

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

AN INTERVIEW WITH EUGENE SHWARTZ

FOR THE VETERANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WAR AND SOCIETY
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

INTERVIEWED BY
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KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
18 APRIL 2005

TRANSCRIPT BY
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KURT PIEHLER: This begins an interview with Eugene Shwartz on April 18, 2005 at his home in Knoxville, Tennessee with Kurt Piehler and ...

JARED MAXWELL: Jared Maxwell

KURT PIEHLER: ... and I just want to begin, normally we ask, we start with, asking questions about parents and grandparents and so for, but I want to really ask you first to start of with some ways at the end of the interview, but I think—you wrote a memoir, a very, I might add a very good memoir, about your life experiences, particularly you experiences in Luxembourg growing up, and then your World War II service and your post-war service, post-World War II service. What prompted you to write your memoir?

EUGENE SHWARTZ: Well ... like I said many times before ... it took World War II veterans a long time to decide to tell their stories. Uh, after World War II, when we came back, we did not want to talk about it anymore because it was a horrible experience for most of us ... and we did not even want to tell our stories to—to our own family. And so we kept it—kept it to ourselves until, I would think, it was about the 50th anniversary of the Normandy Invasion. Uh, when there was a lot to do about it, the President and everybody went over to Normandy to visit the battlefields, and uh, there was so much information came out about World War II, uh, we had programmed ... the war, and ... my children asked me, “Well what, Daddy, what did you do in the war?” and uh, I said, “Uh, gee, I have never told you anything about it, have I?” And they said, well uh, “It would be a good idea if you wrote it down while you still can.” So, that prompted me to start on my, uh, my story.

PIEHLER: ... When did you start writing this story?

SHWARTZ: Well, it, when was that, about ... early ‘90s I think.

PIEHLER: Early ‘90s.

SHWARTZ: It must have been early ‘90s, yeah, yeah, that’s—that’s right.

PIEHLER: So were you influenced by the 40th or the 50th anniversary?

SHWARTZ: There was also a 40th?

PIEHLER: Yeah, well, I guess, I can date it by president, and it was Ronald Reagan, and then Bill Clinton. Which.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, yeah, it started already at the 40th.

PIEHLER: At the 40th.

SHWARTZ: Because ... that’s when a lot of ... stories came forward about the war, uh, and it’s—it’s still going on (laughs). I see, uh, World War II stories almost every other night.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

SHWARTZ: ... on—on the History Channel, uh, so that's when it began, and, uh, when I noticed that a lot of other veterans also did the same thing.

PIEHLER: Yeah, so you didn't think yourself unique for not wanting to talk about the war?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, well, uh, no, I knew that nobody did it. There was this long period of silence, uh, before we decided it was right time to do it, and—and we were urged to do it. I know I was urged to do it, uh, by certain people that said, uh, “you know you're getting old, and, uh, you may not be here too long, so you better get busy writing your story.” That's all I have.

PIEHLER: ... I'm just curious, what was your—you said very little to your children at all about your war experience, what was your children's reaction to your memoir?

SHWARTZ: Amazing. They ... were, I mean, my oldest son was absolutely amazed, and, uh, when I went to visit him in Boston, uh, his other father-in-law, his father-in-law, that was there at the time, and he (waited?) too, and, uh, they came to talk to me and said, “You mean, you actually talked to German soldiers? They couldn't believe it, that, uh, that seemed to them so—so (prior to?) history, you know, but uh, when I told them, “Yeah, when the Germans invaded, uh, I talked to them right there on the street, and so forth.” Uh, they found it quite amazing.

JARED MAXWELL: Why did you wait so long to come out with the story, you know, for 50 years?

SHWARTZ: We repressed it for some reason, yeah, it uh, it was very hard to tell your children the misery you went through, and uh, don't forget I was just 19 years old when they sent me over seas, and I had never seen a dead person. Uh, we never had—we never had anybody in our family passing away ... in our young days. I'd never even seen a dead person, and uh, in the first week I was in Normandy, uh, I was called to the front lines, and uh, I saw where they were loading a whole huge truck with American soldiers, dead American soldiers. They had piled them up like fire wood. And, uh, you know, that was shocking to see ... and then—and then after that, you know, I saw thousands and thousands of more dead bodies, and it does something to you, you know...you reluctant to tell anybody about it, because, uh, you know, it just doesn't sound right.

PIEHLER: Had your children known that you'd grown up in Luxembourg? Had you told them that story?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, yeah, they knew that.

PIEHLER: But they didn't know the stories about your fleeing Luxembourg?

SHWARTZ: No, no, they didn't. No, they did not.

PIEHLER: What about your intelligence work? When did they—cause you mention in your memoir ... you couldn't tell your family what you ...

SHWARTZ: I couldn't tell my wife what I was doing.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

SHWARTZ: ... and it was also a severe strain on you. Uh, you came home every night, and you could not tell your wife what you—what you had done all day. Uh, and this is, this is something the government does not even consider. They don't do anything about it. The...intelligence agents can only take it so long before they quit. There are very few who make it a life—(a life of passion?), uh, particularly in the CIA, uh, mainly because of overseas service. Uh, uh, I loved it when I was single.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

SHWARTZ: It's a great adventure. But once you're married and have children, it changes everything.

PIEHLER: Well, particularly, I mean, uh, particularly at one point you talked in your memoirs about a gun battle which, uh...

SHWARTZ: Yeah, in Vienna.

PIEHLER: In Vienna.

SHWARTZ: ... in Vienna. Yeah, I mean that, uh, that was really common, really, for a while. You know...Vienna was divided into four powers, and so, of course, I lived in the American sector, but the...Soviet sector was only two blocks over.

PIEHLER: Yes.

SHWARTZ: Uh, and so, it was very easy to get...in trouble with the KGB.

PIEHLER: What was your children's reaction when they learned you had been a CIA agent, and then ... worked for the intelligence ... or what would become the Defense Intelligence Agency?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, well, they, uh, I don't remember exactly what...(laughs)

PIEHLER: Were they surprised though? Did they ...

SHWARTZ: Oh yeah, they were undoubtedly surprised, yeah.

PIEHLER: I mean, did they have any ...

SHWARTZ: When I told them, you know, I, uh, I gave them my whole memoirs all at once...

PIEHLER: All at once ...

SHWARTZ: ... so, so they found out the whole story ...

PIEHLER: So you didn't like tell them little side stories? They read your memoir, like I read it, from beginning to end.

SHWARTZ: ... from beginning to end, yes.

PIEHLER: So they had a lot to absorb. (Laughter)

Who else, who else have you shared the memoir with, as I should mention on tape you shared—you deposited a copy for the Center for the Study of War and Society at the University of Tennessee, but who else have you shared the memoir with?

SHWARTZ: Only with, uh, my family and, uh, I have three children, and some other friends. One is also a Luxembourger who came over here. We knew each other from the same town, and he lives in New York, and I sent him a copy. But, um, I sent Dr. Johnson a copy ... and, uh, I only printed about eight copies. I only have two of them left. One is the original one and one extra one, that's all—and I kept the extra one just in case ...

PIEHLER: Just in case ...

SHWARTZ: ... just in case some of my grandchildren or cousins become interested in it.

PIEHLER: Well, I just want to compliment you on tape—on the record. It's a very good memoir. Um, and well, uh, we have questions that sort of fill in things...you know. You've done a very good job, um, and so, if you're any help to us in terms of doing your ...

SHWARTZ: Uh, I mean, I should be because, uh, I have experience that, I think—you might say what did you do in World War II as a fighting man. Well, I didn't fight. I didn't even have a weapon. My weapon was the typewriter. I used a typewriter to—that was my weapon. My job was to inform the American army about the German Army. Your commander wants to know who he is facing. He wants to know about the enemy he's facing. He wants to know everything about the enemy. Before he attacks, he wants to know how—who the enemy is, what kind of unit it is, what kind of—their strength, their weaknesses, their equipment, their losses they've had. Uh, that all helps your own commander to prepare for the battle. He doesn't want to fight somebody who that, you know, he doesn't know. And, how does he get his information? The American army has nobody that speaks German. I was the only one there who spoke German. So, it all fell upon me. I had to interrogate, I had to translate captured documents, I had interpret the photography that we took. I had to...be concerned with the maps. We needed always a lot of maps. Uh, and we sometimes almost ran out of maps. We would advance so fast that the maps couldn't follow us good enough, so I captured German maps. They were quite different from American maps. So, I had also studied German maps, so I knew how to interpret the elevation, which is different mark on the German map than on an American map. And all these things, uh, and I had to interpret to the officers. I mean, that was, in fact, that was a big job.

Um, from the colonel down, they all needed me to interpret. Whenever we captured a town ... the colonel had to contact the local mayor and give him instructions on what you were supposed to do while were occupying his town. And so I had to be the interpreter between the colonel and, uh, the local mayor. And the officers, uh, also had contacts with the local population. I had to interpret for them. I had to do everything for them, you know (laughs). And so, I became a very essential person. I became so essential that—the one man they could not do without was me. So they actually tried to protect me. They didn't want me to take too many chances in getting killed. They—because there would never be a replacement. I would...they would never get a guy like me again. If they lost me, they were out of business because there were very few, uh, soldiers who had just come from Europe, just two years before in my case, who had, who were fluent in the local languages, and geography of France. Uh, and, so to find another one like me was, would be pretty hard to do. So, I had it made, I mean I only dealt with officers. I had nothing to do with the common soldier. I lived practically with the officers the whole time. I had a wonderful life there. I mean, I always lived in a house. So when the shells came and the bombs keep falling, I ran into the basement, and that saved me. When they had to travel to some place, they had to take me along as an interpreter. Uh, I mean, I really had it made, I was really unique—a unique position there. I got better and better as the war went on. When, when General Patton came, twice he came to our unit, and the colonel took me along to the meeting with Patton. I mean, there was no other enlisted man there but me because, uh, he thought I should hear what Patton had to say in case somebody has to interpret what, well, I would be there. And so, I had a really great big story to tell.

MAXWELL: Um, did, yeah, as, you know as an enlisted soldier with such privileges, did any other enlisted soldiers, like, have any resentment toward you in anyway?

SHWARTZ: No, they didn't. I had a SHAEF headquarters, supreme headquarters patch, and, boy, that was wonderful. When they saw they, "Who is this guy?," I mean, "Who sent him over here?"

PIEHLER: Even though you were only a sergeant? That's still the SHAEF, it's the SHAEF...

SHWARTZ: The SHAEF patch, which is on that shirt over there... (points toward uniform)

PIEHLER: Mm hmm.

SHWARTZ: ... that's uh, even the officers wondered who this guy was who had a SHAEF patch down in the infantry. And, uh, yeah, so, uh, and I actually—actually was sent from the supreme headquarters intelligence division. I was an emissary sent from London originally ... to the fighting unit to do this work for them. I never belonged to any of these units. I was only attached to these units, so I was actually independent. They couldn't do anything to me. They couldn't promote me or demote me. Only the—my headquarters could do that. Now, the reason I didn't—everyone would say, "Why aren't you a lieutenant?" The reason was that I was sent when I was just twenty years old to the, uh, intelligence school in Camp Ritchie, and there the whole camp was nothing but refugees, mostly Jews. I would say 80% were Jews in that camp, because they had all come from Europe recently, and they all spoke German, and they were the only ones available to do this kind of job. Now, you say, well, gee, there are a lot of Germans in

America, I mean, one-fourth or one-third of America is from German extraction, why couldn't we find a lot of German speakers to go into intelligence? Well, there are none. These—by 1940, the Germans in America were already second and third generation, and they no longer spoke German. And, if they spoke a little German, it was just a form—a common language, but not the kind of German that was needed to interrogate German officers. So, there were very few of us. But, all the graduates from that school would not make officer because they were mostly foreigners...and so that was just a policy. We should have all been officers, but we were not allowed.

PIEHLER: Well, no, I've interviewed already another graduate of Camp Ritchie, also interrogated German POWs, Simon (Shilowitz?), who was a sergeant, and, though he ... was from Poland originally, um ...

SHWARTZ: There was a German section of Poland ...

PIEHLER: Yeah, yeah, no, he's, in fact, he would have likely gone to a German gymnasium if it hadn't been for Hitler. His family had strong ties to both Germany and the U.S. because of his father's trading.

SHWARTZ: Henry Kissinger was in the camp.

PIEHLER: While you were still in the ...

SHWARTZ: Yeah, he was the same type. He had come from Germany ...

PIEHLER: Yes, yes.

SHWARTZ: And, later when I worked for Kissinger, and, uh, when he was the, uh, security chief for Nixon, I worked for him, yeah.

PIEHLER: I want to back up a little, and really go back to the beginning, um. And to start with your parents, do you know how your parents actually met?

SHWARTZ: Yes. My father was a regular sergeant in the American army. He enlisted in the American army in 1905. Now he had come as a young man over here from the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. He spoke German, and he had an uncle over in Philadelphia who invited him over, but my father said the uncle treated him badly, so after a short time, he escaped and enlisted in the American army. My father was sent to the Philippines because there was an insurrection at the time in the Philippines. After he got through in the Philippines, he was sent to China for awhile.

PIEHLER: For the Boxer Rebellion?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, after ... probably after the Boxer Rebellion ...

PIEHLER: After, okay.

SHWARTZ: ... but there was still unrest there.

PIEHLER: Mm hmm.

SHWARTZ: After he came back from there, he was sent to the Mexican border because there was struggle there, in the 1916. So he went to ... fight with General Pershing on the Mexican border. And then came World War I, and they send him over to France. So, he was in the war in France, so when the war ended in November 1918, uh, the Germans retreated and the American army was right behind them making sure that they kept retreating back into Germany. Well, the American, the 5th Division, which was my father's division, the Diamond Division, settled in Luxembourg just on the border of Germany...after the Germans had moved back into Germany. And my father was quartered in a private home, and that private home had a beautiful daughter—and so he fell in love with that girl. And, he was there a couple of months in this town, and he said, “Well, I love you. I want to marry you.” And she said, “Yeah, you and all the other American soldiers. You're all alike. You all promise us you're gonna marry us, and then you go back to America and then you forget about us.” So, she said, “If you really mean what you say, you will return to America, and you will come back and get me. Then I know that you mean it.” Well, he returned in 1919 (to America). In 1920, when there was a knock on her door, and there he stood. He said, “I'm back.” (Laughter) And they married right away. And, he took her back to the United States, of course. And they lived in the United States for four years, in which time I was born in Washington, D.C.

And, uh, there's an amazing story—my father wanted to show my mother the White House. In those days, you could easily visit the White House. So they took me along,...and as they walked through the White House, a door opened and President Harding appeared, and he went up and he shook hands with all the visitors, and, when came to us, he kissed the baby, me, he kissed my on the cheek. So I've been kissed by President Harding. (Laughter).

PIEHLER: No picture of, uh, ... (Laughter)

SHWARTZ: So then, uh, the grandparents wrote us and said, “Why don't you come and visit us and show us the grandchild?”, that I was the only grandchild they had, and they wanted to see the grandchild. So, my parents decided to take a quick trip over there...to her parents, and that's what they did. And, uh, while they were over in Luxembourg, my father suddenly took ill. He spit blood. He spit up blood. The doctor examined him and said, “You were—you were poisoned gassed in World War II (World War I). You swallowed some gas. You have to go to sanatorium.” So, he went to a sanatorium in Alsace, France where he stayed for six months before he was released. And then the doctor said, “You should still rest some more, after that, in Luxembourg. You shouldn't exercise—do too much work. And, uh, so he stayed a little bit longer, and, uh, then the grandparents didn't want to let us go anymore. They said, “Well, we'll take care of you here, and the grandfather build us two new houses in the suburb, one for us and one for him and his wife. He retired then. And so, we had a free house, and even though my father said, “Well, someday we'll have to go back to the United States.” It was postponed and postponed, and then came the Depression. And my father had to return to the Veteran's Administration in Washington because all the, uh, disabled veterans had to be reexamined.

Roosevelt was cutting down on the expenditures in '33 and '34. Well, this was '34, my father had to come back to the United States for an examination, and ... they proved he had been actually gassed. So, when he came back to Luxembourg, he said, "Oh, we have it much better here in Luxembourg than they have it in the States. I saw long lines of unemployed, and, you know, and (something happens?) and all that. Let's not go back yet." And so, they delayed it and delayed it, and they delayed it too long until World War II.

PIEHLER: Now when did your father leave the Army?

SHWARTZ: By 1920.

PIEHLER: ... 1920. So what was he doing when you were living—when you were born—in Washington, D.C.? How'd he make a living? Do you know?

SHWARTZ: I think he worked a while for the post office.

PIEHLER: Mm hmm.

SHWARTZ: And, uh, he had a...then he retired from an auto plant in (Acton?), Ohio. And that's, uh, but then, before he got the (can't hear) he came back over here. So that's, that's how we (can't hear) in Luxembourg (can't hear).

PIEHLER: 'Cause you mention your father in Luxembourg became a specialist on stamps. He sold ...

SHWARTZ: Well, yes. He had already an interest in stamps during the (____?). He had collected stamps. And we decided to make a business out of it. And he, uh, so he bought all the Luxembourg stamps that he could, and he, then he bought, he specialized in small countries, like Lichtenstein, and, uh, you know, these small countries in Europe that was his specialty. And, uh, the Catholic Church collected stamps too from the students. The nuns and the priests would tell the students, "If you have stamps, particularly current stamps, give them to us," and then they would sell them to my dad (laughs). We had (stacks?), we got (stacks?) of stamps. Uh, we also visited some of the monasteries and convents. And then he established a relationship with the merchant dealers, that do shipping all these stamps to the United States. He became famous as an expert, and he wrote the purpose, he wrote the section on these little countries in the merchant's stamp catalog, a big stamp catalog listing all the stamps of Europe. And then he established a business later on in Washington, D.C.

PIEHLER: ... What did your father tell you about his military service?

SHWARTZ: Uh, quite a bit. Yeah, he liked to stories.

PIEHLER: What were some of the stories you remember him telling you?

SHWARTZ: Well, uh, about members in his company. He also became company clerk. He was able to type and knew German and had some education. I don't know where he got it, but

obviously he was better than the other guys in his company because he was their company clerk. For years, he was (adjutant?). Yeah, he was always telling these (_____?) about his buddies. He had, uh, he said the first sergeant was a Swiss, a big butcher, he was a butcher by trade. And when some soldier did something wrong, instead of taking him up to the court marshal, or something like that, he would just line them up against the wall and beat the hell out of him. (Laughter) I mean, that way you don't get any further punishment. You just get beaten up once and for all and it's over with. You don't get emotional or anything, and that's how they did it in those days. And don't forget these were only single men in those days in the Army, only single men.

PIEHLER: What, uh, you mention your father was gassed, I mean, ... what did he tell you about combat, or did he tell you much about combat?

SHWARTZ: He, uh, he actually was in charge of a supply train that moved supplies up to the front lines.

PIEHLER: In World War I?

SHWARTZ: In World War I. So he actually didn't do any fighting either.

PIEHLER: Well what about, I mean, he was also in the Philippines insurrection ...

SHWARTZ: Yeah ...

PIEHLER: What did he—what was—did he ever tell you anything?

SHWARTZ: Not, not, not that I remember. No.

MAXWELL: What about Mexico?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, well, they, uh, went into Mexico for awhile and chased Pancho Villa all over Northern Mexico, never could catch him. So, they finally—Wilson, President Wilson brought them back, and Pershing, they sent Pershing in there with some American troops to capture this, uh, Pancho Villa. And, uh, they never caught, and, finally, they gave up, and brought the Americans back, because World War II (World War I) was getting serious over there, and Wilson was thinking about getting involved in Europe, so he brought the American army back, so ... that was a big failure.

PIEHLER: Well, uh, you mention your father—you father didn't have a good experience in Philadelphia with family, with his relatives. You—what did he say about what the relatives were trying to do?

SHWARTZ: No, he never ...

PIEHLER: He never told you any of the specifics?

SHWARTZ: No, he never told me anything, anything that was, uh, unfavorable, or something, you know, he wouldn't talk about it.

PIEHLER: It sounds like you ...

SHWARTZ: Another interesting aspect of the story is, that when he came back to the United States in 1919, uh, I don't whether it was still 1919—1919 or 1920 when the Unknown Soldier was brought over here and buried in Arlington.

PIEHLER: Yes.

SHWARTZ: And my father was picked as—as the pall bearer for the Unknown Soldier ... He thought that was quite—quite an honor. And he also became a lieutenant shortly after that.

PIEHLER: That would have been 1921, that ...

SHWARTZ: Was it '21?

PIEHLER: Yeah, the Unknown Soldier was interned in 1921. So that was—that was quite an honor.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, I mean, he was an old soldier, and ... they just don't pick a new guy, they pick some old sergeant, uh, to do that. Uh, he would sometimes talk about that. And, uh, of course with me too, I always thought that I should be an officer, and, so, I resented the fact that I was not an officer. And, uh, in September '44, in just a few months after the invasion, everybody—all the other officers said, "You should be an officer." And, uh, so in September, we were in the city of (Nancy?) in France, we had liberated that town, an emergency occurred, and, so, they immediately appointed me as a candidate to become an officer, and I went to the hospital and had my physical, I went before the board of officers, where they personally interview and (ask?) everything, and I was absolutely sure that I—that my commission—when they informed me that they had picked the master sergeant from division to become...and I understood that because that man was thirty-nine years old, had been a professor at New York University, uh, he was Jewish (____?), and he spoke good German, and they just picked him because he was more mature than I was. I was just twenty years old, or twenty-one years old, and I was just twenty-one, yeah, just twenty-one in August '44. I was just twenty-one. I was just a young kid. So, they said, "Okay, when the next opening comes up, we'll put you in for officer." The war was over too soon, before I had chance—if the war only lasted only a little bit longer, ...

PIEHLER: Yeah.

SHWARTZ: ... I would have made it, but the war was over too soon after that so I never got it. So, I was determined to become an officer. I said, "There's one thing I'm gonna get, it's—I'm gonna get a commission." So, I stayed in the reserve when they discharged me. I enlisted again in the reserve, and ... I did enough reserve service that they finally gave in and gave me a commission.

PIEHLER: What year did you get your commission?

SHWARTZ: May, '48.

PIEHLER: May of '48

SHWARTZ: I went to Ft. Dixon, New Jersey for active duty—I was at the university of course. I went back—I went back to George Washington University after the war, and in the summer when we have rotation, when the other boys were looking for a temporary job, I went back on active service, and they send me to Ft. Dixon, New Jersey to the headquarters there, G-2 division, and, uh, I had a great time there too. And that's when they finally, "Okay, you're serious enough about that we make you an officer." I always got whatever I wanted. When I made up my mind to get it, I got it. The, um, I've always wanted to be in the Foreign Service, the U.S. Foreign Service. So, in 1948 when I graduated, I wanted to apply for the Foreign Service. They told me, "At present time, we are abusing the Foreign Service. They bloated during the war, and we're trying to reduce the service. It's the worse possible time for you to apply for the Foreign Service." And I had studied all—my whole course was designed to Foreign Service. Foreign affairs was my subject. So, what was I supposed to do? I mean I was terribly disappointed, but not for very long because almost immediately I heard a new organization was being formed in Washington, the CIA, the Central Intelligence Agency. I said, "Hey, maybe that would be a good place." I walked in there, I was hired immediately (slaps hands together). They said, "You're just the kind of guys we need," they said. I mean, this was—in the beginning, I was one of the first ones. In '49, I joined up, and, uh, they said, "You're just the kind—with your background and your Army service, that's the kind we need." So, I got hired immediately.

PIEHLER: I want to just, uh, go back to your parents, to your mother. Um, could you, um, talk to me a little bit more about her family background, and what—how high of schooling did she get?

SHWARTZ: Oh, yeah, well...you're talking about before World War I. She was about eighteen years old in World War I. And, uh, yeah, the highest you could get in that time was elementary school. There was no high school at all in those days. They just had an elementary school. And they learned high German and a little bit of French, and, uh, they just managed get that. And they—if you wanted to go into trade, there were trade schools after that. If you wanted to be a plumber or a carpenter, there was another two year course just for that. So, all the boys took the two years, and that was it, that's as far as they went. Now, but there were only a few high schools in the whole country, and that's what I attended to, (Ecole Industrielle et Commerciale?), the name for the high school. I mean, it was nothing to do with an American high school, believe me, because they, they pick the very best students, out of all the schools, only the A and B students, they put them into this high school. And, uh, when I came you came out of there, you were guaranteed a government job. You could become a teacher or go into the civil service or you could become a priest ... That was a Catholic country ... Yeah ... they—we were so well trained in that school that, uh, it was almost like college over here. It was ... certainly ... on a community college level, definitely. And, uh, so I was fortunate in the long run that I went that

school because it put so far ahead of American schools. And, uh, when I went into the Army—at the induction center, they gave you an intelligence exam. And I took it, and the next day they immediately called me in for an interview. Apparently, I had made 100% on...the exam. So, they immediately picked me out of the group. And, so then I got to talk to the captain, and I told him my whole background. He was writing everything down, and he was just writing everything down for a long time, my whole story, and, um, finally he said, “What do you want to do in the Army?” I said, “I want to get into intelligence.” And, uh, he didn’t say anything. He just wrote something down, and then I was dismissed. I went back to the barracks, and I had come to induction center with six other students from George Washington University. So, they asked me, “How did you do?” I said, well, I told them, “I want to get into military intelligence.” “Hahaha,” they all started laughing. They said, “Don’t you know the Army? In the Army, when you’re an engineer, they put you into cook, they make you cook and so forth.” You know...this story. They always put you in something that you’re not qualified for. So, they laughed at me. And, it didn’t look too good because we were shipped to, uh, basic training infantry camp in Arkansas, of all places. And, that was a very wild place. But, they ... will graduate from basic training, they lined us up on the field, and, uh, the major called out everybody’s name, and as your name was called, he would, “Infantry. Artillery. Engineers. You go into the Signal Corps.” And everybody was called out except me. I was the only one left standing on the field. “Hmm,” I said, “what’s going on here?” And he said, “Private Schwartz, report to headquarters.” So I reported there, and they said, “We’re assigning you temporarily to division headquarters of the 79th Infantry Division in Tennessee.” And, so, they that was Tullahoma ... (____?), Tennessee. I never been...I didn’t even know where Tennessee was, of course. And...I was sent to the adjutant general of the division and as his private secretary because I could type, I could take stenography. The guy was just waiting—the colonel was just waiting for a guy like me to be his secretary. I mean, all the other guys were working and exercising and playing soldiers, and I was sitting in the office. And then, after a few months, they said, “You’re only here until the next class at military intelligence center, Camp Ritchie, opens up. Next was in August and you’re going there.” And that, that’s something else. And I was out of the Army, really. For all practical purposes, I didn’t belong in the Army any more because I was independent. I was constantly in schools. The first year, I went from one school to the other school, and...it was even better that they sent me to California.

Here’s another interesting fact that you ... might be aware of. When the American Army was formed in ’40, ’41, ’42, they ... formed all the engineer departments, the signal departments, all the specialized departments. And, of course, they had a very small intelligence department because why would an American army need intelligence living in the United States? I mean, you know, we had no enemy. And...they realized they needed an intelligence department. Well, they did that, okay. They gave it a thought about prisoners of war. It never occurred to them. Then the American army went into North Africa, and lo and behold, they captured a whole German and Italian army of Rommel’s there in North Africa. Two-hundred thousand prisoners. The American army was not prepared to receive that many prisoners. They had no organization. They never thought in their wildest dreams that they would have to deal with 200,000 prisoners. So, now they suddenly became aware there was a big need for...trained PW experts. And that’s where I came in. So, they said, “We are now having armored maneuvers in Southern California, the desert, and we want you to go there and train these American troops in handling of PWs.” And that’s what I did. As each unit went through the training in the desert, I taught them how to

deal with captured prisoners. And...so that was—the good thing about that was that there was a two week interlude ...

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

SHWARTZ: ... so, there was a two week interval between the maneuvers and—a buddy of mine, that was a Jewish boy, he decided to go out on the highway and hitchhike to Hollywood ... all he wanted was Hollywood. And ... all of a sudden a Cadillac stopped and picked us up, and he took us all the way into California, uh, into ... one of the suburbs of Hollywood. And, uh, he said he had a beautiful mansion there. I mean a rich man. And he said, “Stay here with us. Why don’t you—you don’t want to go to Hollywood. You want to stay with us here. We will give you everything you will need here.” Now we said, “We want to go to Hollywood. We want to see the movie stars.” So we got on the bus and we went to Hollywood. And boy did we have (a reception?) there. They were all set to see soldiers. I mean, they gave us the royal treatment. They (____?) us, put us to bed, serve us breakfast, gave us tickets to all the shows, and I had tremendous wonderful time. All the while the poor guys who were literally fighting already (laughs). I was enjoying myself.

So then when I returned from the desert maneuvers ... in March of '44, as soon as I returned to Camp Ritchie, they immediately sent me overseas, and ... they said, “You’re going to England.” And ... they sent me all by myself to ... New Jersey (____?) the port. And, uh, we got on the—ran up to the ship, and I saw the flag ... flag that said, “Queen Mary.” So, I (was pretty mad ____?) And ... since (port?), then ... they promoted me from private to staff sergeant in one big jump. I didn’t have to go through whole thing. They immediately make me staff sergeant. And, then soon they have this tech. sergeant. So, and so I was a tech. sergeant, which was really highly ranked in those days. Everybody was still a private and a corporal, ... no body had yet achieved sergeant status. And so, of course this was all new recruits going over there, and so ... I was sent to the radio office on the ship and my job was to deliver radio messages to the various officers aboard ship. And so (____?) big job. And ... landed in England, I went to the military intelligence headquarters there and ... more training, more training. The British like to know—the British officers who had fought the German army in North Africa were back in England. They gave us their experiences ... about the German, they attended meetings all the time, and told us how to handle the German army, and everything else. And, uh, I lived in a private home. I mean, like I said, I was hardly ever in the Army. And then they send to London to the war. I guess I had to get some more training in the war office. And the British ... gave me training there, and the (____?) they taught me everything about the German army. I began to suspect they were preparing to send me over there and drop me by parachute into the resistance or something. I said, “Looks like they’re getting me ready for that.” (laughs) But that was May, and then in June 6 the invasion started, and so, I went with the invasion.

PIEHLER: I’m curious, ... how old were you went to Luxembourg as a child?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, that must been like two years.

PIEHLER: So you had no memories of the United States ... ?

SHWARTZ: No, none, no memories.

PIEHLER: I guess one question—cause ... you do a very a nice job describing what it was like—in some ways you had a typical childhood of a native Luxembourger, except you had an American dad.

SHWARTZ: We were ... middle class, however. We were ... not poor. ... Really ... for example, like I said, we had brand new houses. And my father being an American made sure that we put a bathroom into our house. We had the only bathroom in town ...

PIEHLER: ... What about your grandparents, did they have ...?

SHWARTZ: No ... they were not interested in that.

PIEHLER: Really? ...

SHWARTZ: No body in town had a bathroom except my father who ... had American ways and he insisted that we have a bathroom. So one of the bedrooms was converted into ... a full bathroom. And so, ... he always (_____?). He always had a suit on. I never saw him without suit on.

PIEHLER: Really?

SHWARTZ: Yeah. He didn't have any sports cloths or anything. (_____?)

PIEHLER: And he wore a suit on vacation, it sounds like.

SHWARTZ: Yes, we went to the beach in (Austam?), Belgium, and of course he didn't swim.

PIEHLER: What was he wearing on the beach?

SHWARTZ: (Laughs) I don't remember that, that was a long time ago. ... I was only ten years old.

PIEHLER: But he was a very formal ... ?

SHWARTZ: Very formal, yeah. And ... so I considered myself always ... middle class. I mean most of the people were farmers, and ... steel workers.

PIEHLER: Did you know any—were there any other American expatriates nearby?

SHWARTZ: Well, ... there were some. There was actually an American society in Luxembourg. They met every year. They had an excursion, and they would meet in some beautiful spot ... and the American consul would come and address the meeting, and ... these were all Luxembourgers who had been to America, but (has returned?).

PIEHLER: So very few people like your father—though even in the sense your father hadn't returned to Luxembourg ... but from Europe originally, from Austria-Hungary, ... what images did you have of America when you were growing up in Luxembourg, for example how often did you see American movies?

SHWARTZ: Very good, very good question, because ... as soon as I became conscious that I was born in America, I became interested in America. Everything I touched in America, I suddenly was interested in. My father regularly go to visit the consul in Luxembourg City, and ... he would bring home magazines that the consul had from America. We had ... Time Magazine and Life Magazine and all these American magazines ... And when he was through with them, he gave them to my dad, who brought them home, and ... I would look through it and I would—I taught myself English just by reading all these magazines. Also, my father and my mother would talk English to each other. When they didn't want me to understand what they were saying. Pretty soon I understand everything they were saying.

PIEHLER: Your language of the house was—what was the primary language?

SHWARTZ: Well ... the primary was Luxembourgish, but my father did not speak good Luxembourgish. That's a hard language—it's the dialect, a primitive dialect. That's the way I had to learn. So he spoke a mixture of Luxembourgish and German.

PIEHLER: So that was the primary language you heard, but your parents they wouldn't ... would speak English initially?

SHWARTZ: That's right. But, they didn't fool me very long. So, then ... he also go the National Geographic Magazine, and I liked to read through that. And ... then I went to the library, and I got every book of America and American novels, all the ... American novels about the West and Wild West and the Indians. I read all this stuff because everything that was—because my father said to me, “Eventually, you will have to go back to the United States.” (____?) he told me that, “If you're not back by the time you're eighteen, you might lose your American citizenship.” So ... I was sure that I would eventually return to the United States. That gave me great incentive to—as soon as I got into high school, I immediately chose English as an additional language. So by the time I got back to the United States, I was pretty fluent in English.

PIEHLER: What about movies? Did you go to very many ...?

SHWARTZ: Oh, yes. Errol Flynn was my favorite. (Laughter) Oh yeah, these adventure movies, pirates and ... and these adventure movies that he plays. But also the cowboy movies. They played many cowboy movies in those days.

PIEHLER: So ... did you see Tom Mix over in ...?

SHWARTZ: Yes, absolutely, yes, always, and then came Shirley Temple (laughter), my mother's favorite. She dragged me to every Shirley Temple movies that ever came to Luxembourg.

PIEHLER: Now, was it in English or was it dubbed?

SHWARTZ: Gosh, you know that's ... hard to remember know.

PIEHLER: Yeah, I'm not sure when dubbing became common.

SHWARTZ: It's (_____) I'm not for sure whether that was dubbed or not. But ... at least I understood it. And ... so you know, I kept up with American. In fact, one issue of the National Geographic Magazine was devoted to Washington, D.C., about middle '30s, maybe around '38, I'd imagine. And that became my Bible because I was Washington, D.C., and I studied that National Geographic from cover to cover. I memorized the town plan, the city plan. When I came back (the second day?), my father took me to see some of his friends who he had in the car, and, so, those people drove us around Washington, D.C., and whenever we came to a monument, I said, "Oh, this is that, this is ... the Washington Monument, this is the Lincoln Memorial." I knew all these things, and they say, "How come you know these things? You never even been here." I memorized everything, yeah (laughs).

MAXWELL: While you were growing up, did you consider yourself an American or a Luxembourger?

SHWARTZ: Oh, I wanted to be—oh, at first you mean?

MAXWELL: Yeah, like when you were growing up in Luxembourg ... did you consider yourself an American?

SHWARTZ: ... At first, I didn't know I was an American. You don't know what these things mean until you are about, really, when you're eight, ten years old, you begin to realize what that means, you know, what American means.

MAXWELL: What about after that, after you ...?

SHWARTZ: Well, I mean, I told know, I prepared myself for the (journey?) to American from the day I was ten years old. Once I realized that I would return to America, I prepared myself. So, I was in good shape by the time (we would get?) back. And after that, I tried so hard to be an American. I tried to forget everything about Europe, you know, and I worked so hard. When other boys, you know, were playing sports or dating, I was in the library studying, (studying every weekend?). I mean I had so much catching up to do. So, I ... never had any dates—sad life. Then I got in the Army, then I certainly didn't have any dates. (Laughter)

PIEHLER: It's interesting, Luxembourg, I mean, I think ... for a lot of Americans, it's—they may have heard it, but know very little bit about it, even ... after it gets overshadowed in the Battle of the Bulge, that ...—what would you say—what comes to mind when you think back of your childhood in Luxembourg, about the Luxembourg you know, particularly ... the town you grew up in? And it's ... also not a big country, so in a sense ...

SHWARTZ: ... I made a lot of friends over there. My father had a lot of friends, and we had close relatives. And, uh, as soon as I got back to Europe in '51 with the CIA, I immediately—my first trip really was to Luxembourg. (_____) students (_____)?. And so, every chance I got, I returned to Luxembourg, so half a dozen times at least. Last time was (_____) '99 (_____)?, I returned. Yeah, I've been back many times, and I still have friends. I don't have to worry where I'm gonna stay when I go over there, I mean, (_____) stay with friends ... And now, there's a friend coming over next month to visit me here, and I was supposed to go to the Battle of the Bulge ceremony in December 16. And I was invited, and I could not make it, and this friend of mine substituted for me. He went to Bastogne, the ceremonies. He took photographs, he collected newspapers, and he got me the medal. They gave a medal to the American who showed up, and he's gonna bring back that medal for me.

PIEHLER: How long have you known this friend?

SHWARTZ: This particular friend, actually not very long. He was a friend of my sister, and there's a couple, and they coming over ... this may and then staying a month. And you know what ... the (man?) is interested in in this country? NASCAR racing (laughter). He's going to go to Nashville to ... the NASCAR race while he's here, and I will probably have to go with because he doesn't speak any English. Uh, and so they're gonna bring all the stuff over here next month, and I look forward to it.

PIEHLER: Could you talk a little bit more about your sister?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, my sister was—I was ... sixteen years old ... in 1940 when the war broke out, and she was ten years old, six years younger. And, uh, as you know, the day after Germany invaded, we were in the war zone, and in the morning, a truck went through the streets with a German announcing that this was a war zone and that we had to leave our town, we had to get out of there fast. Well, my parents got on a (horse?) and wagon ... and went off, and they left me behind with my sister, and all I had was a bicycle. So, they told us where they were gonna go, and I put my sister on the front of the bicycle, and the two of us (_____) for days, took us days before we found our parents again. And, uh, of course she stayed behind, you know, because she was born in Luxembourg, so she's a Luxembourger She stayed behind (_____)?. But she was young, you know, she went to school. ... She didn't have too many memories about the war. Then she ...—when we got our family together again after the war, well then, she came along and ... finished high school here ...

PIEHLER: In the States?

SHWARTZ: In the States, yeah. And ... she married an American, and ...(_____)?, but that's a (laughs) Kentucky ..., but then she joined the government. And they are living now in Southern Ohio, in a ... retirement home.

PIEHLER: Your sister—you were about six years difference.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, a lot of difference.

PIEHLER: Yeah, so how—it doesn't sound you were really playmates.

SHWARTZ: No.

PIEHLER: No.

SHWARTZ: ... That's right. That's the (problem?), we were no playmates. She was too young.

PIEHLER: Did she ... also pick up English like you had?

SHWARTZ: No, she didn't know—I don't think could have learned much English before she got married in 1947, she got married here. I don't think so because during the German occupation, she was not allowed to learn English ... or French.

PIEHLER: Yeah, and she was very young when your father and you left.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, she was six years old ... no, then years old. That was ... ten years old. (She was too young to learn?). Yeah ... she picked it up very quickly ..., and she has been quite satisfied here in this country. She goes back many times, and she has a lot of girlfriends over there.

PIEHLER: Did she—did she tell you much about the war? You said she didn't talk ...

SHWARTZ: No, she doesn't know too much about the war. The Germans didn't bother the towns that we (lived in?). I mean, the German had more important things to do than to bother these little villages.

PIEHLER: Did you ... have an Jews in your town growing up?

SHWARTZ: No, no, none, no Jews. So, we really did not know what was happening to the Jews. However, we did know that the Jews were taken away, but were told they'd just been (desperable?) (_____?) in Europe.

PIEHLER: But not in from your town? You didn't see abuse?

SHWARTZ: No ... our town had none.

PIEHLER: Now you later write about when you ... came back in '44/'45 that a lot of the town males never came back from the war.

SWHARTZ: That's right. My buddies.

PIEHLER: And you said some ... go into the German Army and never come back from the Russian front.

SWHARTZ: That's right.

PIEHLER: So no one ever got back from the Russian front?

SWHARTZ: No, ... nobody ever got back from the Russian front. There was two boys (_____) ... never came back. Both boys from that family. They had one daughter, a (_____) daughter. But the boys never came back. And ... a lot of others—the only ones who survived were the ones who went into hiding. There were a lot of iron ore mines. There were underground passages for miles and miles in all directions, and the boys were able to hide in there. And the miners brought them food ..., and the Germans never found them I visited the mines in the '80s, and to see how that was possible. But these miners were very very smart. They would dig a passage into the mine ... for the boys to hide in, and before they left for the day, they built an artificial wall in front ... there, so the Germans never knew there was another cavern behind there. Yeah, they were very clever ...

PIEHLER: Did some of your friends were hid ... in the mines?

SHWARTZ: Yeah.

PIEHLER: What did they tell about spending five years?

SHWARTZ: Ah, shoot. Well, it was three years.

PIEHLER: Yeah, three, yeah, but still ...

SHWARTZ: It's still a long time.

PIEHLER: Yeah, three, three and a half—I mean, cause form '40 to 44 is a ...

SHWARTZ: You know ... they were not drafted immediately. See it wasn't until ...

PIEHLER: Okay, so they weren't initially ...

SHWARTZ: It wasn't till early '43 before they begin drafting Luxembourg boys.

PIEHLER: But still, what did they say about being in hiding that ...?

SWHARTZ: Yeah, that was an ordeal, I'll tell you. And ... all these tunnels ... have a union now, and they come together every so often and they read from the Luxembourg newspapers that was (_____)?. They still ... (feel?) close to each other.

PIEHLER: You mentioned reading a lot just recently when we asked you, but also you—in your memoir you talk about how—reading you did, because, for example, you mentioned your mother had subscribed to a book club in Germany, so she had lots of—you read lots of German literature. You also read a lot American literature.

SHWARTZ: ... yeah, ... (Samuel?) Cooper, (Zing Dre?), all those types—I read all those books.

PIEHLER: What about Hemingway, did you read Hemingway? No?

SWHARTZ: No, we did not know Hemingway.

PIEHLER: What ... about—what German authors did you remember.

SHWARTZ: Oh, almost all of them. We ... had them in school. We had a school book that had excerpts from all the famous German authors, all of them.

PIEHLER: What about some of the more modern ones, for example Thomas (Vaughn?)?

SHWARTZ: ... (_______?), and (Magic Mon?). Yeah, I read that. They were mostly before World War II, ... but then I read some afterwards. I studied German (works from Berger?) (_______?). I had this whole collection, the whole works of (Gurten Shular?), I brought along with me from Germany. And where are they now? They are at UT, I gave them all to UT. The whole collection of my ... German library ... now that's in UT. And ... there's a (stands up and points to a certificate) (____ of Tennessee, thank you for I belong to the _____ Club?), which means that I have given more ... than a hundred dollars to the University Center. And here are ... all my war books (points to books).

PIEHLER: I saw on the shelf your ... books ... particularly on World War II.

I'm curious, did you read All Quiet on the Western Front when it came out?

SHWARTZ: Well, it's so familiar that I'm not sure if I did or if it was the movie I first saw.

PIEHLER: The ... Lew Ayres version?

SHWARTZ: The Lew Ayres version, yeah. I think that came out in the '20s.

PIEHLER: Yeah, the late '20s.

SHWARTZ: Late '20s. So I think I did see that.

MAXWELL: Did your father ever see that movie or read the book?

SHWARTZ: Oh yeah, ... you know, it was of the German side, (we were from?) the German side, and ... we assumed that that was true that the Germans went through the same problems we went through. And there were all these anti-war books and movies came out between the two war. I mean it was anti-war. Because everyone was convinced that there could never be another war after the First World War. It was so horrible that the idea of another war was unthinkable ... and that's ... particularly the French and English (think?). They did not want to fight another war. So when Hitler prepared for another war, they did not want to rearm. They did not think that war could (reform?), another war, because they lost so many people in the First World War, they couldn't imagine fighting another war. So they were unprepared. It makes easy for Hitler to conquer them.

We need ... a drink. I'll bring ...

(Tape Paused)

PIEHLER: ... Luxembourg is very—it's between Germany and France.

SHWARTZ: (____?) German (____?)

PIEHLER: But the two big powers are France and Germany. Um, how often did you ... go to Germany?

SHWARTZ: We did get to Germany—once Hitler ... came to power, we refused to go Germany.

PIEHLER: You refused—so in 1933, you stopped—at all

SHWARTZ: No Luxembourger ever went back to Germany

MAXWELL: Everybody knew he was pretty much evil or ... you know ...

SHWARTZ: The Luxembourgers were afraid of Hitler from the very beginning because he—as soon as he said his aim is to unify all the German people in Europe, Luxembourgers knew that meant them, that they were gonna get targeted. So they distrusted Hitler from the very beginning, and ... nobody ever took a vacation into Germany after that. And ... if you were a Luxembourger closer to France, they felt that France was a protector, and we fell for that. My father was sure the French army was able to beat the hell out of the German army.

PIEHLER: Even into the late '30s?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, yeah ... we would see magazines from France ...

PIEHLER: You mentioned in the memoir Paris Match.

SHWARTZ: Paris Match. You remember that. Yeah, exactly. That was like Life Magazine in France. And in the '30s, they many photographers in there, photographs of their whole army—how good their army was. Their tanks, their airplanes, I mean, they said that they outnumber the Germans (____?), and the Germans would never dare attack the French army. The French army is unbeatable. The French army is the best army in Europe. My father thought all this. So, he was not afraid. Otherwise, he would have left earlier. Right?

PIEHLER: Yeah. So even—so ... things like Munich didn't alarm your father?

SHWARTZ: No, no, no, ... he said all that would work itself out. And ... of course the British fell for it too. You know.

PIEHLER: Now, you was not alone in ... (laughter). What—so ... did you go to Germany before ...—do you have any memories of going to Germany ... obviously before '30? You wouldn't would gone after '33.

SHWARTZ: No.

PIEHLER: Where did you travel when you were living—growing up in Luxembourg? Where did you ...

SHWARTZ: Well for one thing, the northern part of the country is beautiful, the Ardennes. It's a—in fact there's an area there that's called the Switzerland of Luxembourg 'cause it is so picturesque. It's a rocks and gulleys—very picturesque area, and a lot of tourist go up there. And then ... Belgium, we went a lot to Belgium because there's a lot to see in Belgium. From Bussels on to the ... sea, there's a blemish area, very picturesque, and full of (pictures?). There's the Bruges and Ghent and ... these cities that are picturesque, really beautiful. We liked to go there. I (____?) France. Now, that's another thing, we had a lot of relatives. My grandfather and my grandmother came out of Northern France, Alsace-Lorraine, and we had a lot of relatives over there. In fact, ... my grandfather was married once before and had three children, and they all lived in Northern France. And my grandmother also came from Metz-Lorraine, and she had relative in that area. And so, when vacation time came around, my parents sent me every year to the relatives in France. For six weeks, I stayed with these relatives. The biggest advantage was I could practice my French. I was living among the French, and they had—one family had four sons that (was the same age as me?). They had four sons to play with, and we bicycled all over the place, and ... so I learned to speak French all the time, every year. Yeah, that was a big advantage.

PIEHLER: Now your father was originally from the Austria-Hungarian Empire. Did he have any relatives that he stayed in touch with?

SHWARTZ: No, he didn't. He did not want to really establish—he wanted to really forget ...

PIEHLER: So your grandfather and grandmother on your fathers side ...

SHWARTZ: ... are the only ones.

PIEHLER: Did you meet them? Did you know them?

SHWARTZ: On my fathers side?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

SHWARTZ: No, I don't know any of his relatives ... He never wanted to go back.

PIEHLER: What town did he come from? Did he ...

SHWARTZ: I'm not quite sure ... Somewhere in Austria.

PIEHLER: But he never really ...

SHWARTZ: ... went back.

PIEHLER: He never went back even though you lived in Luxembourg?

SHWARTZ: Right ..., he wanted to forget the things (over there?). No, he wanted to be an American (all his life?). He was very proud to be an American. He had been a soldier for a long time, and ... he corresponded with a lot of friends he had in American. (_____?) And it was a good thing to because when we came over here, I was amazed that he immediately went to see his friends, and they all received us with open arms. And with one of them—see we had no place to stay, and they took us in, all those families. And my parents when they were over here in Washington, for four years they had lived in various boarding houses, and they made such good friends ... The were always welcome to come back. And my father had a knack for making friends. He could make friends every place he went. I don't know how he could do it. From the ship, every—once on the ship we met a ... rich Jewish man from New York who was in leather business, and he made a lifetime friendship with this man. And when we went to New York, we were immediately invited to ... his place, a fancy home, and he would take us—drive us all over New York. I mean, my dad could make friends with everybody. He had ... this knack ... So we were always welcome, and ... that tells a lot. So ..., you know, when we came over here, we still had a lot of friends.

PIEHLER: It's interesting one of the comments you made—and I want to thank for you officially for refreshments, and I think ... yeah—but you said something about being ... sorta half American, half European, and I thought—it was interesting how you expressed it that when you were in the United States, you sort of pined for Europe, and when you were in Europe, you sort of pined ...

SHWARTZ: That's correct.

PIEHLER: And it sounds like that's been ... a pattern all your life because when you were in Luxembourg, you very much ...

SHWARTZ: ... looked forward to America.

PIEHLER: To America.

SHWARTZ: Once I was told I would have to return to America, from then on, my full concentration was ... (directed?) to America.

PIEHLER: One of the things—I asked you earlier about images of America, and ... the West is a clear image of America.

SHWARTZ: All Europeans ... believed that America is still like the Wild West they read in the books (laughter). Yeah, they think—and they believe Chicago is full of gangsters.

PIEHLER: What other things did they, did you believe, or did Europeans believe before you got here that you were (interest in)?

SHWARTZ: America is, they always say, America is the land of impossible ... events, something like that, you know. It's a magic land that is unlike any other country. And of course, a very old old place they believe gold was lying all over the street ... (laughter).

PIEHLER: But that was gone by the time you ...

SHWARTZ: That was gone by the time I grew up. People weren't that stupid anymore. And my grandfather's brother came to the United States—immigrated to the United States—about 1890—1890. In fact my, my grandfather and him had decided to immigrate to the United States. They went to Antwerp to catch the ship. My grandfather said when he saw that big ship in the harbor, he got so afraid and so homesick that he (____?) and went back home again, and the brother went on ... the ship and went to the United States and settled in Arizona. They are still living there. He became a rancher in Arizona, and ... the descendents of the Laux, the families of Laux, L-A-U-X, that's the family name. And they still live there to this day, and we had an inquiry not long ago from a woman ... who my son put it on the internet—he wants to find out about the family. And she saw it on the internet, and she made inquiry. It said, "Is this ... Michael Laux, is he the one who comes from Luxembourg?" So, there still ... some relatives, yeah.

PIEHLER: I'm curious because in your memoir, there were certain things you didn't know very much about America or didn't fit your image. And one ... you hadn't encountered anyone from Africa.

SHWARTZ: Oh, no, no, we never had a black person in Luxembourg. There was no black person in ... I'd never seen a black person. In pictures, I had seen one (laughs).

PIEHLER: But when you came to Washington or New York City, I mean, what—were you surprised?

SHWARTZ: Yeah ... that there were so many, so many. I was surprised. And of course, it was the days of segregation, and actually I was glad that I didn't have to mix with them. I was afraid of them. I was in the middle of strange people, black people, so (I was afraid of them?), and ... they told me, "Well, you don't have to mix with them at all. They sit separately in the buses and street cars." I was actually glad to hear that ... because, you know, I was innocent and I thought segregation was great.

PIEHLER: I'm curious, one of the things you said is your father had come back in the memoir, just after the Bonus March and just after Roosevelt's been elected, ... he had to defend his pension ...

SHWARTZ: Yes, defend his pension.

PIEHLER: And you describe, he came back with pretty bleak reports of America.

SHWARTZ: Yes, he ... brought back a huge shipping trunk of all kinds of good for us ..., and he said he had to buy the shipping trunk before he came back, and he went to the luggage store, and the salesman there, the owner, he said, "I need a big shipping trunk." ... This guy hadn't sold a piece of luggage for years, and here I somebody who wants to buy a new shipping trunk, I mean, big profit. The guy was so excited, he said, "Where do you want me to take it? I'll take it ... personally to the railway station for you," because he was so happy someone had bought his shipping trunk. People were not traveling in 1934 any more. And here he bought luggage. ... My father told that story too. And, yeah, ... he visited his old friends and renewed his friendships there. And he had an old girlfriend in Washington, and they remained friends all the time, and he brought his wife to see her, his old girlfriend ...

PIEHLER: His old girlfriend.

SHWARTZ: Yes, they became friends, yeah (laughs).

PIEHLER: It's a good story. You recalled—your images of America were very—you were very struck by the prosperity?

SHWARTZ: Oh my gosh! ... Realize this. I come out of a war zone, destruction all over. By traveling, I traveled throughout France to get out of Europe, and I saw the destruction that had been caused by the Germans in France and the towns and bombs and ... the burning and the refugees, and I come to the United States (_____?) country, I mean, the advanced—the Americans were like five years advanced of Europeans it seemed to me. They had the greatest stuff. And what made it even better was that, if you landed in New York at the time of the World's Fair, 1939 and '40, they still had the World's Fair on, and my father took me to the World's Fair, and that was even more (_____?). I mean I was so struck by the huge building and ... everybody had an automobile. I mean unheard of. Europeans didn't have automobiles. I mean no. ... The world in this country was fabulous. I was simply overcome.

PIEHLER: Because your father offered you a much bleaker portrayal of America.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, from the Depression days ... yeah. And ... even though the Depression was actually still on, I didn't see it, I didn't see any Depression.

PIEHLER: So in other words, you get the sense in you memoirs that America was much more prosperous than you really sort of imagined it, even in your imagination.

SHWARTZ: Yes, the—everybody was well dressed, and people were better dressed in those days than they are today.

PIEHLER: Yeah ... you don't need that argument (laughs).

SHWARTZ: Everybody had a suit. Everybody wore a hat. When you walked out into the public area, the stores, you were always well dressed, always. And ... so it didn't seem like people were poor (_____?). But this was '40, by that time, things had already improved pretty much. There wasn't ... so much unemployment anymore by the time I got there. ... I got there just in time for

the election. President Roosevelt was up for election again, and we went to his inaugural in Washington (_____?) and I watched Roosevelt's ...

PIEHLER: Third inaugural.

SHWARTZ: ... third inaugural ... yes.

PIEHLER: Well, let me—it's almost out, so let me ...

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

PIEHLER: This continues an interview with Eugene Shwartz on April 18, 2005 at his home in Knoxville, Tennessee with Kurt Piehler and ...

MAXWELL: Jared Maxwell

PIEHLER: ... I wanted to ... make sure Jared had any questions about your growing up in Luxembourg in ...

SHWARTZ: Up to 1940.

MAXWELL: Well, I mean, being a kid in Luxembourg and, you know, looking at the U.S., I mean, ... how did you compare Luxembourg to the United States, ... especially like I'm really interested in the educational system. What did you think when you came over to the U.S. of our educational system?

SHWARTZ: Well, I ... was shocked. I was shocked when I came to the Anacostia High School in Washington, and I saw that boys and girls were sitting together in the classroom. Absolutely shocking. I'd never seen such a thing. In Luxembourg, boys and girls always going to separate schools. There was no integration. I mean I was shocked that—and I saw boys making dates for the weekends with the girls. Ah, we were never allowed to get close to girls. You had to be twenty-one before you could even look at a girl over there. The church would (_____?) at any ... dating. And, yeah ... they had dances, ... school dances. The school actually encouraged dancing. I couldn't believe it. Where I came from, you were chaperoned. If you wanted to go to a dance or downtown, you had to be chaperoned by somebody, a family member. You just couldn't do it on your own. I mean it was a different life entirely. We were ... still living in the Victorian Age over there. Everything had to be prim and proper. You had to behave yourself. Never get into trouble. Our school had many windows, and in the seven years that I was in elementary school, not one window was ever broken. That didn't happen. No damage was ever done. No vandalism. We were so well behaved because we were ... under authoritarian system, even though it was supposed to be a democracy literally, but it was still strictly supervised, and ... boys and girls were kept ... apart as long as possible. So, I had ... plenty of time to study. There was not much else to do in town, so ... I had plenty to read. And there was no television. We finally got a radio in 1935. My father finally bought a radio. But, uh, there was not much else to do, so ... we studied. We studied a lot, and we had a lot of homework. Two hours of homework every night, and ... there was no organized sports. Nothing. And the school was just studying and nothing

else. There was no organization of any kind. So, we had to make our own, and we played soccer. That's what we did. In the streets after school, neighborhood boys got together and played soccer in the street, and there was no car traffic, so we could play right ... in the middle of the street (laughs). The—there was a Mandolin Club in town, so my parents made me join the Mandolin Club because the neighborhood boy had joined first, and so my parents thought that since he joined, I should join too, so I joined the Mandolin Club, and we played for many years. Classical, semi-classical, (____?). And ... I finally got into sports in—it was the year before the war broke out, and somebody started a basketball club, and I joined the basketball club. And we build ourselves a basketball field, and we got uniforms, and a few months later, the Germans (drove in?), and it was the end of basketball. I never learned to play basketball, even though I belonged to the basketball club. And, yeah, I mean, it was—I used to walk through the woods. We had all these woods all around in the valley. And ... I just wandered through the woods, and ... I just loved ... to walk through the woods ... There wasn't much else to do.

PIEHLER: I'm curious, you talk about church. Luxembourg is primarily a Roman Catholic country, so did you attend?

SHWARTZ: I was not a Roman Catholic to begin with. In fact, I was baptized a Baptist, a Baptist, a Southern Baptist.

PIEHLER: In Washington?

SHWARTZ: In Washington, yeah, because ... the people where my parents rented their room, they were Southern Baptist. So, when I was born, they insisted that I'd be taken to the church and baptized. I had a certificate of baptism. So then, when we went back to Luxembourg, my father was not Roman Catholic. He had given up, so he was not religious.

PIEHLER: Had he been raised Roman Catholic?

SHWARTZ: Yes, but ... he never went to church. And, so he ... told them he had been living with Protestants in America all the time there, always been living with Protestants, so he had nothing to do with the Roman Catholic religion. So, I was a Protestant, the only Protestant in Luxembourg. The school had religious classes once a week, and they—the tests, the scores, from the religion was added to the ... other subjects. It was an official subject. So, I did not attend the Roman Catholic class, which meant I didn't get these points. And I—when they added the total at the end of the year, I fell behind because I didn't get any religious points. So after while my—oh, and in the mean time, my father sent me to a neighboring town where there was a Lutheran church. There were some Germans living there. They had established a Lutheran church. So, by streetcar, I had to go to that other town to attend classes in the Lutheran church. Well, then my father said, "This can't go on with him not getting points for ... religion because that puts him further back in the rating. So, we have to make him a Roman Catholic." So, at age nine, they turned me into a Catholic. I had to take Catholic classes from the priest, and eventually I became—joined the Roman Catholic Church. But, you now, I—with all this religious change, I've never been really religious. I mean, and then, when I came back to the United States, I was another—I did not find any Roman Catholics anywhere. I was ... again among Protestants. Nobody ... cared about religion for me. I was not exposed to anymore religion, whatsoever.

PIEHLER: Not even in the Army?

SHWARZ: No.

PIEHLER: No, not by the chaplain?

SHWARTZ: They gave me ... a little Bible, this little pocketbook, a tiny little Bible, and I remember when we came through there, that was the first English Bible I'd ever seen. That was it.

PIEHLER: That was it.

SHWARTZ: That was it, yeah. I was—I've never been really religious.

PIEHLER: ... Just want to make sure before—I'm curious, in terms of Luxembourg, it's not a very big country, ... and ... in the sense, how many people do you know, you know—because I remember a point you described when you end up in Portugal meeting the exiled government, but you also—you know, growing up in a country that's just very big ...

SHWARTZ: The country has changed dramatically today. I can hardly recognize it ...

PIEHLER: What ... changed—what's ... your Luxembourg like compared to the Luxembourg of today?

SHWARTZ: I mean, the country has modernized tremendously. ... It's unlike they were when I was there. They—like I said, it was a close community. The Catholic priest was the moral arbiter of the whole town. I mean you couldn't do anything that the priest didn't approve of. ... Puritan. Now, everybody has bought an automobile, and comes the weekend, off they go with the automobile, and they don't go to church anymore. The church is empty ... because everybody has disappeared. People ... are so modern. They have ... just everything we have now.

PIEHLER: So your Luxembourg—people didn't really leave their village.

SHWARTZ: No, because they had no transportation. And now they ... go do—(actually?) people say they ... drive to Paris just to eat a good meal and come back.

PIEHLER: And that ... would have been unheard of in your day?

SHWARTZ: Unheard of. Everything has radically changed. The people are rich. They are the richest people in the world. The bank—they (____?) they had, they made huge amounts of money after the war because they the iron and steel industry, and ... Germany and France had to be rebuilt, and they provided all the steel. So, they made huge amounts of money. Then, the steel ran out. So, they bought in banking. All the foreign bank—there are fifty foreign banks in Luxembourg City, and they give incredible rates, and people invested their money Luxembourg bank because they got better rates than the other. So, they made another huge pile of money. And they are very clever in having lower taxes there than the neighboring countries, so the Belgians

and Germans and French would come across the border to tank up their—buy gas for their cars because it was cheaper in Luxembourg. They ... had every kind of ways to make money, and they are still rich now.

PIEHLER: ... It sounds like it's a big surprise to you because your Luxembourg was—people weren't, but it was a very modest ...

SHWARTZ: Very modest. That's right.

PIEHLER: Well, I mean, you said a lot when you said it—your family had the only indoor plumbing.

SHWARTZ: Yeah ..., now they all have a bathroom. The first—oh, ... when I came back ... in the—it was in the '70s when I ... came back again I visited all these friends, and the first they wanted to show me was their bathroom. Every house that ...—they say, “Have you seen our bathroom?” “No.” “Okay, come with me,” and they showed me their new bathroom. They were so proud of those bathrooms.

PIEHLER: And this was the 1970s?

SHWARTZ: '70s, yeah. ... It was—we laughed. We laughed so much over that. Yeah, they were so proud that they modernized everything. Another thing was the farmers were selling their land. Farming became ... not very profitable anymore. The ... super stores came in, just like here, and the farmers had extra land to sell, and the ... industry moved in. American companies moved in. ... The tire company, uh, American ...—you know, the famous tire company.

PIEHLER: BF Goodrich?

SHWARTZ: No, the other one.

PIEHLER: Firestone?

SHWARTZ: No.

PIEHLER: Um, Goodyear?

SHWARTZ: Goodyear. Goodyear built a factory in Luxembourg making tires. Then ... the cars were assembled in Luxembourg, and all a long, I mean, the ... many industries moved in. People had jobs—went into banks. The ... foreigners liked to establish company headquarters in Luxembourg. Why? Because the Luxembourgers people were the only ones who could speak German and French, and that came in very handiful in to national business. All the students knew two languages, and we were all educated, very well educated. That was a ... big attraction to Luxembourg. Yeah, the ...—they ... established a radio station, the biggest radio station in Europe, and they took ads from other countries. More money—they ... now have ... a satellite. They send up a satellite into the sky. I mean (then came in?) money from that too. More advertising. They—these people really know how to make money. I tell you.

PIEHLER: Growing up, you mentioned getting a radio in 1935.

SHWARTZ: Big radio, like this (gestures a large box).

PIEHLER: What programs did you listen to ...?

SHWARTZ: ... Mostly German programs.

PIEHLER: Mostly German.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, and they had very good programs, despite Hitler. And ... I have to say this much, they had very popular music and classical music, and ... their movies. Their movies made under the Nazi regime were very good. They were not propaganda movies. That's surprising. Goebbels ... himself was a ... movie fanatic. He like movie moves, but he was a nut. And ... he did not—he must have realized that if he put propaganda in the movies, they would not ... sell. They would not play ball. Nobody would want to play with propaganda movies. So, he kept that out. He just ... played regular movies. And, so, we watched a lot of German movies too.

PIEHLER: Did your family get a newspaper?

SHWARTZ: In Luxembourg?

PIEHLER: Yeah, a Luxembourg paper ...

SHWARTZ: ... There were two newspapers: the conservative newspaper and the socialist newspaper.

PIEHLER: And which one did your family get?

SHWARTZ: My family had the conservative one, and my ... grandfather had the socialist one. My grandfather turned out to be ... an anti-authoritarian, ... anti-church establishment. He was a rebel. I was amazed to find that out eventually.

PIEHLER: Did he have to leave because of the 1870 uprising?

SHWARTZ: No.

PIEHLER: No. But he was a socialist, an anti-clerical?

SHWARTZ: Well, I mean, ... I found out about it when the Spanish Civil War broke out.

PIEHLER: Oh, okay.

SHWARTZ: 1936, I believe. The conservative Catholic newspaper went for Franco. They backed Franco. And my grandfather backed the republicans. That's when I found where he

stood. He—had we visited him next door all the time, and he would (vote for?) about the war, how ... you know, he would ... attack the Catholics. It was amazing because he was, after all, a substantial citizen. He was—he had ... many posts in ... the organizations. He was one of the best citizens of the town. In fact, his home was right in the center of town ... because (____?). And he had a big house, and he had ... a lot of animals, a lot of horses. He liked horses. Horses were his favorite people. He was in the transportation business, and those ... (were for warm days?). He had horses and wagons which he used to transport goods. When he needed to transport goods from one town to another, he would be there to transport the goods. So, he traveled all over the country—in transportation. But ... he was ... a leftist. Yeah, he wanted to bring down the ... Catholic establishment. ... And ... even in his old—and he was in, you know, the '70s by then.

PIEHLER: What did he think of Leon Blum?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, Leon—well ... it didn't last that long ...

PIEHLER: Yeah, ... so you don't remember, yeah.

SHWARTZ: ... about a year. I remember him very clearly, yeah.

PIEHLER: What did your grandfather think?

SHWARTZ: ... That was—I was in France doing my vacation, and I remember they were sitting at the table, and it dinner time, and they were discussing the ... governmental changes that Blum brought about, ... and ... I don't think these people were very much in favor of Blum.

PIEHLER: In ... Metz. ... Your cousins?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, right. Because ... they were farmers, you know. These people were big farmers. But ... he was too radical. He formed that ... popular front. All those leftist parties. ... But ... it ... was a good thing for France because the French workers were poorly paid in those day. Really, much poorer than Germans were paid, and they ... really needed some support, and Leon Blum really tried to help them out ... against those big landowners and factory owners who kept the workers down. So, actually, to this day the French workers ... can thank Leon Blum for ... the social progress that was being made in those days. Yeah, because it—there was always plenty of (reaction ____?). There was never any lack of those ..., and ... on the other hand, the socialist did not care about military rearmament. They didn't want ... to spend money on rearming. So, they left themselves wide open for the German aggression, you know. So, that's not very good, but ... those were very eventful days in the '30s. I mean it was chaos. I mean every country went through some ... chaos, government changes, ... the workers were rebelling. There was unrest every place. The strikes, gosh, the strikes in France ...

PIEHLER: Were you ever in France during a strike.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, oh yeah. There were ... many strikes. The ... public transportation would stop. There would be no ... streetcar or buses running on certain days because the workers were

on strike. The railroad workers were, then after that was always the railroad workers went on strike. After they finished striking, the public utility strikers went on strike. It was just a mess. That's where France lost the war. They were ... so demoralized by 1940—the people were so demoralized—that ... they didn't care anymore what—they didn't care about their government. They had no allegiance to the government. The government changed—every six months they had a new government, and ... so that the ... morale was low, and ... I think that had lots to do with their defeat. They didn't know what they were fighting for, whereas the Germans knew very well what they were fighting for. That had a lot to do with ... their defeat.

PIEHLER: ... I'm curious in terms of—in your memoir you talk about ... your—and you—earlier in the interview, you talked about your confidence in France as the protector of Luxembourg.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, sure.

PIEHLER: You would sort of be engulfed in ... the sense in battle even before you joined the army. I mean, you ... saw some pretty intense shelling.

SHWARTZ: ... I was the only American also who, you know, went through something like that. So, before I went into the American army, I had already been in the war. We ... were occupied and heavily shelled. There was a battle raging outside of my house. The French sent a battalion—a reconnaissance battalion—over from the Maginot line to see what the Germans were up to in Luxembourg. And they clashed right behind our house in a big field. And there was a tank, also, a German tank there. And this is really the fantastic thing—the French won. The French won the battle. The French beat the Germans back. I mean, that was not supposed to have happened in World War II, but I saw it with my own eyes. The Germans were fleeing the field. Now the—instead of the French pursuing the Germans, the French stopped and returned back behind the Maginot Line, and the next day, the Germans were back again. I mean, the French were so defensive ... in their mind that they had no intention of fighting ... back, pushing the Germans back because they were safe behind the Maginot Line. They thought that why go outside when you're safe ... And that was, you know, another French mistake. ... But I was in the war already. I went through World War II twice, yeah.

PIEHLER: I'm curious because there had been an effort in 1939 to bring Americans home from Europe. Did your ...—you mention sort of debates within the family, a reluctance to go.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, we ... came up ..., as I was approaching sixteen years of age, as I said, I should be back by eighteen, so I didn't—I wasn't far away from it. ... It's a hard for a family to move, and my mother didn't want to move because she wanted to take care of her old parents. Her parents were eighty years old, and she didn't want to leave ... her parents behind. And ... even more so, when the war broke out, she said, “I cannot go back to America. I have to take care of my parents.” She said, “You go, you two, ...” And it didn't seem so terribly bad at the time. The United States was not at the war—in war, and the idea was that my father and I would go back to the States. We would establish ourselves, and then let them come over. But it would be a year later, and that was the ... idea, that it would be a year later, ... they rest of the family would come over, and then, of course, the war—the Americans got into the war, and we were cut

off (smacks hands together). And for four year—for over four years, I had no news from my family.

PIEHLER: And your father wasn't able to make any contact through the Red Cross, the International Red Cross?

SHWARTZ: No, no, nothing.

PIEHLER: Nothing, you were completely ...

SHWARTZ: ... completely cut off. They—we didn't happened to them, and they had no idea what happened to us, and so, my mother did not know I was in the American army until I knocked at the door in the Battle of the Bulge, and there I stood in an American uniform, and that was a big surprise. But it worked out very well. It worked out perfectly eventually.

PIEHLER: One thing, was your father active in any veterans groups?

SHWARTZ: Yes, the American Legion.

PIEHLER: The American Legion.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, and the Disabled American Veterans, both ...

PIEHLER: Now ... one thing I was struck in reading your memoir ... let me—how do I phrase this—how helpful were the American consulates and embassies toward you as you were trying to flee from Luxembourg to Portugal via America?

SHWARTZ: Well, the only ... contact we had with America was through the American consul. Fortunately, he was still there after the Germans had entered Luxembourg. He had not been able to flee. He remained ... there, so we were able to see him and ask him his advice. "What should we do?" And he said, "President Roosevelt has recalled all Americans from Europe. You must return to the United States." And (____?). And he could give us the passports. He put me on ... my father's passport since I wasn't eighteen. And, so ... we were well documented. And ... but we needed an exit visa from ... the Germany to leave. See, Luxembourg had been incorporated into the German Reich. We were now Germans (laughs). And ... this required us to go to the secret ... police headquarters, the Gestapo headquarters in Luxembourg to get the visa. So, my father and I walked into the Gestapo headquarters and said, "We are Americans. We want to return to America. Give us an exit visa." The Gestapo chief said, "Well, I would like to, but I don't have the power to give you the visa. I have to call Berlin, and Berlin has to ... allow you permission to leave, and it will take about a couple of weeks." Then we waited, and a couple of weeks later, the Gestapo chief said, "Come in. The visa has arrived. You are free to leave." We had no problem with the Gestapo, none. He was a very nice man, the Gestapo chief.

PIEHLER: The chief that you dealt with?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, he was a very nice man. He slapped my father on the back and said, “Have a nice trip to America and tell the Americans to not come into the war.”

PIEHLER: In a friendly way?

SHWARTZ: A very friendly way. Yes.

PIEHLER: You were under German occupation for several ...

SHWARTZ: That’s right.

PIEHLER: What was that occupation like?

SHWARTZ: Nothing ... real bad. In fact, I remember walking down the street from my house, and I see a German soldier coming there, and he had a little—two children in each arm and was walking the children up the street. The Germans were very nice. They tried to be very friendly.

PIEHLER: And they did not try to abuse their authority in the town?

SHWARTZ: Not ...

PIEHLER: Not yet? Not at that point?

SHWARTZ: They were getting organized. They ...—the Germans—if the Germans thought the Luxembourgers would welcome ... entering into the German Reich, they were sadly mistaken. Opposition soon appeared. So, the Germans, of course, had to use force, and they ... said, “All Luxembourg institutions have been abolished. German institutions have taken their place. You are just—you’re in Germany now. We ... appoint the new mayors of the town.”

PIEHLER: Were you still ...—were you in Luxembourg when that occurred?

SHWARTZ: Yes. I was still there, and the ... man that they appointed chief of the town was our doctor, and we were very friendly with this doctor, but he was of German origin, and so they used him as the chief of Luxembourg. They abolished—I mean the mayor, the old mayor was kicked out, you know. All Germans took over. But, at first, we didn’t feel it yet. Later on it got bad.

PIEHLER: But ... you were gone when that ...

SHWARTZ: I was gone by that time. This was—I suppose the Germans at first tried to be nice hoping that they would win over Luxembourgers. I guess that would be the case. Like I said, the ... German soldiers were harmless. They tried to be as nice as possible. I mean, they—another example, we had to pack a huge trunk with our goods before we left, and we had huge shipping trunk, which was filled with ... mostly his postage stamps to take back to the States. But, before we could take that trunk out, a ... customs official, Germans customs officials, had to come and certify what was in that trunk, and then they had to put a seal on the trunk, and then you could ...

move it. So, they announced this customs official's gonna come, okay, and we had packed all the goods into Luxembourg newspapers that were full of German regulations. And we said, "Well, maybe they won't notice that." And ... so here comes this custom official. It was a middle aged man in his forties, and ... my father immediately received him, gave him a cigar, invited him into the house. They began talking about the First World War. My father brought the whiskey bottle out. Gave him a glass of whiskey. They were having a great time together. All of a sudden, the German officer said, "Hmm, I stayed a little bit too long here. I have to get back." And he said, "Where's the trunk?" "Here it is." He put the seal on the trunk. He never even opened it.

PIEHLER: He didn't even open it.

SHWARTZ: He didn't even open it.

PIEHLER: Because, you said—jumping just a little bit ahead—you ended up turning that over to the Luxembourg government in exile.

SHWARTZ: Yes, that's right. I met them, the royal family, in '41. They came to Washington to meet Roosevelt. And so, my father arranged a meeting with them, and then we turn over all these Luxembourg documents to the royal family.

PIEHLER: Now, had you met the royal family before?

SHWARTZ: No.

PIEHLER: No.

SHWARTZ: No. Nobody ever did.

PIEHLER: Now, they ... were not—I think we now think of the monarchs as very much associating with the common ...

SHWARTZ: Not in those days. Today, it's different. Today, the latest ... duke is so popular, he goes among the people. He shakes hands with everybody. He goes to every festivity. He takes part in everything that goes on. It's totally different from the old (republic?).

PIEHLER: The old were very distant.

SHWARTZ: Oh, gee.

PIEHLER: So, meeting them in Washington was very unique, I mean ...

SHWARTZ: Very unique. Oh, Luxembourgers had never met—you know, except aristocrats. Well, I met them, and I talked ... to the Grand Duchess and to the Crown Prince and to her husband, Prince Felix. "Bourbon par, moi." Prince Felix said, "Bourbon par, moi."

PIEHLER: ... I might even ask you, to be honest, to spell that, his title, the ...

SHWARTZ: Bourbon.

PIEHLER: Bourbon, okay.

SHWARTZ: The old ... dynasty, you know.

PIEHLER: Oh yeah, the Bourbon dynasty, yeah.

SHWARTZ: That's right. He came from that, and then Parma was ...

PIEHLER: ... of the Bourbon dynasty. I think Parma is P-A-R-M-A. Just for—help our transcriber (laughing).

SHWARTZ: And, also, my father met the Empress Zita of Austria in Luxembourg City. My father ... was friendly with the aide-de-comp to the Grand Duchess, Major (Countsbook?). And, because (Counstbook?) was a philanthropist too—he collected stamps, so my father sold him stamps all the time—so, they met in Luxembourg in the Hotel (Aufranc?), and, as they were sitting in the hotel having a drink, the Major (Countsbook?) said, “Look over there. That's Empress Zita of Austria.”

PIEHLER: The last Empress.

SHWARTZ: The last Empress of Austria, and she gets (____?) to the family in Luxembourg, to Felix, to the husband Felix, and so she comes visiting every so often. So, (Countsbook?) takes my father by the arm and walks over to the Empress and said, “Hello,” you know, “how are you. Here's my friend ... Maury.” (Laughs).

PIEHLER: When was that? When did—when was the ...

SHWARTZ: That was the '30s sometime.

PIEHLER: ... '30 something. You were not there?

SHWARTZ: No, I wasn't there. Now, he was—he mentioned that often, you know, because he met the Empress Zita of Austria, and ... I was fortunate ... in meeting a lot of important people. First of all, there was Margaret Truman, who I met in school, and she actually took me once to see Truman. ... He was Senator then.

PIEHLER: You met Harry Truman as a Senator?

SHWARTZ: As a Senator. She took me to the house—to the Senate building, and there was Truman sitting behind the desk, and she introduced me, and he was interested ... in my story about—all of a sudden a bell rang, and Truman got up and said, “I have—there's a meeting I have to attend to.” And he left, and so we had only ten minutes of talk. Yeah, he had to leave to a meeting, so. But ... Margaret and I corresponded during the war ... I tried to—I was smarted

enough to keep up contact with Margaret Truman, because now he was President, and I said, “Damn it, ... just at that important moment when he becomes President, and I know his daughter, I’m in Europe. I can’t do anything about. If I were in Washington, maybe I could finagle my way into some ... big society there,” you know, with Truman’s daughter. But, I was ... away.

PIEHLER: Did you ever make it to the White House when Truman was President?

SHWARTZ: No, no, I met Margaret after I came back. I was still in uniform. I went to the university, and here she was at a meeting ... with women, a women’s club. Yeah, she was a member. I stood at the door, and she was talking to some women from the university, and she turned around and she saw me, and she came running to me and embraced me in front of everybody. Yeah, and so, I used her name in—whenever they needed some ... recommendation ... when the government—the government needed—you have to give three names of ...

PIEHLER: ... of people who knew you.

SHWARTZ: ... knew you.

PIEHLER: And so you would use Margaret Truman?

SHWARTZ: Always used Margaret Truman (laughter), and ... I knew once that was in the records, they’re never gonna fire me (laughter).

PIEHLER: What was the last contact you had with Margaret Truman? Do you remember?

SHWARTZ: ... Yeah ... unfortunately, she had continued in school, and so she had graduated already by the time I got back, so I didn’t have much contact with her anymore. And then she (moved to New York?) and married some New York journalist, and then I didn’t have any contact. ... One time, I went to Missouri to Independence and looked her in the house—I went to her house, and I knock on the door, and somebody opened—a woman opened—and I said, “Is Margaret home?” She said, “No, she’s in New York.” I didn’t see her again. But I tried, and she was no longer there.

And then ... you know Patton—General Patton—(I stood almost before him?)—twice, and ...

PIEHLER: Actually, I wanted to ... bring up another subject. You go into some detail of your leaving Luxembourg ... The trip ...

SHWARTZ: The trip was something. Oh, gee, that trip.

PIEHLER: ... Because you—for awhile you were struck in—you were in France, ... and it looked like you might not be able to get out of France.

SHWARTZ: That’s right. ... We had to cross the demarcation line between the German part and the Vichy part. Well, we had our passports, and we traveled, (and so?), Red Cross members on the bus—there was a Red Cross bus that went down to France to pick up sick Luxembourgers

and bring them back, and we ... pretended to be Red Cross members on that bus. And the Germans let us ... But when we got to Vichy, we were told that we had to have an exit visa also to get out of Vichy France. Well, nobody had told us about that. And so, we applied for a visa to get out of France, and, of course, French ... didn't want to certify us. So, we had to appeal to the American ambassador, who happened to be Admiral Leahy—he was the ambassador to Vichy, and he immediately set to work and got us the visa in a week.

PIEHLER: Did you actually meet Leahy when he was ...

SHWARTZ: No, no ..., we just applied at the embassy.

PIEHLER: At the embassy.

SHWARTZ: Yeah ... And ... it was very dangerous, ... the things we—when we got to the Southern France and Spanish border, and there was Franco—here was Franco in charge of Spain, another dictator, who wouldn't let any refugee come into Spain. I mean, there were thousands and thousands of refugees in Southern France who had—they had already fled from Germany and Austria thinking they were safe in France. Then, France was defeated, and they had to move out of Northern France into Southern France, and they were stuck there at the Spanish border because Franco wouldn't let them in. Jews, there was a—I remember still, the old—once they found out that my father and I were Americans, they all came running. “Help us, help us. Can you do something for us You're both Americans.” We said, “Well, we can't do much for ...” This lady came up. She had a fur coat on. She said, “Look.” She opened the fur coat, and she said, “The lining is full of diamonds. If you can get us to America, the diamonds are yours.” And so, that when my father said, “Nothing we can do to help you.” ... But these people were desperate. They were ... caught in no mans land. ... And a lot of them were eventually deported by the French to the concentration camps. There was this Czech couple from Czechoslovakia. They had escaped to Paris when the Germans occupied Czechoslovakia, and he was a movie scenario writer. He was into the Czech movies, and he had a beautiful wife, and ... they befriended us, and they were trying to get to American. And they hung on to us. They wouldn't let go. They ... thought somehow we could ...

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

SHWARTZ: ...they thought that somehow my father could help them out, and, when we finally got out visa and we went to the railroad station on the Spanish border to go into Spain, they followed us to the railroad station ... hoping that at the last moment, the very last moment, we they could help them. But—so my father told the—Schiller was his name—told Mr. Schiller, “When we get to America, I will vouch for you,” because they needed someone to vouch for them to comet to America, and ... so that was fine. So, they were stuck there. Well, my father did vouch for them. They went to Cuba. They came—they arrived in Cuba, and from there, they contacted my father, and my father vouched for them, and they came over to America, and they went straight for Hollywood where he got a job and ... a house.

PIEHLER: So, your father did vouch for them?

SHWARTZ: Yes, he did vouch for them.

PIEHLER: In fact, you ... met them at—you described (____?)...

SHWARTZ: And so, when I was stationed in California and was able to go to Hollywood, first (job?) was “I’m looking up the Schiller. Where’s ... Mr. Schiller?” And ... so, I found their house, a modest house. It was—they didn’t have much money in the beginning. And ... believe it or not, as I entered the house, ... who was sitting there at the table? Patty Lamar and her husband—oh, I know his name—and he also a new actor—but as I came in as a soldier, they were just leaving ... so she just walked by and said, “Hello soldier,” and went out the door. But ... now that was a close encounter with Patty Lamar (laughter). Now, he had already gotten a job in Hollywood, and he had a lot of contacts with other refugees, and so that was wonderful for me because he took me immediately to the studios, Paramount, and I was able to walk into Paramount and watch the movie being made.

PIEHLER: ‘Cause you describe in you memoir you got to see ... parts of (____?) from Utopia being made, particularly the scene—you say you describe watching (____?)—with a scene where they’re skiing—Bob Hope is skiing with ... (____?).

SHWARTZ: Yeah ..., and I met a lot of other there, and ... there was a lot of German actors I knew from Germany ... were already there, and they were ...—actually immediately got jobs because at that time, Hollywood was making so many anti-Nazi movies, they needed Germans to play the Germans in the movie. So, these ... German actors all got jobs immediately to play German soldiers and German officers. Yeah, so I met some of those, and ... a famous composer ...

PIEHLER: You mention Kurt Weill.

SHWARTZ: Kurt Weill, Kurt Weill. Schiller knew Kurt Weill, and ... so we met him, and it was (____?), so Schiller and (____?), “Let’s take the two soldiers out for lunch,” and they drove us out to the sea, and there was restaurant there that had a nice view of the beach, and we had lunch there.

PIEHLER: I’m curious, was Schiller—were they Jewish? Were they a Jewish-Czech family? Do you know off-hand?

SHWARTZ: I don’t know if they were Jewish or not. No, I never inquired into that. Later on, while watching Hollywood movies, I saw the name Schiller repeatedly in the ...

PIEHLER: In the credits.

SHWARTZ: ... in the credits.

PIEHLER: So, you never stayed in touch after this?

SHWARTZ: No, no, no, because the CIA sent me to Europe, and I was (contact?) with everybody.

PIEHLER: It sounds like the CIA was not a great—in staying in touch with people.

SHWARTZ: No, they—also, those contacts with the Army—I wanted to stay in the Reserves ..., and ... because the Reserves had—one of the meetings in Washington—every month, the Reserve officers met in Washington, and there was always a lecture from the State Department or some place, a general there who gave us a talk about the Cold War, which was just getting started at that time. ... They told us a lot about the Soviet Union, and I really liked to go to those meetings. And once—when the CIA sent me over seas, I could not—I did not—I could not tell the Reserve department that I was with the CIA. So, I missed all the meetings, and after ... several years, they kicked me out of the Reserves. They said, “We haven’t seen you. We don’t know where you are. You don’t even come to any meetings.” I guess ...

PIEHLER: And you couldn’t even—even though they are another branch of the government—you couldn’t even tell the Army that you were in the CIA?

SHWARTZ: ... I could not tell the Army, exactly.

PIEHLER: You mentioned ... (in?) Portugal, you described in your memoir how—the destruction in Spain, and how—you almost get the sense that there was very little difference from occupied Luxembourg, occupied France, Vichy France, and Spain, that you felt sort of ...

SHWARTZ: There was damage every place. Spain had gone through a long civil war. There was—Spanish cities were destroyed (_____?), and we had to drive through it. Of course, we had to make stops in Barcelona and Madrid, and then again on the Portuguese border, we had ... to stop there for the train (to Portugal from Spain?)—we went to Portugal, Lisbon. We had to make a stop there ... It was very hot. It was like 101 degrees, and ... we were burning up. Yeah, I mean ..., at this point, we put our trunk on the train at the Spanish border and never saw that trunk again. And my father was—oh, his whole fortune was in that trunk ...

PIEHLER: In that trunk.

SHWARTZ: And ... we arrived in Washington, D.C. with no trunk. So, he ... was smart. He immediately contacted all the ambassadors in Europe, and all of a sudden, four weeks later, the trunk arrived.

PIEHLER: With the seal still intact?

SHWARTZ: The seal still intact. Unbelievable.

PIEHLER: ‘Cause you describe Lisbon as almost like the promise land compared to what you had been through.

SHWARTZ: Lisbon was pro-British. The Portuguese at that time was pro-British, and ... I wondered why, but the British were trading happily with Portugal. All the automobiles in Lisbon were English automobiles. So, (I get the?) idea that Portugal and England were closely (tied together?) for trade. So, Portugal was ... not suffering then. They ... still had everything, plenty of everything. And food and the (capital?), I mean, I hadn't seen any bananas and grapefruit in practically ever probably, and here that was all available in Lisbon. So, that was a nice place to be, and the coffee was excellent too. They had good coffee there.

PIEHLER: You also describe meeting Luxembourgers ..., 'cause you mention meeting to (labor?) minister.

SHWARTZ: ... in Lisbon, there was a whole bunch of Luxembourg ministers already there. They had fled ahead of us—of course, they had fled the first day the Germans arrived—but the Luxembourg family, the Luxembourg royal family, yeah, they had early warning to get out, and they were—they wanted to go to America too. So, I ... had a good time with them for awhile. And they ... had reservations on the ship, of course ... But then we went to the shipping agency and said, "We want to go that same ship." They said, "Sorry. It's already filled up. No more room on the ship." "What!," my father said, "this is the last American ship leaving Lisbon. We've got to be on that ship." The guys said—my father said, "But I bought the tickets in Luxembourg. They said it would be good (from this line?)." And the guy said, "No good in here. No good (for here?). This ticket is no good (for here?)." My father had to buy another ticket to get on that ship, and anyways, the guy said, "We have no more cabins." My father said, "I don't care if there are no cabins. I'll sleep in the chimney if I have to to get out of this country." And so ... my father really got mad at this(____?), and he took him by the collar and said, "I'm a World War I veteran, a disabled veteran, and I have to get—Roosevelt has said I have to get back to the United States. You are not gonna keep me here." Then the guy finally said, "Okay, okay. So, if it's alright with you, you can sleep on deck." And that is all, that is all.

PIEHLER: So ... you slept on deck?

SHWARTZ: Slept on deck.

PIEHLER: Literally.

SHWARTZ: Literally, with a blanket. It took seven days to ... get to ... New York—not just five day, seven days—it was a little steamer.

PIEHLER: Where did you wash?

SHWARTZ: Well, I guess—that's where my father met that Jewish man ...

PIEHLER: In the leather business.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, in the leather business. He was ... on that ship too. He was leaving Europe. And ... I guess they ... let us use his cabin. Yeah, they were drinking at the bar all the time. The two were always at the bar (laughter). That's how ... they became good friends.

PIEHLER: At the bar.

SHWARTZ: At the bar.

PIEHLER: How many ... of the people on the ship were refugees? It sounds like it was—were there many Americans?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, there were, I mean—all Americans were leaving Europe.

PIEHLER: On this ship, were there very many—how many Americans (was there?)?

SHWARTZ: I don't know, you know. It was full. I mean the ship was full, and I imagine the ship probably ... had about 600 ... passengers.

PIEHLER: And of that, how many would be Americans and how many would be refugees? Roughly.

SHWARTZ: There was a lot of Americans on board.

PIEHLER: So, you weren't the only Americans?

SHWARTZ: ... The refugees were only the very important refugees, I mean, like ministers, ... you know, very important people. ... Ordinary refugees were not on that ship. They didn't get on. You had to have an official pass. Then we got on. Yeah.

PIEHLER: You described in your memoir arriving ... to the United States, and you described earlier particularly how impressed you were with New York and the general prosperity. You also talk about—and you talked earlier about ... going school—I should add that you have a picture of your—you have a high school class picture hanging on the wall, and just above it is your training class.

SHWARTZ: ... my basic training, yeah.

PIEHLER: ... I'm curious, ... you had spoken English at home, but how long did it take you to get American idioms?

SHWARTZ: It went pretty fast because ... I was allowed to go to this American high school for three semesters, and ... (____?) with American kids, we learned slang pretty fast. That's the place to be because they teach you fast. And ... they were—everybody was so good to me. The teachers took me into their—I remember one of the (____?) teachers invited me home for dinner, and they all ... couldn't do enough for me because they wanted to hear my story. Everybody—it was just before we entered the war, and Americans were becoming interested in the European war, particularly since the Germans had just attacked our ship. And that was a little later however. They—but the Americans were so interested in listening to a refugee, what they had to say, so I was welcome every place, and ... later on, I—in early—in late '41 and early '42,

I was out of school, and my father had an apartment at the (_____ Avenue?), and he said, “I’m running out of money. I can no longer support you. You’ve got to go out and get a job.” And, so, I had to go out and get a job. I got it out of the newspaper, the personnel office at ... streetcar ... company, and I got into the personnel office, and ... I made a lot of new friends. Fortunately, the personnel chief, he was a Jewish man too, and he was interested in hearing about Europe. So, they took me out to lunch, (all the members there?). And they were always nice to me. And ... the supervisor invited me to his home. So ... they were extremely good to me.

PIEHLER: I’m curious about—(_____?) to debate over America’s entry—what did you think over the debate over America’s entry in the war ’41?

SHWARTZ: Yes, yes, it was various serious. Boy, you can say that again. I ... was trying to get America into the war. I tried to do—because I wanted to rescue my family, so ...

PIEHLER: So, you supported intervention?

SHWARTZ: Oh, man, did I support intervention! Everybody I talked to, I said, “America got to get into the war.” At the ... university, they had—the Hatchet, the ... school newspaper called Hatchet because George Washington and the hatchet, so ... it was called the Hatchet—and I wrote articles in there telling the students about Europe, about the Nazis, and I got this information from the Belgium embassy in Washington. They sent me reports about what was going on in Belgium, and I assumed that was the same thing in Luxembourg. So, I excerpted some of those articles which showed how the students were opposing the Nazis, the students went on strike, and the Nazis were shooting people who opposed them, and ... so I put all that into the paper, and there was a professor, (Ragatz?), in the history department who also knew my father, and he supported me.

PIEHLER: What was his name again?

SHWARTZ: Ragatz

PIEHLER: You have that—do you remember how to spell that?

SHWARTZ: R-A-G-A-T-Z.

PIEHLER: He was very ... supportive of you effort?

SHWARTZ: Yes, yeah, he was very supportive. I went to—in his class, took his class—it was European history—and he took me to the faculty club—the only student I bet that ever entered that faculty club. And ...oh, I did everything to get America into the war. I said, you know, that England is losing, I mean, and the Germans were winning in Russia too. Oh my gosh, I mean, at least we hoped that the Russians would beat the Germans, but no. The whole summer of ’42, the Germans were winning.

PIEHLER: ’42 or ’41?

SHWARTZ: Was it '42 or 1 ... it started in June '41. Okay, because it was before we got into the war.

MAXWELL: What was that, like, students opinions on the war? I mean, how—did they, you know, believe that the U.S. should intervene?

SHWARTZ: Well, I mean, like ... this country was divided, seriously divided about entering into the war, and ... with good reason. I can see ... the view point, you know. But, there was also a large segment of Americans who were actively campaigning for the war. They said we cannot morally stand by and let Europe and England go down the drain. I mean, that's—they said we cannot do that. But, the common people saw no reason to join the war. But, I make propaganda. Every place I went—Margaret Truman—I gave her an earful about that to tell her dad that we should enter the war. Every place I went, I was an activist, a big activist. And ... in '42, I joined the Reserves, the Army Reserves—volunteered, I mean, I was not drafted yet. But, I was so intent on getting back to Europe to see my family again, I was afraid they might put me into the Air Force or the Navy, and I would never get back to Europe. So, I wanted to make sure that I would get into the Army because I knew the Army would go back. And so, I entered the Reserves, and the university had a reserve unit, (_____) joining the reserves, and in the basement of the university, they had a shooting gallery, and they were training us to shoot in '42. And so, they told me—somebody told me, “Continue your studies. Whatever you do, do not join the Army yet. It's more of your interest to ... stay at the university,” and they were so right because when I finally got called up, I was one of the few in that field to have college education. You have no idea how few Americans went to college. That was a rarity. Not only that, when I met these southern boys in Arkansas and in Tennessee, they hadn't even finished high school. A lot of them hadn't even gone to high school. That's how bad it was in 19—in the early '40s. They—I mean, college was so out of the range of those people that, to think, they didn't even have a high school education. And here, I was a college kid, so I stood out like a sore thumb.

MAXWELL: Even more reason you probably should have been an officer.

SHWARTZ: That's right, absolutely. But I was just a year too young. If I had been just one year older, I think I could have made. But a nineteen year old kid, you know, they were right. I mean why give—why make an officer out of nineteen year old kid, you know, I mean, I was just a school boy.

PIEHLER: One thing, I just want to back up, just a little is—were you a member of any organization, interventionist organization?

SHWARTZ: No, no ...

PIEHLER: You didn't join some ...

SHWARTZ: I didn't know about that.

PIEHLER: You didn't join say the (_____) Chapter of Giving Aid to Allies?

SHWARTZ: No, I ... was just a student, really. I was too young. If I had been a few years older, I might have taken some action. Yeah, the ... so, you know, I was eager to get into the war. I couldn't wait to get into the war.

PIEHLER: What was the—you stayed in Washington through '42, through much of '42. What was Washington like in war?

SHWARTZ: Oh, gosh. Somebody had written a book about it. Washington, before the war, was a sleepy southern town. I mean the government was nothing. The government was small, and the Roosevelt—when it was being enlarged, but militarily, I mean it was, insignificant. You never saw a soldier in town, and ... once the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, what a change took place in Washington. Oh, they went crazy, Washington. They had to enlarge everything. The government had to establish new departments. They didn't have enough typists. They called for women typist from all over the country. They were flooding into Washington. There were shortage of housing. People had to put up these girls in their homes. And the military flooded into Washington. Every department had military in it. And they were hiring and hiring industrialists, managers of all kinds. They had this, I mean—this country was transformed like you've never seen it before, you know. But it was really a military town all of a sudden. The Pentagon was still under construction, and they really needed that because they had no place to put the ... management. They had these old World War I buildings along the Reflective Pool. It was still from World War I. They were supposed to have been torn down after World War I. They never tore them down. They were dilapidated. And that's where the military ... staffs moved into these places. It was a temporary building. Yeah. ... Everybody got exited. Everybody took in the mission, and then, you know, the rules that came out of Washington constantly—what we had to do to support the war effort. Selling—buying war bonds. We had to buy war bonds. We had to put some of your income into war bonds. You were forced to. When you worked, they forced you to do it. You have to ... be patriotic.

PIEHLER: So, ... in your company, you really had to buy war bonds?

SHWARTZ: You had to buy war bonds. Yeah, everybody had to put something away. Oh boy. Everybody became so patriotic. We had to save metals to donate to the war effort so they could make more guns out of it. All kinds of scrap metal. Everything you had you were suppose to turn in. And then the rationing came. Gas was rationed ... Oh yeah, that was a tremendous (event?). I was able to go back to Washington quite often because the military intelligence center was part of Washington, so I could jump on the bus on weekends and ... my father was still in Washington at the time, so I went to see him. And ... in the evening, I would go out to the USO club. They had USOs and girls were waiting for you there. I mean, you could dance with them, and everybody couldn't do enough for them. You should have lived in those days. That was different from today, I tell you. Everybody was willing to help. American people reacted marvelously. I've never seen anything like it. The whole country eventually got organized in support of the war effort. Everything ... you could think of was organized and supported ...

PIEHLER: Which it hadn't been in 1940 or '41.

SHWARTZ: No, not in the beginning, but by ... '43, it was at the height. I remember being on the train to California, and the train made many stops along the way, and at every stop the good old women were there with the donuts and coffee. You only had to lean out the window, and they would give us everything we wanted. I mean cookies and everything. Every stop—and we stopped in Chicago for a day and immediately went to the USO. Oh my gosh, they had food their, and they—the girls were there. “Stay as long as you want to.” You know, they didn’t want to let us go. Yeah, the country was just wonderful to us, to the servicemen. You couldn’t ask for more.

MAXWELL: I know ... a lot of Americans were, you know, they were focused on the Japanese, and ... you were focused on Europe—what was your opinion on how the Japanese and their whole issue of the war?

SHWARTZ: I didn’t even think about the Japanese. ... No, I couldn’t care less about them. I mean, that was not my ... area, and I wasn’t interested.

MAXWELL: Not at all?

SHWARTZ: In fact, once I was over in Europe, we didn’t hear anymore about the Japanese. However, when the war—when Europe ended—it ended in May 8 of that year, the war in Europe—the war in Japan was still going on in the Pacific. And then we heard about Iwo Jima and the next up with, uh, Japan there. Then we heard what our boys were doing over in ... Japan because they told us, “You’re going there too. You’re next,” they told us.

PIEHLER: You didn’t ... have enough points to get out?

SHWARTZ: I had enough points. A lot of (_____) did not.

PIEHLER: So, you didn’t have to go to Japan?

SHWARTZ: No, I had enough points. And I was—anyway, I joined the CIC and I had a lot of jobs to do in Europe. Furthermore, even if I had enough ... points, I refused to go home, and no body could understand this. I said, “I want to stay here. I don’t want to go home. I have not.” I said, “I have no home in America.” No home. I had no home. My father was back in the sanatorium. We had no home. I had no place to go. So, I said, “I volunteer to stay ... over in Europe for another year, if need be.” And I rarely let have somebody else have my ticket back. And so, that gave me chance to go back to Luxembourg many times and my family, yeah.

PIEHLER: I’m curious, do you ... remember when the news of Pearl Harbor—the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred?

SHWARTZ: Oh yeah, ... nobody forgets that. I was actually in the apartment in Massachusetts Avenue, and we always turn the radio on for (Ria Gabriel?), he’s a somebody, some commentator like that, giving news, and then it came over the radio. My father and I were both sitting there, and then—but ... of course, we sort of welcomed it. I mean I welcomed it because now I knew the United States was going to the war. I’m (not?) the only one that was happy. I’ve

always—just like, in the Battle of the Bulge occurred, I was in the 35th Infantry Division. We had fought all the way from Normandy. We were now at the German border, opposite the (south?). I was unhappy because we were not going the direction of Luxembourg. I was the unhappiest man in the Army because I had hoped that the army were headed for Luxembourg, and they were not. They were going the other direction. So, I was so unhappy. So, on December 16, I hear the news that the Germans have attacked in the battle—in the Ardennes, and that Patton was turning his army was turning around to help, and I was the happiest man in the world. We were going to Luxembourg. I mean, while the other guys were crying. They said, “Oh no, not again. We’ve gone through too much already. Now we have to go to another battle. And I was so happy. I said, “We’re going to home. Yeah, I’m going home.” And I was going home. That’s—my story is so ... different from everybody else’s. Yeah, that’s right. Yeah, that was nice that the general let me go and find my parents—my mother and my family. We were at Metz. We were just moving up into the Bulge, and we were only an hour from my home by jeep. I had my own jeep. I said, “Now or never. Now’s my chance to ... find my family.” And I went to the general and I said, “Here’s my story. I would like to—I don’t know if my family is still alive or not. Will you let me drive over there and see?” And he said, “Yes, son. I would do the same thing if I were you.” And he said, “Take the jeep, and you go to the mess hall, and you ask the mess sergeant to load up your jeep with food for your family before you go home.” And that’s what I did. The mess sergeant loaded up my jeep with flour, sugar, all the good stuff, and I had a whole jeep full of food, and I ride home for the weekend. That’s so nice, isn’t it?

PIEHLER: I’m curious—before we talk about your experiences with the Army—how well was your father treated by the veteran’s administration because he—during the war he had a relapse—how good was the care?

SHWARTZ: That poor man—when every few months (____?), he had attacks—well, when we first got to the United States, he was okay. But once ... we found we were cut off and he was cut off from his family, he ... felt bad about it. But when he found his only son was going into the Army and overseas, that was the last straw. The man collapsed. He just couldn’t take it. And he had more attacks, and he had to go—they sent him first to a sanatorium near Virginia Beach, and then they sent him to a New England—to a sanatorium in some valley up ... in New York state where he stayed in the whole war. So, when I came back to the states, I have no home. They asked me, “Well, we have to discharge you someplace. Where—because ...,” you could ask to be given free transportation wherever you lived in the United States. They would pay for your way home. I said, “I don’t know where to go.” So they said, “Don’t you have any relatives?” I said, “Well, I have a father, but he’s at ... the hospital. And they said, “Well, then, we send you there. Where is that?” I said, “Well, it’s in Massachusetts.” And so they said, “Okay, we discharge you in ... Fort Devens, Massachusetts,” and that’s what they did. I arrived—I said this not home, but I immediately was able to see my father, and ... he was so glad that I was still alive. And then, he got better ... after that. I know that he suffered because (____?). And, but later on it got worse and worse. He went Mount (Algor) Hospital in Washington, D.C. (____?). And, he spit blood, and ... the last time I was at the hospital, the surgeon showed me his file. His file was that big (gestures a stack of papers). He said it was the biggest file he had here (____?). He had gone through this so many time to—when he spit blood, we immediately rushed him over to the hospital. And then they always managed to fix him up. They always managed to fix

him. It was fortunate that we had something that could be ... yeah. So, he lived a long time. He out lived all his buddies, who were healthy, and he the sick man lived longer than any of them.

PIEHLER: When did your father pass away?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, it was—he was like eighty-five or something in ... '77.

PIEHLER: That's when he—yeah, he was—and did he receive care throughout his life from the VA establishment?

SHWARTZ: Oh, that's very good, yes, very good care.

PIEHLER: And ... it sounds like it stemmed from his World War I gassing.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, we always—we think that ... at first, when he was in Europe, he only got half pension, he only got half disabilities, 50% disabilities because he was not that sick at the time, so they gave 50%, which was not much, but in those days in Europe, the American dollar was very high compared to the Belgian Franc, and we were able to live actually comfortably on that pension. I may have been only \$50 a month. But \$50 in American money in Europe in those days was big money. So, as he got worse, they put him on 100% disability, later on, so he got twice as much ..., so he did pretty well. But, that's his business. They were able to retire to a very nice retirement in a place in Maryland (____?), it's very nice place there. And of course, he took the first boat back after the war, and he brought the family back. We were reunited for the first time after seven long years before the whole family was back together. Seven years. And, ... I felt lonely a lot of that time.

PIEHLER: How often ... did your father write to you while you were in the service?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, quite a bit. Yeah, we wrote each other quite a ... few times. Yeah, he took a map of the war on the wall and followed the war on the map, and then he would write to me about ... newspaper stories. And I would write to him wherever we were in Europe, and when I got back to the States, my father showed me letters, and there were nothing but big holes in them (laughter). Big holes. In every letter were big holes, everywhere. Those damn censors—every time I mentioned a European town, they cut it out. What difference did it make? We were already past that town by now. I mean, we wouldn't have hurt anybody. The Germans knew that we had captured that town. So what were they protecting? But no, they cut out every mention of every town.

PIEHLER: Did your father give you any advice about the Army?

SHWARTZ: Stay out of it (laughter).

PIEHLER: He ... didn't want you to go into the Army?

SHWARTZ: No. I was his only son, and that had something to do with it. And particularly, since he also didn't have a family anymore at the time, he wanted me to be with him. And

because I remember when I told him—when I wrote to him that I had volunteered—oh, he was very upset.

PIEHLER: He didn't want you to volunteer?

SHWARTZ: "Why volunteer when you're—why don't you wait till you get drafted. Why did you have to volunteer unnecessarily?" Well, he was afraid something would happen to me.

PIEHLER: And you didn't want the Navy because it wouldn't take you to Luxembourg.

SHWARTZ: That's right.

PIEHLER: And you didn't want the Marine Corps, I guess for the same ...

SHWARTZ: No, for the same reason. Everybody else in my group wanted to have everything but the Army. They couldn't wait to get into the Navy and the Air Force. That's their first choice. The ... Army was always their last choice, and that was always my first choice (laughter).

MAXWELL: When did you decide you wanted to join the Army? I mean, was it just like you planned on doing it after school?

SHWARTZ: No, when the war broke out, I mean, you know, I—as soon as I came to the United States, my only ambition was to save my family, and the only way that could be done was for the United States Army to go over there and rescue them, so getting into the Army and going over seas was my first priority. I couldn't wait but—everybody it was ... not tempted to go, but to me that was the greatest thing. So I was always happy. And I mean, I was a good soldier because I was proud to be an American soldier. I tried very hard whereas a lot of the other soldiers tried to avoid as much duty as possible, and the officers liked me because I was very patriotic (____?), and ... of course I could tell them stories about Germany. I tried very hard, and I succeeded. ... I had the best (timing?). And the Army wasn't—that war was a big adventure for me. It was the best I ever happened to me. The other—my other buddies, the soldiers I mean the MPs who worked with me, I had a bunch of MPs working for me and (____?), we were just ordinary Americans from the Midwest or someplace. They didn't know where they were. They knew they were in Europe, but they had no conception of the geography. They didn't know where France was, where Germany was. These poor guys were lost. I don't know how they made out, I mean, being like that. Whereas I was conscience of where I was, what I was doing. I was enthusiastic about my work. I tried to do the best I could. But I always wondered why are the American soldiers fighting so hard. I always wondered. I have a good reason to fight hard, but why are these poor GIs fighting so hard. I often wondered, but they do.

PIEHLER: You did understand why they were fighting so hard, it sounds like.

SHWARTZ: They were in a foreign country far away from the U.S. How could they justify—because you know, when I talk to them, they didn't know where they were. Yeah, they were lost. But still they did their duty. I saw very few shirkers.

PIEHLER: Once you got overseas?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, once I got overseas, yeah. So, ... the American soldiers are ... good soldiers, even though they don't know what they're doing. Yeah, I mean, the Germans were much more inspired in their philosophy than we were in ours. They were brainwashed—the Germans were really brainwashed from the time they were eight years old. So, they actually believed in what they were doing, and I can see why they were fighting. They were fighting for their homeland. They were not Nazis, I mean, the top echelon were Nazis, but the common people were not Nazi. The Nazis is—it's a philosophy you would have to study and understand, and most people don't bother to do that, but the German soldiers fought extremely hard, even when they were losing, when they realized they were losing. Why were they still fighting? This is so hard to understand.

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

KURT PIEHLER: This continues an interview with Eugene Shwartz on April 18, 2005 at his home in Knoxville, Tennessee with Kurt Piehler and ...

JARED MAXWELL: Jared Maxwell

PIEHLER: ... and you were saying about the German soldier.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, the German soldiers were better soldiers than American soldiers. You can't deny that.

PIEHLER: What made them—why—what made them so much better?

SHWARTZ: They acted like professionals. While we were civilians in an Army uniform—we were still civilians—we never became real soldiers like the Germans were. The Germans—probably because they grew up under this militaristic system, and the patriotism was drilled into them and Hitler was very successful in converting the you to his philosophy, which was simply was he was trying to do everything possible for the good of Germany, and here these nasty Allies were trying to stop him from doing good things for the Germans. So, it's no surprise the German soldier thought they were actually defending a good cause. But why were they keep fighting, at least the ... generals? Why did they keep fighting for the bitter end is beyond me. The German generals after all are intelligent people. They should have seen at some stage that there's no chance in a million for them to win the war. That—even though Hitler was protected by the SS, nevertheless, you think that a general that had command of a division could have marched on Berlin and shut downed the SS guards and killed Hitler just to save the German people from total destruction, which we were about to do. We were just at the end—the last six months of the war were terrible to Germany. We beat the heck out of them. We bombed them to bits. What they went through is unbelievable. Now, you think that some general, or all the generals, would have seen that this can't go on and that they would have just stopped the war. Just stopped it. No. They kept fighting for the last man. This is something I will never understand because the next surprise was when we entered Germany, the American standard attitude was that the Germans are all like people. They have gone along with the Hitler regime. They're all bad. There's no such thing as a good German. They all deserve to be destroyed, and when we get there, we'll

really go after them. Well, when we opposed Germany, as soon as we even walked across the line, the Germans hung white flags out of their windows. They surrendered immediately. The civilians ... immediately became friendly—flags out the window—and as we went deeper into Germany, the German civilians even became friendly. I mean, finally to the point where they became (____?). They received us with open arms. I couldn't believe it. I was—the women were all over us. We practically had to beat them off they were so friendly. Here, we had killed their husbands, their fathers, and they showed no resentment about that. Something I couldn't believe, you know. And Eisenhower also did not understand that. He ... was intent on punishing the Germans, particularly after they had shown him the concentration camps. Before that, Eisenhower didn't—he never said anything particularly anti-German. But once he had seen the concentration camps, he became violently anti-German. And so, when the German army surrendered and there were still a lot of German troops who surrendered. I mean, I saw half a million myself, Eisenhower interned them in camps along the Rhine River. There were various prison camps, and the Germans suffered tremendously because they were underfed and no medical attention, and ... I said to myself, "What's the use of keeping these German prisoners there? Why not let them go home? If they went home, they could start planting new crops for the next year and do something useful," and it took months before Eisenhower finally got it in his head that that's what he should do and finally let them go. But the German civilians, I mean, how could these people—we had done so much damage to them, and yet they did hold it against us when we got here. That is really a mystery to me to this day. Yeah, they—I practically lived with the Germans after that. I visited their homes, and ... they never showed any hatred against Americans, and I went as far as the Elbe River where we met the Russians. An then, the war stopped and I returned to the American zone, and on the way back, I drove through Koblenk, which is in the junction of the (Moselle?) and the Rhine River, and as I drove through there, somebody stopped me—I forget who—and told me that the town had no ... management anymore. The mayor and all the officials had fled the town, and people were helpless. There was nobody of the town. And he said, "Since you speak German, the people want to find some American they can talk to." And, I walk into the city hall and I sat behind the desk of the mayor, and the German people came to me. All they wanted to know—is it alright for them to repair this, to repair the utilities, and ... to, you know, put the town back in order. I said, "Well, of course it is, we encourage you to do that." And they were so happy because an American gave them permission to do something because they were so afraid to do anything on their own. They needed an American to tell them what to do. I was for a day the mayor Koblenk.

And ..., we had been very stupid in bombing Germany in the extent that we did because we destroyed all the utilities. There was no transportation, no water, no electricity, and now we had to live in that same (____?). We had to live with this condition. We didn't—we made it hard on ourselves by destroying all this. And now we were trying as much as we could to repair everything. You see. And so how stupid were we to destroy all these towns because now we had to rebuild them, and later on we had rebuild them with millions of American dollars, the stuff we destroyed ourselves. And the destruction didn't do much good as far as shortening the war. Yeah, so ... the German—the American soldier at the end of the war said that they like the Germans better than they liked the French. Can you imagine that? I mean, the French, our allies, were not as friendly to us as the Germans, and we beat the Germans down. Now, this is interesting historical facts.

PIEHLER: I want to go back a little in terms of your Army service. Your first induction into the Army—where did you report for service?

SHWARTZ: Petersburg, Virginia.

PIEHLER: Mm hmm. And how did you get there?

SHWARTZ: By bus. I think they—I left from the university. There were about six of us were supposed to go to Petersburg, Virginia and be inducted, and the ... President of the university met us outside and gave us a little speech and wished us well as we got on the bus, and so we arrived in Petersburg, Virginia.

PIEHLER: And what happened to you in Petersburg?

SHWARTZ: Well, you know, the first day, they ... teach you the regulations, and they square you in, and then they have to fit you out with the clothing and shoes, and then they give you these tests, the intelligence test, and to see what ... skills you have that they can use in the Army. Yeah, so ... I made out extremely well on the test. I was (ranked?) because I was called in the very next day, and—oh, they waited—they also did—physical, take the physical. So, you have to undress, and they check you all over. They weighed me. The doctor—there were two doctors there. They looked at the—119 pounds ... One doctor said to the other you think that he is fit for military service? He is underweight. And the other doctor said, “Oh, don’t worry about it. They feed him. They ... build him up.” (Laughter) I had been a year at the university pretty starving— ... I was living on \$50 a month. (Cheese sandwiches?)—I was alone there. I had to—no, practically no income, and I was down to 119 pounds. Now, thirteen weeks later, the end of my basic training, they weighed me again—143 pounds.

PIEHLER: On basic training food. Even with all the exercise? Even with all the training?

SHWARTZ: Oh exercise, they worked you to death, and yet they fed you as much as you could eat. They put it on the table, and you could just grab and the guys were—quart of milk—they drank the whole quart of it down. You have never seen soldiers so hungry as when they went through physical training. All that marching, and all that jumping around. Oh gosh. And they built me up. I became a man in thirteen weeks, believe me. That’s, uh—I remember that too. Yeah, so ... they fed us well ...

MAXWELL: So this is in Arkansas where your basic training is?

SHWARTZ: Mm hmm. Yeah.

MAXWELL: What other stuff did you learn at your basic training?

SHWARTZ: Well, I mean, a lot of drill, that went on for weeks and weeks. ... Somehow the Army thought that the war is fought by marching. All you have to do is march, and you win the war. They—actually, the purpose of it is, I found out later on, you come in as a civilian, you have to go out as a soldier. Now, your mind has to be changed. You have—they have—what they do,

and they do it successfully, they break you down. They break you down mentally till you have no resistance left. Till you are like an animal. And you do everything they say. And then they build you back up again. So ... that's how they make a soldier, particularly Marines, that's—Marines particularly. I mean, I see them—they'll do everything the commander tells them. They have no resistance left. If the commander tells them to walk off the cliff, they walk off the cliff. ... They were so trained, but you become that until you become a soldier, and it takes thirteen weeks before that takes in effect. Basic training, you resist everything they tell you, and you say you're crazy, you just—nonsense—you fight everything they tell you. You think the Army's crazy. Don't, it's stupid. Everything in your body tells you that—what they tell you is total nonsense. Then gradually, they break you down. If you do not do what the ... sergeant says, you get punished. You get various punishments. Exercises, where you have to do your bed over again, or you don't get any beef. And they finally end up by making a soldier out of you. You'll see that coming. But, you have to be patient because it all ... makes sense in the end because if it didn't do that, nobody would listen to any commands. If the general says you have to take that hill there. You say, "Oh yeah, are you crazy? I'm not gonna go up that hill." You know, I mean, they have to make a soldier out of you first, and that's ... what the officers do.

MAXWELL: What was the name of the place where you did your basic training?

SHWARTZ: ... Little Rock, Arkansas. I don't think that—no that camp isn't there anymore. I passed there one day, and ... it wasn't there.

PIEHLER: What was it like to get to the camp and what was the area around the camp like?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, the camp is always in the middle of nowhere, and in Arkansas, we call it the hell hole of the state (laughter) because Arkansas—where they put us was really wilderness area, and I arrived there in ... February—still winter time, and then the rains came, and the whole place was a mud, was mud, nothing but mud, and they made us march through all that mud, and in the rain and carrying a heavy pack. You know, we thought this was the worst place in the world.

PIEHLER: Your ... basic training unit—where were people from and were you the only person who—you were in a very peculiar group because you are ... an American, but you're ... really ...

SHWARTZ: Yeah, I'm not an American, you're right.

PIEHLER: Yeah, so—how ... many had lived abroad ...?

SHWARTZ: Oh, nobody. Well, except when you got to Camp Ritchie.

PIEHLER: Yeah, but no ..., you 're basic.

SHWARTZ: Originally in the basic training ...

PIEHLER: So, you're the only one with an accent?

SHWARTZ: Oh my gosh, they put me into a platoon, and the platoon occupied one barracks. One platoon per barracks. A platoon is something like eighteen men. And who were my buddies? Like I said, all southerners from Mississippi, Alabama, you know this kind of thing. All uneducated. Country boys. But, they, uh—squirrel shooters, they said, “We shoot squirrels,” they said. And, just the opposite type I was, and here I thought I was highly educated. I ... had pride in myself. And here I lived with these boys, so I realized, “You got to be careful here. You must not show that you’re different from the others.” And I kept quiet, but because I had been in the Reserves and I had some experience in firing a rifle, the sergeant put me in charge of teaching them how to fire a rifle. So, I was at least one up on them. I ... told you to lie down, you know, and aim correctly.

PIEHLER: But in some ways, you’re just telling them to shoot the Army way.

SHWARTZ: The Army way is different from any other way. You put your arm like this. You steady your arm, and you have to aim practically to the—I can’t remember the words anymore.

PIEHLER: Yeah, but there was a certain Army way you would learn in Reserve?

SHWARTZ: Yeah, certain ... way to teach it. So, then they get some respect for me. Then, I became very friendly with some of these boys. There were two boys in there that were so stupid that they were sent home, they were dismissed.

PIEHLER: Because they really were ...

SHWARTZ: They were actually illiterate, totally illiterate. They were actually sent away. There was one other guy in the regiment who also had some college. However, this guy was anti-Army all the time. He did not want to be a soldier. He was too good to be a soldier, and he did not play along. And that was very bad for him. He never got any place. He—even though he could have been an officer, with this attitude, he probably remained a private through the whole war. I mean, you have to play the game. You cannot get away from it. You have to do what they tell you. And if you ... try to show a good attitude, you’ll get through it fine. It is only when you resist, when you fight back, that it’s bad for you. But you should go along with the system. You make out like everybody else. And, well, so, what do you think happened? The lieutenant in charge of the company, the sub-lieutenant, he soon found out about it. He called me in ... Oh, he said, “We having a celebration—some sort of celebration for the Fourth of July or something like that. And ... the ... lieutenant said, “I want to celebrate something in the mess hall. I want to make a menu?” I said, “Aye, can I make you a menu?” I said, “I make it in French. I’ll make you a French menu. Alle so and so and alle so and so, and then you have it beautifully framed and everything.” And he said, “That’s great.” And he said, “While you’re doing that, the other boys have to go out on a forcer march.” (Laughter) And they had to march twenty miles that day. They came home with their feet practically bloody, and I was sitting in the office making menus (laughter).

PIEHLER: It’s a good story.

SHWARTZ: Because the officer realized that I was just too good for this stuff, that he realized I would never be in the infantry ... anyway, you know, and so he gave me a better deal. Now, you have to—I found out that being intelligent actually is a big advantage in the war. It's a big advantage to you. (____?) The people who are not intellectuals just ... can't cut it. I mean, if you want to be a professor, you have to have an intellectual mind. You know, you have to research. You have to be able to research. You have to be interested in history and things like that, or you're just never gonna get any place. You're just gonna get an ordinary job at a factory, and that's it. You actually have to do something special. Nobody's gonna give you a job. You have to prove yourself. You have to—why should anybody pay you \$40,000 a year, are you worth \$40,000? What can you do for that guy for \$40,000. I mean, think about, why should he pay you \$40,000 a year? You better—if you want to pay your debt—if you produce more than \$40,000 worth a year, or he could afford to pay you. So, you always think about that. If you get a job, you actually have to do better than the average person if you want to get any place, you always do better than the average guy, or you'll never get anything. So, you now, things are not—they're not given to you. You actually had work for them. And that's the less that I found in life. Later on when I joined intelligence, I particularly had to worry about that. I had to show that I could do more than the average person. And, immediately, I was promoted. Every time I did something better than somebody else, they promoted me because ... these people are not dumb. The people in charge look out for people who can do something better for them. And ... here, this boy from Luxembourg who knew nothing about the United States ended up with the general staff in the Pentagon, the highest level in the Army. I ended up on the highest level. I briefed the generals of the general staff. That's how far I got. Because I was able to prove myself and I always knew more and I always studied more than the other guys. So, when some general, wanted to know something about a foreign country, he called in from the Pentagon to where I was sitting—a red phone—and he said, "Can you brief me next week about this situation?" And I said, "Yes, Sir." And ... I knew nothing about the subject. I went to the libraries, and I looked at every book and every dictionary and everything I could get a hold of to get information about that country, and after a week, I came up with the whole story, and I gave it to him, and he was happy, said, "Oh, great ... stuff," even though I knew nothing about it to begin with. You must never admit that you don't know anything. You—even if you think it, it's better than ... to say, "I'm sorry. I don't know anything about this." You must never show your innards. You try to find out as much as you can about the subject that you're supposed work on, and I was given some unbelievably stupid requirements. Now, when we came ... into this home here, I showed you the Chinese living room. Believe it or not, I ended up as the American Chinese expert. Me, a European expert, ends up as a Chinese expert for the American intelligence service.

And the way that came about was that China was ignored after the war. I mean who's China? Mean's nothing. Chinese a primitive nation. We don't have to worry about China. And then in 1967, China exploded a nuclear bomb. Pentagon went berserk. China exploding a—how—they don't have the capability to explode a nuke (____?). Well, they showed us they could, and two years later, they exploded ...

PIEHLER: The Hydrogen bomb.

SHWARTZ: ... the Hydrogen bomb. "Wow!" the Pentagon said, "What do we know about China? Who knows anything about China?" Nobody knew anything about China. We had—the

China section was one elderly lady and a young fellow, and all they did was file things away. That was our China section. No body had thought that China would ever be important. So, now they don't have any China experts. So, the general in the Pentagon say, "Well, we have to establish a China section." Where are we going to get the Chinese? There are plenty of Chinese in this country, but they don't qualify. They cannot get clearance. They cannot get a security clearance because we have to know what their parents are. Their parents are still in China or ... grandparents. They can't get any clearance, so no Chinese. We can't trust the Chinese. So, this is what they did. They picked one man from each division, and they finally had six men, and they said—and I was one of them—and they said, "You are now the new China section, and you start from scratch. We want to know everything there is to know about the Chinese army, and you better get busy." And that's what I did.

MAXWELL: During this, you're working for the Defense Intelligence Agency?

SHWARTZ: Yes, yes. By ... the time I was through, we knew every unit in the Chinese army and where they were located, and I wrote the final report—well, there were six of us wrote the final report, but I had a big section of it. And we handed in the final report on the Chinese army. So, you know, I was the equivalent—my rank was the equivalent of a Lieutenant Colonel by that time, ... and I always dealt with the officers.

PIEHLER: I actually need to just pause for a second, wanted to use ...

(Tape Paused)

PIEHLER: Well let me, um—you let us know when—give us—if you could give us about a ten minute warning when you want to break for today.

SHWARTZ: Well, I mean, uh, I would say about ten minutes.

PIEHLER: Oh, okay.

Well let me—I think you have—you definitely had a question about interrogation I think.

MAXWELL: Well, if I do it again, we can get to that when we get—next time when we get into the war.

SHWARTZ: Oh, something (about?) interrogation. Oh, yeah, that's a tough one.

PIEHLER: Because it's one of the things you don't talk about in your memoir is really the process of interrogating.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, that's true ... to an extent. It's a ... whole subject by itself. There's a technique to it that they taught us, and there are various aspects to interrogation, and it's something—by the way, it's a subject that Americans simply do not understand. Naturally enough, because the average person would say, "How can you interrogate somebody and get information because nobody's gonna give you information. He's the enemy. He's not gonna give

you anything. So ... what are you doing?" And this is the secret, see, and ... so we know that, but very briefly I tell you. Look at the front line. There's just been a battle—a big battle, and its been raging for days and everybody is exhausted and terrified, and ... but our side wins, and we push forward and we capture a whole bunch of Germans. The Germans had been knocked down. They've been shelled. They've been bombed. They had nothing to eat for a couple of days. They're in terrible shape. Now, we capture them. They are scared. The Germans are scared. They don't know what's going to happen to them. ... That's just a normal reaction. Now, the GIs grab them and kick them and beat them sometimes. They're mad at them. I mean you're not going to get nice treatment the first time you get captured. You might get kicked and pushed and told "Hands up" and "Hands up" and so forth. So, the enemy—the prisoners are scared now. Their own officers have told them that the Americans shoot all the prisoners. So, they're really scared. They don't know what going to happen now. So, the MPs are called in and the MPs go to the front line and pick up the prisoners and bring them to me because I'm right behind the front lines. So, these scared boys come in. Now, I had one secret that nobody knows. Every German soldier has a soldier's book on him. In this book is his whole military history. His place of birth. His state of birth. Had all the units he's ever been in. That's because he needs this book to get paid. You have to show that book to get paid. That's how the Germans do it. So, as the MPs line up the prisoners outside my headquarters, my interrogation headquarters there ... in a farmhouse, I have one of the MPs pull these books out of their pockets and bring them into me. So, he brings in the first book and I look at it. It's ... Private Schmidt, and I look over his whole history, and then I tell the MP, "Bring the guy in." The guy comes in trembling, and I speak German to him in his own language. Oh, he's so relieved to find a friendly voice for a change. He hasn't heard nothing but English, and now all of a sudden he meets somebody who speaks his language. Immediately, he is relieved. He said, "Ah, thank God, I finally found somebody who speaks German." So, that's my first advantage. Then, I address him by his name. He says, "(How?) does he know my name?" Then I say, "How about things back home Hamburg? How's family doing in Hamburg?" "How does this guy know that I'm from Hamburg?" Because he doesn't realize I have this book that I studied before ... These are the techniques you use. Then, I watch his reaction. If he's friendly—if he sounds like he's glad to be out of it—a lot of them actually told me that, "Boy, I'm glad that I'm out of that war. I mean, you know its been terrible."—and ... if he's not a Nazi, not a fanatic, just an average guy, then I work on him. For example, this might not be the first guy from that unit that I have interviewed. Maybe we've placed that enemy unit for weeks and captured many guys from that unit before. So, I know already stuff about that unit. I know who their captain is in their company—the name of the captain is. And, I turn this information against him, the new prisoner. I say, "I want to know a few things. If you tell me that, you know"—and I say, "By the way, really know almost already about your unit. For example, Captain Hauptman ... Reisman is—that's your captain." "Wow, you know that already?" "Yeah." And so. Then, the next ... tactic I have, I have food laid out on my desk. Coffee, lemon juice that the Army gets you. Sugar. Chocolate bars. And he is hungry. I mean, he hasn't been—may not even eaten. And, so, I tell him, you know, if he's nice and he answers my question, he's gonna get this good stuff. If he doesn't ... want to answer me, then he's not gonna get it, and I tell him I don't when you might get the next meal. It could be days before you get the next meal. And so, that's some of the technique that I use.

Then, an enemy comes in. He's really Nazi. He's not give you anything. In fact, "Hitler's gonna win this war, and ... no matter what, you know, we've not lost the war yet," and a real nasty guy.

So, that's when I tell him, "Hmm, is that right? ... It looks like you're not going to be very cooperative, and we have a place for guys like you. The Russians have lately asked me if they could get a few more German soldiers over there. They would welcome come Germans soldiers. So, if you ... don't like the Americans, we can easily send you over to the Russians." Oh, that changes him mind fast, I tell you (laughter). It was one thing they were afraid was the Russians. I mean, they were not so afraid of the Americans, but the Russians, wow, if I threatened them with the Russians, they were willing to talk about anything.

PIEHLER: I wanted to ask—and I know we don't have much time—but one thing struck me going through your—it's not even in your memoir part, but one of your letters to your father—that when you saw the Life Magazine article and pictures about the Lublin death camp in '44—that left quite an impression on you, and you also started ... mentioning the death camps to ... the Germans, and they all feigned ignorance. Could you—do you have memories of ...?

SHWARTZ: Well, yeah, the, uh—no German, and I mean no German, ever admitted to me that they new about the death camps.

PIEHLER: Even the hardcore Nazis?

SHWARTZ: Even the hardcore Nazis, and even if went up to the general, he claimed that he did not know about it.

PIEHLER: Both during the war and after the war?

SHWARTZ: That's right. They claimed that they were never told about it. Now, at first, I didn't want to believe it, but over the years, I wondered if they didn't know about it. It's possible that they did not know about it.

PIEHLER: ... The only reason I sort of asked that is—the Army is often rounding up civilians, rounding up Jews, particularly those who server on the Russian Front.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, but ... the Army did not actually do that. They had special units, (Einschaftruppen?). These are special units whose job it was to round up the Jews. The average infantry soldier had nothing to do with that murders. So, it's possible that the average really did not know it.

PIEHLER: And this is sort of jumping way on ahead, but I know there's a scholar coming—we're doing a conference on the atomic bomb in American society, so this is jumping way ahead, but I ... even want to try to develop some more—you talked about later in you career ... in the Defense Intelligence Agency ... going to the secret facility under the mountain, the sort of, you know ...

SHWARTZ: Most Americans don't know about that.

PIEHLER: I forgot he term you used—it's called the Black—is it the Black Rock?

SHWARTZ: Well, some called it that, yeah.

PIEHLER: ... You describe sort of being in this wargame—being isolated for thirty days and playing this wargame. You found it kind of spooky. ... I mean, reading your account, you were really ...

SHWARTZ: I mean I didn't know that anything like that existed.

PIEHLER: 'Cause you did this—I think this was the—what year was that that you were sent to the secret ...?

SHWARTZ: Oh, that was in the '70s.

PIEHLER: In the '70s.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, it was in the '70s, definitely. Twice I was sent there.

PIEHLER: 'Cause you talk about it once.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, but I was sent there twice, yeah ...

PIEHLER: And you were completely cut off from the outside world.

SHWARTZ: Because the game was that the war had broken out, that nuclear war was in process, and the mountain was closed. The mountain was ... closed down.

PIEHLER: So, you were—you didn't get any news reports or ...

SHWARTZ: Nothing. We can assume for two or three weeks, we would be sitting inside that mountain and not know what's going on in the outside world. In the meantime, Congressmen were being sent to the hotel ...

PIEHLER: In Greenbrier.

SHWARTZ: ... in Greenbrier, and under the hotel, that's where they were gonna live. And I was gonna sit in that mountain up there.

PIEHLER: What was it—I mean, 'cause you said it's this little city, but ... you were completely isolated.

SHWARTZ: Oh, absolutely.

PIEHLER: And you were doing this wargame. I mean, ...

SHWARTZ: And it was a nuclear wargame.

PIEHLER: I mean, what do you remember about the sort of gaming. I'm just sort of curious, like your role and—it's hard to think that you actually thought a nuclear war, but how much ... in the role did you start to get?

SHWARTZ: They told us that it was a nuclear war, and that ... the Air Force was bombing the Russians. And after each strike, the reconnaissance would fly over and photograph the damage. Then, that report would come back to us, and we would look at the damage, and we would decide that—number one, the target is destroyed, the end of that—secondly, the target was only half destroyed. We have to go back for another attack. That was essentially what we had to do in that exercise. ... Before the reconnaissance came back to us, and I had to look at it and determine how much damage had been done to this refinery.

PIEHLER: So you were getting images to look at? And you were deciding ...

SHWARTZ: Yeah, I was deciding that this refinery was only halfway damaged and it could be rebuilt soon unless we destroyed it the second time because that's ... the only way that war could be fought, since you didn't know when to stop the attack. The idea was you stopped the attack when the enemy is hopeless. Helplessly defeated. He can no longer fight back.

PIEHLER: The reason I was struck by the gaming was—I mean—were you also gaming out what to do with the civilian population in the United States?

SHWARTZ: No.

PIEHLER: No, you were really just focused on ... attacking the target and assessing the damage, not assessing what happening what's happening in the United States.

SHWARTZ: We were not concerned about that because we talked among ourselves and we said, "When we leave this place, we will see nothing but devastation outside. There will be no people left out there. We will be the only people left in the whole country possibly." Which—and I said to myself, "Gee, isn't that great? The Army picked me as one of the sole survivors of this whole country (laughter), that is an honor. I'm honored that they would pick me, of all the people ...

-----END OF TAPE THREE, SIDE THREE-----

PIEHLER: But your family ...

SHWARTZ: My family wouldn't be there anymore. No, and we would have to measure the radioactivity outside before we would even go out. We would have to measure that. We had instruments for that.

PIEHLER: I guess, in doing this—how realistic was to see sort of a nuclear war going on for thirty days? Because even by the 1970s, the ratio what nuclear weapons we had—in both the Soviet and American arsenal—were so vast. Did you even think it was even realistic you would fight a game over several weeks?

SHWARTZ: For years, I had established the targets that SAC was supposed to bomb. We had a bombing encyclopedia, and—where we put all the targets. And then we had to refine the encyclopedia for the best targets. The targets (_____?). Now, at first before the nuclear bombing, they had just regular bombing, and we had thousands and thousands of targets. Well, the Air Force first liked that because then they could go back to Congress for more money because there are more targets, so they loved that. They said, “Give us more targets, so we can ask for more money.” But then it got to the point that there were so many targets, they realized they couldn’t handle it. At that point, they said we go over to nuclear bombing. We need fewer bombs. Now they came to me and said, “You have to revamp the bombing encyclopedia. What you have to do now is combine maybe twenty targets into one because one bomb now will do what twenty bombs, separate bombs, could do. So, they gave me a twenty mile diameter, and all the targets that were in the circle, that twenty miles, put them all together and make that one target. Ten targets become one target. So, that was the next thing I had to do. And ..., of course, they had no idea how nuclear warfare would actually work out in practice.

PIEHLER: Well, that’s what I’m saying in this wargame. I mean, you know your ...

SHWARTZ: It’s only guessing.

PIEHLER: How (can?) people got into the role? I mean, part of me thinks that half—some people might have been, “This is ridiculous. This is just a game.” Others, I think ...—particularly because you’re so isolated—literally cut off—start to really get into the role—beginning to think it’s real.

SHWARTZ: We had the generals who were—gave us the orders. They—I mean, we had to—I remember the Air Force general came out and he told us what the game plan was. They had—the generals had devised the plan, and they would come to us and tell us—we as individuals (what we do?) within the plan. So, I never knew what the whole plan was.

PIEHLER: So you, in other words, you were really just focusing on target assessment.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, target assessment.

PIEHLER: You weren’t part of the decision making of where to attack next.

SHWARTZ: No, no.

PIEHLER: That was the general’s ...

SHWARTZ: That was the general level.

PIEHLER: And you weren’t in the room?

SHWARTZ: Oh no, ... I was an analyst. I was the analyst. Even though I was high level, I was still an analyst.

PIEHLER: I'm curious as to who—you know the functioning of this little city, because you describe it very much as a little city.

SHWARTZ: It is. It had everything. All the facilities.

PIEHLER: You're working all the time—the war game, is that ...?

SHWARTZ: Day and night.

PIEHLER: Day and night.

SHWARTZ: We never stopped—you had a day shift and a night shift.

PIEHLER: And so you were on for twelve hours ...?

SHWARTZ: That's right, twelve hours.

PIEHLER: The twelve hours you were off, what did you do?

SHWARTZ: You sleep.

PIEHLER: ... Sleep, yeah.

SHWARTZ: We had bunk beds.

PIEHLER: So, you had bunk—you slept in bunk ...?

SHWARTZ: Bunk beds, yeah. You drew a curtain for privacy and (slept in the bunker?).

PIEHLER: How was the food?

SHWARTZ: Well, it was a cafeteria. It was cafeteria.

PIEHLER: But there were no fresh vegetables?

SHWARTZ: Well, they had some in the beginning, eventually we'd run out.

PIEHLER: Like the salads ran out.

SHWARTZ: They couldn't resupply us.

PIEHLER: Yeah, so you were like ...

SHWARTZ: We were entirely cut off from the outside world because that's—and the President was—soon he was up in an airplane during the whole time.

PIEHLER: During the whole time—the whole thirty days. That was the assumption.

SHWARTZ: Yeah ..., the second exercise was with North Korea. I did North Korea. What would happen with if North Korea again attacked South Korea.

PIEHLER: Yeah, and ... you write in your memoirs you didn't have a good scenario. You saw the line collapsing.

SHWARTZ: Yeah, well ...

PIEHLER: One thing I just—I guess and this is a good concluding—we only scratched the surface, particularly World War II—one thing I was struck in your—when you're talking about—and it seemed to be a very timely, even though specific exchange—the analyst problem telling the brass what they don't want to hear. And when it's clearly—your work entirely is very interesting because you basically said the chances of an invasion, particularly from Western China, the Soviets, was not very likely, and part of it was terrain.

SHWARTZ: And I had Tibet also. Tibet, India, and the Soviet Union were my primary concerns because you had to (____?) China such a huge country. But what was interesting, for me, was that I was that I was (included?) in a total new area, a new country. Nobody knew anything about that area that I had. The Western half of China was (____?) incognito. Nobody knew anything about that ... I was a pioneer, and the way I was able to pioneer—thanks to the satellite photography for the first time. They gave it to me. They showed me the photograph of Tibet, of Xinjiang, the western province, all the desert areas, and I could actually look down and see every little (tank?) down there. And I had wrote reports and telling them what I saw. Well, if the Chinese had any defense down there, that's what they wanted to know. Suppose the Russians attacked through Turkistan into Western China, what's gonna happen? Are the Chinese—do the Chinese have any way to defend themselves. That's what the Pentagon wanted to know. So, I answered those questions. I could see everything. They—eventually, I saw the Chinese moving armored regiments into Western China for the first time. There had never armor in there. ... But still never enough to defend themselves against a serious Soviet attack. The Soviets could have taken all of Western China easily.

PIEHLER: One of the things you said, logistically, you didn't think the Soviets, and I think later the—I mean you saw real problems with logistics.

SHWARTZ: Yes, that was, see, that was my specialty, among other things, logistics, which nobody wanted to touch. When I came to DIA, there was one guy in logistics, and he ... was not a very good analyst. They didn't like him, and they put me in with him in order to beef up the section. I ended up finally by myself in the logistics section because nobody else wanted to get into logistics. They hated the subject. No ... analyst wanted to touch logistics because it's a bucket of worms, they say.

PIEHLER: But it's so crucial. I mean, it's ...

SHWARTZ: See, it's easy to count airplanes on an airfield or tanks. That's what they like—that's what the analyst likes to see, but the logistics, what do you see in logistics? Nothing but warehouses and you don't know what's inside, and ammunition dumps and repair places, but that was my job and I was the first one who wrote the final report on the Air Force logistics. It was so good that I briefed the Pentagon and they sent me to Wright Patterson Field to brief the general there who is in charge of Air Force logistics.

PIEHLER: But in some ways they were not so—some of the brass were not happy because you were sort of saying there's real logistical problems.

SHWARTZ: The weakness of the whole Soviet system was logistics. They had plenty airplanes, plenty tanks, but their logistics were lousy, as you can well imagine.

PIEHLER: Yeah, no—I mean in retrospect, the Soviet Union was a vast shell. Not there some real strength, but it was ...

SHWARTZ: Yeah, it was empty inside. It was hollow, and so I pointed that out that they have serious weaknesses in their logistics. Well, what do you think the reaction was from the generals? They didn't like it. They didn't like what I was telling them because to show the Soviets had a weakness would mean that they wouldn't—they couldn't ask Congress for more money. The idea was to build up the enemy as much as possible, so they could get more ... airplanes and tanks—to tell the President that the Soviet Union has such bad logistics that they cannot even fight a war. They did not want to hear that. The CIA was in the same position. They couldn't tell ... their own leaders that there were serious logistics problems in the Soviet Union. They claimed that the CIA never told. That's not true. I know analysts who knew the weakness of the Soviet Union, but were not allowed to come out with it. But they were pushed back.

PIEHLER: No, I mean, when I was reading part of your memoirs—this is a very timely—the circumstances have changed, but the whole question of assessment and how analysts telling the policy-makers, general, and other what they don't want to hear.

SHWARTZ: ... Right now there's a big fuss over intelligence. And I could tell them quite a few stories about. And I have my own ideas about the whole thing. Their trying to build another layer, the top layer, sit another layer on top, and they think that's gonna improve intelligence. That's debatable. But, as the last word I will say that we are in deep trouble when it comes to intelligence today. Why? Because Americans do not make good intelligence people. Americans—we are brought up democratically. We don't believe in spying on other people. We think that's bad. We, furthermore, we are white people who now have to deal with oriental people. You cannot go over there and be a spy because they can see you're not one of them. You cannot even spy. You're hopelessly lost. I mean, against the Germans, it was easier because you couldn't tell ... a spy because he looked like a German. But now, with the Muslims, you cannot go over there and pretend that you want to be one of them and that you want to spy on them. It doesn't go. So, we are in deep fix here, and you can rearrange the intelligence department any way you want it. It's not gonna change anything. But, that's ... about it. Now if you want to come back.

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