. Everybody, including all the cannons, and artillery, whatever there was in the division. You put up your hands, you follow the other guys, and you get captured. And the reason for that was, which we found out afterwards, they wanted the Germans to come in. And then Patton came along with his tanks and he closed the circle. Then they cut them up, piece by piece. It's all documented. I think I gave you a copy. If not, I'll give you one, from Bradley. It gives you a lot of an idea of what took place there. General Bradley. So, that was the Battle of the Bulge. And one of my school friends, school friends, which I grew up with, was in a tiger tank, and he passed me in St. Vith. And you know how I found that out? When we went to Germany, for the first time in '89.

MRS. LANG: Yeah ...

LANG: We found out in '91, that he was there—when I gave the speech—he was there in St. Vith when they captured us. And he said, “Yeah, I was in a tiger tank. I was a driver, a tank driver.” And I still write to him, and he writes me. Yeah. A school friend. We [were] passing each other.

PIEHLER: You were friends, so ...

LANG: School friends, and we're still friends, right now.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: That shows you what can happen in life.

PIEHLER: How cold were you during the Battle of the Bulge? Because it was a pretty cold winter, in that November.

LANG: Very cold, bitter cold. It was December, around Christmas. And snow about a foot high, and we got our beans, our army food, you know. Beans and K-rations or whatever you call them, [and] cold drinks. You couldn't make a fire, because it gave your position away. So, it was pretty miserable, but when you're young, you survive, you know, like everybody else. You make the best of it. Once, I had to go back to the hospital. I had elephant foot. You know what that is?

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: Feet were like this (gesturing). I got it in the foxhole. Had wet shoes, wet socks, and couldn't urinate anymore. And they took care of me. The field hospital.

PIEHLER: Where was that?

LANG: Two weeks—that was in France. It was in France. It wasn't in Luxembourg, it was in France. We were in a foxhole for four days, raining and snow, yeah, and when you wanted to light a cigarette, which I never did, the guys had to bend down, practically to the floor, light it, and then take a drag, and put the hand in front of the cigarette, so you wouldn't give your position away.

PIEHLER: So you never smoked?

LANG: Never!

PIEHLER: Did you trade your cigarette ration for anything with anyone?

LANG: No, no. Whatever I got I ate. Especially the chocolate. (Laughter)

PIEHLER: What about—did you gamble at all?

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: Did people in your unit gamble?

LANG: Some of them did. Some of them did, but I never cared for that. No. Played cards, played blackjack. I never gambled.

PIEHLER: When were you made an interpreter?

LANG: That was in 1942. No, wait a minute, not '42. What am I talking about? It was '43 ... '43. Wait a minute, before they shipped us overseas, they asked for interrogators. Yeah, it was before I got shipped overseas.

PIEHLER: So, you were made interrogator at Fort McClellan or on the boat ride over?

LANG: I think it happened in Fort McClellan, before we left. They asked for interrogators. Because that shipment, the 28th, went to Germany. And that's when I joined Colonel Thompson.

PIEHLER: You mentioned the boat ride. Did you still go over with the division?

LANG: Well, the whole division went.

PIEHLER: The whole division went over.

LANG: Sure.

PIEHLER: And as interpreter, when were you used, and how were you used?

LANG: We had to interrogate the prisoners. When they captured somebody, they brought him over. And, they set him down, and you tried to get information, as much as possible, for the division. “Where were you the last time?” In German, actually. “What position did you have?” They had the uniforms on, but some of them had their own identification, too. And some of them may have dressed in American GI clothes, especially in Bastogne. And they were Germans, but they spoke English. Perfect English. You couldn’t tell the difference. So, some of them turned the signs the other way, when you wanted to go someplace, they turned it this way. Sabotage, everything, and finally we got wise to them. That was documented in the Battle of the Bulge.

PIEHLER: ... You mentioned being on the line, because you got frostbite. Was your job every day to interpret, or did you in fact serve?

LANG: On and off.

PIEHLER: On and off.

LANG: Everyday.

PIEHLER: So, you were a part of the unit when you were not—and then they’d call you back?

LANG: And they call you back and you come there and you got to do your job. But even the cooks were on the line in the Battle of the Bulge.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: Anybody who could shoot.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: No matter what you were.

PIEHLER: ... How often would you get to interrogate in a given week?

LANG: In a week, maybe they call you once or twice. During the Battle of the Bulge, I lived there practically, you know. Even though I was on the front line.

PIEHLER: But then you were captured?

LANG: Then I got captured. The whole division got captured.

PIEHLER: Yeah. What was the experience of being an interrogator like?

LANG: Well, I didn't mind it, because I spoke the language, naturally, and it helped me. And I had to translate it into English, then, and somebody else corrected me and gave it to the colonel, as far as the writing goes. Whatever information I found out, I gave to the colonel and he reported back to headquarters.

PIEHLER: How long would an interrogation last?

LANG: Depending on, depending on the conditions. In other words, depending on the battle, sometimes it'd last an hour, sometimes ten minutes, fifteen minutes. Depends on the soldier, too. Some didn't want to talk. And you can't make 'em. You can't hit 'em, or can't shoot 'em, you know, that was against the rule. But some of them talked freely, especially the younger ones. Sixteen-, seventeen-, eighteen-year-old kids they had on the front lines.

PIEHLER: Those were the easiest to ...

LANG: Yeah. As long as they could shoot, they drafted them. And that's what I had. Yeah.

PIEHLER: Even though you were doing interrogation, they must have found—your German's impeccable.

LANG: Well, sure. They were captured, you know. Some of them knew that I came from Germany, but they didn't say anything.

PIEHLER: They didn't say anything. You never had a belligerent prisoner?

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: Did you ever interrogate an SS Waffen?

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: Just regular ...

LANG: Army, regular army. I never had the SS. I would have shot them, if I would have had them, believe me. I mean, in the field. Not interrogation.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: But we never came across the SS, only army troops. Yeah.

PIEHLER: As an interrogator, what sense did you get of how the German Army was doing?

LANG: They were going very well the first week when they had the offensive. Battle of the Bulge.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: And then after that, they ran out of gas, they ran out of ammunition, and then we knew they spent most of it already. And we're going to make it one way or the other.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: And they surrounded them, like I told you before, and they cut them up in pieces. Then they went to the Rhine River, right then and there.

PIEHLER: But you were taken as prisoner. You said you were captured. I think when I came, here, you said December 22.

LANG: That's when I was captured.

PIEHLER: When the division ...

LANG: Yeah, the whole division, yeah, the 28<sup>th</sup> Division laid down their arms. That was the order. And everybody—they didn't know what to do with us, for Christ's sake. Fifteen thousand men, in one shot. And if that's the order, you give up your rifle, that's it. You follow the lead. Then we walked back to [a bombed out school house] ...

PIEHLER: Had you thought of trying to go back to the rear and not surrendering?

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: No.

LANG: No. You couldn't.

PIEHLER: Is that when you threw your dog tags away?

LANG: Yeah. Before, absolutely.

PIEHLER: Now, you mentioned, you told other people ...

LANG: I told those twenty-two which got shot the next day. I told them, "Throw your dog tags away before you get captured." You know, before we got sent to the camp. "Oh, we're Americans, nothing will happen to us," he says. "Throw your dog tags away. Take it from me." I threw mine away. The only thing I had is a watch. And a handkerchief. I had some pictures on me, I threw them away, too. Of my family, my mother and father. I knew what was coming.

PIEHLER: So, you threw everything out that could possibly ...

LANG: Handkerchief and a watch. They took the watch, too. They didn't take my handkerchief, though. (Laughing) That's the truth. Who cares? A watch, I always can get another one. We did the same with the Germans. A lot of GIs robbed them, too.

PIEHLER: So, that was a pretty common ...

LANG: Oh yeah. Oh yeah, they did.

PIEHLER: So, you mentioned earlier before we got started, you had a long march to your prison camp. How many days was it?

LANG: It was five days. Five days we walked.

PIEHLER: What about for men who couldn't make it? Did they all make it?

LANG: No! A lot of them passed away.

PIEHLER: They just passed away?

LANG: They were weak. Sure.

PIEHLER: Did any get executed along the way, for not being able to keep up?

LANG: The only ones I know of are the ones that got executed in the camp.

PIEHLER: Who were Jews. Jewish ...

LANG: They had an execution, but that wasn't in our sector. That was in Malmédy?

PIEHLER: Yeah. The famous massacre.

LANG: That's right.

PIEHLER: But on the march to the camp no one got killed for not being able to keep up?

LANG: No. No one got killed. No, the ones which couldn't keep up with it, I don't know what they did with them, they laid them on the side. They dropped out. I don't know what they did with them, because we kept on walking.

PIEHLER: What did you think would happen to you while you were walking? Because you knew

it wasn't good, what happened to your parents.

LANG: I knew the story. All along, after I got the last letter from my mother, the last card, I knew they would be goners ...

PIEHLER: Did you think you would be a goner, too? Or did you think ...

LANG: Well, you always think that you [will] get shot too, you know?

PIEHLER: Yeah. You did think there was a good chance ...

LANG: Sure. Sure. It's a war. It's either me or him, you know. That's the way you got to look at it. So, when you see someone out in the field, a hundred, two hundred, three hundred yards away, you try to shoot them.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: I was lucky I got away with it.

PIEHLER: When did you—what prison camp did you finally make it to?

LANG: Bad Orb.

PIEHLER: Bad Orb?

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And how many were ...

LANG: You want to take along with you?

PIEHLER: Oh yeah, if you have made a copy of it.

LANG: I know I got a copy of it. As a matter of fact, it's probably over there. It's probably in the album. I'll have to look over there.

(Tape paused)

PIEHLER: It says, "Somewhere in Luxembourg, November 25, 1944. Dear Fred, Just like to drop you a line stating that I'm well. Guess you received V-mail from November 22<sup>nd</sup> in the meantime. As you can see for yourself, we are in pretty good—a pretty nice place at the present. We had turkey with cranberry sauce and vegetables, just like in the States."

LANG: That's true.

PIEHLER: "Boy, did we eat. How are you and what's new? Everything is pretty much the same. I guess everything is pretty much the same. Are you going to Providence over Christmas? Why not? As soon as I get a chance, I send you a parcel, with souvenirs again. Up to date, I did not yet receive any from you or ..."

LANG: Any mail from you, probably. Persky, that was the landlady's name.

PIEHLER: Oh, okay. "There are too many at the present on the way, therefore I shall wait. It is quiet here that some of the boys can not sleep anymore. Take it easy and give regards to everyone. Love, Hugo. Save this manuforn." So this is the champagne ...

LANG: Yeah, we stayed in that place, but we didn't have any champagne. (Laughter) That's when I ...

PIEHLER: These are ... the letters ...

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: These are ...

LANG: From the War Department.

PIEHLER: Yeah, because you ...

LANG: Missing in action.

PIEHLER: First you got a missing in action report. Your brother got it January 20th.

LANG: Yeah, yeah. He saved everything for me.

PIEHLER: "December 17<sup>th</sup>, the International Red Cross communicated that he [Hugo Lang] was a prisoner of war."

LANG: Yeah, yeah.

PIEHLER: And that you were—and April 22<sup>nd</sup>, there's a message that you're under military control again.

LANG: Yeah, I got liberated.

PIEHLER: And you arrived in the U.S. in May of 1945.

LANG: Yeah, right.

PIEHLER: Who is—I see this picture here. Who is the woman in the picture? Is this you? This picture by the Capitol.

LANG: It's probably a girlfriend of mine. We went to see Washington, D.C. It's probably 65 years old.

PIEHLER: Oh, yeah.

MRS. LANG: Excuse me. Do you like milk or cream?

PIEHLER: Milk, please.

MRS. LANG: Milk.

PIEHLER: Now, you weren't with the unit when it was out in Oklahoma? The Rainbow Division?

LANG: Alabama.

PIEHLER: Alabama, yeah, because June it was in Oklahoma.

LANG: Yeah. No, I wasn't with the unit then.

PIEHLER: This is a (manuform), I guess.

LANG: Probably part of a newspaper.

PIEHLER: From Camp Ruger. But you weren't in ...

LANG: Yeah. That's after the war when I went with the kids. When we were moving, I put it in there, too.

PIEHLER: Oh, okay. So, this is ...

LANG: Yeah, forty-second.

PIEHLER: And these are—are these the postcards?

LANG: After the war, they took us to Atlantic City to recuperate.

PIEHLER: Oh, and then this is your ...

LANG: Yeah. Thompson, there you are.

PIEHLER: N. R. S. Thompson, Lieutenant Colonel.

LANG: That's the letter I told you about.

PIEHLER: Oh, okay. "5 May, 1945. My dear Lang," and it's somewhere in Germany, 5 May, 1945, from "N. R. S., Thompson, Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry."

LANG: Right.

PIEHLER: Twenty-Eighth Division, Headquarters. "My Dear Lang, We are all very glad to hear from you and know that you and Bayer ..."

LANG: That's a friend of mine, too. He was an interrogator, too. Another Jewish boy: Bayer Penowski.

PIEHLER: "And Lieutenant Cassidy came through okay. The other four boys of the section are all well and send their best. We have missed you and others and often wondered what fate—what your fate had been. Our work is very heavy now; we are all out straight. I'm sure we do not handle krauts the way we used to. We feel we have a few scores to settle in your behalf, and don't worry, we'll do it. It looks as though the game is about over. And all that's left is CBI and the Japs. They are tough, but with nothing else to worry about, we'll take them in not too long a time. Sorry you're not here to help us. Should you get back on this side, let me know, and I'll try to get you back with us. You're a good man, and I can always find a place for you. We are four times in strength, officers and men, what we used to be."

LANG: Yeah, because the war got bigger and bigger for them, you know?

PIEHLER: "Have a good time in the states and accept our hearty congratulations on being there. Good luck. N. R. S. Thompson, Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry."

LANG: I think that was very nice of him to send that letter.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: And naturally, I got dog tags after I got liberated. Yeah. That's the last shot fired. I saved that, too.

PIEHLER: So, you were back in the States to copy this from The Daily Mirror in your scrapbook of the Germans, Germany surrendering.

LANG: Sure. Yeah.

PIEHLER: Oh, and here's a—this is a feature page on you. “This is not your ordinary—” This is from a feature page, it looks like, from an army publication.

LANG: It probably is.

PIEHLER: “This is not an ordinary ‘Do you know?’ story. It is [not] the tale of a boy lucky enough to be born in America with a proud heritage of freedom, but the saga of one who is long imbued the spirit while living in Nazi Germany; who came here and earned the title of American the hard way. PFC Hugo Lang of Ward 11 came to America in 1941 via France, Spain, and Portugal. It took two years to get an American visa. And though he had planned to come here with his parents and two sisters, they were not so fortunate. They were kept in Germany. He joined his brother Fred, who had come here a year before, and got a job as a machinist with the Stuart Machine and Tool Corporation of Newark, New Jersey, until his induction into the army in December of 1943. He was sent to Camp McClellan, Alabama for basic training and while there he became an American citizen in April of 1944.”

LANG: Now you got the date.

PIEHLER: “August 1944 marked his return to Europe as a member of the 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.”

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: “And he fought through France, Luxembourg, and Belgium until his capture on December 18<sup>th</sup> in the Battle of the Bulge. There followed an eighty mile march to a prison camp, during which time he and his buddies ate anything they could lay their hands on, mostly snow.”

LANG: And potatoes - rotten potatoes or apples on the road.

PIEHLER: Yeah. “They ate mostly snow. He and his buddies ate mostly snow and sugar beets. Many of the men died on this march. And the survivors were herded into cattle cars for five to ten days and did not see the light of day.” So did you ever ...

LANG: I don't remember.

PIEHLER: “Strafing by American and British planes did not add to their comfort., and a few of the men were killed by this attack. While in prison at Stalag 9B between Frankfurt and Hanau, the Nazis suspected his German origin and quizzed him for more than 3 hours in an effort to prove it. If discovered, it would have meant his immediate death. All during the interrogation, Lang insisted he was born in Jersey City, and could speak no German. Evidently he convinced his captors, for outside of starvation rations, which was the lot of all, the Germans did not molest him.

He says he never saw the supermen beat an American, but the Russians and Frenchmen were frequently subjected to severe beatings.”

LANG: Yeah, yeah.

PIEHLER: “Prison life took its toll on Lang’s health and he lost forty-five pounds before being liberated on April 2, 1945.”

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: “Too weak to return to the States immediately, he was sent to an evacuation hospital for several weeks where he regained lost poundage. There followed a trip to a staging area, Camp Lucky Strike, the trip home, a sixty-day furlough in Aberdeen. Although very happy to return to his adopted country, the news from Europe was not good. For recently, through the efforts of the Red Cross and the French Embassy, he re-established contact with one of his sisters [who] informed him of the death of both of his parents and of his sister in one of the Nazi scientific death chambers in Poland to which the country they had been deported. Notwithstanding the hardships and great potential losses which he suffered, Hugo Lang is optimistic about the future and plans to start life anew upon his return to civilian life. He would like to return to his old job and bring his sister to this country. On this latter plan he is being assisted by the Red Cross and hopes to be reunited with his sister within the next few months.”

LANG: I forgot about this letter altogether. I never knew I had this letter anymore. (Brian) [the author of the article], he worked in the interrogation pool with Thompson.

PIEHLER: Oh, okay.

LANG: Now I remember. He set that up and mailed it to me. I forgot I had that letter in the book.

PIEHLER: This was in the divisional newspaper?

LANG: Yeah, yeah. This is interesting, maybe, to you, too.

PIEHLER: Yeah, actually it’s interesting. I just came across this doing my own research in the Jewish war veterans’ records ...

LANG: [Josef] Goebbels lived there. They had a *Shul* in there. After they liberated it.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: I saved that, too. Oh, I got so many things. You asked me if my father was in the First World War, right, before?

PIEHLER: Yes.

LANG: That's my uncle and that's my—no, the other way around. My uncle, my father.

PIEHLER: So your father as a soldier was a very thin man.

LANG: Yeah, that's what I told you.

PIEHLER: Yeah, I know, I just—because people won't be able to see our pictures!

LANG: You can see how big he was after the war. Naturally, he was normal. After that, as soon as they got out, they ate everything they could lay their hands on.

PIEHLER: So, it sounds like he had stories about being hungry as a soldier.

LANG: Yeah. Oh, yeah. And while we're at it—I don't want to side track you—this was the *Shul* in Göppingen. Our *Shul*—that's where we went on holidays. I made a copy of that, too. Now, if you're interested in this here, I have them in the album here. You can have those three.

PIEHLER: Are these—these aren't the originals, though? These are the copies.

LANG: You can have those.

PIEHLER: You sure?

LANG: I can spare them. You don't have to send them back.

PIEHLER: The article that was written [says] you were interrogated for three hours. What do you remember of that experience?

LANG: The first thing they had asked [was] what division we are in, what company we are in? What kind of weapons did we fire?

PIEHLER: Did you try ...

LANG: "How many men did you have in the front lines, approximately," we asked them. You know, they couldn't count them. Two hundred, three hundred, four hundred, whatever there were, you know. Some of them had a battalion; some of them had only a company; some of them were on a scouting mission, you know. Every case was different. You found out all the information you can. That was the job.

PIEHLER: But, when you were being interrogated by the Germans as a prisoner, would you ...

LANG: Shell shocked. Didn't answer one word, because they could sense that I am German. Not one word! Shell shocked.

PIEHLER: You didn't respond? What did you ...

LANG: Nothing. Threw out my hands. Here.

PIEHLER: And just put ...

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And just rubbed your ears ...

LANG: Otherwise I wouldn't be here today, believe me. Now, I'll tell you another story about the prison camp. They used the old timers, soldiers from the First World War, as guards in the camp. Guard duty. Men were sixty-five, some of them, sixty-seven, with a rifle, you know, walking around, make sure everything is alright. The day we got liberated, a man comes up to me, "I know your father; I know your mother; and I know you. You're Lang, Hugo or Manfred, I don't remember if it's Hugo or Manfred." I says, "Yeah, I'm Hugo." He talked to me in German, actually, and I told him, "Yeah, you're right." He says, "I, when I saw you, I recognized you right away, but I wouldn't turn you in, I knew better." And he saved my life, too ...

PIEHLER: Because he could have easily ...

LANG: From my hometown!

PIEHLER: Another hometown ...

LANG: From my hometown. God's honest truth, otherwise he wouldn't know me. It had to be my hometown. That's what happened to us, yeah. Yeah, we have a cup of coffee and then we continue.

(Tape paused)

PIEHLER: When you were a prisoner, you mentioned, before we broke for coffee, you mentioned you were able to convince them you had shell shock.

LANG: Yeah, yeah.

PIEHLER: But you were also in camp with your buddies.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: So, did you talk to them at all while you were in the camp?

LANG: In the barracks, yes.

PIEHLER: Yeah, in the barracks, yes.

LANG: In the barracks, yes. And I told them again and again, “Don’t—you don’t know me, even though I trained with you.” And believe it or not, none of them ...

PIEHLER: None of them ...

LANG: None of them.

PIEHLER: And there was even, when you left off, you said there was even a German guard, you later learned after you were liberated, [that] knew you.

LANG: From the First World War.

PIEHLER: Yes, from the First World War.

LANG: I remember that. He came up to me and said, “Look, I know you, but I didn’t turn you in because I saw you,” you know, where I lived. “And I knew your parents and your mother and your uncle.” And I was amazed when he told me that, and sure enough, he knew everybody.

PIEHLER: He really did know you?

LANG: He sure did, yes. That’s a true story.

PIEHLER: What was daily life in the camp like?

LANG: In camp, it was in the morning, you gotta come out, they count you to make sure everybody’s there. You get up, you get a cup of water, if you want to call that. Not coffee. Water, hot water. And uh, they had a name for it but, I’m not going to tell you the name. (Laughter) It’s the urine from the horse, they called it, the GI’s. Now you know. So anyway, and then they counted you, and then they had you to march along in the camp, a little exercise, in other words. But not in step, you know, at leisure. And then after a while, you had no lunch, after a while, you got ready to go back in the barracks again. And you do whatever you wanted to do. Little could you do in the barracks. There was nothing there. And then for—in the evening, seven men, when you got your supper, where at one loaf of *Kommisbrot*. That’s a black bread, a German black bread. And each night somebody else took a slice. Picture that. You have seven men to one loaf of bread. Every other night, somebody else cut the bread, maybe you have a little bit too much, maybe you haven’t got enough here, but nobody squawked. You got a piece of bread, whatever it was, you know, on a loaf of *Kommisbrot*, that’s a black bread they had. And we were satisfied.

At least we had some bread. But we changed every night. Somebody else cut it. And uh, then you got a hot soup, they call it tea, but it wasn't tea, naturally. And we drank it and that was our meal. Now, in the evenings when they made that famous soup in the kitchen, they threw all the bones out. They brought in the dead horses from the front. They brought them in, they put some, a little meat in there in the food, and the bones naturally they cooked the soup with. And they threw 'em out, and the GI's, including myself, dove for the bones. You know why?

PIEHLER: No, why?

LANG: The marrow in the bones, we took in the barrack. We took a big stone in the barrack, and we opened up the bones in order to eat the marrow. That's how hungry we were. That's the God's honest truth.

PIEHLER: Did you ever get a Red Cross package?

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO-----

PIEHLER: This continues an interview with Hugo Lang on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2001, in Newton, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler. You never got a Red Cross package, but you were able to send postcards out?

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And you think, going back, because it [the previous tape] was cut off, you think they just kept the Red Cross packages if any were intended for you.

LANG: We knew that. We knew that. And even packages which my brother sent, or anybody else, never saw anything.

PIEHLER: Your camp, how many Americans were in it, roughly? How many hundreds [or] how many thousands?

LANG: Well, naturally I don't know the correct count, but I would say ... when they liberated us in '45, at least, at least two thousand. At least, and the Russians, and French, and English troops, but at least two thousand Americans.

PIEHLER: So, there were Russians—there were also these other nationalities there?

LANG: In the camp.

PIEHLER: Were they segregated from you?

LANG: Yes, they were segregated, Russians were in one spot, different barracks. We had another

spot for the Polish people, Polish soldiers. Whatever they could capture, that's all in that camp. It was a big camp. You got the pictures.

PIEHLER: Yeah, I know. It's a huge camp. It sounds like you would see beatings of Russian and French prisoners of war. A little article had mentioned that.

LANG: Yeah. We saw them, when they walked through like we did, you know, but we had ... a fence in between.... You could talk to them, but you didn't understand them, anyway.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: They didn't understand us, so what's the use? But we saw them, and we waved to them. 'Cause they're in the same boat as we were, and that was it. Some boys which came from Poland could talk with them, you know?

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: But, it didn't do them any good, neither. They just say "Hello," and—it's miserable, you know? But, what can you do? They got captured, too, like we did.

PIEHLER: Did you do any work while you were in the camp?

LANG: Yes, forced labor.

PIEHLER: What kind?

LANG: Collecting wood. They march you out, a couple of guards on each side. They march you out in the woods, and you collect woods for your own barracks. Otherwise, you freeze. We had a little stove in that barracks, and if there is no wood you don't have a fire. So, we collected the wood, and we made sure we had enough wood. I mean, the wood ran low, we went out again with the guards. But nobody dared run away or get away, because we knew what would happen. The minute you move out of line, boom, you're done. We knew that, and some boys tried it and they got killed, too. You saw it on the—I showed you before. Some of them died got killed that way, they didn't die in a natural way, you know?

PIEHLER: They died trying to escape.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Any other work details?

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: Besides ...

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: So, in other words, you didn't work in a factory or agricultural ...

LANG: No, no. Only collecting wood. But that was under guard.

PIEHLER: Under the guards, yeah.

LANG: But we did.

PIEHLER: Was there any type of black market in your camp?

LANG: Yes. There was some black market. Some people got some cigarettes, some people got some food. I don't know what they traded, a watch or whatever they had, in order to get it. But I never went for that. Besides, they took my watch, anyway. I didn't want any part of that. But some people, they made money.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: And playing cards, you know. I was never into it. Up to this day, I never had a card in my hands. I never cared for it.

PIEHLER: You never cared for it. I take ... it you don't go to Atlantic City.

LANG: No, no, no. That's not my cup of tea.

PIEHLER: After you were captured, what did you know about the war?

LANG: Well, sometimes we got news. Sometimes we got news from people which got captured. In other words, they gave us the news, the latest.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: And, some, some of them were fliers. They threw them in the same camp, in the same barracks, where we were, more or less. And some of them were infantrymen. They captured them later on, after they went further up the Rhine River, or whatever. And they gave us the news. Where we are, where the troops are. And they couldn't hide it, I mean, verbal, nothing printed, naturally. And we were glad to hear that we were making progress. In other words, we were glad in the camp to hear they were making progress. And the war should be over soon. And sure enough, after four months, after they came in, we saw—we heard a noise. It was early in the morning. A rumbling noise, we were standing on the fence like this here. One guy said, "Those

are tanks. Either German or American.” So, one guy said, “What are you talking about? I don’t hear anything.” Says, “Yeah, they’re tanks,” another guy said. Within five minutes, they brought the tanks up the street, up the hill, and they went right through the gate. They didn’t even open the gate. Tanks went right through it. The soldiers had strict orders, not to give anybody, even a piece of chocolate. You know why?

PIEHLER: Well, you would have all gotten sick. You could have potentially died.

LANG: Strict orders. They would have been court-martialed. They told us that. And no cigarettes, nothing. Then, then the kitchen came up, and they had hot broth only, not even a noodle in there, just hot broth. That was soup, though, to us. Hot broth, and that’s how they nursed us back the first couple of days. Then the second day you got a noodle or two noodles. Then the third day a little more, a little more. Within a week you could eat a little piece of chicken. ‘Cause your stomach couldn’t take it anymore. That’s how they nursed us back.

PIEHLER: So you were—it sounds like you distinctly remember this order, because people were asking for chocolate.

LANG: That’s right. They had strict orders not to give any cigarettes, chocolate, or any kind of rations to anybody. Because that would’ve killed them. The stomach wasn’t up to it after five months. Yeah. So, we begged them. “No, no, no.” (Laughter) The lieutenants were around, you know, and people were around. And they had to obey the order. The guys kissed the tanks after they stopped. You wouldn’t believe it, what took place there. But, we were glad to be liberated. And then we—they collected us, took us in GI trucks and put us back in the rear. And they kept on fighting, they kept on going forward. They were there for an hour, the tanks.

PIEHLER: The tanks.

LANG: Then, they took them away. After the camp was liberated. All the guards left overnight

PIEHLER: So, when you were in the camp, you woke up and there were no guards?

LANG: No guards, not one.

PIEHLER: Not a single ...

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: No Commandant, no ...

LANG: Nobody, nobody. They all left. Some of them they found later on, the Commandants, and they put ‘em ...

PIEHLER: So, how did you meet the German who knew your family?

LANG: The night before we got liberated, the man came up to me. The night before we got liberated. He had changed his clothes. He must have had orders that [they were] leaving tonight, you know. So, the night before we got liberated, he came up to me, "I knew you." And they took off in the middle the night, and they left us in the barracks. We didn't know anymore.

PIEHLER: So, he told you while the Germans were still in control. He could have still turned you in.

LANG: Yeah. Sure he could have. Sure he could have, but he didn't.

PIEHLER: And that was the last you ever saw of him.

LANG: That's right. He died in the meantime. Because we didn't go over 'til '69, and we got liberated in '45.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: You know.

PIEHLER: Did you try to look him up when you went back?

LANG: Yeah. He died.

PIEHLER: He did die.

LANG: Yeah. The man was sixty-five, sixty-six. He passed on. It was nice of him, anyway. I knew the family. They weren't far away from us. You know, they lived far, not far away from the house. So, I knew the family. But he came over and he said, "You're Lang, you're Hugo, or Fred, I didn't know the name." He didn't remember the name one hundred percent. So, "I'm Hugo," I thanked him, in German, actually, and shook his hand, and I wished him well. Then he said to me, before he left, "I wished I would have been in your boat." (Laughter) In German, "I wished I would have been in your boat." That's what he told me. But, he had to go with the rest of them. Well, you know why. Otherwise they would have shot him.

PIEHLER: But he was clearly disillusioned.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Did you ever see any brutality, on the part of the guards, towards prisoners?

LANG: No, no. The only thing is what I told you.

PIEHLER: ... is when they tried to escape.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: You mentioned the guards were very old. It sounds like you had a bunch of guards who would rather have been elsewhere.

LANG: That's right, from the First World War. The men they used in the front, they're younger men. Couldn't afford to have ...

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah.

LANG: Somebody pulling guard duty; didn't make sense.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: But the old timers, they had a gun. And you know, if you wanted to flee or something, they shot you, too.

PIEHLER: What about the Commandant? Do you have any recollection?

LANG: Never met him.

PIEHLER: Never met him.

LANG: Never met him.

PIEHLER: He never came out to address the troops?

LANG: Nope, no, never. He had his designated people. You know, second in command or third in command, but you never saw the Commandant. Some of them they caught after the war. The guy that shot those prisoners in Malmedy?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: They hung him up, they strung him up, after the war.

PIEHLER: What about—you mentioned the twenty-two who were executed ...

LANG: Jewish boys.

PIEHLER: Where and when did that occur? What are your recollections?

LANG: That happened in ... February of '45.

PIEHLER: And that happened in your camp?

LANG: That happened in the camp. Yes.

PIEHLER: And when—how did you get wind that it occurred? I mean, was this ...

LANG: We heard the fire.

PIEHLER: You heard the execution.

LANG: Everybody talked about it. And we knew it was Jewish, Jewish boys were involved in it.

PIEHLER: Uh huh. Who perpetrated—because you mentioned the guards are really these old men. Who, who ...

LANG: Yeah, well. When you shoot somebody, you hear the fire to start out with, and you hear twenty-two shots and you can make out it must be the Jewish boys, and sure enough, we went over there, where they were housed ...

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: And they had stuck them in there [in a separate barracks], too.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: In the Jewish quarters, and they were gone. So, you take it for granted they got shot, because you heard the noise.

PIEHLER: And they were segregated because they were Jews.

LANG: Because they were Jewish.

PIEHLER: In some camps, I've been told, when there was unexploded bombs, Jews would be sent out to diffuse them. Did that occur in your camp?

LANG: No, no.

PIEHLER: You never had an incident ...

LANG: No, no, no.

PIEHLER: But instead you had the execution.

LANG: Absolutely.

PIEHLER: Was anyone ever held accountable for that at the end of the war?

LANG: That I don't know.

PIEHLER: Yeah? Testimony was never taken from you?

LANG: No, never, no. No, never. But it happens. That's why they rounded them up to start out with. They came from headquarters. Its all documented in the little piece of paper I gave you.

PIEHLER: Uh huh. Yeah. And that could have—if you hadn't thrown your dog tags away, that very well could have been ...

LANG: That's right. I wouldn't be here today. Believe me. I knew what was coming. I told you that before. I knew the Nazis, what they can do.

MRS. LANG: I'll be right back.

LANG: She's going next door to my daughter-in-law. (Laughter)

PIEHLER: Were there any prisoners who couldn't take it as a prisoner? In a sense, went crazy in camp? Did you ...

LANG: A couple of them. A couple of them went bananas, yes. They went crazy. But somehow the boys held on to them, so to speak. They nursed them, nursed them, and nursed them. "You're gonna be liberated soon, don't worry about it." You know, they set there. Didn't know what to do anymore. "You're in the same boat as we all are, so don't give up. Don't throw in the towel. It's just a matter of time. Be patient. We can live on a piece of bread a day, and a little soup." People can live on that, and we did. I lost forty-five pounds, like I told you before, and [I have] the pictures prove it. And we were lucky that they came up and liberated us. Lucky that the war didn't last longer.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: Because you lose more and more when you have a piece a bread a day and a little soup. If you call it soup. Bones for the horses, they used for soup. The good stuff, the meat and everything they [the Germans] ate, you know. You have the place there, too, where the hotel is. I gave you that.

PIEHLER: Yeah, no, it sounds like at one time, it was a wonderful resort.

LANG: This place here.

PIEHLER: The headquarters building.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: It sounds like it was a beautiful ...

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And there's a picture of ... the dining room in the hotel.

LANG: You don't have that? I don't know if I have that.

PIEHLER: That's okay, that's ...

LANG: The dining room is not important.

PIEHLER: Yeah, no, no, no, this ...

LANG: I even got the German version from that friend of mine, like I told you. If you want, you can take that along, and mail it back to me if you want to read it someday. And an American tank as a souvenir. After the war, they put up ...

PIEHLER: This is in ...

LANG: It's an [American] tank.

PIEHLER: Which town—this is where the camp was?

LANG: No, that's not where the camp was. That's Bastogne. Belgium.

PIEHLER: Okay. Uh huh.

LANG: The German ... people which took care of all the graves. That's where. (German phrase.) That's a Sherman tank. They left it there. Fenced it in and left it there as a souvenir from Bastogne. That's what I told you, we had a heavy battle. That's Belgium. Bastogne, Belgium. So, if you want to take this along, you can read it.

PIEHLER: No, no, actually I'd prefer not to.

LANG: Okay.

PIEHLER: You've given me enough to read.

LANG: That's the cemetery. Yeah.

PIEHLER: Were there any officers in your camp, or was it only enlisted personnel and NCOs?

LANG: No, the officers were kept extra. Separate.

PIEHLER: They were separate from the—segregated.

LANG: Sure.

PIEHLER: Did you have a ranking NCO in charge of the camp?

LANG: An American?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: We had a ... lieutenant, a first lieutenant, a white bar. I don't know his name anymore, though. He was in charge of the American prisoners that we had.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: In other words, if you had a complaint ...

PIEHLER: You went to him.

LANG: We went to him, and he went further. Like he wanted some medications, for different people. But they told him at headquarters, "We have nothing for ourselves. How can you ask for medications?" You know? "They are needed at the front." So we didn't get anything.

PIEHLER: Did you ... have an infirmary? Did you have an infirmary in your camp?

LANG: We had a little space in one of the barracks which a corpsman ...

PIEHLER: But no supplies?

LANG: Nothing there. Nothing there.

PIEHLER: Oh, if you were sick, did you have to turn out for roll call?

LANG: Yeah, yeah. They wanted you to come out to make sure you're still there. Oh, yeah. They were very strict about it. They checked the barracks, so nobody stays in the barracks while you have the roll call.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: Otherwise you get a gun butt in your back. "Move out! Get out! *Raus!*" Yeah.

PIEHLER: Did you have any malcontents or ...

LANG: Bitterness?

PIEHLER: Bitterness, or people really trying to prey on other prisoners?

LANG: An American prisoner?

PIEHLER: Yeah ... among American prisoners.

LANG: No, no, no. We all stuck together.

PIEHLER: Overall, you didn't ...

LANG: No, no, none at all.

PIEHLER: What did you dream about when you were in prison? Did you think a lot about food or ... (Laughter) I mean, what did you think a lot about?

LANG: Not girls, that's for sure! (Laughter) But food was on your mind all the time!

PIEHLER: Prisoners have—I've read accounts ...

MRS. LANG: (Whispering)

LANG: I can't hear you.

MRS. LANG: I don't want to talk about this thing ... (Laughing)

LANG: That's alright.

MRS. LANG: Well, anyway, tell him about the French people. There's a story there.

LANG: No, that's private. We don't have to tell that.

MRS. LANG: Alright. I said that because ...

LANG: We liberated a town in France, our company. And we were walking with the gun on the shoulder, walking up the street. All of a sudden, a Frenchman with a helmet on, a French helmet, stands in the doorway and he goes like this.

PIEHLER: He's waving you in.

LANG: He goes like this, so we looked around and I said to my buddy, "He's French. He's not German."

MRS. LANG: He couldn't speak English, of course.

LANG: So, let's see what he wants. So we walked up to him. He took us by the hand, because he didn't speak English, pulled us in the living room and there was a table set, with a white tablecloth, and all they had in those days was rabbits. We didn't mind to have a rabbit for dinner. A beautiful dinner, vegetables, everything that goes with it. And we ate the meal, and we get a knock on the door in the front, in front. We didn't have to serve. In other words, we [were] just about finished with the dinner. Somebody knocked on the door. "We're moving forward. Come out! Right away." Anyway, so a sergeant came, knocked on the door. We moved out. So they followed us to the area where we were stationed. You know, near the town. They had a couple cakes. They cut the cakes in little pieces, and all the soldiers came over and took a little piece.... And I gave the girl, it was a young girl, she was seventeen or eighteen years old, and gave them my address, my company address, and she wrote me. I wrote her back a couple times. And she got married over there, had a daughter, and my daughter and her are the best friends.

MRS. LANG: He's talking about the daughter from that daughter now, okay?

PIEHLER: The daughter from ...

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah.

LANG: We brought her over here twice. She was ...

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah, she was here. Three times she was here.

LANG: And I went over to France to say hello to them.

MRS. LANG: Yeah. We were with them together.

LANG: Her daughter spoke English, and she was [an] interrogator, and that's a true story. Believe me. And they still, we still write them every couple months and they write us back.

PIEHLER: So, in other words this was—you were just marching along and a family friendship developed.

MRS. LANG: That's why I thought it would be interesting.

PIEHLER: No, it's a great story.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah.

LANG: Actually, my daughter is very ...

PIEHLER: Very close ...

MRS. LANG: Yeah, like sisters in fact. Yeah, yeah.

PIEHLER: Really, so they—oh, okay, oh, that really is a wonderful ...

LANG: But that's private though. I didn't want to bring that up.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, but I thought it was an interesting story, because you talked about food, you know.

LANG: That's not going to be recorded. (Laughing)

PIEHLER: ... After you were liberated, when did you learn the full extent of the Holocaust? When did you have a full sense of how massive it was? I mean, you knew your family ...

LANG: Well, we heard some stories after we got liberated, from Jewish boys, you know. Because they got mail from home, too, after we got liberated. And, the word got around that most of the Jews in Germany went to the camps, and who knows how many came back, because in those days you didn't know. And that's how we found out that the people, the Jewish people got more or less killed. Including my parents, and uncles and aunts.

PIEHLER: When did you definitely learn that they were killed? Did you get official word?

LANG: Official word, I got—let me see. I think it was '44. After we got liberated.

PIEHLER: In '44?

LANG: '45, rather. After we got liberated.

MRS. LANG: '45! I was going to say! I thought it was May of '45 you got liberated.

LANG: '45, we got liberated. Yeah, it was in May or June, we got word. I think my sister ...

MRS. LANG: But I didn't know him then, of course.

LANG: Wait a minute, wait a minute. My sister knew the address from Fred.

MRS. LANG: That's right, yeah.

LANG: Because she wrote him a couple times. After she got liberated, she wrote Fred. That's what happened.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah.

LANG: So that's how we found out for sure.

MRS. LANG: And then the two brothers got the sister out, of course.

LANG: Yeah, Fred and I got my sister out in '47.

PIEHLER: When did you learn that she was, you mentioned ...

MRS. LANG: '46, not '47.

PIEHLER: When did you learn that your sister was alive?

MRS. LANG: I think in forty—you must, in September '45, I guess.

LANG: I don't know. When it comes to dates, I'm no good.

MRS. LANG: I know. That's why I ...

LANG: That's when she ...

PIEHLER: May '45.

LANG: Yeah, May '45.

PIEHLER: And how did you learn? Do you remember, how she—did she write you a letter or ...

LANG: She sent a telegram, my brother got the telegram that she's alive, and she's going back to my hometown ...

PIEHLER: So, she went back to the hometown.

LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: What happened to her there? Did she ...

LANG: What happened to her there, she went to the mayor of the town first. And she introduced herself, because, naturally, who comes back from a concentration camp? But she did, with some—with my cousins, and they demanded that they get back to the house which she owned, before they got taken away. And sure enough, they arranged—and the people had to move out, within a week. They moved out, and they [the sister and cousins] moved into the house, which they owned. They stayed there 'til we got the visa for her. That was a couple months afterwards. She came over in '46.

PIEHLER: It sounds like she was treated [well] when she got back to your hometown.

LANG: And no more problems.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: Because the [U.S.] military was in charge, more or less, of all the survivors. And they looked after her. They gave her some food, naturally. And they made sure they get what they owned before, and then some. So, they lived comfortable for a couple of months, 'til they came over here.

PIEHLER: Regarding your military life, did you ever have any contact with any chaplains when you were in service?

LANG: Well, we had Jewish chaplains, but ...

PIEHLER: You never.

LANG: We never went to *Shul*, or ...

PIEHLER: No, you never went to any ...

LANG: No, no. But we had Jewish chaplains in the service, you know that yourself.

PIEHLER: Did you ever go to a USO show?

LANG: Yes, we had one. It was in—let me think for a minute. Oh, sugar. It was just before we went overseas. It was in England, in Salisbury. Yeah, Salisbury. And Glenn Miller was there, with his band. And some actors, I don't know the names of the actors anymore, but they were

there. That was in Salisbury, the staging camp before we went overseas. That was the last time. Once or twice, I went there.

PIEHLER: How good were your medics, your combat medics? Did you ...

LANG: Good. Excellent. Yeah. They took care of us. If it was something they couldn't handle, they sent you back to the rear. Either you walked back on the shoulders of some other guys or you had a ambulance there, if you want to call it an ambulance, or a jeep. Whatever you had, that's how you went back.

PIEHLER: What was your closest call in combat? Do you remember? Does any particular story ...

LANG: Yes. I had one close call. Hürtgen Forest. It was in the Ardennes where they had that big battle.

PIEHLER: Yes.

LANG: And um, a shell exploded and I got a shrapnel which grazed my helmet. It grazed my helmet. I had a line on my helmet. I took it off afterward to look, look at it. There was a line across the helmet. That was the closest call I had. And thank God I didn't get hurt, but I had a mark on my helmet.

PIEHLER: How often did you fire your weapon? Do you remember?

LANG: Quite often.

PIEHLER: Quite often. You had no inhibitions about firing your ...

LANG: No, none at all. It was either him or me. That's the way I looked at it. Whenever I saw a German, that's when I fired my weapon. Within range, naturally.

PIEHLER: Yeah, within range.

LANG: Yeah, within range.

PIEHLER: Did you ever find people in your unit who were hesitant to fire? That were ...

LANG: No, not in my unit. No. No, they knew the same thing what I just told you. It's either me or him. You had no choice. Kill or be killed. That's it.

PIEHLER: Any recollections of being—I mean, you told this [story about] having your helmet grazed from shrapnel ...

LANG: Yes, yes I did. I did. It bounced off.

PIEHLER: Any close calls with small arms fire?

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: No. It was really artillery.

LANG: Yeah, it was the artillery. Artillery shell exploded. I think it was twenty-five or thirty feet away from us. And before we went back in that foxhole it grazed ... my helmet.... But that happened. That was the closest call I had. Otherwise, I wasn't wounded. Thank God. I had no other injuries.

PIEHLER: When you were in the field, how often would you get, say, a hot meal? And how often were you living on K and C rations?

LANG: Whenever they could afford a hot meal they brought it up to us. But during the battles ...

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: And the biggest one I was in was near Bastogne, like I told you before. Only cold rations. You couldn't even make a fire.

PIEHLER: Yeah, you had mentioned ...

LANG: You can't; you just can't. You eat it the way you get it, cold. It was winter. It was cold. And, uh, we survived. You can do it when you're young. It's not a big deal. But the hot meals, whenever they could come up with a kitchen, you know, with a field kitchen, they gave us hot meals. Especially turkeys around Christmas. Christmas and Thanksgiving we had hot meals. Commanding officer made sure that we get a turkey meal. Whenever possible, that we did.

PIEHLER: You had mentioned you spent two weeks [behind the lines] because of health, basically trench foot, elephant foot. How often did you get clean—did you keep a pair of socks next to you? I mean, how ...

LANG: No such thing. Not when you're on the front lines.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: No, sir.

PIEHLER: You didn't try to keep a pair of dry socks?

LANG: You got wet feet, it was raining. The water goes in the foxhole ...

PIEHLER: Yeah. You weren't able to ...

LANG: The water goes up to here, sometimes more. So there's no way you can prevent it.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: And you can't urinate, and they have to take you to the rear, fix you up again, and send you forward again. Give you new shoes, new socks, and make sure that you're in good shape again to go out there.

PIEHLER: And then you once again ...

LANG: Back again to your unit, sure.

PIEHLER: How much ...

LANG: They called it elephant foot. That's what they called it.

PIEHLER: How often, when you were in the line, from the time you landed in France 'til the time you were captured, how often did you get a hot shower? Do you remember any?

LANG: Oh my God, a hot shower? Well, you didn't get them in Belgium, and you didn't get them in Luxembourg. But we had some areas where they had hot water. In other words, they had a farmhouse or something which was taken, the water was still on. We washed ourselves there. But a hot shower we got, I would say, once a month, they took care of us. Whenever they could arrange it; whenever they could do it.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

LANG: They put a shower up for the guys, if you want to call it a shower. We had hot water, anyway, and soap, maybe once a month.

PIEHLER: Once, yeah, but probably was not more than that.

LANG: And, you go there and they bring you right back again. You don't stay there. You get clean uniforms and socks and shoes, and they send you right back again.

PIEHLER: Did you ever get a pass while you were ...

LANG: A pass I got once in England, and none in France or Belgium or Luxembourg. None. You didn't have time to go away and rest. That's out. No social life at all.

PIEHLER: ... You told a great story about this French man inviting you into his house for dinner, thanking you for the liberation. I've also interviewed veterans [that said], particularly in France, how one side of the town was welcoming Americans, while the other side was saying good-bye to the Germans. And pretty sadly about losing the Germans. What would you have said about the difference between the French, the Belgians and the Luxembourgers towards the Americans? Were all French glad to see you?

LANG: When you liberate a town that was under German domination for a couple of years, they are all for the Americans, or the English, or whoever liberates them, you know what I mean?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: But how they felt against the other people, I don't know. The Germans ...

PIEHLER: You always felt like you were always welcome.

LANG: Always welcome, always. I got pictures I could show you from the family, but that's immaterial. They're upstairs. We're still good friends today, after so many years.

PIEHLER: Did you do any trading with civilians?

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: You never traded cigarettes?

LANG: No, nothing.

PIEHLER: While you were ...

LANG: No, never. Some people did, some GIs did.

PIEHLER: Yeah, but you ...

LANG: Don't ask me where they got them, or how they got them. But I never did. Never. That's not my cup of tea.

PIEHLER: How long did it take you to regain your strength? You were sent to Camp Lucky Strike, I believe.

LANG: Yeah, we were sent there, and they boosted us up. And then they sent us to Atlantic City,

after we got back to the States, for two weeks. And then the discharge.

PIEHLER: Did you give any thought to staying in the military?

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: No. You really wanted to become a civilian?

LANG: Yeah. No.

PIEHLER: Did you take advantage of the GI Bill at all?

LANG: Yes, I did.

PIEHLER: What did you do with it?

LANG: I went to vocational school after the war, and I took life insurance out, which I had from the army, took them out for ten thousand dollars. Which was very cheap, six-fifty a month we paid. It came right out of the pay. And vocational school was the biggest thing for me.

PIEHLER: Where did you go to vocational school?

LANG: In Elizabeth, [New Jersey].

PIEHLER: What was the name of the school? Do you remember?

LANG: Edison Vocational School ...

PIEHLER: In Elizabeth.

LANG: In Elizabeth.

PIEHLER: What did you study?

LANG: Machinist.

PIEHLER: Machinist.

LANG: That's where I learned my trade, more or less. Whatever I did in the factory, like I told you before, you make one part and they're all the same. But that's where I learned my trade. I didn't want to be a *Kellner*, waiter, anymore. *Kellner* in German.

PIEHLER: Had you thought of going to college at all, for engineering or ...

LANG: Didn't have time. No money to study. I needed the money to live.

PIEHLER: So you didn't want to try to use the GI Bill for ...

LANG: No. But I worked myself up at Bristol Myers. I was working for thirty years with Bristol Myers, after that. And I became assistant head of research and development. And I had to go out for the company and buy machinery for the company. I went to Germany again to buy machinery. Blister pack machinery.

PIEHLER: When did you make your first trip to Germany?

LANG: The first trip I took in '69. Yeah.

PIEHLER: And that was for business.

LANG: Business, for Bristol Myers, yes.

PIEHLER: How did you feel about having to go to Germany?

LANG: It's a job. I go. And I had no problems in '69. No problems at all. We went to Ulm. Laupheim is the name of the town, which is immaterial. And we bought a blister machine, which makes little blisters for tablets, you know. I got some upstairs, if you want to see them. And the machine was over a million dollars, and I accepted it for the company. And I made sure they didn't screw up at the port, being shipped. It was shipped, and [is] running today, after all those years. Yes, they're still producing on that machine. You can't kill it. It's in Indiana where my son is.

PIEHLER: This was your first trip to Germany?

LANG: In '69.

PIEHLER: What were you expecting to find? Did you have any ...

LANG: I expected more ruins than I saw. Believe me.

PIEHLER: You were surprised at how rebuilt [it was]?

LANG: They rebuilt. Our town, my hometown, I say our town. My hometown had one attack. From a bomber, and one child got killed, that's it. One house and one child. And that was during night fighting. They dropped a bomb by mistake, I guess. And when the tanks came close to the town, they gave up. They had those, I don't know what you call them in English, but I know it in German, *Panzerfausts*. That's like a rocket. You go there and you hide yourself and when the tank comes close, you blow it up. And they had about four places where they had them around the city,

I found out afterwards. And they all gave up. The minute they saw the tanks. The minute they saw the tanks coming down, they gave up.

PIEHLER: You give the impression, I'm sure Gilya has followed up, that your town was not a very enthusiastic town for the Nazis.

LANG: No.

PIEHLER: I mean, there were some Nazis in the town, but ...

LANG: There were some Nazis in the town, yes.

PIEHLER: But it sounds like they were a distinct minority.

LANG: That's right, but they belonged to SA and SS, but they never bothered us.

PIEHLER: But it sounds like they were also the first to surrender. I mean, they surrendered as soon as they could.

LANG: Yes, they could, because they wanted to be safe, too. And a lot of them fled, they got away. Went to South America.

PIEHLER: The Nazis.

LANG: Argentina.

PIEHLER: So, I guess, did any of the Nazis remain in the town after the war? Do you know?

LANG: I didn't see any. I mean, let's put it this way. They were all not Nazis!

PIEHLER: Well, that was one of my questions, in terms of ...

LANG: They were all not Nazis! On the other hand, even as a school kid, you had to join the Nazi Party. You couldn't get away from it.

PIEHLER: Yes, for the Hitler Youth.

LANG: Hitler Youth, *Hitler Jugend*. And the girls, too. We had no choice. This fellow that sent me this—in Germany, postcard I showed you just now. He had to join 'em, too. He had to go in the army like I did. He had no choice. He was a school friend of mine. We played soccer together, but that's immaterial.

PIEHLER: Well, when you went over for the first time in '69, I mean, there were a lot of—a lot of

the people you were dealing with ...

LANG: No, in '69, when we went over, we walked through the town.

MRS. LANG: Yeah.

LANG: Like we wouldn't be there. We just walked through the town. We didn't want to see anybody. We had still hatreds in us, right?

MRS. LANG: Yes.

LANG: We walked around for two hours. We didn't meet anybody or see anybody I could talk to. I didn't want to talk to anybody.

MRS. LANG: No. You didn't want to talk to. I didn't know anybody, of course.

LANG: Yeah, I didn't want to talk to anybody in '69.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, right.

LANG: And then the next time we went over ...

MRS. LANG: By then, but that was different, the next time we went over there because the *Burgermeister*, mayor ...

LANG: Mayor of the town.

MRS. LANG: Mayor of this town, invited us to come over. And that was in '72, then. Was that in '72? No, that was, wait a minute ...

LANG: No, it was in '88.

MRS. LANG: Oh, that was in '88. That's right, yeah. And he invited us to come over and they would pay for everything for us. But we took our children along. We said we would pay for them, of course. Because we didn't expect them to do that. But that's when we met all these people, and his *Shul* and there's people—I mean, went to school with him, and that's when we got friendly with everybody then.

PIEHLER: You mentioned just earlier that there was a hatred in '69. I mean, would you have preferred not to buy this equipment from a German company?

LANG: If I had my choice?

PIEHLER: If you had your choice. If you had your way. I know you had no choice.

LANG: If you work for somebody, you do as you're told.

PIEHLER: Yeah, but if you personally, if you would have ...

LANG: I would not have.

PIEHLER: You would not have.

LANG: No, no, never.

PIEHLER: Did you feel odd? The people you were dealing with were your age. They could have been in the army. I mean, you didn't ...

LANG: Sure, sure. They could have been right across from me. I don't know.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: But, they were engineers. And when I went to Laupheim to accept the machine you're talking about ...

PIEHLER: ... Because you spoke impeccable German.

LANG: I did.

PIEHLER: That must have wondered what was your background.

LANG: They asked me, too. And I told 'em. I was in the army.

PIEHLER: You didn't tell, did you tell ...

LANG: Nothing else.

PIEHLER: That was it. You just told them. So they didn't even know if it was the American or the German army?

LANG: No, no. They assumed it was, no, it wouldn't be in the German army.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: But they assumed it was the American army.

PIEHLER: Did they know your background? Did they know, for example ...

LANG: They found out my background.

PIEHLER: They knew you were Jewish.

LANG: They—I lived in my hometown, yeah.

PIEHLER: Yeah, the people you were buying from.

LANG: In the meantime he passed away, too. The owner of the company. I knew him in Laupheim. So that was my job. I stayed over there for five weeks. 'Til the machinery ran the way I wanted it to run, so it could produce a hundred percent when it came here. It was a huge machine, blister machine. My son is running it now in Indiana. Still running, after all those years.

PIEHLER: You mentioned that '69 was your first visit, but then you went back in '72. What prompted you to go back in '72?

LANG: What prompted us to go back? We wanted to see our hometown again. Right?

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah.

PIEHLER: You went to Berlin?

MRS. LANG: Yeah

PIEHLER: It also sounds like you were prompted to go because of your family. You said family ...

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah. I mean, actual connection, yes. Yeah, that's right.

PIEHLER: Yeah, the couple that, in many ways, have been an aunt and uncle.

MRS. LANG: Yes, yes. It was like an aunt and uncle ...

PIEHLER: Yeah, even though not. But you called them aunt and uncle.

MRS. LANG: Right, yeah. Aunt and uncle, yeah.

(Tape paused)

PIEHLER: So, in '72, did you just go to Berlin, or ...

LANG: No, we went ...

MRS. LANG: No, no. We went then, for four [weeks] in Europe. We went all over.

PIEHLER: So, not just Germany.

MRS. LANG: No, we went to Berlin, all over Germany and we went ...

LANG: Switzerland.

MRS. LANG: Switzerland, we also went to France, and to visit these people and, yeah.

PIEHLER: You mentioned earlier, before we taped, that in fact you had a very nice visit in Berlin with your wife's ...

MRS. LANG: Right.

LANG: Yes.

PIEHLER: You, in fact, you told a wonderful story about how he had converted all his money. He had given all his money during the war, to gold.

LANG: Yeah, before the war.

PIEHLER: In fact, still had some in '72, buried underneath his garden [shed]. (Laughter)

LANG: He showed it to us.

MRS. LANG: I really don't know what happened to it altogether ...

LANG: Who the hell knows?

MRS. LANG: ... because he had a niece, and maybe the niece—she moved to Austria, then, and I guess maybe she took it. I don't know.

PIEHLER: So in many ways they, the family, stayed with him in Berlin. They really were able to regain their status after the war.

LANG: Yeah, yeah.

MRS. LANG: Oh, yes, they did. Yes.

PIEHLER: You mentioned earlier—both Jewish American veterans, but also just general veterans

have commented, to me, that there were no Nazis after 1945. (Laughter) I mean, and they say that with a varying sense of cynicism. What was your sense of that, particularly in '69 and '72?

MRS. LANG: Well, we weren't much in contact with anybody, really, that much.

LANG: We assumed there's still a lot of them running around.

PIEHLER: Yeah, that was your assumption.

MRS. LANG: Yes, but ...

LANG: Yes, but ...

MRS. LANG: We didn't encounter anybody really, you know. First of all, all your friends are the people who lived in that apartment house we lived in. That was bombed out. I couldn't even see the street anymore. So, I couldn't even talk to anybody, who I knew before. You know, Christain people, I'm talking about. But, so we only saw the people which, this couple. And then a few friends of them, which also were not Nazis either, really. Because they were never in contact with anybody, ... you know what I mean?

PIEHLER: I guess you never, when you walked to your hometown, say in '69 or '72, you didn't run into several people on the street [and] it was a Nazi. You know, there he is ...

LANG: I tell you the truth, in '69 we didn't want to talk to anybody. As a matter of fact, sometimes we went out of the way, to avoid that we talk to somebody, because we're still that bitter. It brought back memories, you know. And then, as time goes on, you ease up a little bit.

MRS. LANG: Well, you cannot hate all the time. It's impossible. I mean some people just wouldn't go over at all, Jewish people. But I feel you can't, should never forget. [But] you shouldn't go on hating. Especially the young people. They have nothing to do with that. You know what I mean?

LANG: The younger generation. The second generation, they call it.

PIEHLER: Well I guess, another comment I'd be curious for your thoughts on. My sense of Germany is, I've been there twice, is it's a very different country, than, say, the Germany of the 30's and 40's.

MRS. LANG: Oh, definitely.

PIEHLER: Culturally.

MRS. LANG: Definitely, definitely.

PIEHLER: I've often, the two times I've been there, I was struck by in some ways how Americanized Germany is ...

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah, oh yes, definitely. That's why I say you should not hate, especially these young people who have nothing to do with it.

PIEHLER: Well, 'cause I'm struck by, for example, how much American fast food is in Germany.

MRS. LANG: Absolutely, oh yes.

PIEHLER: Which is not the Germany of a few ...

MRS. LANG: No, no. Absolutely not.

LANG: You still have today; you have Nazis running around.

MRS. LANG: Oh, sure.

LANG: Different countries; Germany, too. Some of them survive ...

MRS. LANG: There are some idiots who don't believe there was a Holocaust. I mean this is ridiculous. I mean really.

LANG: (Referring to papers) Not that I want to sidetrack you, [but] she was in a camp is why, and when she came back she opened a museum in Brooklyn.

PIEHLER: In Brooklyn. Where you went back in 1988 on invitation of your hometown.

LANG: From the hometown.

PIEHLER: What was that like?

LANG: That was very friendly, very nice. Very stoic, I should say. I've got everything documented here, too. And the mayor spoke, knew the man actually. He spoke wonderful and he brought up the fact that we lived there 'til 1933, very comfortable. And then after that, after the Nazis came in power, things got changed, naturally. And then he naturally mentioned when our parents left the town. It was a long ceremony which I have documented here, too. It's all in German, if you want to see it. You can take it with you.

PIEHLER: It's striking that a lot of towns are very embarrassed about what happened.

MRS. LANG: Oh, yes. Yeah.

PIEHLER: This town, it strikes me you're saying that this town seems very embarrassed ...

MRS. LANG: Yeah. Very.

LANG: Sure, sure, because it never should have happened to start out with. You don't kill people just because they have a different religion. It's unheard of. You never had that 'til Hitler came into power. You never had that ...

MRS. LANG: The same thing happened in Yugoslavia. That's also with religion.

PIEHLER: This trip was also pretty important because you rekindled certain friendships again that you've maintained.

MRS. LANG: Oh, yeah, yeah.

LANG: Yes ...

MRS. LANG: Especially this what Hugo said before to you. He encountered the person in the tank, you can imagine, he was his best friend.

PIEHLER: And you've been in touch with him since.

MRS. LANG: Oh yes, very much. We still write each other, yeah.

PIEHLER: Has anyone from the town come here to visit?

LANG: Yes.

MRS. LANG: Oh, yes. The mayor of the town came twice.

PIEHLER: To visit you.

MRS. LANG: And when we lived in Chatham he stayed with us even, for a week. And then Hilda, the girl who was in school with him, all the time. She came three times too, and she stayed with us.

LANG: She just wrote a letter, "When are you coming back to see us again?" Just now, last week we got a letter.

MRS. LANG: And so this fella, we mentioned before and this singer, the girlfriend of ... Gilya, now they came a few times. So, like I said ...

LANG: They had a packaging show in Chicago.

PIEHLER: Okay.

LANG: Like my wife told you, he's has a big factory, one of them in Lafayette, which is close by. One of them in—where the hell is it now? I forgot the name of it. It's in New York State, a big factory there.

MRS. LANG: And a lot of people, friends of his, would have liked to come. They didn't like to fly. (Laughter) That's one of them that ...

(Tape paused)

LANG: The planes in the States.

PIEHLER: Yeah, Carl Stahl.

LANG: He manufactures all kinds of wire ropes, even for big boats. Anything in wires, he manufactures and puts together. Souvenir, the key chain. You can pull it out. But I have a copy of it.

PIEHLER: Thank you.... Have you been back to Germany since '88?

LANG: No, we went back, we went back with the kids ...

MRS. LANG: I forgot already. It was in '90, wasn't it?

-----END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE-----

LANG: They wanted to see Dachau, too. Showed them Dachau ...

PIEHLER: So, Dachau is where you went in '90?

LANG: Where my father—my father was there.

PIEHLER: When your kids were growing up, how much did you tell them about what had happened to you in the army and before that?

LANG: I told them whatever I could tell them, and they understood. That I went through hell, like so many other people.

PIEHLER: So, you never kept it from them?

LANG: No. Why should I?

PIEHLER: Yeah. 'Cause some veterans I've talked to ...

LANG: No, no. They asked me point blank, "Opa, I heard you were in the war? What can you tell us?" Especially Tori, [my granddaughter].... What was she, eleven?

MRS. LANG: Yeah. Twelve, at least twelve.

LANG: She asked me, and they teach them in school about the Holocaust. And she remembered that I was in the army, and she asked me the last time we were down there. "What can you tell us about it," and we told her. And Inge told them, too, what she went through. They were very interested in it, and they teach it in schools around here, too, now. Which is a good thing.

PIEHLER: I want to go back a little bit. You went to trade school, ... vocational school. How long were you in vocational school?

LANG: Two years.

PIEHLER: Two years. Full time?

LANG: No, after hours.

PIEHLER: After hours?

LANG: You can't afford full-time, you can't miss a day's pay, in those days.

PIEHLER: What was your first job after you got back? Where did you work?

LANG: The first job I had, in Stuart Machine and Tool Company.

PIEHLER: In '45, or did you go back to Stuart?

LANG: I went back. Yeah.

PIEHLER: And how long did you stay at Stuart?

LANG: I stayed, let see, '45 ...

MRS. LANG: Not before ... until '47.

LANG: '47. I think it was '47.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, I met you in—you weren't even there anymore.

LANG: No, '47.

PIEHLER: And after leaving Stuart, where did you go to? Did you ...

MRS. LANG: You went to ...

LANG: I went to Charm's Candy Company, in Bloomfield. They manufactured machinery for square candies, to package them. And from there I went to Bristol Myers.

PIEHLER: What year did you start?

LANG: In 1950.

MRS. LANG: In 1947, he started in Charms.

LANG: In 1950, I went to Bristol Myers.

MRS. LANG: Yeah. I know, but in '47 you were in—because I met my husband in '47 and he was in Charms then.

PIEHLER: Okay, since you brought that up, where did you meet? How did you meet?

LANG: My wife can tell you the story.

MRS. LANG: (Laughing) His friend, his boy friend, which I mentioned before from Ulm, they knew each other from Ulm. Way, way back. They met each other in '35 or '36, something like that. And when we came over here, my girlfriend and I came over to this country together in '47, in February of '47. And then his father, his friend's father made an evening once a year with all the people who came from near Süssen, and Ulm, and this vicinity. And that was a big party. And that's when I was invited to my girl friend, and she was in the meantime, engaged to this fella which she met when we came over here. Yeah, she was engaged then. Anyway, in December of '47, we met each other. So, at that party, and somehow it clicked right away. So, we went out together from then on, and we got engaged in June '48 and we got married in July of '48.

PIEHLER: Oh, and, um ...

MRS. LANG: That's how that went. (Laughing)

PIEHLER: So it was a chance meeting.

MRS. LANG: Yes. A chance meeting and because I happened to be there, be invited from my

girlfriend, and through my girlfriend saw him, and he was invited through his friend, of course. But when he told me he lives in New Jersey I thought—I didn't think it would even work, but it did. He had his sister living in New York, and I lived in New York then.

PIEHLER: Oh.

MRS. LANG: And that's when we got together.

PIEHLER: I should just add, for, partly for the transcriber's sake, that that story was told by Inge.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, something like that. But that's how ...

PIEHLER: When did you, when did you actually get married? What year, what month and year?

MRS. LANG: In July '48.

PIEHLER: July, what date?

MRS. LANG: 18 of July, '48.

PIEHLER: '48. Where did you get married? Was it in ...

MRS. LANG: It was in my brother-in-law's, his brother's house.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

MRS. LANG: In his sight.

PIEHLER: Uh huh. Did you have a rabbi or ...

MRS. LANG: Yes, we had a rabbi, and, but it was very small. Because it was only his uncle and aunt, two uncles and aunts from him ... which were here. And his sister, of course. And then, of course, the two girlfriends of mine, and his friend. Which we, you know, mentioned. So it was altogether, I think about fifteen people. That's all. Very small little wedding, and that's it. And we lived with them together in that house.

PIEHLER: Did you ever work?

MRS. LANG: Yes, I worked. I couldn't work anymore. I couldn't work what I did, as with the dentist, you know.

PIEHLER: Uh huh. You were a technician ...

MRS. LANG: It was impossible, because I would have had to make this over again. I didn't speak English that well. I couldn't do that. But I did know how to sew on an electric machine. Because I learned this also. I went to finishing school in Germany.

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

MRS. LANG: And that's how I know how to do this. So I went as a seamstress here, because I couldn't do anything else, of course. So, I also would have gone to college if ...

PIEHLER: If you—if it hadn't been for the war.

MRS. LANG: Right. I was good in school and everything. He was excellent in school. He would have been really something, really big. He worked himself up as a director of engineering.

PIEHLER: No, that's quite a feat.

MRS. LANG: Yes, yes.

PIEHLER: That's quite a feat. Where did you live when you first got married?

MRS. LANG: We lived in Hillside for four years. With my, as I said before, with my brother-in-law together in the same house, because we couldn't afford anything really. Not much money. And then, then we—this is our wedding picture.

PIEHLER: Oh. Okay.

LANG: We couldn't afford a hall. So we got married in my brother's place. That was it.

MRS. LANG: And we could not buy—of course, I had a blue dress, you know, and—but anyway, so that's where we lived first. Then we ... saved because we didn't have to earn. He didn't let us pay that much money.... And then, of course, we could afford—we would save money together and we could afford a house. And we bought a house in Union, a one-family house. We lived—the kids were born there. And we lived there for twenty-seven years.

PIEHLER: And then you moved to Chatham.

MRS. LANG: Then we moved to Chatham. We lived there for twenty years.

PIEHLER: Did you—to buy your first house, did you use the GI Bill?

LANG: Yeah.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yes.

LANG: Yeah. Oh yeah.

PIEHLER: What led you to take your job at Bristol Myers? I mean, you spent the rest of your career, most of your career there.

LANG: Thirty years.

PIEHLER: Thirty years.

MRS. LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: What led you to go to Bristol Myers? Why?

LANG: Next door to my brother lived a fellow, which was in charge of the printing department in Bristol Myers. He lived right next door to my brother. And my brother asked him, "Could you use—could you use my brother? But he doesn't speak the language yet. Would you be good enough, to inquire at the personnel department if you could use him?" So, he came back the day afterwards and he put in a good word for me, and sure enough, I went to the employment office, and they took me. Because he recommended me. He was a foreman....

MRS. LANG: Yeah. So he started.

LANG: They gave me the job, and I started out as a machinist in the machine shop. And I worked myself up to assistant head of research and development.

PIEHLER: Which is ...

LANG: In thirty years.

PIEHLER: Thirty years. What was your ... first big break? 'Cause you started out as a machinist. When did you ...

LANG: I liked the trade. I like the trade. I was curious to do things, to make things, manufacture things. And I liked machinery, you know?

PIEHLER: When was your first promotion to management?

LANG: To management, that was [July 28, 1952].

PIEHLER: What was your first management position?

LANG: Foreman.

PIEHLER: Foreman?

LANG: Yeah, foreman of the machine shop.

PIEHLER: And the machine shop was where?

LANG: It was in the building, in Hillside.

PIEHLER: In Hillside.

LANG: Yeah. Hillside, New Jersey.

PIEHLER: How long did you stay in the Hillside facility?

LANG: They closed the plant in—I stayed there ‘til they closed the plant, and then we moved someplace else. I didn’t quit the company. I went with the company to Bridgewater, if you know where that is.

PIEHLER: Yes.

LANG: But they closed the Hillside facility about ten years ago. They sold the place, and closed it and moved to Bridgewater, and from Bridgewater—we stayed in Bridgewater for about five years, and my son-in-law was in the shop there. He was a printer. From there, they opened a deli, which is immaterial, and I retired, from Bridgewater.

PIEHLER: From Bridgewater.

LANG: Yeah, in ‘88.

PIEHLER: In ‘88. So, you were there from 1950 to ...

LANG: From 1950 [to 1988], that’s right.

MRS. LANG: You were sixty-five years, when you retired.

LANG: Yeah. And I’m glad I did. But I liked the job, I loved to go to work in the morning.

PIEHLER: ... When did you become assistant director for research and development?

LANG: That was in—I can look it up, I have it upstairs. That was—I think it was in ... January [1980].

PIEHLER: Before that, what had been your title and duties?

LANG: Foreman in the machine shop, and then I got assigned to the engineering department. And I worked myself up in the engineering department, to assistant head of research and development. It's all concerning machinery. Buying machinery for the company and developing machinery, building machinery. And I got pictures of it to prove it.

MRS. LANG: In fact, you were sent to Germany twice, to buy machinery.

LANG: I told him that ...

PIEHLER: What type of—you mentioned the one machine in that '69, you purchased. What type ...

LANG: Blister machine. I show you some samples. No, stay here. I'll bring it down.

(Tape paused)

PIEHLER: You mentioned purchasing a machine. You've just brought down a sample of the contracts. A sort of machine that puts it into separate little tablets, capsules. Were you involved in creating any new machinery? What types of machinery would you ...

LANG: Ban filler. That's a liquid. I was involved in that. And I got pictures to prove it. (Laughter) If you want to see it, I'll bring it up. You've got to see my machine shop downstairs before you leave.

PIEHLER: I should. I would like to.

LANG: It's there. And my brother and I built machinery. We sold it on the side, after hours.

PIEHLER: So, you had some business work on the side?

LANG: No, not anymore. I had it.

PIEHLER: Not anymore, yeah.

LANG: We worked 'til ten o'clock at night. But for Bristol Myers, whatever came along, we developed with the engineers, and we worked it out electrically and mechanically. It worked out pretty good for us.

PIEHLER: It sounds like you also liked Bristol Myers.

LANG: I do. I mean, I did. It was like a home to me, after thirty-eight years. And I got letters from

the president of the company thanking me for the service. I can show you that, too, if you want to see it. Believe me, thirty-eight years I put in there ...

MRS. LANG: In fact they wanted to keep him even after—what do they call it? They wanted to keep you.

LANG: Yeah, they told me come in as a consultant.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, a consultant.

LANG: Four times a week, but nothing doing. My goal was to retire at sixty-five. We got enough to live on, and that's what I want. And I'm glad I did. Some people work. A friend of mine is eighty-two years old. He goes to Brooklyn every day.

PIEHLER: Still ...

LANG: Eighty-two years old, and he doesn't need the money. Just to get out of the house and go there.

PIEHLER: So, you didn't have that problem?

LANG: No.

MRS. LANG: No. (Laughter)

PIEHLER: What have you done since you've retired? It sounds like you've enjoyed it a lot.

LANG: I'm active everyday. I don't watch television during the day. I always have something to do. Then we go in the store for my daughter and son-in-law three times a week. Four-thirty in the morning.

MRS. LANG: We get up quarter after four, three times a week.

PIEHLER: So, you—that's why when I called about you working in the morning ...

MRS. LANG: Five o'clock we go in, until about eight-thirty.

LANG: We're busy every day, my wife and I.

PIEHLER: Yeah, if you're getting up at ...

LANG: I'm glad we can do it here.

MRS. LANG: But only three times a week, and only until eight-thirty. That's enough already.  
(Laughter)

PIEHLER: That's a big help to your daughter.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yes, sure it is.

LANG: We try to help as much as we can.

PIEHLER: You mentioned you have two daughters ...

MRS. LANG: No, one daughter, and one son.

PIEHLER: One daughter and one son.

LANG: One daughter and one son.

PIEHLER: One son is an engineer for Bristol Myers, and your daughter is ...

LANG: She's got a deli.

PIEHLER: A deli. And she also worked for Bristol Myers first.

MRS. LANG: Yeah.

LANG: Yeah, she did.

MRS. LANG: Yeah. She worked there for eighteen years. She was—about ten years she worked as an office manager, for the president of the company, in fact.

LANG: My son got twenty-nine years with the company.

PIEHLER: ... Your son went to college?

LANG: He went to trade school.

PIEHLER: Trade school, too.

LANG: Oh, yeah. Oh yeah.

PIEHLER: And your daughter, did she go to college?

MRS. LANG: No, she went to ...

LANG: She went to finishing school.

MRS. LANG: She went to finishing school, secretarial. Nancy Taylor Secretarial School. They both didn't want to go to college. We had the money. We said ...

LANG: "Go to college."

MRS. LANG: They didn't want to go.

PIEHLER: Neither one wanted to go to college.

MRS. LANG: No, they didn't want to go. It was that time when the flowers started.

LANG: Flower girls.

MRS. LANG: You know when [the sixties]. They didn't want to go.

LANG: They didn't care for that. They figure we can make it. My son told me—we offered them to go to college. He said to me, "Dad, you made it with your hands, I can make it with my hands." That's what happened. "I don't want college." Finished. The same with my daughter. We sent her to finishing school. We were lucky to send her to finishing school, typing and shorthand and all that garbage. And she worked for Bristol Myers for how many years?

MRS. LANG: Eighteen years, she worked.

LANG: Yeah. And then they decided, when he got laid off, my son-in-law got laid off. They decided to go into business for themselves. That's when they started the deli. That's eleven years ago.

MRS. LANG: Well, the grandchildren will definitely go to college because they are excellent in school. They make only As. They're on the honor roll continuously. She is now in second year of high school, and this one is going to start junior high school. They are excellent in school. My daughter-in-law was a registered nurse. She works as a nurse in the hospital. So, she made sure that the kids gotta go to college! (Laughter)

PIEHLER: Did you stay in touch with anyone you served with after the war? You never—you've never gone to a reunion?

LANG: No, no, no.

PIEHLER: Did you ever join any veterans' organizations?

LANG: No. That I didn't do. They sent me letters, to join. One of them was in Newark. Then the ... VAF [VFW], Veterans of Foreign Wars. I didn't care for it anymore. I had too much to do. And now the time has come, I don't even go to Quarter Century Club anymore, which we had in Bristol Myers. They still have it every year. It's about an hour and a half away from here. So, I don't want to go, and come home [at] two o'clock in the morning. No, I don't need that anymore. Besides, I don't like to drive at nights anymore. My sight is not that good any more, not as sharp any more, as it was before. I wanted to show you this here. This is from the German, in the same boat as you are. Trying to get information from me. I have a letter here from him, requesting information, and this is what I sent him. On the back. It's interesting.

PIEHLER: I guess ...

LANG: You can take it with you, if you want.

PIEHLER: Is this a copy?

LANG: That's the original one ...

PIEHLER: Let me not take the original.

LANG: You can have it. You can send it back to me.

PIEHLER: No, I prefer, particularly since you've made a copy.

LANG: There it is.

PIEHLER: Can I keep this copy or ...

LANG: You can keep it. That's why I made it.

PIEHLER: Okay, let me ...

LANG: You can keep it. And then I want to show you this, yet. I don't know if you ever saw any Jewish money from the concentration camps.

PIEHLER: No, I haven't seen ...

LANG: Gilya was very impressed. I just want to show it to you. That I won't give it to you.

PIEHLER: No, no.

LANG: That, it came from my sister. Julia took it along and she made copies of it, too. See, Jewish money, they gave them, in the concentration camp. And then I want to show you one more

thing, if I may. When we got back to Süssen again—you can have this.

PIEHLER: Thank you.

LANG: When we came back to our hometown, we went to the cemetery, and we saw the signs for the people which died during the war. And my parents, and my uncle—my mother is down below, which is immaterial—they didn't—*Gefallen* means you died in the war, *Gefallen*. Those are memorials for people which died in the war. But they didn't die in the war. And I raised a stink about it in Süssen and guess what they did? What the township did? They erected a stone. That's yours if you want to keep it.

PIEHLER: Oh, thank you.

LANG: You can read it at your convenience. I made that up for you, too. And for my hometown, too. So, at your leisure you can read it. If not, throw it out, but I wanted to show you that. They erected a stone for my parents and everybody which got killed in our hometown, it's all on there and that's the speech they gave. Here is the speech you can take along, too, when they unveiled the stones.

PIEHLER: It's interesting that they did acknowledge them, even on the larger—they didn't just ignore them.

MRS. LANG: Yeah.

LANG: I raised a stink about it, because they weren't killed in the war. They were murdered.

PIEHLER: Yeah, no, I know.

LANG: They made it up for me, no problem, and I wanted to pay for it even, when I initiated it. And the mayor of the town said, "Nothing doing. That's on us." And they paid for it. Yeah. So, that's all I have. Unless you have something else. [To prevent] denying the Holocaust, we save all that stuff. You saw what they were doing.

PIEHLER: You mentioned talking to your children about the war and your experiences. I assume you've told them ...

MRS. LANG: Yes, definitely.

PIEHLER: What about others who knew you, say, your colleagues at work? What did they know about your background?

MRS. LANG: Not much.

PIEHLER: Did they know you were [Jewish]?

LANG: No, no, I never publicized it.

PIEHLER: You never spoke to school groups? Did you ever speak to any school groups or synagogue groups or ...

MRS. LANG: No, not really. No.

LANG: We had friends that wanted to do the same thing what you're doing, and I wouldn't let them do it, because it brought back memories, but I do it for Gilya's sake, and you were good enough to come up here and interview me, which is okay. But on the other hand, who wants to see this in ten, fifteen, twenty years from now? It's all—I know it's all recorded, but nobody is going to see it. It's just laying there, or it will be in a folder.

PIEHLER: It will be put on the Internet, so you would be surprised who sees it, when it's on the Internet.

MRS. LANG: Oh, it's going to be in the Internet?

PIEHLER: Yeah, my plan is to put it on—I can even show you the interviews. Do you have a computer at home?

LANG: No.

MRS. LANG: No, my daughter has ...

PIEHLER: I should give you the website of my Rutgers [Oral History Project].

MRS. LANG: I tell you the truth, now. I wanted one, but—my daughter has a computer, and she's on the Internet.

PIEHLER: Oh, okay, I can show you where.

LANG: When the time comes you can probably give us the information ...

PIEHLER: Yeah.

LANG: That we can do.

PIEHLER: Well, I guess, I've asked you about life in America, your first reactions. What have you thought of American society since ...

LANG: We've enjoyed everything. There is nothing we didn't enjoy. We were glad to be alive, to enjoy the life in America. And we still do. I would fight for this country again if I had to. Believe me.

PIEHLER: Did either of your children serve in the military?

MRS. LANG: No.

LANG: No.

MRS. LANG: Our son was on the—what do you call it? The numbers that time—was it Korea?

PIEHLER: Vietnam. Vietnam.

MRS. LANG: Vietnam. Korea! What am I thinking?

LANG: That was in the fifties.

MRS. LANG: Vietnam, of course. I meant to say Vietnam, of course.

LANG: He had to report ...

MRS. LANG: Yes, yes, he had to report, but thanks God, he was in a very high number. So, he was never ...

PIEHLER: Never called.

LANG: No.

MRS. LANG: Never drafted. Thanks God. He wasn't drafted. And our son-in-law was already older at that time.

PIEHLER: Now you've joined a synagogue.

MRS. LANG: I did. When the kids were young, we belonged to a reform synagogue in Elizabeth. All these years, I—I used to go even Saturday mornings and I took the children along with me. And on big holidays, of course.... But then when they were older, when they got married, let's put it that way, we moved, so we—I let it go. Now we don't.

LANG: Yeah, but, tell him about Kenny. What he's doing now.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, I did just mention, before, yes.

LANG: Yeah? He's a [reborn Christian] now.

MRS. LANG: Well, he—reborn Christians also believe in the Old Testament. That they do. I just don't like ... what I mentioned before to you. Because I mentioned about Jesus, when you die, you know. But, that I don't like, but otherwise that religion believes in the Old Testament and the new one, so she, my daughter-in-law, knows more about the Old Testament than I even know. Don't say that! (Laughter)

LANG: She's a hundred percent into it.

MRS. LANG: She's very much in it, yeah. So, she goes every Sunday to church.

LANG: She asked my wife to send her the recipe to make a [food?].

MRS. LANG: Yeah, now she wants; she does everything. She does the Jewish holidays ...

PIEHLER: She's in a sect that does both—sort of a New Israel.

MRS. LANG: Yes. Yeah, right. Yeah, yeah.

PIEHLER: Does she know Hebrew?

MRS. LANG: No.

PIEHLER: She doesn't know Hebrew?

MRS. LANG: No, but she knows the Bible from the back to the forth. From, I mean, everything.

LANG: My son was bar mitzvah, now.

MRS. LANG: Yes.

LANG: He was bar mitzvah.

MRS. LANG: So was our daughter.

LANG: In Germany. No. What am I saying, not Germany!

MRS. LANG: Not Germany, here in America.

LANG: Here in America.

MRS. LANG: He was bar mitzvah, yeah.

LANG: I was in Germany. (Laughter) I was bar mitzvah in Germany, in Göppingen. Yeah.

MRS. LANG: Well, of course.

PIEHLER: There was a question right on the tip of my tongue, but now I ...

LANG: About religion?

PIEHLER: No, it was on a related topic.... It'll come to me. That's okay.

MRS. LANG: I'm sorry.

PIEHLER: No, no. (Laughter)

LANG: Anything you want to know? Anything you're interested in, I'll be glad to finish it.

PIEHLER: Well, is there anything I forgot to ask you? You sort of said you ...

LANG: No, you were pretty thorough. (Laughter)

PIEHLER: Now I remember. Your sister coming over.

MRS. LANG: Yeah.

PIEHLER: I think your wife told me when you were I think chasing the squirrel, she became quite religious.

MRS. LANG: Oh, yes, yes.

LANG: She became religious in the camp.

PIEHLER: Yes, she became ...

LANG: We were not religious, as I explained to you before. We had *Shabbat*, we put the candles on, we had the Milchtig and Fleischtig towels. That we had at home. But my sister when she met this, her former husband, her husband in camp, they were out.... They [were] gonna go all the way. And they did. Believe me, they did.

PIEHLER: They became, yeah, your wife said, they became Hasidic.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah.

LANG: So are the sons. They had two sons. They're both rabbis and they went all the way, and when they came to us, they brought their own food. We couldn't do a thing for them except give them something to drink.

MRS. LANG: Yeah. I mentioned that before.

LANG: It had to be kosher, on the bottle, before they would drink it. Yeah.

PIEHLER: It sounds like your family has the full [range] ...

MRS. LANG: But, my brother, my brother-in-law I should say, wasn't like that. He wasn't at all. She had the Jewish—but she was also like we [were], reformed.

PIEHLER: Yeah. Reformed.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, yeah. And my parents, my father was the first one, and second, my mother was not kosher or anything. We just ...

LANG: And we respected them. We accepted it. If that's what they wanna be, that's what they wanna do.... That's what they did. We respected them. My sister passed away in December. You probably know that by now, too. She had the stroke, a couple strokes, and she couldn't survive it.

PIEHLER: Well, I guess, one inevitable question, I just figured to close it, if you could reflect: there's been a whole discussion—I'm sure Gilya has raised this about the guilt of the average German during the twenties and thirties. What do you think of—I mean, there's a whole range of views, and ...

LANG: Well, the only thing I could make out, that the Versailles Treaty, which they signed in 1918, didn't sit well with the Germans.

PIEHLER: Mm hmm. Did it sit well with your father?

LANG: Well, he had to go, too, just like I did. He had no choice. When they call you, you go. But, I think that was the revenge for 1918. And naturally they lost the war in '45. Because we were much more powerful than they were, even though they tried that last offensive. But even—I could say even today, even today, you still have some Nazis running around all over the world. Not only in Germany.

MRS. LANG: Well, it's all over. I mean, you cannot—it's here in America, there, too. I mean, let's face it.

LANG: The hatred is there.

MRS. LANG: But, it had a lot to do with the time with Hitler, of course. He hated Jewish people. I don't know why, really, but there was something with him.

LANG: Nobody knows why.

MRS. LANG: But ...

LANG: Something I have here. I have so many papers I don't know where I put them now.

MRS. LANG: What are you looking for?

LANG: What took place after the war. This is not far away from my hometown. They saved Jewish people. Goyims.

MRS. LANG: There were a lot of good people around. I mean, they just couldn't do anything. I mean, it was the same like [with] my parents.

PIEHLER: I guess the question is—there is one historian [who] has argued, you just scratch a German, you found a Nazi, inevitably.

LANG: Here. If you look—if you look, yes, you'll find them.

PIEHLER: But, not every German. In other words ...

MRS. LANG: No, no. You cannot say ...

PIEHLER: You wouldn't say that even in the thirties, just scratch a German and you find a Nazi. That you wouldn't ...

MRS. LANG: Yeah. No, no.

PIEHLER: Given your experiences.

LANG: This took place in Berlin. When they burned all the books. You probably heard about that, I'm sure.

PIEHLER: Yes.

MRS. LANG: Well, that was *Kristallnacht*, you know, the ...

LANG: Here, Nazis next door. Some of them live next door to you. You don't know. I saved all that stuff. This is from Germany, you can take that along. Interview in Berlin. That's only a year old. There is some of the sayings of the Germans nowadays.

PIEHLER: I guess—have you ever been to Israel?

LANG: Yes.

MRS. LANG: Yes, yes, we've been. There we went in '79. We were there for three weeks. What you call Israel in depth ...

LANG: We enjoyed it.

MRS. LANG: And we saw all Israel. We were all over Israel. We were on the Dead Sea. We were on the Masada. We were in Tel-Aviv, of course. We flew to Tel-Aviv, and we were a few days in Tel-Aviv, we went to Haifa, and we were all over. Let's put it that way.

LANG: Yeah.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, we were in that, too, of course. Yeah, so.

LANG: We enjoyed it.

MRS. LANG: It was nice [at] that time. There was no problem that time at all, by coincidence. We could even—we wanted to go to Egypt, even. Or over to Jordan. In fact, we saw Jordan, a little bit. But we let it go then, so—in fact, my daughter-in-law and our son want to go now. That is from their religion, from the church. They will go in September. They're going to be, [in] September, twenty-five years married—coincidental—and they're gonna go for ten days.

LANG: Want to take this along?

PIEHLER: No, let me—that's your only copy, and I don't ...

LANG: No, that's not the only copy. I have other ones.

PIEHLER: I'll take a copy, then. That would be great.

LANG: Yeah. That's the *Shul* we went to.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, we liked Israel a lot. It was nice, it was really beautiful. We had a nice guide. We went with a group, of course. We had a terrific guide. And he showed us everything. We went to Jordan River and ...

LANG: ... A lot. Jordan River.

MRS. LANG: Yeah. We went swimming in the Dead Sea. (Laughter) Swimming! I mean, you

can't swim there, of course.... We went all—it was really beautiful. Yes, it's a beautiful country. It is amazing, how it is, what they did to this country. It's such a shame that they cannot have peace there. Because they could live so well together, they could learn from each other. I mean, I don't hate the Egyptians or ...

LANG: Arabs.

MRS. LANG: Arabs. I mean, it shouldn't be any hate, really. I'm telling you, they could learn from each other. They could learn from them and they could learn from them whatever they know. But they cannot make peace, somehow.

LANG: They could live in peace, if they wanted to ...

MRS. LANG: I don't know why. It's a shame.

LANG: A guy I saw on television last night. The Iraqis are looking for volunteers to fight against Israel. That was on the Channel Two News. They're looking for volunteers. They want to send them against Israel. Send them to Arab countries and they'll fight with them. That's what it's coming to, now.

MRS. LANG: It's a shame really. It's a crying out shame. It's not because I say I'm Jewish and I love Israel. It has nothing to do with it. I mean, I don't understand why people can't live in peace. You know what I mean? It is unreal.

LANG: In my theory ...

MRS. LANG: Unbelievable.

LANG: ... you always will have wars. Here or there, or wherever it happens. You have it in Kosovo again.

MRS. LANG: Now, look at Yugoslavia, what happened there. Isn't that horrible? ... It's a horror. Now look at—I mean, what is it called?

LANG: Iraq?

MRS. LANG: No, the other one. In England.

LANG: Iran?

MRS. LANG: Iran? No.

LANG: What do you want to say?

MRS. LANG: Next to England ...

LANG: Ireland?

MRS. LANG: Ireland. I couldn't think of the name for a minute. Ireland. Now look at this, those are Christians. These are Christians, who fight together. Just because you're Catholic and Protestant? For thousands of years, they're fighting with each other. Now, is this necessary? It isn't necessary. There are Christians who fight with each other. It's ridiculous.

LANG: Christians and Catholic.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, that's what I mean. I mean, it's so ridiculous, I'm telling you. But what are you going to do?

LANG: I even got Mr. Spielberg, see?

PIEHLER: Uh huh.

MRS. LANG: Well, anyway ...

LANG: I save all that stuff.

MRS. LANG: That's how it goes in life, and people will still always be like that. They just have to fight with each other. They can't live in peace somehow.

LANG: What is your outlook?

PIEHLER: On which ...

LANG: On this part, on this—what we're talking about. What do you think will happen to Israel?

PIEHLER: I'm not—I wish I knew for sure. I mean, I ...

LANG: Nobody knows for sure.

PIEHLER: Yeah, I mean—I think militarily, they'll have to give up much of the West Bank, just because it's indefensible.

MRS. LANG: Yeah, they will. We thought of that, too, already, yeah.

PIEHLER: Many of the settlements are just indefensible ...

MRS. LANG: But they don't want to give up Jerusalem. But they want Jerusalem, too.

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah, that's—that is ...

MRS. LANG: That is a shame, you know? I mean—well, it's holy to all them. Christian, Muslim and Jews. It's holy for three religions ...

LANG: What they want and what they are going to get is two different things.

MRS. LANG: But Jerusalem, they don't want to give up, but what you just said, that they should do, I agree with that. But well, I—but you give 'em a little finger, they want the whole hand. That's the problem. I think if they would give this up, what you just mentioned, they want something else again. They want really all Israel, let's face it.

PIEHLER: No, I think there's some truth to that. I think ...

MRS. LANG: They want everything back again, and this is ridiculous. I mean ...

LANG: He's coming over [to the US] I think today. Ariel Sharon.

MRS. LANG: But now he's—he's a little bit—very tough man.

LANG: He was a general, a big general in the '67 war.

MRS. LANG: Well, listen, what are you going to do? I mean, it's a shame, but ...

LANG: That's where he made his name, in '67. In five days eliminated the Egyptians.

MRS. LANG: So many people died for nothing, so many people died for nothing all the time. It is such a shame ...

LANG: They still do.

MRS. LANG: I mean, on each side, you know. You think—the Arabs, too. I mean, it's a shame, you know, what's going on. But ...

LANG: [Do] you people talk about that in you—in Tennessee, in your studies?

PIEHLER: Yeah, I mean, I teach ...

LANG: About Israel?

PIEHLER: I don't as much, because I do American military history, but Gilya Schmidt definitely

does, and so does ...

LANG: She's in ...

MRS. LANG: Uh huh.

PIEHLER: And we actually have an assistant professor who does Jewish Studies in the history department, too.

MRS. LANG: I see.

LANG: I have to ask her what she thinks. What she thinks of the outcome. What's gonna happen.

MRS. LANG: Well, nobody really knows. I mean, nobody can really tell what's going to be.

LANG: You assume it, that's all you can do. What's gonna be.

MRS. LANG: Everybody tries so hard and everything, and it just doesn't work somehow.

PIEHLER: Well, let me officially thank you on tape for really ...

LANG: You're quite welcome.

PIEHLER: I really appreciated it.

MRS. LANG: Oh, that's okay

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

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