

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

AN INTERVIEW WITH
RICHARD THOMAS ALEXANDER JR.

FOR THE
VETERANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
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INTERVIEWED BY
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PIEHLER: We had a little equipment snafu which is—I'm glad to have my assistant Mark Boulton be able to replace it. Let me begin by saying this continues an interview that was first begun on April 16th, 2003 with Mr. Richard Thomas Alexander Jr. and the first interview was conducted at his home in Canton, North Carolina, in Haywood County. This follow up—that interview was conducted by myself Kurt Piehler and Jake White who's now in active service with the U.S. Army, and last I heard was at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. This follow up interview on October 1st, 2004, at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee, is with Kurt Piehler and ...

PUACA: ... Brian Puaca.

PIEHLER: And Brian Puaca is here today to present a paper at the War, Diplomacy, and Society Colloquium and he'll present a paper, *The Pen is Mightier than the Sword: Student Newspapers and Democracy in Post War West Germany*. We left off your interview—we did it all day. (Laughs) And we just—we didn't even really get you home. We were still sort of in Germany and I think you were sort of heading home, but I thought we would do, since Brian is doing a dissertation on—is it fair to say German—sort of post-war reconstruction of German education ... and the role of the allied military government in that. Is that a fair characterization?

PUACA: Sure.

PIEHLER: I thought we would start off—because your father had a leading role in the American military government—sort of start of by talking—Brian was going to start off by asking some questions about your father and things I might have missed in the interview. And then specifically his role that you know of—in a sense the hearsay evidence and things you know a lot about, not only of your father but other ... protégées that he had around him. So I'm going to turn over the interview to Brian.

PUACA: Thank you. Well maybe briefly you could just recap how your father ended up getting to OMGUS (Office of Military Government, United States) in Germany after the war, but specifically I was curious about how your father felt, having all this background in German education, about the prospects for change, and also what maybe his biggest priorities were when he arrived.

ALEXANDER: Well my father Thomas Alexander was a student at Columbia years ago and after he finished his undergraduate work at Columbia he went to Turkey to teach at Robert College there in a Presbyterian-supported school north of Constantinople. He was there for one year and after that year, which was 1910/11—is that close enough?

PIEHLER: Yeah, you're fine.

ALEXANDER: He spent the second year 1911 to 1912 in Germany where he taught—I think it was English and whatever they had him do in Stettin up there on the Baltic. And at the same time while he was there in Germany he spent some time in Jena and Weimar and was really studying the German, the Prussian—this was before World War I—the Prussian educational system—and this eventually became the topic of his doctoral dissertation at Columbia. He came

back—I think it was after the 11/12 (1911-1912) school year. Continued his work there at Columbia on his advanced degree. In 1914 he had not yet published his dissertation but he had finished all of his course work and he got a job on the staff of the newly reorganized George Peabody College in Nashville. He started working there in 1914. Twelve years later in 1924 he moved back to Columbia as a member of the International Institute and he was the German expert in this group of people who were interested in comparative education and international education. Dr. Paul Monroe was head of the Institute and his specialty was the Pacific area. Dr. George Counts was the Russian specialist. My father was the German specialist. Ruth McMurry was the French. Dr. Isaac Kandel was the British. Del Monzo was Central America and Spanish—Latin America. In that capacity my dad became very active going back and forth to Germany, taking students back and forth, from 1924 until just before World War II. One of his students, John W. Taylor, a student that my father had at the Peabody Demonstration School—he was sort of one of my dad’s protégées. My dad helped him through Columbia. Eventually John went to Europe with my mother, my sister, and me. Anyway, I saw him as an older brother. John spent his first year in Germany [in] 1925-26 and then continued with the New College Foreign Study Program for some years in the mid and late ‘30s. John eventually took a position with LSU in Baton Rouge. He was executive assistant to the President Smith, the gentleman that went to jail because of a problem—he used university bonds to—you never heard that story? [Ed. – President Smith was involved in financial speculation on the cotton market]

PIEHLER: No, no. (Laughs)

ALEXANDER: You ought to read it. It was the Huey Long days.

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah.

ALEXANDER: President Smith had been a student and friend of my father at Columbia and a very good family friend and the Smiths—they had children about the age of [me and] my sister. But he got involved with the stock market or cotton market or something, and he used some retired negotiable bonds that belonged to LSU as collateral. Eventually the market collapsed and the people holding the bonds found out that they were not his bonds to use. Well anyway, he spent some time in both state and federal prison. But anyway, while John was at LSU he worked there in an administrative capacity as an assistant to the president. War comes along and John gets some information about military government and he signs up for training—specialized training in military government. I believe it was—where was that in? I thought in Virginia someplace where they train these—Fort Belvoir or something like that.

PIEHLER: It sounds familiar but ...

ALEXANDER: Anyway, I don’t where it was but John went into the service shortly, well shortly after the war started, before I went into the service actually. I knew he was in the Army and the next thing I heard—next time I heard from him he was in North Africa with some kind of an occupation area somewhere in Tunisia. And eventually John was assigned to [General] Lucius Clay in England where they were organizing the team that was going to go in to occupy Germany, and John became a member of that team. I’m not quite sure when John went into Germany, but he was in the Paris office of General Clay’s group. I didn’t see him there. I left—

I was there for a few days and I did leave a note at his office, and this was just a few days before the Germans surrendered [on May 7, 1945]. Eventually I came home in September 1945, and John did try to get me into his outfit. I think I mentioned that before. But I wasn't interested in it because I was due to come home. I had high points and I knew that if I joined the outfit, his outfit, I might be stuck and they would say, "Well you're essential because you have this special assignment." So I turned it down. I wrote John and said, "Call off the dogs. I don't want to go." I don't know just when the military government went into Berlin, but it was sometime I think in June of '45, perhaps at the time when the Potsdam Summit was held. John was one of the main people in the education branch. Sometime between June and the next Christmas, which would have been December, John had contacted or had revised and made arrangements for the state department to talk to my dad and my dad said he'd go when I got home. I got home on the first day of November and my dad was on his way to Washington for an orientation session in two weeks. He got to Berlin sometime before Christmas of '45. And John was still there, and he worked with John I think for about a year, maybe a year and a half. And when John came home my dad took over the responsibilities that John had had in the education branch. Now, my dad was a Republican.

PIEHLER: You had mentioned that earlier in the week.

ALEXANDER: He would—I'm sure if he knew what the Republicans have been since he passed away in 1971 he'd be revolving in his grave. He was a La Follette—Teddy Roosevelt—progressive Republican. He generally disliked bureaucracies; whether it was state or federal bureaucracies or university bureaucracies. He almost had a vendetta against things bureaucratic. In fact—did I mention before about his swimming?

PIEHLER: I don't think so.

ALEXANDER: When he was an undergraduate he had come to Columbia College from Kirksville Normal School and had done very well and gotten full credit for his two years there—graduated Phi Beta Kappa [Columbia, 1910]. But he failed to fill out the necessary papers to graduate in the spring of '09, and he failed to go to the gym or the swimming pool and swim the length of the pool, which was a requirement. He was too late to get the papers in. He was too late to get his swimming proficiency paper, and they said, "I'm sorry, but you can't graduate [in] '09 because you haven't filed these papers in time." So he didn't graduate in '09. He graduated in 10. And you know the philosopher Adler at the University of Chicago was about two years—three years behind my dad at Columbia. Of course Adler never did get a bachelors degree for the same reason.

PIEHLER: He didn't do the swim test?

ALEXANDER: He tells that story. If you ever read any of Adler's work, he talk about his—and of course he went on—I don't know where he took his doctorate, but he got his doctorate without a masters—without a ...

PUACA: BA?

ALEXANDER: BS. My dad went and did the swimming and he got his degree finally. But anyway, that kind of thing just drove my dad up the wall. All this ...

PIEHLER: Just if I could break in—it's interesting because your father's from Tennessee.

ALEXANDER: No, he's a Pennsylvanian.

PIEHLER: Pennsylvania, okay. And he marries your mother—your mother's side that has the Tennessee.

ALEXANDER: She was Pennsylvanian, too.

PIEHLER: Okay, so it's the Peabody?

ALEXANDER: Peabody is where they met but they were both born in western Pennsylvania. My mother was born in Bradford which is up near the New York state line. My dad was born near Punxsutawney—a little town called Smicksburg.

PIEHLER: So their Republicanism would fit very ...

ALEXANDER: Yeah, yeah, but both sides of the family were mostly Scotch-Irish Presbyterian. They'd come through Ireland. They'd fled Scotland and all, and then North Ireland, and then they fled to the United States back in the 1700s. Well, actually—but they were also on my dad's side there was a German element that had fled after 1814. Some of my family name is Wilhelm and that was my grandmother's paternal grandfather—mother. But the family was predominantly Scotch-Irish. But the name came through because of the male line. So there was German ancestry there, but not much. When my father was real young—I think he was about three—my grandmother had inherited some land in Kirksville, Missouri. The family moved there. My mother's family lived in Meadville-Bradford area. My mother was born in Bradford. My grandfather [Andrews] was in the cross-tie business—railroad cross-ties—and he moved to Tennessee because it was close to the source of his timber. So my mother moved about 1900. She was born in '96, so probably 1899 or something like that the family moved, and my mother grew up in Nashville and went to school in Nashville. My dad came to Nashville in '14 when he finished Columbia. So that's how they met, and that's why my sister and I were born in Nashville initially. So he, my dad, was not really very political. He had never had any desire to run for office. He voted, but he had a great deal of disdain for politicians—Republicans. I think he was very fond of Roosevelt and La Follette. He had some class mates at Columbia that were of the same ilk that he knew. But I say again, he was interested in his studies, interested in his teachings, interested in paedagogy, but he was still very, very hostile to people that would say, "Well we can't do it because the rules say this or the rules say that."

Another classic example that I like to cite—and he was really in many ways a radical. I remember one year I was about thirteen or fourteen. That would have been the early '30s. My dad and another gentlemen in the music department—they had about 150, 160 students in Europe, in Germany primarily—traveling, visiting schools. They were there the whole summer. The summer before they had a group and when my dad got back the auditor—the comptroller,

where he turned in his financial reports—wasn't satisfied with—I think every student had a fifteen dollar petty cash account on a budget. And if you multiply that by a hundred and fifty that's quite a bit of money. But it was intended to pay for street car rides, to pay for when you went to the opera you had ... to pay fifteen francs for that, and everybody had about fifteen dollars that they could spend on those little miscellaneous things. Unfortunately, when my dad got back he didn't have what you call real receipts, and they called him to task about it. Well the next year I was with the group, and I was sort of a gofer. The first night we were in Berlin—I had been in Berlin all year and here comes this new group, and we have a big meeting down at the hotel where they were staying. They had about an hour and a half after supper when my dad was getting ready to tell them what they were going to do and passing out itineraries and so forth for visitations. At the very end he said, "Now there's one thing I want you to cooperate with me. I've had trouble with this goddamn controller." And he said, "Well I'm going to solve a problem this way and I want your help." He said, "The kid here—" me. He said, "I'm giving the kid here a Gladstone bag, and I want you to collect every street car ticket and everything. Every little receipt you get I want you to give it to the kid." And my job was, as we traveled—every day I carried around a big kind of a leather—not a leather but a cloth—sack. I'd stuff these things and put it in the Gladstone bag. By the time the summer was over I had that Gladstone bag just crammed with the subway tickets and all kinds of things. I carried it all the way home. After I got home my dad took it and a few weeks later when he had all his reports in and he went in to turn in his financial report at the controller's office there at Columbia and said, "Here they are." He took that Gladstone bag and opened it up, and he shook out on this guy's desk and he said, "Here's your goddamn receipts for the fifteen dollars." (Laughter) I mean that's the kind of thing he did. Made people madder than the dickens, but he would get so frustrated with that kind of thing. That's a gospel truth.

PUACA: It's interesting his views on bureaucracy in that. When he came though, I mean he comes as a bureaucrat more or less.

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

PUACA: How did he—what were his goals I guess? When he came what did he think he had to get done during that time?

ALEXANDER: First of all, one of the things that I made notation in your report was that I think that when you start talking about educational reform—educational change—you've got to remember that when he went there [to Germany, June 1945]—when John first got there this was not peacetime really. It wasn't as if we go down here in Knox County and have a meeting and start a curriculum with long range planning session. This wasn't the case. You were in Berlin. It was completely flattened out. And where I was, even before my dad got there in Passau, it was a madhouse. The word chaos doesn't do it justice. So that is something that a lot of people don't understand is that initially when he first got over there the opening and the reorganization of schools was very low priority. Now in his office that was there function, but when he got over there and you say, "Now okay, let's start the schools." It was a silly question because you had these thousands of refugees all over Germany. You had different groups going east and going west. You had the problem of food. You had no utilities. You didn't have anything. And to think about worrying about whether this kid could go to school tomorrow really was way down

on the list. So there was a little frustration there. You go over there to start the schools, and you don't find any school buildings. The school buildings that were still standing had been requisitioned by the military for their purposes. So that was the scene that was there for at least a year and a half or two years. I don't think people really understand that when you talk to them about school reform. You simply can't conceive of it in terms that we would do today. So that was the sort of thing that he ran into trouble. He ran into difficulties. One of his first jobs he had to do was try to locate people that he knew—people that he had known in the Weimar days, because everybody else who had any authority in the schools or anything else were suspect. You know, General Patton found that out in Bavaria when he started using people that he thought had the competency they all turned out to be Nazis. So the branch there—the education branch of OMGUS in Berlin had exactly the same problem.

The first few months that John was there—my dad hadn't got there even. John was out looking for people that he and my dad and our family and people had known, and many of them had fled Berlin. It took quite a while to find them and get them organized. Some of that, you see, meant that the people in the education branch had to work through the military control and you know what that is. Now my dad was very pleased with—he got along very well with General Clay. He said General Clay was very competent and understood the kind of problems he was having, you know, with getting things done. But you were still dealing with a military organization. You were dealing with these horrendous problems. It wasn't altogether the fault of the military either. So my dad really, in his own philosophy, was a progressive. He was very much interested in progressive education and he started a laboratory school here in Nashville, and he organized the New College program at Columbia, which started in 1932—which included foreign study for everybody on the program. It included experience in the work place and administration. As teachers we had to come and spend our time in North Carolina in the community. We all had to go to Europe, or someplace to study abroad. So he had a very, very novel and interesting program, and it was a five year program that led to the masters. But you worked five full years. You didn't just work two semesters. You worked year round, and your summers were programmed. So in that respect he was a rebel. He also said we waste a lot of time in our education for people who have certain competencies and don't need to spend much time. He had the New College if you could test out you didn't have to take things that you could test out of, which they said, "Oh, you got to have credits..." (Laughs) So to that extent he was a rebel and got into trouble with his administrators.

PUACA: Was there—not to interrupt, but was there a lot of tension? I mean you've already remarked on this tension. Not so much—obviously, there's tension between Americans and Germans, but a lot tensions within the American military government about ...

ALEXANDER: There were tensions, but the American military, when my dad was first there, gave him sort of short shrift because they had other things to do. They had to worry about refugees. They had to worry about thousands of things that were just—everything from food to shelter for the troops plus all of these millions of people that were just messed up. So that was a frustration, but I can't say from what my dad told me of General Clay—General Clay was somewhat himself an imaginative commander, and he could see what the problems were. You were talking about—somebody mentioned books and so forth. That was one of the problems—materials. Very early on there was the Russians and everybody were interested in doing

something about the scurrilous books that the Nazis had printed over during their period at the time, and it was decided that they were going to purge the country and the libraries. I don't think they worried much about private collections. That was too hard. But in the schools and school libraries and so forth they started going around and collecting all these Nazi publications. They gathered together in Berlin. I don't know what they did out in the states, but in the Berlin area they took over the Sportsplatz you know, and they started collecting these volumes by the thousands. The Russians, the Americans, the French and British—they gathered them together in this arena. Thousands of books. As a matter of fact they had a German [Dr. Richard Mönnig] who was suspect. He had been in the publishing business, and he had belonged to the National Socialist Organization of Publishers and he was under the—worked under the aegis of Goebbels in the Propaganda Ministry. He had to be de-Nazified or de—what do they call it?

PUACA: Yeah, de-Nazified.

ALEXANDER: The man had been in the army. He was in his forties, but they had him as an interpreter because he spoke English very well. My dad got this fellow and somehow got him approved to supervise the collection of these books because they were going to be destroyed. Somebody said, "Well we don't want to burn books because that what the Nazis did."

PIEHLER: Yeah, I was going to ask you about that.

ALEXANDER: The Nazis were out there in front of the University there on Unter den Linden and they just came down—but the books that they had in the Sportsplatz would have burned down the rest of Berlin if they lit them. (Laughs) And there were just tons of these things. The Russians—I think my dad said the Russians were in favor of just—burn them. I guess some of the British and the Americans said, "Wait a minute now. We don't want to burn them because number one, they could be salvaged. We don't have enough paper now to publish new books." So finally they convinced the Russians that they wouldn't burn them. But for historical purposes and research they gathered together collections and I think that the education branch that my dad worked for ... gathered about fifteen sets of every book that—there were some things that really were so—everything from little pamphlets to big volumes. They made some decisions. They didn't collect everything, but they got a tremendous number of things. I think the education branch had about fifteen sets of these books. They had them in crates. They were about half, no about a third the size of your desk there. These crates of books must have weighed three hundred pounds or more. I think a whole set was about a hundred and sixty or a hundred and seventy crates. The idea was to collect them and get them crated and then the German my dad had inventoried them and got these sets together, and they shipped them back to the States. I know that one set went to Indiana University, and another set went to Columbia and to Harvard and Chicago. And my dad got a set. These crates came in. They were shipped from Germany—from Berlin. My dad wanted a set. I never was quite sure why but he had a set sent to our place over there in North Carolina and I had to put them in the barn—took up half of the hayloft. (Laughter) You can't imagine the problem we had. They were there from about 1948 or '49. They didn't come right away. They were there until after I left. They were there fifteen years in the barn. My dad comes back, and he's retired and lives down there. It was after I went to Indiana in '57. It was about 1960. Those damn crates were still in our barn. Well from time to time I'd go down and my dad would be there and he'd say, "Let's go to the barn." He was up in

years by that time. He'd say, "Let's go to the barn." I took a crowbar and we go out to the barn, and I pry open one of the boxes. We picked out some things, and he would find something he thought was interesting to read and he'd take a book or two here and there. But we never—they didn't have a catalogue. They had no inventory of it. But finally my dad said, "What do we do with these?" By this time he was in his eighties I guess. I said, "Dad, I don't know." He said, "Well, I've been trying to give them away and nobody wants them." So I went back to Ball State and told our librarian there. I said, "I've got this set of books. Would you be interested?" She said, "Well frankly we don't have any room for it. We don't have anybody competent to read all this stuff. We don't have any place to put them." And she said, "I don't see how we can take them." And she said, "Would there be any possibility of getting a grant?" At that time I think salaries are—I was making about six thousand bucks a year. She came up with a figure I think of about twenty five thousand dollars a year.

PIEHLER: Which was a lot of money then.

ALEXANDER: Yes, but it was ample to a cataloger with German competency. And you had to be more than just able to read German. You had to know something about Germany. She said did I think that we could get a grant like that. I said, "Nothing comes with the books." I said, "Chancellor Herman Wells has a copy down at IU if we really need them." So she said—I said, "There's no way we're going to get twenty-five thousand bucks for that." It wouldn't be just for one year. It would probably take a career almost to do that. So the books sat there another year or two and finally my dad found somebody up in New England that he knew that had more money than he had sense I guess. (Laughter) He paid for the shipping of these things, so we crated up the books that we had and hauled them into the railhead there and shipped them by freight. I don't know what happened to them. I've never found out for sure how they're treated at these—I do know that these major universities—and I think Stanford got a copy, and Minnesota. I think Vanderbilt Peabody got a set. But anyway ...

PUACA: I believe I actually used those books at Columbia. I went to Columbia special collections and worked with a collection of German texts that they had received.

ALEXANDER: That was probably it.

PIEHLER: Were you aware how they arrived there?

PUACA: Well I was told by the special collections people that someone involved in military government had arranged for them. And I knew also from my research that your father had Columbia connections so I inferred that, but never knew for sure.

PIEHLER: You didn't know the whole situation.

ALEXANDER: And I can't tell you. There may be some kind of a document that authorizes the shipment and the collection because—but my dad was the one that set it up. Richard Mönnig was the one who supervised it. I met Mönnig later on in the '50s. Mönnig came to this country eventually. I met him here one time. He came to see my dad years ago. So I know how they were collected, but I can't give you the chapter and verse, but it was pretty early on. Then what

they did after they started collecting these things the Russians did the same thing. Then the proposal was to take all these extra books that were not saved for historical purposes and have them redigested. They found a paper making organization that recycled the pulp, and then they made quite a bit of it. That paper was used to print some of the very first new texts that were used. I can't tell you what year it was.

PUACA: I'm kind of curious—yeah, that's really helpful, especially the textbook stuff.

ALEXANDER: Of course you mentioned in your paper the difficulty these schools had in publishing and that they got together because of shortages of paper.

PUACA: Precisely, yeah.

ALEXANDER: Well this is the same thing that you're talking about.

PUACA: And that lasts as far as I can tell through almost the whole occupation—I mean all the way into the late '40s and '49 [are] problems getting paper and supplies. Well I'm curious what your father's religious background and about how he viewed the role of religion in German schools. I imagine that must have been something he ...

ALEXANDER: Yeah. He was brought up in a Presbyterian family and community, but I can say that I can never remember my father ... He made me and my mother made me—I went to Presbyterian Sunday school—I went to Broadway Presbyterian church. You know where that is? On Broadway and 114th Street. Isn't it still there?

PUACA: I'm not sure.

ALEXANDER: It's down there. It's on Broadway on the northwest corner. Not Riverside Church—Presbyterian Church. Well I went there and I got all kinds of attendance medals. Gold stars with a wreath, and then fifth, six, seventh, you know I was—perfect attendance. My sister and I always went to Sunday school. But I can say I have never seen my father in any kind of church religious service. But he was adamant and he made no bones about it. But he didn't believe that church organizations should be getting state support for education. He didn't question their right to have their own parochial school. That was never in question. But state supported education—religious education was just a cardinal sin and was undemocratic and un-American—un-Christian or however you want to say.

PIEHLER: He was very adamant on all levels of ...

ALEXANDER: Now he recognized though knowing what he knew about America's education he was very much in favor of higher education and he knew darn well that if it hadn't been for the denominations in this country we would have had nothing but military schools like West Point and the Naval Academy. He believed that if the churches wanted to do this—and the Presbyterian churches you see were very good about that. They did more than any other group in the South.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: And they did overseas. And he taught in a Presbyterian-supported school in Turkey. That he believed in. He said, “Pass the plate around and if they want to ante up and you want to spend on schools, great. But by god don’t go out and put tax money into a religious ...” So when he got to Germany—well when he had been in Germany he saw in the imperial days, and he saw it continuing in Weimar. He saw what Hitler did. He was very much opposed to that—to the type of things that Hitler did to the churches. But as far as the curtailment of state funds for parochial education in Nazi Germany, he didn’t say that’s the way it ought to be. But he realized that Hitler was doing something that the Germans themselves could not do—in other words, divorcing state money from parochial education. And to that extent I think—he never came out and said, “Well this is one thing the Nazis did good.” He didn’t say that because he realized there was a bigger problem. It wasn’t simply a question of separation of church and state, but it was a separation of church and state and making sure the state didn’t go hog wild in its political programs to where you had a dictatorial regime. But he didn’t believe that the churches should have that kind of money.

PIEHLER: One of the things you said to me yesterday—you sort of explained the term, but your father did come from a very Protestant background.

ALEXANDER: Yeah. My mother did, too.

PIEHLER: And in a sense a real whiff, as you described, of anti-Roman Catholic.

ALEXANDER: Oh yeah, I’m having roast Catholic for lunch!

PIEHLER: Yes, yes on Sundays.

ALEXANDER: Well, that was something that I never heard him say that.

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah.

ALEXANDER: But in the family. And of course my wife’s side of the family they were Southerners. They’d come—in fact they’re buried out here at Dumplin Valley, Tennessee. They’re the Rankins and the Pitts—Lincoln County and out here at Jefferson County. And there’s a monument out there where some of the early ancestors are buried and it’s talking about they fled and they were martyrs for the cause, you know. And it was basically they fled the tyranny of the Pope. So when you started talking that kind of talk—and actually the Ku Klux Klan was segregationist but the next priority was the Pope. And they weren’t necessarily too concerned about Muslims or any Jews or anything like that. It was basically the pope. That story about the terrible antagonism that these New Englanders had against the Catholics during the 1830’s and so forth came out of that experience that they had. This gentleman had written a paper something similar to yours talking about this thing. I didn’t push it. I didn’t get involved in it, but I thought he had ignored completely the heritage that many of these mountain people had and still have.

PIEHLER: Oh yeah, we still have it in class with people that don't think Catholics are Christian.

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PUACA: The Catholic question—I imagine that this was probably one of the biggest problems that your father had over there with Catholics, particularly Bavaria because you ...

ALEXANDER: Oh, yes. Now you must understand that initially when my father was there as a young graduate student and still becoming a German expert he was aware of what was going on in Prussia. Prussia was primarily Protestant. But he knew enough about what was going on in Germany, that is the Imperial Germany, and he recognized the impact that this relationship had and the subsidies that the church groups—not only the Catholic groups but some of the Protestant churches too had also. They were all supported, one way or another. In fact they had a church tax you know that was collected ...

PIEHLER: Germany still does.

ALEXANDER: ... and divided up according to head count. Hitler did away with that, you see. If you realize that my dad initially was simply an observer and had absolutely no authority as a young graduate student. When he went back later on as a university professor and was still studying Germany all he could do was talk to his friends and reflect on what was happening and talk to them the same way he would talk to people at home and say, “You guys are never going to get...” And the other thing that upset him a lot—didn't upset him the same way but he was concerned about because he was interested in Germany and because he was interested in the progress they were making. They had a real organized system, and he always told them though he said, “You know the way you are selecting your people for leadership with all this structure you have within the tracking you do and cutting off after the ... or the guy gets into the *Gymnasium* and has nine years and if he doesn't get in the first year he's doomed.” He said, “You're missing an awful lot of talent that way.” And he said, “You got a good system.” The Germans have an excellent vocational system. They had probably the finest in the world but training certain kinds of people in certain specific jobs. Everything from being engineers on the railroad to being telegraph operators and pole-climbers. They had a marvelous system of getting young people trained for these jobs. But he said, “You are missing because you don't have anyway to get people who come from rural areas and come from disadvantaged economic situations. There's a lot of talent you're losing.” He said, “We in the United States are doing a better job in that than you are.” So at that time he was then an experienced educator and he knew his subject very well and knew something about international differences, and he wasn't at all hesitant to tell them. So his friends sought his advice. But when he went over there in '45 he was the head with some authority, and see, there's a difference there. Have you ever read any Herman Wells?

PUACA: Yeah I know him. Actually I met him. He was the chancellor at IU when I went to IU.

ALEXANDER: Oh, you did?

PUACA: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: Did you ever read his memoirs?

PUACA: *Being Lucky, or Getting Lucky.*

ALEXANDER: *I'm Lucky.*

PUACA: Yes, yes.

ALEXANDER: Have you read that book?

PUACA: I read parts of it. I haven't read all of it.

ALEXANDER: Well, you ought to read the chapter on his work with [General Lucius] Clay.

PUACA: Yeah, I have read that one.

ALEXANDER: Well, you read about my dad then. Do you remember anything about that? (Laughter) But anyway, I'll tell you. I didn't read it until about three years ago. I have a son that lives in Indianapolis and he came across the volume and he saw his granddad's name in there. Well, it's not a lengthy chapter. You ought to read it. You may have read it before but you ought to look at it again. And in it he describes his work with Clay—General Clay. I had great difficulty with it. It's a book that has a lot of me, myself and I. You know what I'm talking about? It's a memoir. It's not a biography. It's an autobiography written from—it's an interesting book. It reads well, but when you read that chapter about his involvement with OMGUS—and he was involved primarily because John and my dad recommend to Clay to get people like that to come over and help them with the struggle between the cultural group and the education group. In this paragraph it starts out by mentioning John's name there and then he says Thomas Alexander and so forth. It was at Columbia and describes my dad as being there and said that he was very knowledgeable and rendered a great service to the cause by knowing so much about Germany. But he was a lousy administrator. He went on to say that he—Wells—had made some recommendations to Clay about changing the organization and separating some of the responsibility and he went on. He said my father was very brilliant and very understanding and knew a lot about Germany, and that he was dogmatic and vindictive. Now vindictive is an action word and if I had read—had it been a thesis or dissertation I would have said, "Chancellor Wells, let's describe some ... behavior and then decide what is vindictive about it."

Then he goes on later on and talks about everything he did while he was there. He did a lot of things that were helpful. He was invited by my dad to come over and make some suggestions, but when you read this thing it sounds like he did it all. He talks about the exchange program—that was started almost immediately by John and my dad—of bringing German students to the States. When you read that—what Wells wrote—it sounds like it was his idea. And then about Free University [of Berlin]. The problem they had there with higher education in Berlin was the fact that the university was in the Soviet—in the other zone and they had to use the old polytechnic university building. They still do I guess—which was in the west. That's one of the

first things my dad did was to gather together—I don't think the institutions were functioning, but they had students that were just in limbo. He started meeting with these students and of course sent a hand full of them to the States. When my dad knew—and when you read Wells' account of it, Wells says he met with these students and listened to them and made suggestions and got them interested in setting up the move to the University. I remember that my mother was there then. She was there before Wells got there. My mother used to have these evenings when my dad would have fifteen or twenty of these students come to his house and my mother fed them and everything else. They had care packages for them and had clothing and stuff that she got.

PIEHLER: Because in the context of the occupation, this must have been a big deal for these students.

ALEXANDER: Oh, yes it was. And see Wells never got over there until November of '47 and this was two years—almost two and a half since John was there.

PIEHLER: So the exchange—when was the first semester that students got—the exchange program got started?

ALEXANDER: I think it was late '46.

PIEHLER: That your father was able to send that first group?

ALEXANDER: I can't swear. I have the names of some of the people because I met some of them. Some of them were here and they were funny little institutions. My dad knew—one down—one of them I know went to Adelphi and there was a girl that went down to school somewhere and she came by. My dad was still in Germany but she came by to say hello. She was down somewhere in—maybe she was at Peabody. I don't know.

PUACA: Do you happen to know these exchanges that your father set up. Are these just individual or small groups that the universities were helping to fund or were these actual State Department programs?

ALEXANDER: Well, a bit of both. I do know that my dad talked personally—he talked some of these people into just taking them on and not charging them anything in terms of tuition. I don't know how they got their subsidies to live off of. Transportation I think was taken care of by the military or something like that. But this had started, but when you read—now what Chancellor Wells did was monumental, really. When he came back in '48—he was there from November until commencement time. He had to come back for commencement in '48. When he got back, he put on a terrific effort in Washington and what's the big—American Council of Education? He was on the board of that I believe. He was in several—he really put it to them and said, “We've got to help this.” I think by '48 or '49 they were bringing two or three hundred. It went up drastically. But when you read this thing there's no indication that anybody else had the idea but Wells. When you talk about the little evening coffee klatsch they had that was at my mother and dad's house. My mother did the cooking at those things. (Laughter) My mother had all of the doctors in middle Tennessee. Her brother-in-law—her sister's husband—was a well

known surgeon in Nashville, and he got all the doctors to get together, and my mother sent pounds and pounds of just cloths that first year my mother was there—and sent cigarettes that they could then barter. My mother sent carton after carton of cigarettes along with these cloths. They went through military—you know it wasn't any contraband. When they had these things—she had clothing for some of the female students. She had suits and things for the men and cigarettes for everybody. It was just ingenious, I thought.

PUACA: I'll re-consult it.

ALEXANDER: It's page 305. (Laughter)

PUACA: I know the book. Now I know the page.

ALEXANDER: It's a very good chapter though. It's well written and it talks about not only that but the culture, and that's where the differences were. I think that—I don't know what Herman Wells had in mind when he talked about being dogmatic and vindictive, but I think it probably had something to do with the fact that when they were beginning to reorganize a great number of the people who stepped forward were people [of] suspect. My dad was quite clear about that. He knew what had happened and how people had lost their jobs.

PUACA: By suspect you mean Germans who had ...

ALEXANDER: Who had been—maybe quit schools or superintendents or directors of programs under—had not been retired by the Nazis, and it was felt that maybe they were party members but they had cooperated. As a result I know my dad must have in some cases said, "No we can't have these people. These people are suspect or they haven't been cleared or we shouldn't use them or we can't use them." He wouldn't hesitate to say, "Hey this guy's a son of a gun." You see what I'm saying?

PUACA: Yeah, absolutely. I don't mean to shift the gears a bit but I have a question about something I've had trouble kind of getting an answer to. I don't necessarily know, but your father and Wells and John Kell—these people in leadership positions very high up. Do you know anything about the people that worked for them? I mean the other people who were involved in military government because the backgrounds of these people are very hard to find.

ALEXANDER: There was one man that worked—he was not in Berlin but he was a colleague of mine at Ball State. [Dr. Robert LaFollette – retired head of the History department]

PUACA: So they were educators?

ALEXANDER: Oh, yes.

PUACA: Did all of them have an education background that worked in the ...

ALEXANDER: Oh no not necessarily. Well they would have some aspect of—some of them were school principals. Some of them were subject matter teachers. Some of them were

administrators or superintendents. I do know that—I know Wells was brought over as, you know, and Clay used him probably more as much as anybody. Doctor Hill, who was president of Peabody, was over. Will Russell who was dean of the Teachers College went over. Let's see I can't think of the man's name— Dr. Herb Hamilton. He was from Indiana, and he was at Ball State.

PIEHLER: He was a professor?

ALEXANDER: Yeah. He was a few years older than I—four or five years older. Big, tall fellow from outside of Lafayette. He had taught—he lived up—you know where Battleground is? Somewhere about fifteen miles north of the [Purdue] campus. He was teaching at Ball State when I got there. Herb Hamilton. Then there was a man who was head of the history department at Ball State [Dr. LaFollette] that went over as a specialist. It was in the early 50s, and this man was killed. A Ball State bunch were killed in Vietnam. They crashed ... [The dead included Dr. James Abernathy, Dr. Robert LaFollette, and Dr. Howard Johnshoy]

PIEHLER: When you said he was killed in Vietnam was it an educational ...

ALEXANDER: Yes it was before we really—it was early on. It would have been in the—see, I didn't go there until '57 so it was in the early 60s. They were there—Albertson who was president had been—I knew—he was assistant to John Emens at Ball State and he took a job at one of the Wisconsin schools. Howard Johnshoy, who was on staff and was in student affairs. And then an older man who had retired in the history department. There were three Ball State people on some kind of an educational team working with the Vietnamese.

PIEHLER: I mean it's an interesting continuity between people involved in the German reeducation now in the Cold War being involved in Vietnam. It's sort of similar.

ALEXANDER: Albertson was younger than I am. He had been—President John Emens' assistant. He went to—it wasn't Madison. It one of the other ...

PIEHLER: Yeah, Whitewater and Superior. There's a whole ...

ALEXANDER: LaCrosse, one of those schools. They all went—I can't remember the old man's name. He retired but Johnshoy went with Albertson to Wisconsin, and then they were invited to go on an inspection team of some kind. There were eight or ten of them, and they were in a plane. It either crashed or was shot down and they were all killed. That was in the early 60s. Then Mildred English—do you know that name?

PUACA: Yes, I do.

ALEXANDER: She was at Milledgeville, Georgia, and she was a specialist over there in early childhood education. There were some others I knew over there, but she was over there for several years. Let's see, there were a couple others that I knew. I didn't know them personally but my dad talked about them. Of course, there was Gen. Clay. Then there were a couple of military people that my dad got to know in Berlin that were helpful to him.

PUACA: That's fine. I was just curious about the background of some of these people that were working with your father.

ALEXANDER: Mildred English had been a student of my dad's, and she had been in Georgia there and was with the Georgia Department of Education. At the time I think she went overseas she at Milledgeville—what's the school there?

PIEHLER: Yeah, in Georgia.

ALEXANDER: And one of my colleagues—one of the department heads went there about the time I retired. Milledgeville is an old town. Wasn't it at one time a Confederate town—capital at one time?

PIEHLER: Steve Ash, our Civil War historian, is the one to ask. I've heard of it before.

ALEXANDER: It may have been the capitol of Georgia at that time—after Atlanta or something, I don't know. But anyway, she was there. She was my father's age. Then there was a man over at Chapel Hill. He was head of the Education Department. Do they have a College of Education?

PUACA: They do, yeah.

ALEXANDER: I think at the time he was a friend of my dad's.

PIEHLER: So a lot of the people—he really staffed a lot of people he knew?

ALEXANDER: Yeah, and John did too. I think John got into the military—into the special military government branch through General Middleton—Troy Middleton, who was a lieutenant general and was VIII Corps commander in Normandy and at LSU where John Taylor was assistant to President Smith.

PUACA: In Louisiana.

ALEXANDER: He was at Baton Rouge and was ROTC there for many years. John knew him because John was President Smith's assistant and John knew all of the various—he took care of all that stuff with the budgets and everything. Middleton went back into the army and I know that John must have gotten some clues as to, "How do I get a commission?" (Laughter) John was a dear friend. I mean, he was a big brother to me you know. He was very good to me. Ten or eleven years older—did I tell you that story?

PIEHLER: Which?

ALEXANDER: About John—John was very sharp, very bright. He was a finagler.

PIEHLER: The one story you told me was when you became a Hitler Youth for the weekend. You told me that story because you had accompanied him.

ALEXANDER: John was working on his dissertation, and so he sicced me on this guy, and I went and spent the weekend with these troopers and everything in Munich. But John was a finagler. Is that—what kind of word is that?

PIEHLER: Finagler is a great—‘cause it’s not necessarily—he’s not doing criminal activities, but he’s also knowing how to sort of ...

ALEXANDER: John was married, and they had a young son. It must have been quite a traumatic thing for him to leave because he was—his wife couldn’t go with him. She went to New York, eventually, and his son—they spent some time in New York while John was—John was overseas for quite a while. So when the war was over John was stuck. That’s one reason why I decided I didn’t want to go Berlin when John was trying to get me to go into it with him—was because I didn’t want to get stuck for an indefinite period of occupation. But John was in—that’s what he was in. So he ended up in Berlin, and they had the rule that after the war ended you could have family join you, but you had to spend a year before the family was eligible to join the person in the service. So what did John do? He and his wife divorced. (Laughter) She was no longer family and then he got her hired at a clerical job in his office in Berlin and then they remarried.

PIEHLER: That’s a great story.

ALEXANDER: But she couldn’t bring her son with her. So the son stayed with grandparents or members of the family and then when the year was up—she had been over there, oh I don’t know, she must have got over there before I got home. But anyway they divorced. She got over there, got a job in Berlin. She came over, and then after—well my mother was already there but there was another—Dr. Karzen, Fritz Karzen who was head of the Karl-Marx-Schule and Gymnasium, and it was the biggest school in Berlin. Doctor Karzen was over there helping, working for the education branch. Mrs. Karzen was coming back—they were Germans who fled initially when Hitler took power. So Mrs. Karzen took the little Taylor boy to Germany. Taylor’s wife had been there considerably longer. So John—and when John and I were living together and traveling and working together I was always sort of a gopher for him you know. I would do things. I would take students that needed a chaperone, or needed somebody to translate for them, to take them to the school and get them on the streetcar. I did that when I was thirteen, fourteen years old. John was very clever at trying to—there’s a word, *Ausknobeln*. Do you know what that means? It means to figure things out. I don’t know what the derivation of the word is, but John was ... He could figure out how to get it cheaper and how to make it work.

PUACA: The English version of the finagler.

ALEXANDER: Yeah, it’s *Ausknobeln*. I’m not sure how to spell it exactly. I haven’t used the word in fifty years, but anyway you get what I’m saying.

PIEHLER: I think it’s a great description.

ALEXANDER: I inherited some of—my dad was a finagler, too, and I think most people who are trying to do things differently ...

PIEHLER: One observation is that in many ways the way you described the situation which I think—it's hard sometimes to grasp when you read about it from the paper. It's often either is over dramatic or under dramatic in that it sounded like you needed to be a little bit of a finagler to make things work.

ALEXANDER: Oh yeah, in any big organization. I mean if it's in industry or in school.

PIEHLER: Well particularly in Germany that is such ...

ALEXANDER: So rigid.

PIEHLER: Well also such chaos, too. Rigid and chaotic at the same time that—you know like the idea of giving students cigarettes because the normal channels aren't working for supporting students.

ALEXANDER: And my mother brought a lot of stuff home that she had swapped off and down at the Brandenburg Gate, in front of the Reichstag, where a lot of the black-market took place you know. Right near where the Russian zone was, and the Russians were some of the biggest customers. (Laughter)

PUACA: Oh, okay.

ALEXANDER: Because the Russians didn't have much that anybody wanted but they wanted a lot of stuff.

PIEHLER: Let me just take a break because—repeat what ever is important. Rarely do I leave this but I'm going to ...

PUACA: We're just talking about Berlin and ...

PIEHLER: Yeah I'm going to leave. I put it on pause for a minute. I don't want to lose anything. I have to go to the men's room. I normally don't.

ALEXANDER: But you got excited. (Laughs)

PUACA: I just asked him about when he was in Berlin the last time.

ALEXANDER: And my wife and my sister and the son Jimmy and the four of us. Jimmy had to go to Cambridge. He was in charge of the (journals then?) that were published in North and South America by Cambridge University Press and he wrote for *The New Yorker*. But he had to go through the meetings that they held at the university—the annual meeting that the board of directors held and they invited—all the units had to have representatives to go. He had this trip

to make to England and so he said, “Well I don’t (see what?)” Planned to go at the same time and I said, “I’ll take a few days vacation.” So we went over before his meeting and we went to Berlin and he—he’d never been to Berlin. My sister and I hadn’t been back together since 1936. My wife had been there once just for a couple days. So we said okay. So the four of us flew to Berlin and spent time there and then we went over to England and spent a few days with him and then he stayed for his meeting. That was ’94.

PUACA: This is a strange question maybe, but you’ve been to Berlin before the Third Reich, in the Third Reich, after the war ...

ALEXANDER: I’ve been there during the war.

PUACA: ... during the war, and then of course after the war. Before the Wall you were there and ...

ALEXANDER: After the wall.

PUACA: ... when the wall is built and now in the ‘90s now that the Wall is gone. What strikes you as the most striking thing about the city or what stayed the same? What are your observations now that you’ve been so many times in so many different situations?

ALEXANDER: I realize that Berlin has changed tremendously, but in many ways it’s very similar. If I—a funny thing happened. My sister and I had different interests then my wife. And my wife was having a little trouble walking. So Jimmy took her and my sister and I excused ourselves for a couple hours and we were going to meet at the Dorothenstraße museum eventually. Get a little lunch. But Mary and I wanted to do a little pedestrian touring so we spent two hours just walking. We walked the Leipziger Straße, the Potsdamer Platz, and we came down Wilhelmstraße and we went by the university and went up to the library where my old school was. And by that time we could see the empty lot where our house was and then we joined my wife again. We had walked down one side of Unter den Linden and gotten down there by—you know where the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is?

PUACA: Yup.

ALEXANDER: We walked down one side and then we came back up the side where the university was and we went in the Berlin University. The day we were there it was a very nice day. It was very bright and sunny. It was in the spring and nice. On the lawn there—I guess they still do it. There were a group of students who had a little—they didn’t have a kiosk but they had this—they were selling papers and pencils and—on the grass but they were selling things for other students to buy. I don’t know whether if this was just one day a week they did but anyway, they were on both sides of the sidewalk. That must have been very I mean students that had things they were ... As we walked along my sister said, “Hey look!” And I stopped and there was this woman—young student had this display of stuff. Paper, pencil, you know pens and that sort of thing. She had a staple gun and she had refills for it. My sister asked, “How much for that stapler?” She said, “I ran out of staples twenty years ago and I still have it and I can’t get staples for it.” (Laughter) And then she stopped and she bought a couple boxes

of the staples. It was a little desk stapler hand thing and she was so thrilled. She had bought that thing in 1935 and here it was 1994, sixty-years later.

PUACA: Wow.

PIEHLER: Actually the other ...

(Tape Paused)

PIEHLER: Thanks for giving us the whole day today.

ALEXANDER: I'm glad to do it.

PIEHLER: I'm going to turn it back over to Brian.

PUACA: Thanks. I just wanted to have kind of a wrap up question. Your father was there until 1951?

ALEXANDER: '51.

PUACA: So six years he's in Germany after the war and he obviously had this enormous work to do and he had all these issues to deal with. When he came home how did he look back on his work there? Did he look at it as—did he feel like he had made a lot of accomplishment? Did he feel like he got a lot done or did he feel frustrated? What was his feeling?

ALEXANDER: Well he came back—he wasn't there quite six full years. He was in six calendar years but got there late in '45 and came home very early in '51. He had his 60th birthday in Germany—July 3, 1947. I think that's correct. When he got back he returned to the university and he had about eighteen months to go. He got back in the middle of the year and had about eighteen months to go until mandatory retirement. He decided since his office had been closed for that period of time while he was gone and he had no students with whom he had been working that he would retire then. So that's what he did. He retired a little early because he said he would be there another eighteen months and then have to retire and he said he didn't see any sense of teaching classes and then working with some students who might have dissertations or thesis under development and he thought it wasn't fair to them so he just quit. But he did stay in New York and he worked for a couple of years helping a program that involved a foreign study experience at Adelphi University up in Garden City. He worked out there for a couple years just as a part time irregular staff. So he didn't retire completely. Later on he came down to North Carolina and worked down there with our school and the last teaching he did after he got back was at Indiana University. He was invited there by Herman Wells. He had a summer seminar of advanced graduate students and I think that the topic was comparative education and I'm sure he talked primarily about Germany and the reconstruction of the educational system. He was quite positive. He was very pleased with what they'd done. He did not like the change over when the State Department took over from Clay. I don't think Clay retired, but my dad came back at that time and he got along very well with General Clay... Some of the others stayed until the mid 50s. But he wasn't disgruntled about it. He was pleased with

what he did. He was very frank about some of the problems he had, particularly about his unhappiness of the way that church-state relations were going in terms of educational support. He continued to voice that. But he maintained contact with a lot of the people there. He heard from them and... (By that time of course John had left. John went to UNESCO about the time I was—about '53 or '54, Taylor left Louisville. He went from Germany to Louisville then to UNESCO. When his term was over in UNESCO in the late 50s he went to WTTW educational television in Chicago and he was—he ran that. He worked that for twenty years I guess.) But I think he [Thomas Alexander, Mr. Alexander's father] was pleased with what he did. He kept contact with a lot of the exchange students that he'd known. I'd say a lot. Probably were a dozen that he'd known pretty well. And several of them were in this country. Some of them stayed. Some of them married and stayed here. That always bothered him a little bit. He used to say, "You ought to go back and help over there. That's why we brought you here." He said that occasionally. But he understood why people didn't. He'd say, "Well my folks came over and they didn't go back either." (Laughter) Thinking back to when our German and Scottish ancestors came over we came over for the same reasons that the German and a lot of the other refugee people were coming. But he did—he always hoped that these people who came to this country to be educated and observe our ways of operating would be able to go back and make a contribution and many of them did, but he didn't begrudge them that. He still got along very well with them.

PIEHLER: Were you surprised when you read Chancellor Wells memoir?

ALEXANDER: I was.

PIEHLER: Because you wouldn't have had that sense before you read that the memoir that ...

ALEXANDER: No, no. My dad never came out and said—my dad spoke about a couple of people that came over. They were to refugees that had fled in the early days of the Nazi regime. They left almost immediately. My dad did say to me one time he said, "You know they were a great help." But he said, "Their interest was not really supporting our program." He said, "They spent more of their time trying to figure out how they were going to get compensation for some of the properties that had been ...

PIEHLER: Taken.

ALEXANDER: ... taken or forced to sell. And there were two cases where he was critical of—he thought they had a divided allegiance. A personal menu—not a menu but an agenda at the expense of the military and government. There were a couple of them like that but—he thought he made a contribution. I don't think I ever heard him say anything, that they'd done things wrong or did things differently than he wanted them to be done and therefore it was a flop. He never did that that I recall other than saying that he could not get along and he did it in a different position in terms of that relationship. I think he knew he at least lost the battle at that time and that things were—that he knew it. So when Clay left he wasn't interested in staying because he saw the political struggle that—with the Russians and the British and all that and was probably time for him to come home. And he was hitting sixty-five and had been gone five years.

PIEHLER: Okay. One of the things I'm going to do because Brian has two areas of expertise. One in German history in general, more so than I, and also he's from Indiana so I like to move the interviews in chronological order, but I think I'm going to ask you more about—partly because you have such remarkable involvement with Germany. We've talked at length about your involvement in the thirties and obviously as a soldier and a little bit in the occupation, but then your desire to go home. Could you tell me sort of the next time you went back to Germany?

ALEXANDER: After World War II.

PIEHLER: After World War II.

ALEXANDER: I got home in '45 right at the end of October. My service was extended until—because of unused leave my three weeks so I was actually on payroll until November sometime. My father left—that was '45. The next time I went back to Germany was nineteen—was August of '53. I went there with a group of junior undergraduates from Adelphi who were doing foreign study. We were with the university and these students were in Scotland, they were in France, had one girl in Switzerland, and one young man in Italy and Germany. My job was to oversee their foreign experience. They were all in school at Adelphi University. Some of them were interested in teaching in high school. Some were elementary majors. That was from August until—through Easter in April. That was '53 and '54.

PUACA: There was a question I was kind of hoping to ask. You've been in Germany in the 30s. You'd been there as an American. You had obviously experiences there as an American and as a student there. When you went back in '53, and I know even that time it's different than '45 or '46 as a member of the military, but how were you received by Germans as an American after the war? I mean did they treat you differently than—I mean obviously you're older, but I mean did they treat you in a different way than they had when you were there before?

ALEXANDER: Well to tell you the truth—'cause I was there in the 20s as a seven or eight year old. Then I was there in the 30s. '30, '31, '33, '34, '35, '36 as a teenager and '35 and '36 I was there ...

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

PIEHLER: This continues an interview with Richard Alexander on October 1st, 2004 at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee with Kurt Piehler and ...

PUACA: Brian Puaca.

PIEHLER: And we sort of—unfortunately the tape ran out in mid sentence but you were saying how you were there as a college freshman in '35 and '36.

ALEXANDER: And I was there as a child.

PIEHLER: Yes.

ALEXANDER: Just as a child and we lived in Grünewald in Berlin, and my mother when she was out socially we had a *Kindermädchen* that took young teenager—probably a fifteen or sixteen year old German girl who was a refugee from Russian—German Russians. Her father was I think a—Olga's father was a merchant in—German merchant in Russia and had fled the revolution and they were living there in Berlin. In '30 or '31 my sister and I went to the Karl-Marx Schule there in Berlin. Then in '33 and '34 I was not in a formal school at any time because I guess it was a little shorter but we traveled most of the time. And then in '35 and '36 I went to the Dorotheenstraße Realgymnasium in Berlin that we talked about. Then went—transferred over to the university at the International Institute. Then I didn't go back to Germany until '53-'54 when I was with the Adelphi group. I was working as a faculty member and I was in the midst of my doctoral dissertation and so forth—doctoral program and had not finished yet. I did not get back to Berlin then and in fact I saw very little of Germany as I had seen earlier years because we were limited just to the American Zone and we were in Freiburg im Breisgau and I had been through there but I never spent any time there so I was seeing parts of Germany that I hadn't seen previously and they were not the places I had been doing the combat through the army which was north Germany. I never did get back to Berlin that I knew best until the 1970s. So I did meet—in '53-'54 I did meet some friends of family. I mentioned I was in (?) and Frankfurt and several places. Met some of these people that my dad, my mother and I had known. I can't say that—I'm sure that Doctor [Franz] Hilker recognized that I had grown up and that I had been—I had known him when I was fourteen or fifteen years of age. I was pushing thirty. No I guess I was over thirty when I was there in '53. And then I was an American veteran and had been in Germany and to that extent it was different. But I didn't see very many people I knew or had known. I didn't get back to Berlin until '70. I was totally unsuccessful in trying to find any of my German classmates. I found—I had an address book that went back to that date and I checked the telephone book. I spent a lot of time trying to trace them and didn't find person one out of about twenty five or thirty names that I had. That was in the seventies. And again in the nineties the second time after the war I still kept looking for people and didn't have a bit of luck.

PIEHLER: I almost feel like we should put your list when we do the next version of the transcript—if you still have that address book list the names and addresses 'cause that, you know. The internet is sort of funny about that. People have connected because of interviews I've done.

ALEXANDER: And there is—from the '30-'31 year when we were at the gymnasium over there in '35. I have heard from one girl who was in the class—Doctor [Fritz] Karsen's daughter [Sonia Karsen], who went to school there. She fled with her father and eventually ended up going to—I think she went to Bogotá, Columbia, and got an education and she's been teaching for many years teaching romance languages somewhere in New England. I talked to her about ten years ago. She's my sister's age.

PIEHLER: I'm sorry you weren't able to connect with your gymnasium because it sounds like you were curious—partly what happened to them. [Particularly Max Kösten and Sonia Karsen]

ALEXANDER: Well first of all it wasn't as if I was there for the whole gymnasium term. I was just there a fraction of the year. These boys came from all over Berlin the gymnasiums were not neighborhood schools. That is in Berlin. It was the Dorotheenstraße Realgymnasium and I was

there. Then I transferred over to the university where I took language courses. Across the street just down from where the library was. I had more contact over the years with the ones when I was in about the eighth and ninth grade at Dorotheenstraße because I saw them a second time when I went back later. One of my very best friends there at Dorotheenstraße was a Jewish boy that I had known [Max Kösten]. We had done a lot of things together back in '30-'31.

PIEHLER: Yeah and you had mentioned taking him to the Olympics in '36.

ALEXANDER: And he was still in—he was the one who went into the foreign legion in France and he was still in Berlin in '36 and he went to games with me several times.

PIEHLER: Yeah I thought it was a wonderful story you told about ...

ALEXANDER: I finally got a letter from him. He wrote my New York address at Morningside Heights. I was teaching down here in Carolina and I got a letter from him and he was asking for financial help to buy his way out of the foreign legion.

PIEHLER: You did mention that. You talked at length about it.

ALEXANDER: I had more contact with Max and with Sonia Karsen and two or three of the others because I was able to see them in '35-'36. Whereas the gymnasium people I didn't get back. If I'd gone back in '39 or '40 I might have seen some of them, but by the time I got back to Berlin they had all probably been in the army and probably half of them were dead or had left. So that's the reason. At the International Institute most of the students I went with most of the time were foreign students. They were studying language like I was. We had German friends, but the ones that were in class with me were Japanese. There were Scandinavians, there were a couple of Americans and so forth. So those friends were harder to maintain. Now did I answer the question?

PIEHLER: I guess one question is you mentioned in '53-'54 there were parts in Germany you didn't know very well. I mean you had only visited at best, and not even visited all. Taking that into account what was your impression of Germany at that point in time compared to your earlier ...

ALEXANDER: Well the reason I didn't know the area was because I'd been through there as a tourist, but I spent my lifetime—we shared an apartment with a German woman and her daughter. Was in Freiburg in Baden. I had never spent any time in Baden. Baden is quite different than Berlin. I got to know the area pretty well. I met some people there that were very interesting people, but they were not people I'd known before. I tried on several occasions to get into Berlin but it was a very touchy time. I forget what the crisis was, but they just closed down—the Americans closed down the permission to take the train into Berlin and I had made arrangements at least twice and then they had some kind of a conflict and they close down everything and I wasn't able to go. I didn't get back until '70 and by that time many of my father's old friends were gone. I still didn't have any luck finding anybody in my generation. I did run into some university classmates that I had at Columbia that were in Germany and doing social work. I remember two of them with some evangelical groups doing social work in Germany. I met them

and I met one or two of my father's old friends. But I was well received and didn't have any trouble particularly. I was living in the French zone which Freiburg was. I think I mentioned I lived there because it was cheaper and it was equidistance pretty much from Italy and Scotland and it was on the main north-south train that goes from—you take London you go all the way to I guess you go to Istanbul. It was on a main line that you can get into Italy very easily. Go through Switzerland. And the train service was very good. So that's the reason I picked out Freiburg because it was a nice place and I hadn't been there and it was equidistance between most of the students I had in Switzerland and so forth, and Rome, and Scotland. As a result I got to know that area and the only problem I had was they took me for a Berliner because of my accent. (Laughter) And then there was some of the South German vernacular that I didn't understand in Bavaria. It was amazing how I mean I knew there were differences but I never was quite as aware of the different speech patterns that were—they were not Berlinish. They always the minute I opened my mouth they knew I was—they didn't know I was from Berlin but they knew I'd been educated there.

PIEHLER: Educated in Berlin.

ALEXANDER: Yeah and my German was good but it was not—they could tell I wasn't a ...

PIEHLER: A native speaker.

ALEXANDER: A native speaker. Well it was not my first language. But they knew that (I must have studied in Berlin.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) Well how much in the years you were—in '53-'54 how much destruction was still obvious?

ALEXANDER: Well in Freiburg there was still quite a bit because Freiburg was hit on two different occasions. Were you aware of that? I forget the—I used to know something about the Americans who bombed it. It was in December I think before the Bulge and they flew over with three hundred bombers you know, and just devastated the place. There was some bitterness. The Germans were still resentful because they did a job on them. Just in two flights. They ended up with—they still have a cemetery there. Have you been to Freiburg?

PUACA: I have.

ALEXANDER: Do you go up and see that mass grave? You know about the goose?

PUACA: No.

ALEXANDER: Well there's a monument there. It's a memorial to those killed in the air raid and apparently short minutes before the air raid got there before they got the warnings—the sirens that blew—apparently this bird I think was a goose. That's the story. The goose that lived there in a pond in Freiburg went berserk apparently because he could hear the bombers coming at a greater distance than the air raids warnings could hear it, and this goose apparently went down just screaming and flying and making terrible noises and alerted some people that something was

happening and saved some lives and so now there's this monument to this bird that saved some lives because the bird gave a warning. Then there were people—there were four or five hundred that were in this downtown area where the bombs hit. Did a big bang up job and they just buried them in this big memorial area in the main cemetery in Freiburg and this goose—there's a monument to it with this bird. I think they call it just the Freiburger goose or something like that. The Germans of course always felt that the attack was kind of late in the war and it wasn't necessary and that sort of thing. Then I heard that story. But the biggest problem in Freiburg if I remember correctly at that time—those particular years—was the concern that the West Germans had about the number of East Germans who were fleeing and were overwhelming—you talk about the impact of the refugees. I don't know what the percentages were, but in some places it was about a third of the inhabitants were refugees from eastern Germany or from Berlin. And that was a big problem and it was causing quite a financial crisis. The Germans at that time I remember one of the big themes was stick it out stick it out, stay. Don't flee. They want you to flee. They would tell them.. The West Germans were trying to convince the ...

PIEHLER: The East Germans not to ...

ALEXANDER: Says don't give up. We'll take care of you and we'll get back eventually but don't leave because that's what they want you to do. So that theme was very strong in all of West Germany. It had a local motive. They were getting tired of trying to put all these people up and feed them and get them jobs and it was causing a lot of problems.

PIEHLER: After you did that one-year appointment when did you go back to Germany again?

ALEXANDER: Not until 1970.

PIEHLER: And your trip in '70 that was part of ...

ALEXANDER: That was for another overseas program, but at a different—that was at Ball State.

PIEHLER: Okay.

ALEXANDER: Because I had always had that in mind and I had gone and studied abroad with New College at Columbia. And then my wife had too, and then we got involved with Doctor Agnes Snyder and her work at Adelphi and had taken over this job. I eventually made it part of my dissertation. The foreign study and teacher education was my dissertation topic, in which I compared—I followed up some of the people who'd gone in my generation and tried to develop criteria for evaluating the foreign study program that we then applied to the Adelphi group. That was basically my study. So then when I went to Ball State, they put me in the—I was in the teacher's college, well it was the education department when I went there. We weren't a university then. They put me in the education department. And because of my background in study abroad they gave me a part time—part of my assignment was being a foreign student advisor. So I was interested in the idea and I eventually conjured up a project. It was an experimental program with some elementary teachers where we did several things differently within the elementary curriculum we had at the time, where we arranged it so that they could opt

to go abroad during their junior year to do student teaching in England, instead of doing it—well it was pre-student teaching. It was our junior experience in the classroom. The idea was to take them to England for a semester and then let them study there and see British schools and so forth. That was my project and we started working on it in late '69 before making the proposal to get the approval of the curriculum committee at the university for this four-year project we had. In order to work on the foreign study component in 1970, I took between quarters I dashed over to England to make some arrangements there at the University of Keele, to bring a group in '72. So while I was there in '70 also I went to Germany to see some possibilities there, and then in '72 my wife and I went again with the first group. We didn't go to Germany. We didn't go to France although I had some contacts there primarily because we were dealing mostly with elementary education. Most of them did not have rigorous foreign language experience. At that time they were going just for the quarter. We didn't have semesters then.

PIEHLER: That's not a lot time.

ALEXANDER: It was not a lot of time to even get accustomed to the foreign language if it was a totally—the language in England was foreign enough. (Laughter) So we—what we did—we did have a couple students who went independently to France and went to Germany, but they happened to have a—one of them had a family with German-Americans and this fellow spoke sufficient, good German to where it was possible for a short period of time. But the ones that I worked with—and that program is still on. We took them to England and we had the arrangement—we liaised to the University of Keele there in the Midlands. We'd send over about twenty-five at a time in a group. They were assigned to elementary schools in the area and a couple other departments—home economics department and the special education department tagged some people onto our group that wanted to go and we got experiences for them in schools where they dealt with exceptional children or with handicapped children of one kind or another. We even had one girl that was home economics but her major was marketing. She went with my group and we arranged to get her assigned to one of the big department stores in New Castle and she spent the whole time there in this British—well it was like Macy's. We had some other students who were in home economics with cooking, domestic science, and we found some junior high age groups and put them in schools that were appropriate for them, although it was an elementary education program. That's what I did pretty much until I retired.

PIEHLER: You mentioned earlier and I don't think I need to put it on tape, but then you went back in the nineties to Germany.

ALEXANDER: That was ...

PIEHLER: Just on a vacation.

ALEXANDER: Yeah, yeah. I went back to see old friends in England and old friends in Germany. The last trip I made to Germany was in 1994 and that was simply because my sister and I had not been back to Germany together since '36. She was a retired teacher of German in Ohio and we just wanted to go. So my wife and my sister and I and our little boy who worked for Cambridge University Press in New York had to go to England for the annual trustees meeting that they had where you go and talk to the people in Cambridge. So he said come along

that time and he took a little vacation ahead of time and we went to Germany and back to Cambridge, England and he stayed for his meeting and we came home. We had a couple weeks together with my son Jimmy and with my sister. That was in '94. I've been back once since then to England. I think it was—it was after Jimmy died. We went back in '96 I think.

PIEHLER: Your middle son passed away?

ALEXANDER: Yes. He was director of journals.

PIEHLER: For Cambridge University.

ALEXANDER: Yes, in New York, and he was responsible for the journals printed—some of them were printed in Ireland. They were the ones that were printed in North and South America. He had worked for that wild man that had a press in Yonkers. The one that disappeared off his boat in ...

PIEHLER: Oh, Maxwell.

ALEXANDER: Maxwell. He worked at—what was his—Pergamon Press. Jimmy first got into the journal business through Maxwell's Pergamon Press in New York. Boy, well that was an experience. He did the same kind of thing but for Pergamon, rather than—and then the people that hired him at Cambridge had worked for Maxwell too, and they left and they took Jimmy. He had a very good job. His story though is amazing. Do you know anything about Maxwell?

PUACA: No I don't.

PIEHLER: I think it was Robert Maxwell wasn't it?

ALEXANDER: Yeah, yeah. He was a Czech refugee that fled Germany—fled Czechoslovakia during the early Hitler days. Went to England as a relatively young man, and boy, he was a promoter—Ponzi type.

PIEHLER: Well he sort of—my sense is his finances were all built on a deck of cards and then one day the deck of cards literally fell.

ALEXANDER: Yeah and he kept borrowing from certain very respectable institutions and they didn't dare not give him more money to keep him going because he owed them so much. Finally the whole thing just collapsed and he died a very serious—a very suspicious death. He was somewhere out off the coast of Africa or Asia or something and he disappeared. [His body was eventually found]

PIEHLER: It was quite a New York story 'cause he had bought the *Daily News* and I knew someone who was a graduate student who was working at the *Daily News* and it completely changed his life because Maxwell just caused incredible havoc at the *Daily News*.

ALEXANDER: Oh Jimmy said it was just terrible. And the man would—he went back and forth all—he had publishing houses all over the world actually. London and Ireland and New York, and Maxwell was just a little bit like this Australian. Just a—Jimmy would say that Maxwell was coming and the whole place in Yonkers would just all become catatonic. He'd come in for half a day and just tear things apart and change things. So Jimmy just said the hell with it and got out and went to Cambridge, but anyway that's why Jimmy and I went there.

PIEHLER: One thing I want to—as I said we've got to do the rest of your post-war life, but it's sort of I think a good time to ask a sort of—more sort of overview question or I guess let me ask it in a broad way so it's not a leading question but what's your take on German society because you've had sort of a unique perspective that most Americans don't have?

ALEXANDER: I can't really respond.

PIEHLER: I could ask more specific questions but I wanted to first ...

ALEXANDER: Well, Germany has always been to me sort of a second homeland. I have always been more favorable towards Germany than I was France, primarily because of language. I was able to communicate better and felt more comfortable in Germany and the German language. France—I enjoyed France. Didn't know much about France. Since I'd been in England before the war, briefly, and my wife had been at Cambridge and she did a foreign study before the war and I had a lot of friends in England and I've been back several times and I'm very fond of England. But it's different because England is not all together a foreign country. I have roots there and that sort of thing. But I was always very fond of Germany. But I was always disappointed in them because I always felt that the typical German was made of better stuff than what they allowed to happen and they allowed it to happen. Now there were influences that caused it to happen but there was not much resistance that there should have been. I personally—I think I mentioned this to you once before that I suffered a little bit myself when I got back to finish up my high school work. I missed several years of my formal education in New York. Eighth grade and I missed my junior year pretty much. And when I came back to my school in New York I was considered—they knew I was a Germanophile. Is that what they call it? Because they knew I liked Germany and they knew I preferred Germany over France I guess I don't know. When I came back after my junior year, when I'd been there after the advent of Hitler, they thought I was a Nazi. Unjustly so. I think I mentioned that.

PIEHLER: Yeah, you actually wrote a note—I mean it was interesting your comment also ...

ALEXANDER: They vandalized my yearbook. Some of my friends, you know, by going through it and putting swastikas. You know how you take your yearbook and you have your friends sign it and somebody got a hold of my—one of my friends got a hold of my book and he did some very obscene—I thought it was disgusting graffiti, on my page in my yearbook accusing me of being a Nazi. Some of my good friends, and I couldn't explain to them that's what was going on and I was a messenger a little bit coming back saying, "Hey folks." When I was a junior in high school I came back and the social studies teacher that we had—a very fine lady used me as a resource in some of the things we were studying in contemporary twentieth century civilization. Ms. Lucky would have me talk about my experience and they'd ask me

questions and I'd tell them what was happening. I didn't do it in glowing terms. I was not a propagandist, or Goebbels and Hitler and that bunch. But I told them that the Germans were happier under Hitler initially than they had been during the years of the Weimar when everything was—during the depression years that they got a boost, and they worked. He got ninety-eight percent of the vote, but even if he hadn't done what he did and eliminated the other party he still would have gotten the most votes. The Germans were a little bit like the Ronald Reagan euphoria that we had in this country, you know. It was nationalism is what it was you see.

PIEHLER: You also sort of wrote to me and you said—you were sort of saying this is what Germany is like, but also you sort of conveyed that a lot of Americans—this was a very distant thing. There's no—and I think what I found very useful for historians and what we did earlier is in a sense that even a lot of your classmates thought this doesn't have anything to do with us.

ALEXANDER: That's right yeah.

PIEHLER: Where we now look at it as how come we didn't do something and for a lot of Americans ...

ALEXANDER: And in the thirties there was a very definite anti-war activity, and "No More War," I remember a summer where the teenagers in the school there had a little chant, "No More War." We were pushing League of Nations and we'd have a mock in the school, assemblies where the League of Nations—and we would have to study the positions of various members of the League even though we weren't in the League of Nations. (Laughs) And there was this reluctance to war and nobody in his right mind would ever go to a school where you had to take ROTC. That was—you thought somebody that went to a land grant college would have to take two years of ROTC was an idiot. That was true. I tried to explain to my classmates that the Germans had a new spirit about them and that they were rearming and that they were—they loved parades. They loved the flag, and all of their songs. They'd march and sing.

PIEHLER: Let me ask—'cause I've spent some time in Germany. Not as much as you. And I spent—the two times I've been in Germany the one time—I don't know if I should put it on tape but I did not develop a great fondness for Bavaria, or at least Bavarians. So I don't know if I should put that on tape for the world to read. I'm trying to warm up to Bavarians. Let me—but I think particularly the second trip I got to spend a lot of time—I spent almost the whole time on the Rhine Valley in my mother's childhood town Karlsruhe, and to me it was, one much different than Bavaria I could sense. And just sort of—Germany is a—I get the sense but I'm curious your comment. The Germany of today or even the Germany by the '70s and '80s is very different from the Germany that you were as a young boy and a student. Is that an accurate read given your experiences in Germany?

ALEXANDER: I think so. One thing too that I noticed in Germany, of course was in Berlin was not all that typical of other parts of Germany. It was typical of that kind of Germany. The people in Berlin were more accustomed to Americans and other national groups over there, but the Germans always had a sort of air of superiority. They thought their schools were better than ours. They thought they were smarter. And in some ways they spoke foreign languages better than we did. They had more training in language in their schools depending on who you were

talking to. But when it came to being able to do things—this was at the gymnasium. There were a lot of things that I knew that they didn't know. A lot of things I could do that they couldn't do. I was a better boxer than anybody in that class of mine. That hurt them. That made them mad. (Laughs) And we had boxing. I think they were trying to see what I could do and I just clobbered this one guy. (Laughter) So the instructor stopped me from boxing. I never boxed again. And they put me on these parallel bars that I never done. Nearly killed me. (Laughter) But anyway, they had some ideas about that and they were so sure that in some ways they were superior. But in this group of—I didn't participate. I sat through it but I didn't participate in the Latin class because I've never had any Latin. They wouldn't let me sit in on an English class.

PIEHLER: That would be an unfair advantage.

ALEXANDER: They had a good teacher. He spoke quite good English but it was British English and he didn't want me to contaminate. He told me one time, "It's not giggle, its *jiggle*." I said, "Yes sir." But he wouldn't let me participate in that. But I went to chemistry class and mathematics I was way ahead of them in mathematics. I was a good math student. I was a good science student and I used to help them in chemistry and so forth. I didn't—I wasn't offended, but I recognized this sort of hoity-toity attitude that they had towards what they could do. That wasn't typical of all kids that I knew, but they certainly felt better than the French and they knew they were better than the Russians but they were scared to death of them. So I loved Germany. I liked it. It's a beautiful place. And I enjoyed it. I learned, I spent a lot of time at the opera, the ballet, and these kinds of things. I didn't spend much time in the theatre because even though I spoke German quite well, it was difficult. You know 'cause just like theatrical Shakespeare I have trouble listening to Shakespeare sometimes because of the language. When you get into something of Schiller's works in the theatre I found it difficult. [Goethe was equally difficult.]

PIEHLER: Let me ask a question tied to these sort of general questions about thinking about Germany and your relationship to Germany and your views of Germany and it's a question Brian's asking in his—in a sense a case study. You knew—Nazism wasn't a distant thing. You saw the Weimar. You lived through the early Nazi period off and on and then you fought against the Nazis. What's your take on the way Germany becomes—particularly West Germany becomes such a viable democracy?

ALEXANDER: Why?

PIEHLER: Yeah and do you ...

ALEXANDER: Well I think that there always has been in Germany, certainly after the Imperial days and into the '20s and so forth, there were always movements for the people and all those other organizations that emerged that recognized the dignity of man, and the German philosophers were romantic people that believed in music and the arts and, that of course is the enigma is how could this happen with this kind of people. And I can't explain it but there were efforts in Germany that recognized the dignity of the individual and were just the antithesis of what Hitler was talking about but they were snowed under. I think to some extent because of the stratification of the society there was not much mobility. And when you think of all of the student movements that they had even during the resistance—that's where some of the major

resistance took place was in the university students. There were a lot of free thinkers in that but they had never been able to democratize the system and that's what I was talking about is that you have to change the governmental structure to where these kind of things can flourish. When I was there in the thirties we spent a lot of time with students in youth hostels. That was a big movement. Much bigger than it was in this country 'cause it certainly was pretty small relatively speaking. We spent a lot of time hostelling and there was nothing that was more interesting than to hike and travel and spend time together in a hostel at night. But this was all kind of lost and you ended up with this regimental Reich. The Germans have always liked order, neatness, cleanliness, sweeping the streets clean, seeing that they're repaired. Very efficient, but to a fault I think in the sense that lent itself to regimentation. The definition of what your responsibilities are and what mine are and categorizing these things to then became a robot in a mechanized system.

PUACA: I'm kind of curious—I mean another aspect that people often cite for this kind of successful democracy is the economy took root. The capitalists delivered the goods in a sense. I'm wondering when you were there in '53 and '54 did you see that? I mean did you see—people had cars. People had consumer goods.

ALEXANDER: Yeah, not only there but all over Europe. What had been a bicycle transportation system was a mini car. I noticed that not only in Germany, but particularly in Belgium and Holland and Germany. Yeah, that had changed. Now the Germans when I was there earlier were never very happy with Africans—colonials. Germany had colonial, but to my—well, I didn't live there then but by the time I was there, they lost their African colonies but you almost never saw a black in Berlin. Whereas in Paris ...

PIEHLER: Yeah there was a very big expatriate ...

ALEXANDER: And the French had a little different—and even the British had a little less—not color consciousness, but the British were not quite as disturbed by color differences because of Indians and so forth. But the Germans—boy when you saw a black person it really grabbed your attention. The Germans weren't particularly receptive to blacks. I remember in the hostility there in Mainz when the Senegalese troops moved out of the fortress there in Mainz where they had been in occupation since World War I. The Germans were saying what a filthy bunch. And then they said, "I think the French put them there specifically." Just to stick it to the Germans. And they had these Senegalese troops there in Mainz until about 1930. The Germans, they couldn't believe how these people behaved ...

PIEHLER: So you remember the propaganda when you were living in Germany about the Senegalese?

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

PIEHLER: So you were talking about the attitude towards—the Germans towards race and the Senegalese colonial troops from France.

ALEXANDER: Yeah, it was very narrow.

PIEHLER: Yeah but you remember this and you were in Berlin. You weren't very old at this point.

ALEXANDER: I never saw any. [Dr. Alexander was fourteen in '30-'31.]

PIEHLER: No but you were aware of this German attitude.

ALEXANDER: Oh, yes.

PIEHLER: And it was pretty pervasive?

ALEXANDER: I ... remember vividly to this day I can take you and show you exactly where it was. It was in Mainz. That was of course in the Rhineland, and it was in the old *Zitadelle*. That was the old fortress that went back at least to the Napoleonic period or probably even before, that had been used by the Germans down through the years and during the occupation after World War I from 1919 to 1930. I believe that was when the British and the French pulled out. The Senegalese troops were removed from Mainz. There were some in Trier, which was on the Mosel. I don't know why they were there, but you can go there today and see these Muslim graves. I don't know whether they were Senegalese, but they were some kind of [French] colonials.

PIEHLER: This was with the French I thought. Or was it the British.

ALEXANDER: These might have been British, but I don't think so. In 1930, the departed occupation troops were French Senegalese that had been billeted in the *Zitadelle* in Mainz.

PIEHLER: Okay.

ALEXANDER: These might have been Indian or some of their ... [The ones in Trier.]

PIEHLER: Right, other Africans.

ALEXANDER: And they were in Trier on the Mosel. The ones that I saw—I saw that in Trier and then I saw the ones in Mainz where they had just left and this facility, this old army barracks and the fortress there had been—the Germans couldn't use it anyway because it was still demilitarized. They couldn't have any military installations within fifty miles of the east side of the Rhine and this was on the west side. So the Germans weren't going to use it for their—this was the Weimar people. Weren't going to use it for any military purposes, so they spent some time cleaning it out and getting rid of all the old—I remember the toilets. You know the North African toilets that looks like a shower stall with two places for your feet and the hole. No stool or anything. They had torn those things out and they just couldn't see how you could use a toilet like that. They tore all this stuff out. Got it all cleaned up and painted up and made it into a pedagogical museum. Doctor Nieman who had some responsible job in Mainz—I don't know whether he was superintendent, but anyway he was there and a friend of my dad's. And our group spent some time in Mainz and we stayed up at the citadel. But they had this museum and

they had an exchange program for international students. They made it kind of an international student place. But they had the—not the barracks but the houses made for the officers and the military installation. My sister and I on the first day the place was finished and opened up for business Mary and I sat there and Doctor Nieman asked us if we would sell tickets. We were there at the gate selling at fifteen pfennig tickets to get in to see the museum. It was at that place where these people had been and I still remember the people there who were working on the museum kept telling everybody how the place had been—what a pigsty it had been and how dirty these soldiers were.

Does the name “Abetz” mean anything to you? In Paris? Well Otto Abetz was one of the students there at that time and he had some kind of responsibility. I don’t know whether it was a job or not, but he was a German student that had some responsibility to arrange this interchange and students would come in and stay and it wasn’t a hostel. It was an international French, German and there may have been other nations too. Otto Abetz was there and somewhere in my dad’s stuff—I haven’t seen it for years but there was a letter from Abetz who later became the—either the consul general or the German ambassador in Paris during the German occupation [1940 – 1944]. He was in the international exchange. I remember that vividly. He was—I guess he was a student there.

PIEHLER: I want to sort of now go back to chronologically—you mentioned earlier in the interview your desire to come home. How did you come home?

ALEXANDER: By boat. [This was after VJ-Day. Dr. Alexander sailed from Le Harve, France, on October 17 1945.]

PIEHLER: By boat.

ALEXANDER: Yeah, but it was a lengthy process. I suppose that you’re aware that when the war ended in Germany in May, hostilities ceased there but ...

PIEHLER: There’s a war still going on.

ALEXANDER: After VE-Day, there’s still a war going on, and there were troops that just arrived, and there were troops that were on route that they didn’t even unload. They sent them through the Mediterranean and through the Suez Canal and they just kept going to Asia. My division, 83rd Infantry Division—we’d been there almost two years and we’d seen a lot of fighting. We went all the way from Omaha Beach to across the Elbe. We weren’t in the most senior group as far as experience was concerned, but we had been there a long time. We had a lot of points. You know what I mean by points?

PIEHLER: Oh yes, yeah.

ALEXANDER: Days in—months in the army, months overseas, wounds, citations, battle stars you had and they added up. If you had initially something like eighty points you could be sent home sooner. They told us that we were kind of in the middle. We weren’t the most high point bunch. We certainly weren’t the lowest point bunch as a unit. They were going to keep us there

indefinitely, for a period of time and if we were needed in the Pacific we would then come back to the U.S. It was easier to rebuild or to reequip a unit back in the States rather than send all the stuff you needed to go to the Pacific to Germany and then to the States. So they said you folks will sit here a while and when transportation is available you'll be sent home, and if needed you'll be reequipped and retrained for Pacific duty. Well before that happened of course, from May until early September when the Japanese surrendered, and the whole thing was—the whole game was off and then it was then just high pointers went home. I was one of the high pointers in my unit and I was one of the first three officers to leave and I left about the third week of September and it took me seven weeks to get home. You had to go across Germany and France, and wait and wait and wait for a ship that's available and then they put you on a slow boat. But I got home. I got back to North Carolina and out about the first of November of '45.

PIEHLER: I'm curious because your father left for Germany when?

ALEXANDER: About two or three weeks later. [Arrived in Berlin just before Christmas, 1945]

PIEHLER: Did you get to see your father before you left?

ALEXANDER: Oh yes. He told Washington he could not leave because I was gone and our principal was still in the army, and he had been holding down the fort a bit for the school there. And he said, "Well, I just can't leave." So I got home—actually I arrived in Asheville, North Carolina, at midnight just after—well I never quite remember, but anyway it was the happiest day of my life.

PIEHLER: You were glad to be home?

ALEXANDER: As I say people ask you what was the happiest day of your life? Not when I got married, not when my children were born. It was when I got home and I knew I made it. Then my married life could begin. If I hadn't gotten home I wouldn't have had any children. See my children were born after I got home so the happiest day was probably the day when—I still say it's the high point of my life is when I got home just about midnight at the bus station in Asheville.

PIEHLER: And then you felt you were home?

ALEXANDER: I felt I was home.

PIEHLER: We soon have to leave for seminar at the colloquium. The happiest day—you mentioned the happiest day of your life was coming home. I guess—you returned to Haywood County. Do you think you would have returned if it hadn't been for your school that your father had established?

ALEXANDER: No, there's no doubt about that. If I had not had the financial investment in it 'cause I think I mentioned there were four or five of us young teachers. My dad, Doctor Snyder and several—some of the people at Columbia. We had this struggling school corporation, and we bought this property and we'd have to pay it off, and we were committed to work there so

that we'd have teachers. If I hadn't been there, I don't know where I would have been. But I did—that was one of the considerations I made in my mind when John Taylor wrote and requested my transfer. Did I mention?

PIEHLER: You mentioned wanting to get home, and not being stuck.

ALEXANDER: But at the very end of the war, at that time they commissioned me in the field. The general kept me. I didn't go to school. He just had me commissioned and he kept me doing the exact same thing. I moved over from master sergeant—his operations sergeant—to his second lieutenant aide. Same headquarters, same job. Just exactly the same but I got a little different pay and I had the rank. When John—and then in the last two weeks of the war General Montague—we had reached the Elbe and we had gone as far as we were going to go but we were still firing and flying missions every day. I came in one afternoon after having flown at Zerbst and General Montague called me in and said, "Get packed. You're going to go to Paris in the morning to librarian school." Did I tell you that? [The division had a bridgehead at Barby on the Elbe. Zerbst was a short distance east of the river.]

PIEHLER: You talked about going to librarian school.

ALEXANDER: So they sent me to Paris from the Elbe. Took us three days to get to Paris. I went to a week school in Paris. Stayed in the Maison Belgique, which is right next to the Maison d'Etats-Unis that I'd stayed in when I was there ten years before as a student going to Germany. John Taylor's office—Clay's office at that time was in Paris. After the first chance I got from formation in the afternoon, I went downtown to buy some clothes, and I went to see John. John wasn't there and Doctor Clarence Linton was—I saw him on the stage at the opening session at the librarians' program and he was at Teachers College when I was there, knew him quite well. But he ducked out early and I couldn't find him. So I left John a note in his office and called before I left the next Saturday. He hadn't gotten back from England I think. We had to return to Germany. We got back to the Elbe where we had left two weeks before the night before the seventh of May when the armistice was signed. About four or five days after that, we were in our first occupation. The war was over in Germany. General Montague called me and handed me a telex message—like a telegraph. He handed it to me and it was requesting my transfer to this organization. It was signed Lucius Clay, Lieutenant General. General Montague gave it to me and I read it and he said, "What do you know about this? Do you know what this is?" I said, "Yes sir I think I do." He said, "Do you want to go?" I said, "I don't think so." He said, "Well I can keep you for awhile, and declare that you are essential for a short while." He said, "But that's three stars." He was a brigadier. He said, "You better write your friend." Of course I don't have the telegram. It must be in our unit journal somewhere in the archives. So I went right out and sat down and wrote John a real quick note. I said, "John, thank you very much but we're headed home eventually, and I don't want to get stuck."

PIEHLER: Now when you left Haywood County you were teaching public school?

ALEXANDER: No, no it was at Springdale School, I was teaching—it was a private.

PIEHLER: It was private. I may have been—I may not have understood that when I interviewed you the first time.

ALEXANDER: Yeah well I taught later in the public high school down the road.

PIEHLER: But initially when you were teaching in Haywood ...

ALEXANDER: It was Springdale School.

PIEHLER: That was a private school?

ALEXANDER: Yes.

PIEHLER: So you didn't start out in the public schools in Haywood.

ALEXANDER: No, no.

PIEHLER: Okay that's my—I just assumed the schools you were teaching ...

ALEXANDER: No the Springdale School was started during the New College days.

PIEHLER: So it was part of the New College.

ALEXANDER: It was a place where some of the students did their student teaching and it was a boarding school for boys and girls. It was a residential school. We had the summer camp, High Valley Camp, that was also started as a laboratory. We had two nursery schools at the university, and when the university withdrew their—they stopped having their program in North Carolina, we took it over. We took up the option. They hadn't bought any property. They were renting it. And when they curtailed the program the camp and the school were full, flourishing and going along, and we wanted to see it going. So we kept the thing there for twenty some years. Twenty six years for the High Valley Camp, a recreational camp, and about twenty for the school.

PIEHLER: So the Springdale School was in operation from what years?

ALEXANDER: Well the High Valley Camp started in '34 and ran until the '60s. The Springdale School started in '37. I started in '39 and taught for three years until '42, when I joined the Army. Then we closed the school down in '54 about the time I was getting involved with the Adelphi program. So that was—and then after I finished my degree I was in the middle of the year and then the next year I didn't have any—I hadn't decided what I wanted to do with my degree. I educated myself out of employment in Haywood County. And I wasn't interested in administration particularly. Then I was invited to—I had several offers and I took one at Ball State in '57. That's when my wife and I had both—she had taught also in a local high school just down the road.

PIEHLER: I want to ask you about—I think we're going to have to do even another follow up interview on more about Haywood County and more about your education. But I want to ask

you a little bit about Ball State and Indiana simply because Brian also originally grew up in Indiana.

PUACA: In the region.

PIEHLER: In the region. It strikes me that, and I can be wrong, but Indiana was very different than New York, Germany, and Haywood County. Is that a fair—I mean I'm just curious.

ALEXANDER: Well of course, when I went to Ball State, I went there to work primarily in the laboratory experiences of pre-student teaching and student teaching. I had no intention—I did not know that I would end up working with international students. I went to—the job that I was hired for was the supervision of student teachers all over the state and also to work in the laboratory school. Now I was quite familiar with laboratory schools because I had gone to one at Columbia. So I was a product not of public education. The only time I ever went to public education was in Germany, until I came to UT, which is a state school. But all of my undergraduate work, all of my elementary and secondary and college work was done in private institutions. Peabody was a private. Lincoln was a laboratory school. Teachers College had two. They had Horace Mann and Lincoln. There were two of them. I was at the Lincoln school, which was really different in organization, different funding, and so forth. But I had been in public schools in Germany and I had worked with public schools when I was here on campus. I worked a couple times when they needed people and when I was a graduate student I worked in Sevierville one, we had quarters those days. I had a student teaching center in Sevierville and then just after I graduated they needed some help and it was in the spring. Actually it was in the winter quarter they needed the help and I stayed and helped them and supervised the Gatlinburg student teaching center. That's how I got into the student teaching work was here at UT. Then I went to Indiana in '57. It was in some ways quite similar to the experiences that I've had here as a graduate student. I worked with the student teaching program here. It was organized a little differently. It was about the same size in numbers. I worked in our lab school there and then my kids all went to lab schools. I never taught in a lab school but I supervised the Muncie Burriss student teaching people who were assigned to them.

PIEHLER: I'm just curious just because you mentioned your children going to school in Muncie. How is it that your son, ended up in a sense becoming—he's now sheriff of Haywood County.

ALEXANDER: Well you see, the three boys—the two older ones were born in North Carolina in Haywood County. They started school in Haywood County. When we moved to Indiana they were about in the third—Jimmy was going into the third grade and Tommy was going into the fifth and Edward was born in Muncie. That's the youngest boy. He was a good deal younger than his two brothers. We put them in—the house we bought in Muncie was in the lab school district. We wanted them in there because I was sure it was a better school than what they would get in the Muncie city schools. Although, the lab school did have city money. It was one of those things where they got the basic per-student cost essentially given to universities to apply to the lab students because they lived in Muncie. There were about five hundred in the lab school got that support from the city just as if they were in one of the city schools. But the city didn't have any thing to do with that program. I'd grown up on a university campus in New York at Columbia and had been at Teachers College since I was a kid and I had worked with overseas

programs as a youngster. Then I participated, and my wife did too, as a college student. So when I got to Ball State the things I did, supervising student teachers, I had done down here and working with international students I had had experience in that. I instigated the inclusion of a foreign study experience in our program we developed there. That was a continuation of my own personal experience plus the Adelphi experience. So it worked out pretty well. I—but I did a good job. They got their moneys worth. It wasn't as if it was something that I had to—you know initially you always have to be told what the rules and regulations are like getting your grades in on time and how you do this and how you do that and some of these clerical things. But as to—they didn't have to hold my hand when they said we're giving you some students over here and it's your responsibility to go over and introduce them to the classroom. I had seen plenty of classrooms, before I ever got to Ball State. A lot more than most of the other people who came in—because see I was forty when I went there. I was probably ten years older than some of the faculty members who came in about the same time I did. You see what I'm talking about?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: So the collegiate atmosphere coming from Haywood County wasn't a question of a hayseed going to the big city.

PIEHLER: I guess more coming—I mean the Midwest versus the mountains of North Carolina versus New York City. Is it because you're more on a college campus?

ALEXANDER: But you're right. When I came from the south I had little baggage being a southerner.

PIEHLER: So they viewed you not as a New Yorker?

ALEXANDER: But see when I came there I hadn't been in New York for twenty years and unless they looked at my transcript. See I was born in Tennessee. So when I went there I went to Phi Delta Kappa, you know the main home office was in Bloomington. I had been a Phi Delta Kappa here on campus and I just transferred my membership. Ball State had a chapter. I don't know—we had some kind of discussion one night at a meeting and something came up and I mentioned something. Oh I know what it was. It had something to do with the Arkansas problem in '57. They were talking about the integration of the Central High school there in Little Rock and somebody up there said something about the south, and it was sort of a snide remark. I rose to the occasion and I said, "Wait a minute now. I'm from the south." He didn't know I was from the south. He was very condescending in his position. He said, "You people from the south," and he made some comment that made me madder than hell. I said, "Well now I may have some southern attitude, but I want you to realize that there is such thing as Hoosier provincialism." (Laughter) I used that several times. Everybody's provincial to some degree. You are east Tennessee or you are western North Carolina or you are ...

PIEHLER: I find there's a certain—among some New Yorkers a New York provincialism that used to drive me crazy when I lived in New York.

ALEXANDER: Then I had an offer of a job with Fairleigh Dickinson. Did you ever know the president there?

PIEHLER: I've heard about him.

ALEXANDER: Yeah shot himself—Dr. Peter Sammartino. Well, he was at New College—I didn't have him in French. My wife had him. He taught French. He was a very good friend of my dad's and a very capable man. But he had a very—his health was bad and his wife was a vegetable [had Alzheimer's]. He invited me to New York to take a job there. He asked me that question. He said, "Do you think you would be able to handle the urban New Jersey-New York student coming from your background in the mid west?" I said, "Doctor Sammartino, you know better than that." I said, "I've been around." But he knew that I had two degrees from Columbia.

PIEHLER: I mean you'd grown up in Columbia.

ALEXANDER: But he thought my experience in Muncie was sort of hayseed or something. I don't know ... It's that—you've seen the New Yorkers on the other side of the Hudson thinking that everybody that's west of the Hudson is parochial. And again, when we were—I had to write a proposal describing what our—we had this experimental program we were proposing. I had the responsibility for the foreign study component. That was my baby and I had to write eight or ten pages defending the program, describing how it worked and what role it would play with the education of elementary teachers in Indiana. So, somewhere in there I talked about some of the things we were trying to do, and—Ball State was primarily, ninety percent Hoosier. I used that word—Indiana provincialism. One gal said, "Dr. Alexander, what do you mean by Hoosier provincialism?" I said, "Well, Dr. Beth Mascho, I'm glad you asked that question." She said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Well I'll give you an example. Do you remember last week when we had that coffee hour over at the arts building with this group that we had"—we had a group from Brazil. About twenty Brazilians were coming there for a couple weeks for observations of Indiana schools sent by the state department. I said, "Do you remember over there at the arts building when we were having this, it was the afternoon tea with the social hour and you got into a conversation when I mentioned the man's name and you said to him how glad you were to meet him, and that you hoped that while he was in town."—she said, "I hope I have a chance to practice my Spanish with you." (Laughter) And he said, "Madam, in Brazil we speak Portuguese." I said, "Dr. Mascho that's provincialism." They approved our program. But that was the sort of thing that I ran into there.

PIEHLER: One thing I want to close—well you mentioned being this common in '57 about race. One of the things you sort of wrote to me after your interview was—and the first interview you did you sort of—one of the things that makes the interview so wonderful, for historians and I think for my students that I assigned to read it, is you convey a sense of the reality of the Nazis taking power and what that meant as—not being a German, but pretty close to it. And as you say in this interview in many ways you felt very much at home in Germany. But you also sort of made a comment about race and putting this sort of how—why in some ways German racial attitudes towards the Jews and others doesn't quite set off the alarm bells in the 30s it might do today, because of the question of race in the United States.

ALEXANDER: I don't remember exactly what I said but—I think what I did say though, was that there—that even in New York there was a great division among the Jewish.

PIEHLER: Yeah you mentioned that.

ALEXANDER: And there was a constant struggle as to which way to go. Do you defy actively the Nazis, or do you work along with the ones who are still there and try to help them hoping that the thing will collapse? The struggle that went between Rabbi Weiss and there was—they were ambivalent about it. There were a good number of Jews who had interests in Germany and didn't want to rock the boat because it was their business. You take the Macy's and all those people—the Gimbels and all those people that still have money there. That's all money that was there, before World War I even. Many in the American-Jewish communities had this investment in the Haphag Steamship line—was Jewish owned. There were many people with these kinds of investments that said, "Hey, we could still do business with them, and this thing is going to collapse." As opposed to those who said we've got to— isn't that what I said?

PIEHLER: Yeah, I'm trying to find it. Believe it or not I was looking at it yesterday and I've somehow misplaced the letter you wrote to me, which is on my desk. But one of the comments you made—you observed to me is trying to convey the sense of race is that your laboratory school at Columbia is right next to Harlem, and it was a different world. There was no—and not even to sensitivity, that it's a different world.

ALEXANDER: We had two children that were black at the Lincoln school, that I know of. One of them was in—the girl was in my sisters class and their father was a well known—he was a preacher and a classmate of my dad's at Columbia. My dad knew him. These kids were as white as we are. The mother was quite dark. The father was quite fair. They were there, and nobody knew that they were black. They were the only ones in the school. We were right on—on the backside of the school was LaSalle Street. That was the way it was. It was black, but it was mostly Hispanic—Puerto Rican. But a lot of people don't realize that Harlem has several subdivisions. You have the West Indians. You have the Puerto Ricans. You have the southern Blacks. There were different places there. You get outside of New York where you had a concentration of refugees. I mean you couldn't live in Manhattan on West End Avenue when I was there, and you could walk down Broadway from 110th Street on down. You'd hear more German than you would English. But these were, in most cases, rather well to do. They were upper-middle class professionals that came—and they weren't the kind that couldn't get out. A lot of professionals, Doctors—and unless you lived in a place like that where you had—from Ninety-Sixth Street up it was pretty much over on West End Avenue, Broadway, Riverside was the enclave where great numbers of refugees from Germany and Austria had fled to New York. I think I mentioned before, that when I tried to explain that to my friends many of them were very, very hostile to anything German. There were others though in school—in fact when I came back from Germany—I think I mentioned it before. I came back in January of '34. I was just there half the year. I came back for the second semester my junior year, and by that time Hitler was really beginning to be kind of nasty about things, and that's when Dr. Franz Hilker was arrested in '33. This was right after Christmas in '34. Some of my friends were chiding me, "Here's the Nazi coming back." And it made me mad, and really quite angry with them. I said, "Well now

wait a minute.” There were two classmates who had been in Germany the same summer. I didn’t see them but they had been in Germany with their families on business.

PIEHLER: You did mention it before.

ALEXANDER: I said, “Now wait a minute.” My father—and that was the year also when my father got into some trouble with *The Spectator*, which was the ... Columbia University paper. *The Spectator* was attacking him for going on a German boat on the Haphag line. They got very nasty about it, and they were trying to discredit him, you know, and saying he was being paid and so forth and he should be investigated because he was getting kick backs from the line. That was—then when I got back this question came up about going to Germany and spending good dollars there, you know. I said, “Now wait a minute. I went there with my father and my mother, and he was there on professional business. He’s an educator. He is not a Nazi” That was when he was there and was told to leave. When Dr. Franz Hilker was arrested, Dr. Thomas Alexander was declared *persona non grata* and told to leave within forty-eight hours by the Gestapo. They finally decided it was a bad mistake to throw him out of Germany. I said, “What is the difference?” Two of my classmates were there with their families and their father’s were both members of the Gimbel family—the department store. They were buying and selling and making commerce. I said, “Now there’s the people you ought to talk to. Don’t talk to my dad because he wasn’t doing anything and he doesn’t care about the politics of the thing.” They just didn’t see it. It was irrelevant to what they were doing. At the time my father was never able to tell anybody this—and John Taylor who was over there running the group, and in charge of the group, was getting money in Berlin from a very wealthy Jewish family out in Grönewald, Berlin. Getting marks that he used to pay for room and board for everything for the students that were in Germany. This family was given credit at the university to pay tuition for relatives that had gone to ...

PIEHLER: Had left Germany.

ALEXANDER: ... had left Germany. In other words we were ...

PIEHLER: You were essentially funneling money out, because there were these restrictions on how much money you could ...

ALEXANDER: You couldn’t take anything more than about ten marks. Anytime we cashed money we had to go to the bank, and it was registered in our passports.

PIEHLER: So this thing you were doing with this Jewish family ...

ALEXANDER: Was very illegal.

PIEHLER: Under Nazi law. And you couldn’t tell anyone you were doing this?

ALEXANDER: That’s right. And yet they were crucifying my dad for taking kickbacks. They accused him of getting—but what he got was not kickbacks but when you had twenty-five

students sailing on the same ship they gave you one free pass. That was used for the graduate student or two that my dad took with him to help with the running of this overseas study program.

PIEHLER: And also the graduate students education.

ALEXANDER: Yeah. So what my dad did though, when they attacked him—and they wrote letters to Nicholas Murray Butler, who was president of the university at that time. My dad said that he understood that they're concerned, but he said, "As long as you want to investigate me, why don't you ask the president of the university to investigate the ownership of the Teachers College bookstore." That was owned by the Russell family—the dean's family. And boy that brought an end to that.

PIEHLER: We need to end today 'cause I want to make sure Brian has a few minutes and we don't have to rush over, but I have to say that you had such a great closing story about the funneling of money. Because I know you told me part of that story of the—but you left out the funneling of the money.

ALEXANDER: All the money we cashed—the dollars we cashed we had to cash at the Deutsche Bank. I even think about it when I hear Deutsche Bank. There're lots of ads on the television these days. (Laughter)

PIEHLER: Well thank you for today.

PUACA: Yes thank you very much.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----