

CD-1083 Transcription

Paris Forum on Antisemitism in Europe [1]. 20 March 1983.

F1: Before explaining all the experiences which are of
(inaudible) to all of us, may I ask you, (inaudible)?

TANENBAUM: The fact that we are calling this morning a session on European anti-Semitism -- obviously, it strikes everyone that there are a number of countries in Europe for whom we would want to have chairs and do not, and will not be joining us. We have spent a week in the Soviet Union, just a week prior to going to Israel to attend the National Conference on Soviet Jewry. It is *chutzpadik* to report on behalf of a community when it is not able, through its own representatives, to speak through its own eyes. But we did have an encounter with [01:00] a good number of Jews in Leningrad, in Moscow -- refuseniks and just plain Jews in various places. It's not a scientific survey, it's a series of impressions. But I suppose they would want us to share, particularly with this group, the sense of hardening of their situation. It continues to press upon them, and the flickering of hope. There had been some pause in anticipation of the change in leadership, anxiously looking for some signs. And those signs have not been forthcoming. And, in fact, there are indications of not only continuing the direction, but, to some extent, creating even more difficulty. The particular problem of the refuseniks [02:00] is complicated by the fact that, as part of anti-Israel

propaganda, as an approach to dealing with their Jewish problem, we're able to, sadly, identify a spillover into the atmosphere that has crossed the line between what one might accept as a point-of-view political comment on Israel into an atmosphere which has which has bred a, really, an unleashing of what we could call "old anti-Semitism," on very fertile soil.

And so, we have reports, particularly in the provinces, of assaults upon Jews who are not refuseniks, with no relationship to the refusenik problem. We have stories about applications for [03:00] normal advancement, whether it's the institutions of higher learning or other points along the path of personal growth and development, particularly for young people, that -- because of the suspicion that Jews have begun to be regarded all the way down the line of apparatchiks -- of severe double standards in the testing for qualification, apparently fairly overt. Some academicians describing a kind of freezing off of them, from their colleagues of long relationship in academic institutions; collegiality of the academy having had walls built around them, cutting them off; a whole series of things that make that report a very sad one, and, in some aspects, I think, potentially a [04:00] very dangerous one. And the conference itself, in Israel, ended with a declaration, more or less, as we all would have expected. The impact value of that conference is something that is yet

to be seen. If nothing else, at least it allowed a group of people to come together to really affirm, in a congregation of Jews, their commitment to these efforts, because the efforts will be -- and ought to be -- on more than one mind.

That's the framework. So, these individual stories would take up the morning, and it's not the place. I would like to say a word or two about this gathering this morning. I know that -- I hope that you sense, coming from the United States [05:00] and from the Jewish community in the United States, and through various religious arms, a continuing, deep fraternal interest -- that's a very weak word -- a brotherly interest and concern about Jewish communities throughout Europe. We see gatherings of this kind, from the people who are on those fronts, as an important contribution to our own understanding. One almost doesn't have to have a conference. If I listen, really, to your titles, of the positions that you hold, dealing with anti-Semitism, with anti-Semitism, and anti-Semitism, it is clear that we live in an atmosphere where that concern has to have a certain priority in our thinking and in our responses.

Our attitude toward these matters, of course, is to listen first, [06:00] before anyone shoots from the hip, and speaks out on someone else's behalf. And, back home, we are anxiously awaiting the results of your reports, so that we can have them as part of our thinking as we move on

together, in the perpetuation and enrichment of Jewish life.
It's nice to be with you. Thanks.

F1: Thank you, rabbi. Noting we have quite a number of hours
ahead of us to discuss, in a brotherly way, the (inaudible).

TANENBAUM: (inaudible) too, the feminism one, too. (laughter)

F1: Coming from me, we can generally (inaudible). Since it is a
hearing (inaudible) we have as keen an observer as
(inaudible) here with us. And I know he has to leave before
the end of the morning. If anybody cares to ask some
specific questions on his experience, [07:00] go ahead. And
then, when it (inaudible), I will begin.

F2: I have invited a few participating observers, of which Mr.
Azoulay is one. (laughter) [Leslie?] notes recalling from
their (inaudible). Would you like to introduce yourself, as
we all have done just before you arrived?

AZOULAY: I have just a few words to say that I am here as the
president of group of American Jewish who are meeting in
France. And (inaudible) items (inaudible). We have, too, in
our community, some specific problems with anti-semitism
chatter. But I'd be interested by this new (inaudible)
complete my knowledge.

F1: (inaudible). Does anybody have some questions for
(inaudible)?

M1: I have one question on, actually, whether [08:00] this
discrimination is (inaudible) is happening on a voluntary
basis, whether it is...

TANENBAUM: How do you mean voluntary?

M1: The (inaudible) groups not even protesting (inaudible), and they do it because they ultimately (inaudible) because they want to (inaudible).

TANENBAUM: Yes, I think what you have is a phenomenon where the tone is set from above. Particular manifestations may not be the result of a precise directive to say and do this. But the atmosphere is created where it is almost OK to do that. It is perceived as a reflection of the basic policies under which things are being conducted. We, ourselves, encountered particular difficulties, and in some discussions which I don't want to blow up [09:00] out of their realistic proportion, which is very small. It's clear that officials, in describing some of this -- what you get -- all of that was ignorance. But the ignorance that is allowed free flow -- the type of thing I mean is a state policy that outlaws anti-Semitism, by constitution. OK, refuseniks -- one problem. Matters have come to the point now where people report to us a turndown. And the apparatchik is asked why, what is the reason. The kind of answer you get is, "Whatever reasons pleases you the most. I want you to be happy." So, you decide what is the reason that makes you happiest. But it's a kind of [stick?] and arrogance that is perceived by people at these levels as reflecting the attitude toward the problems that the...

The other [10:00] kinds of things -- if Jews are perceived as dangerous, that, somehow, inauthentic members of the

society... At the faculties, the turning away may not be the result of a direct order from somewhere, "Do not fraternize." It is perceived in terms of one's own career, the perception of one's self, that you're not too involved with these people, because it might rub off on you. There was a report of a new game that has evolved in Leningrad -- and, presumably, from our report, spontaneously -- where, in playgrounds -- and these are teenagers, high-school level -- a game called "concentration camp." The kids pick out a concentration-camp victim, invariably a Jewish kid. And he is given a number. And for three, four days, the game is, you only refer to him with that number. [11:00] Now, no one is able to say that a directive came down from the politburo to create this. But the atmosphere of other things that come from there make it... In the Soviet society, if you know you're doing something wrong, you feel it instinctively. That is not permitted, and not encouraged, and is somewhat dangerous to do. These kinds of expressions and manifestations are not perceived that way. On the contrary, they are perceived as reflecting an overall attitude that the society is permitting, and is a consequence of its policies. I think we have to be very cautious about saying they're directed. But it doesn't take much social science insight to perceive what happens through an atmosphere when these sorts of things happen here, and then play out in various ways, in daily life.

F1: That (inaudible).

F2: A new arrival, Mr. [Heisenberg?] of [12:00] (inaudible).

HEISENBERG: I'm sorry. (laughter) Hi.

F3: (inaudible) think the expectations or apprehensions focused on the early succession of Andropov, on the fact that Andropov is in power now?

TANENBAUM: Whenever there is a change, one pauses to hold one's breath, to see whether it will be the same, it will be worse, it will be better. Clearly, a change is a moment of anticipation and hope (inaudible). There is particular case of a refusenik that was very disturbing to the refusenik community because there was a turndown, just on last Thursday, of a man who was born in Chicago, went to the Soviet Union at age 19 with his parents, who were Communist idealists, as was he. Who served the Soviet Union for 50 years -- he was the English voice [13:00] of Radio Moscow for many years -- Abe Stolar. He holds American citizenship, was born in the United States. And, according to him, never opted for Soviet citizenship. He and our embassy there -- the United States has a claim on him, has pushed the matter continuously as being a special case. And he's been in refusal now a number of years, and he was turned down again this Thursday. This sent waves of disappointment through the refusenik community, because this represented an easy case, which without precedent could have said, "Well, he has an American passport." And there was an understandable sinking of feeling of what they may be up against when, at this particular moment, they knew he was up for reconsideration,

and were waiting to hear. And then, the news came, and it was (inaudible).

One hears all kinds of stories: Andropov doesn't yet have his hands on things; stories that, maybe, he was in trouble. He didn't appear at the international women's thing, [14:00] so, right away, things start to whisper, which is really a symptom of the uncertainty and the anxiety. But there is nothing that is happening that has given them any new grounds for encouragement.

F2: Very interesting. I believe it is no understatement to say that in the last few months, World Jewry and European Jewry, in particular, has undergone one of its worst and deepest political, moral, existential crises, even in its history over the past 40 years, since World War II. Therefore, I think it's no understatement to believe that it is extremely important for us to be here together, and to compare notes, so to speak.

Now, who would like to continue this? Somebody suggested that, first, we elect the big ones in the European family talk. I, frankly, believe that, since we are all, big and small, on the same boat, we should just follow the alphabetical order. [15:00] We'll mix big and small. I think it's fair, and I think you agree.

So, at this time, we are going to follow the alphabetical order. Then, I would like to ask (inaudible) to sum up (inaudible).

M2: How long am I supposed to...?

F2: I will say five minutes, (inaudible) and concise. (laughter)
The consensus is (inaudible).

M2: Well, if there's anything special about Austrian anti-Sem-- well, there is a long tradition. It was always very strong. If there's anything important to say, the first thing is it's a typical "anti-Semitism without Jews."

(break in audio)

-- percent of the population. It kind of began -- there was the question of [16:00] people having Jewish relatives or being themselves of Jewish origin shouldn't answer our questionnaires. And we had 3% or so of people saying that they are of Jewish origin, besides the 0.1% being in the Israelite community. If you ask people what percentage they guess that the Jewish population in Austria is, it's up to 30% with people guessing. This is one of the main indicators of anti-Semitism. If you ask persons how many Jews live in your society, the higher they guess, it's a very good indicator, at least in the Austrian case. And, later on, I could show you some of the data, which are very impressive. So, people didn't even recognize the fact that, after the... They think there's more Jews living in Austria than [17:00]

before the Holocaust. They just do not acknowledge the fact that Jews have been really driven out. It just didn't come to their mind. One of the effects of this is that the majority of Austrians never had any contact with any Jew. And, again, we asked people, if you ranked them according to their contact, and the frequency of contacts towards Jews, the more contacts they have, the more friendly they are. The less contacts they have, the more anti-Semitic they are. There are regions where, since generations, no person ever who've had the chance to see any Jew, to meet any Jew, and they're most hostile. This is very, very clear. And, I mean, it's an understandable phenomenon, but still, it cannot be pointed out too much. And this is, again, presenting some very impressive tables of how this [18:00] relates.

And then, a second phenomenon, which I called "anti-Semitism without anti-Semites." Which means, it's a forbidden prejudice. It's not allowed to be expressed. It's not ideology any longer. It's not political anti-Semitism in the traditional sense, any longer. It's pushed into the underground privacy. It's a simple, private phenomenon. It's not a political phenomenon any longer as, for example, in Poland, where I stayed last year as a visiting professor. There, you have the traditional, political anti-Semitism, which is manipulated from above. You don't have this in Austria. But you have a strong anti-Semitism within politics, which is something different. It comes up again

and again. For example, Chancellor Kreisky, when he first ran for his office, his opposite candidate was presented as a [19:00] "real Austrian" against Chancellor Kreisky, who was known to be of Jewish origin. I mean, you know all this story. (inaudible) minister appointed to his office, being found of having had a Nazi past. All of this stuff -- time and again, it comes up. The whole controversy between Simon Wiesenthal and Chancellor Kreisky. All of these episodes, all the time, kind of, crystallized the old anti-Semitism. And what you have is, one of the main focuses of anti-Semitism is the relation to the Nazi past.

You have two focuses, in general. One is the attitudes toward Israel. The other focus is the impact of the Nazi past. And this is one of the, so to speak, allowed expressions of anti-Semitism. So, people say, [20:00] "Well, there should be an end to these processes against war criminals," for example. Where the middle class sample, asking people, "Should there be still processes against war criminals?" Eighty-three percent said no. There is this neo-Nazi propaganda about not six million Jews having been killed in the concentration camps. Thirty-eight percent of the middle-class Austrians, to some extent, say, "Well, there may be some truth in this." Eighty-eight percent said, "Well, there must be an end to all this talking about it." So, this is a very strong focus of anti-Semitism. And this is one which a person can deny that they're anti-Semitic, in

saying, "Well, you know, let's just finish this, and let's not talk about it any longer." And this is, so to speak, a socially allowed expression of anti-Semitism.

1[21:00] Another phenomenon is that, compared to other prejudice, it's very exceptional. So, for example, related to almost all the other prejudice, you have a small difference between the generations. Not so with anti-Semitism, at least up to the middle of the '70s, there was no impact, no change whatsoever, between the generations. Of a dozen prejudices which are very strong in Austrian society, it's the only one which did not change over time, and between the generations. Now, in the last 10 years or so, we had some change. But it's still slower than with all the other prejudice.

TANENBAUM: You mean the others changed more, whereas it did not change across the generations?

M2: Sorry?

F2: So, he would like to you to clarify --

M2: Yeah, yeah, every generation, in general, [22:00] becomes more tolerant, except with regard to Jews. But now, there is some change. (laughter) But, again, it's much less than with other prejudice. Well, you have what I called "anti-Semitism without anti-Semites." It has many, many, very strange aspects. For example, it's a, kind of, everyday cultural-sedimented prejudice. It's not official. It's not outspoken. It's very latent. So, for example, it's all this talk in terms of Nazi categories, like, "He's a quarter of a Jew,"

"He's a half-Jew." Which doesn't make any sense outside (laughter) the racist veil. This is very, very strongly embedded within the Austrian society, within the Austrian. This goes on. For example, [23:00] if you don't like a person, you make him a Jew. This is, time and again, used during election campaigns. People are made Jews by secret propaganda of the opponent party. If you don't like certain types of behavior, you make them Jewish, so to speak. When I think --

F2: (inaudible), your five minutes are up, but you can go on.

M2: OK, I'll tell you the story. When I came to the American Jewish Conference, I went to the airport. It was very busy, because I had to reach the bus -- it was five minutes before. And I couldn't [cross?] the street, because there was a person unloading his package. And I said, "Well, please, could you move [out?] of the way. I'm very busy. I have to reach my plane." He said, "[Nuka Yiddische hast?]," he said. He was a worker. He doesn't even know what Yiddish is. He said, [Nuka Yiddische hast?]." I said, "What does this have to do with Yiddish?" I asked him. And he said, "Well, if you're so pushy -- I mean, what else is it, if you're so pushy?" (laughter) [24:00] So you know, that's the... So I said to him --

F2: Was he a young man or an older man? Was it a young man or...

M2: He was entering the mid-thirties, or so. So, this is the type of things you find. Well, one thing -- the emphasis toward Israel. And this brings in the question of

immigration of Soviet Jews, which is, as you know, advocated, organized, managed, helped by Chancellor Kreisky, which is not very popular with the Austrian society. It relates to the Middle East country, and it relates to the relationship of anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism. For a long time, Israel was extremely popular, extremely popular, within the Austrian political culture. So, we had overwhelming [25:00] siding with the Israeli side against the Arabs in the Middle East conflict. It was 86% of the Austrians said Israel deserves appreciation and sympathy versus Israel rejected. It was only 7% who rejected Israel. In '76 -- still in '76 -- 86% of sympathy versus 7% of rejection. And about half of the Austrians siding explicitly with Israel; almost half of them neutral; only 9% siding with the Arabs. Now, the impact of the Lebanon... Well, and then there was a, kind of, distinction between Israelis and Jews. Israelis are the good Jews, so to speak. The Jews of the diaspora the bad ones. And Austrian, out of their anti-Semitic traditions, partly, as we found out by the in-depth interviews, very strongly [26:00] identified with the strong... So, this big German-like Israelis. And you have this (inaudible) and impact of attitudes towards Israel. This had an impact on attitudes towards the Jews. And it has a positive impact -- a small one, but a positive and continuous impact.

Now, about five years or so, we have a dramatic change in this. For the first time, you have a strong identification with Jews and Israelis, again. It's not distinguished that much any longer. We can speculate about what the reasons for this are. And, especially since the Lebanon War, you had an absolutely dramatic change of attitudes toward... Well, there's a slow change the years before, but this was a, kind of, focus of dramatic change -- was the war in Lebanon. And now, for the first time ever -- and [27:00] I have the recent data from last week. Last week, we had the most recent survey. And now it's 35% siding with the Arabs in the Middle East conflict; 23% siding with Israel, and 42% saying, "Well, we can't answer this. We don't know. We are neutral" -- who are undecided, so to speak, or some of them split loyalties. This is really a dramatic change. And you have people saying, "Well, the impact of the war with Lebanon worsened our attitudes towards Jews -- towards Israel." Towards Israel, it's 46% who said, "It worsened our attitudes toward Israel," while 49% said it's equal than before. And 24% said, "It worsened our attitudes towards Jews," as well -- also people claimed to be able to distinguish. [28:00] So, this is a very negative and sad change. I can show you the graphs. I mean, we can pass them through. It's very easy to understand even if you don't read German. And what we found, again, is this: with regard to Israel, the people voting for the more conservative parties

are still more in favor of Israel, while the leftist parties are much more hostile to Israel, but less anti-Semitic.

And this is a very interesting phenomenon. Because what I found first was, that in all this anti-Zionism, in a society which has such strong anti-Semitic traditions, of course, it's always fused with anti-Semitism. You don't find, like in the Third World countries, [29:00] not having this anti-Semitic tradition. But, on the other hand, if you look at who is going to be especially hostile towards Israel, it's the old anti-Semitic groups, which now seem to have, kind of, legitimization to revive their old prejudice. And, well, this is very clear. I mean, again, I can show you on the graphs. So, obviously, people on the left distinguish between Israel and Jews. Not so, people on the right, on the political spectrum.

One last thing -- the attack on the synagogue building in Vienna one and a half years ago had a strong impact, too. Because Chancellor Kreisky's foreign policy -- up to then, they followed by the overwhelming of the Austrians. Whatever he said, it was followed. [30:00] Now, for the first time, we've found that people were very insecure, very fed-up. They (inaudible). They condemned this. And, especially, they were disgusted with Kreisky's comments on this, blaming the Israelis for being too intransigent and too rigid, and indirectly responsible for this attack. And this really

caused a change in public opinion, this episode as well as the un-understandable reaction of Chancellor Kreisky. And now what we have is that only a third of the population any longer considers his Middle East policies to be successful, while most people say they don't know. They feel very uneasy, undecided about this. So, there is the possibility for a change [31:00] because people do not follow these policies any longer. And they say it doesn't help anybody. Three percent say it helps Israel, 13% say it helps the Palestinians, 18% say it helps the Austrians, but all 70% say it doesn't help anybody, or they don't know to whose favor it is. So, this is really a strong switch, again, in public opinion within the last (inaudible). (inaudible) stop here, and just pass this around.

F2: Thank you, very much. And I thank you for this very important analysis. (inaudible) basically saying (inaudible). I would like, now, to ask (inaudible).

M3: Yes, I am sorry. My approach is less scientific. I have no graphs, no real sciences. First of all, it's difficult to get one unique picture of anti-Semitism in Belgium, because [32:00] Belgium is made of two very, very distinct parts, which is the Flemish part and the French-speaking part. And in all aspects, they are very, very different. There is a, kind of, atmosphere of great civil war, I would say, because all the problems are being aggravated in Belgium by this conflict between the two communities in Belgium. I would say there are about 30,000 Jews in Belgium, in a population of

10 million people, which is also very small. But I wouldn't say that (inaudible) people without Jews, because the physical presence of Jews has much more weight than percentage would (inaudible). The very, very big majority [33:00] of the Jews are concentrated in two cities. I would say more than 95% of the Jews are either living in Brussels or in Antwerp. I think the most interesting problem is the problem of the Jews living in Antwerp, which means in the Flemish part of Belgium. These Jews represent about 15,000 people on a total of one million, which is a very small percentage. But I could say there is something very special about this community. According to me, it's the last very authentic ghetto in the world today, because there are comparisons which are made very often between, for instance, Antwerp and New York. But it doesn't work, according to me. Because I will tell you one (inaudible) which is very clear. [34:00] I just learned this a few days ago, that there are 3,300 Jewish children in Antwerp. This is only 300 of these children going in non-Jewish schools, which is a very -- I'm assuming the highest percentage --

F2: Three thousand and three hundred?

M3: Yes -- 10% of the children going in non-Jewish schools, which is a very fantastic percentage, I believe.

F2: Incomparable.

M3: Incomparable with everywhere else in the world. I believe something very special is that this community is very close. The exchanges between the Jewish community and the outside

world are very, very [unique?], Jews having their own schools, own stores. Everything is closed inside this community. And the contacts between the Jewish community and the outside world is very, very small. The Jews are having their own [35:00] places where they take vacations and (inaudible) and so on. In one word, I would qualify it, for the moment -- the relations of the Jewish community and the Flemish community in Belgium as -- I can't recall the exact word in English for *la coexistence pacifique*?

F2: Peaceful coexistence.

M3: Peaceful coexistence, like you could have spoken of between American and Russians a few years ago, which is a state of latent hostility, but which is not very clearly spoken out. There are a few specific factors in the case of Antwerp. First of all, that the Jewish community in Antwerp speaks French, while the other people in this part of the country speak Flemish. And it's not only [36:00] a [perversity?]. It's a very important factor, because French-speaking people, generally, are considered as enemies, more or less, in this part of the country. So, in some kind of a way, Jews are considered as a part of this enemy (inaudible) inside this Flemish nation.

Also, there is the very specific factor of what has been happening during the war. While the Flemish nationalism has been developing itself during the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, during

the First World War and, even more, during the Second World War, a large part of the Flemish movement has been considering the Germans as objective allies for reaching their purpose. [37:00] So, the collaboration between the Flemish and the Germans has been very important during the war. And this is some kind of a permanent object of conflict between the Jewish community in Antwerp and the Flemish community.

One other point is that the Jews in Antwerp don't try to come out in the Belgian community. I can show this best in two different ways. First of all, in politics, there isn't any real involvement of Jews in the Belgian politics. And even if some of the Belgian Jews go in parties, it's almost, all the time, [38:00] to act as a kind of representative of Jewish interests inside the Belgian community. Secondly, in the field of arts, it's also very clear that there is absolutely -- at least in the Flemish part of the country, there is no involvement of Jews in the Flemish culture.

I could say I feel that there is a very strong anti-Semitism in the Flemish community, but I must say, it's never encouraged by official authorities. It's almost considered as something very shameful. It's always condemned. But it's, for instance, very interesting to have read the reactions of the press after the bombing of the synagogue in Antwerp. The commentaries were always more or less [39:00] that Arabs and

Jews fight their war somewhere else. And it's been only spoken of innocent victims, when there were Flemish people killed in those bombings, instead of Jews. You feel something that could come out very strongly one day or the other, even if it's absolutely not encouraged from above.

Secondly, I could say that the war in Lebanon has had a very strong influence on the evolution of anti-Semitism, because, for instance, take a comparison. The French people have been very shocked by the attitudes of radio, television, and press in their commentaries about the Lebanon War. Because I believe it's been very, very worse in Belgium, because there has been [40:00] a climate of anti-Zionism in, for instance, the Belgian radio, which has been fantastic. And sometimes it even came out as really anti-Semitism. And it's, anyway, feeling very, very strongly by the Jews in Belgium. For instance, when there has been a bombing in the synagogue in Brussels, there has been a crew of the Belgian television, and they have really attacked by the Jews who stand by, nearby the synagogue, as really the enemies of the Jewish peoples. I believe there has been some exaggeration in this reaction, because some members of the Jewish community in Belgium feel any criticism about Israel as a direct attack against Jews. [41:00] Even if you take a more moderate point of view, it's really getting -- a very serious problem in Belgium. We can...

F2: No, no. (inaudible).

TANENBAUM:What about the Brussels problem?

F2: Yes, the (inaudible).

M3: Yes, the Brussels part -- the problem is less strong. The Jewish community in Brussels is infinitely less close than the Antwerp one. There are a lot of mixed --

TANENBAUM:Marriage?

M3: The mixed marriage in Brussels -- while there is, I believe, maybe 10 a year in Antwerp, or maybe less than that. There is really a part of the Brussels Jews who have chosen for assimilation, which has never been the case in Antwerp. The factors that [42:00] play, also, a part in Brussels is, of course, the attitudes towards the war in Lebanon. The anti-Semitism as a factor of everyday life is very weak, I must admit, in Brussels.

TANENBAUM:(inaudible) or reluctant? (laughter)

F2: I think you represent, very well, this unique dichotomy which exists in Belgium between the communities which (inaudible). I would like, now, to ask the Danish representative.

M4: The Jews in Denmark is also a very small community. It's numbering no more than 8,000 persons out of a population of 4.5 million, 5 million. In general, one must say that the relationship between the Jews and the non-Jews in Denmark, for a very long time, as been very good, and there's been no problems. However, in my opinion, there has been a change to the worse during the last couple of years. [43:00] A number of local events has happened in Denmark, which has played

some role -- have taken them out of the general analysis, because they are local. But we'll have conflict within the Jewish community, which, of course, can cause some confusion and bitterness within the Jews, and some disappointment within the non-Jews. We've had a lawsuit of anti-Zionism, anti-Semitism, which our enemies won, and which had the effect of making the anti-Zionist cause much more legitimate and much more recognized. We've had the *Holocaust* TV series --

M5: Excuse me. Can you specify what this lawsuit was?

M4: Yes. What happened was that a person from a very leftist party -- the only party in the Danish parliament which advocates that Israel should not exist -- sued a man who's a non-Jew, because he said that this party was carrying out [44:00] anti-Semitic practices. And what happened was, one of the very few persons of this party, who has no anti-Semitic past, came up and said, "Are you talking about me?" And the other person was stupid. He said, "Yes, you also." And he went to the courts, and he said, "I have never been anti-Semitic. I condemn anti-Semitism. I am only against Israel as a state, but I don't mind Jews," etc. And he won this case. But I must say that it does not have such importance, because the press, in general, was against this leftist party. On the other hand, it has influenced a number of journalists, because they now know that the Danish court has said that it's not applicable to equate the two terms *anti-Zionism* and *anti-Semitism*.

And we've also had the *Holocaust* TV series shown in 1979, which was quite well-received, [45:00] and received, also, a lot of coverage of the positive effects of the *Holocaust* was sabotaged by the Danish TV, because they made absolutely no follow-up on the Holocaust. They were forced to show it. They had objected to show it because it was just a typical, quote, "American," unquote, piece of sentimental, etc... But then, there was a large pressure put upon them by the public, and they had to show it. So, they showed it, but they didn't make any follow-up programs.

Now, in general, about the level of anti-Semitism in Denmark, there is absolutely no issue of anti-Semitism. And it is fought in any case where it exists, or in any case which could emerge. So, I'm not so afraid of that. But there is a change in the relationship between Jews and non-Jews, because today, it's much more (inaudible) to make statements about Jews, to tell anti-Semitic jokes. [46:00] And what is being said about the Jews is much more harsh. Like, you have the newspapers talking about "Sharon, King of the Jews, his hands are soiled in blood"; "Begin's concentration camps in Israel"; or, "Begin's holocaust in Lebanon," etc. And you also have the impression that all Jews are responsible for Israel's actions, and the terms *Jews* and *Zionists* and *Israelis* are used much more interchangeably. Very few Danes

know the difference, and even fewer care to make any distinction.

So, in my opinion, one of the major factors contributing to the escalation of the anti-Semitism has been the anti-Zionist, anti-Israeli spillover effects. Now, luckily, we have no tradition for the classical anti-Semitism in Denmark. There are a number of cases of what we call "little anti-Semitism." That means just the kind of anti-Semitism in the daily life, about Jews being especially rich and so on. But there's [47:00] physical anti-Semitic situation. To give you an example of what they've been experiencing, there's quite a number of letters to the editors saying during the Lebanon War, "If I had known what the Jews would do now, then I would not have helped the Jews during the Second World War." And that's really critical. But there was a lot of them. Now, although the Lebanon War triggered a wave of these anti-Semitic events, the larger part of them also took place before the war. But the Lebanon War acted as a catalyst in terms of numbers. Of course, these are indications which are more the exception rather than the rule because, in general, the climate is good.

Now, the Jews in Denmark do not perceive anti-Semitism as a threat, but they do believe it exists, and they do believe it is increasing. [48:00] The general impression is one of worry, particularly among elderly Jews. Most of the Jews

believe there's increasing anti-Semitism that (inaudible). Now they have to walk into the synagogues through the rear entrance rather than the front entrance. They have had a guard (inaudible) implemented in front of the synagogue, stricter security measures in the Jewish school. And, also, very heated discussions at work, where, before, people would come to Jews and say, "That was really a good thing you did." Instead, they will now come and say, "What a dreadful thing you did in Lebanon," etc.

Now, non-Jews, in general -- the majority of the non-Jews -- a very large part of the non-Jews would say that anti-Semitism does not exist, and, consequently, it's not a problem, and there's no reason to anything about it. And, in general, there's a tendency that the pro-Israeli non-Jews do not manifest themselves [49:00] so much pro-Israel. I mean, they are more silent. Those who are against Israel say much more. In Denmark, when you mention the world *anti-Semitism*, it is equated only with the classical anti-Semitism, particularly among the young. It's a thing of the past. It's something that Hitler did to the Jews. It does not exist today. This attitude, of course, is the consequence of lack of knowledge, particularly among the young Jews. It has had the effect that most of the non-Jews, particularly the young, are indifferent towards Jews, towards Israel. They don't care what happens.

Now, if you take some of the factors which lie behind anti-Semitism -- and maybe I should mention that I asked a number of persons in Denmark of their opinion about anti-Semitism [50:00] in Denmark, and factors behind anti-Semitism. Most of these persons immediately answered the war in Lebanon and the policy of the Begin government in Israel as one of the factors behind anti-Semitism. And I am sure that if I asked the Danish public of (inaudible), they would give the same amount. But I disagree on this point, because I believe that the perception of Israel's in Lebanon, and the perception of the policies of Begin which create this (inaudible). In other words, if the actions of the Begin government had been the object of a fair and comparative, and thorough analysis in the media, (inaudible) which probably took place in all other countries there, then, in my opinion, the impact of anti-Semitism would have been very much smaller.

I made a list of a number of factors which, in my opinion, contribute to anti-Semitism. The most important one is the [51:00] fact that there is a common ignorance among non-Jews. So, an average Dane, historically (inaudible) something which took place in the last five years. If it happened five years before, it's just forgotten. It has no importance at all. And this means it's very difficult to explain the Jewish cause to the Danes, because they don't care about history, in general. And since the average Dane has no other means of information about the Jews, about the

Middle East, then the media -- since there are only 8,000 Jews, it's very few Danes who have actual contact with the Jews. It means that they are also very vulnerable to any distortions in the media. And the person would never realize that their attitudes are formed by the media, or that the media could be wrong. It is my opinion, the person watches the TV, he sees scenes of terror from Shatila and Sabra and hears 30 times that Israel is responsible, he would believe that Israel is responsible. [52:00] And he would believe that it was Israel that was solely responsible, because there's nothing else said in this affair. I'll describe this media campaign against Israel as something which magnifies anything negative that happens in Israel. In other words, if something happens in Israel -- it doesn't matter what -- just this non-stop negativity be show in the media. And there's also a complete lack of anything positive from Israel. There's a complete lack of anything negative from the Arab world. When Assad killed 5,000 people in Hama, there was actually nothing in the media.

And the final point is that, time and time again, the media emphasizing the balance on (inaudible) and the Jews or Israel is stubborn and hawkish. Now you may say, is this campaign deliberate or not? It's probably both. But it's difficult to decide. But it's very easy to estimate the effects of this campaign -- the vilification of the Jewish state. In a situation [53:00] where most people do not

distinguish between Jews and Zionists and Israelis, this has the effect of causing severe anti-Semitic (inaudible). Another point which influences the level of anti-Semitism of the media's treatment of Israel is the fact that people tend to side with the underdog. And in the first 10 years of the conflict, after the Six-Day War, it was perceived as a conflict between the Arabs and Jews, in which the Jews automatically are the underdog. Whereas, today, it is perceived as a conflict between the Jews and the Palestinians, in which the Palestinians automatically are the underdog. And this thing is also reflected in the educational system, partly by a very large number of anti-Israeli, anti-Zionist books in schools, whereas there are very few pro-Israeli ones. And it also shows in the fact that 15 years ago, the topics of the schools were [54:00] how were the problem of the Jews, how were the problem of Israel? Where, today, it is what is the problem of the Palestinians, and what is the problem of the Arabs?

In general, you can also say that the economic crisis has decreased the general level of tolerance. However, this has not had so bad an effect in Denmark, in terms of the Jews, because people tend to direct their smaller level of tolerance towards to the Danish guests workers, which are not, of course, Jews. But, nevertheless, they are the ones who are scapegoats now. One of the things which also play a very important role in the perception of Israel, and

therefore the perception of Jews, in Denmark, is the fact that there are number of Jews who talk against Israel. And this means that the Danes -- they don't really realize [55:00] that the Jews can hold different opinions. They watch Yasser Arafat on the television. They watch him say that Israel is fascist and extremist too (inaudible), in Israel, where they see Jews demonstrating in Israel with exactly the same signs. And this, of course, makes people think that Arafat is right. There's very, very few people who realize that what they are witnessing is an example of Israel's democracy. The huge majority would conclude that Arafat must be right.

Now, I mentioned that, also, the war in Lebanon and the Begin government -- or, rather, the perception of the war in Lebanon and the perception of the Begin government, makes an impact. And, especially, the media has mentioned Israel's responsibility in that war so greatly that it's very common to meet people who believe that it was the Israelis who committed the massacres in these refugee camps. Also, [56:00] I'm afraid that, apart from the Khomeini government, I think the Begin government is probably the most hated government in terms of journalists. If they can, in any way, give the Begin government (inaudible), they will do it, because they perceive it as being hard-line, stubborn, and provocative, etc. A short list of the most disliked actions which the Danish public -- and many Jews also do not

understand this: the Lebanon War, particularly the bombing of Beirut; the policy of settlements; the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor; mentioning the (inaudible) past of the former [Gemayel?] (inaudible); references to Holocaust; the immediate (inaudible) to Reagan's peace plan; cooperation of the (inaudible); cooperation with South Africa, etc. Now, this list should not be taken as an expression of my own opinion, but as an expression of items which the general public in Denmark do not understand, do not like. [57:00] And, therefore, which influences their policy towards Israel, and, in this way, also influences the policy towards Jews, because people do not distinguish between them. And to take the almost total lack of explanation and understanding in the media, it would be a miracle if the public could perceive (inaudible) of the Begin government any differently, because they knew nothing else.

Now, I also have to mention something about the expectations of the Israeli democracy, because there is a wide tendency in Denmark to demand more from Israel than from other states, because Israel is a democracy. And so, it is perceived as being a member of the family, and a member of the democratic family. And you can compare the situation to the situations in which a father tells his son, "Now, you have to behave." And, of course, you know, later the son will revolt against this and say, "You go take a swim," or

whatever, "because I need to do it the way I think is correct."

I also have to mention the [58:00] economic crisis, and the oil policy of the West. There has been a general degrading of the level of tolerance towards minorities that can be felt in Denmark, also. But it is directed towards the foreign workers, which I mentioned. The politicians, also, submit to the Arab petrol pressure. For instance, a film on the press of the Saudi princes was originally scheduled to appear, but they took it off, because it was afraid to (inaudible) of the sheik. They would never admit that that was why. They would say it was a typically British, sensationalist reportage. But that's the effect of it. Now, it has some effect on anti-Semitism. But the effect is indirect, because it prevents focusing in the Arab side. And this, combined with the over-focusing on the Israeli side is leaving the impression that Israel is the only [crook?] in this part of the world. In fact, the world is (inaudible). [59:00] If you look at the public-opinion polls in Israel -- we don't have too many of them, but there are a number of public-opinion institutes which ask these questions, you can see that there is a very clear tendency that Israel seems to lose about 2.2% sympathy to --

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