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Hans Schiller (1917-1998)

GERMANY, PALESTINE, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA:
POLITICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL ACTIVITIES

Interviews Conducted by
Malca Chall, Eleanor Glaser, and Suzanne Riess
in 1987

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Cataloging information

Hans Joachim Schiller (1917-1998)

Architect

Germany, Palestine, Northern California: Political and Architectural Activities, 1993, 540 pp.

Childhood in Breslau, Germany, and Berlin; emigration to Palestine in 1935; studies at Hebrew University, Jerusalem; spying for Haganah, night patrol, while undertaking pre-med studies at American University, Beirut; meeting and apprenticing with architect Eric Mendelsohn; with British army in Egypt during WWII; marriage to Charlotte Bernheim, family, come to San Francisco in 1947; residence in Mill Valley. Eric Mendelsohn: training, attitudes, utopias, Einstein Tower, emigration to America, acceptance within the profession; Schiller's association with Mendelsohn, in Israel, in San Francisco, Mendelsohn's office, the Madeline Haas Russell house, career since 1953, John Bowles. Political interests: Clem Miller, Adlai Stevenson, Eugene McCarthy, John Tunny campaigns; California Democratic Council in the 1960s and 1970s; participation in Marin County design review, Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). Includes Schiller's notes on Eric Mendelsohn from 1965; comments by Glaser, and Riess on the interview process; eight pages of handwritten notes by Schiller about his life; and chronologies of his political work in Marin County; 1995 newspaper article on Schiller wedding; greeting cards from Schiller.

Interviewed in 1987 by Eleanor K. Glaser, Suzanne Bassett Riess, and Malca Chall.

Unreviewed draft transcripts available for research only at The Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.

Underwritten by the Columbia Foundation.

Hans Schiller, 80

Architect, Humanitarian and Political Activist

Hans Schiller, distinguished architect and planner, political activist and 50-year Marin resident, passed away at his Mill Valley home on Tuesday, July 28. He was 80 years old.

Schiller was born in 1917 in Breslau, Germany and immigrated to Palestine in 1934 to escape Nazi Germany and certain arrest for his involvement in the underground movement. He attended both the Hebrew University and the American University of Beirut.

While in Jerusalem, he worked for Eric Mendelsohn, one of the most well known architects of the time. Under Mendelsohn's mentorship, the British Mandate Government of Palestine certified Schiller as an architect in 1940.



Schiller served with the British Army Royal Engineers in Egypt and Italy during World War II. Following the Allied Victory in Europe, he immigrated with his family to the United States and in 1948, settled in Mill Valley.

For the next 50 years, Schiller dedicated his life to supporting liberal causes, preserving the environment, and promoting world peace through active involvement in local and national politics, in addition to continuing his professional work as an architect.

He also chaired the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, served as president of the California Board of Architectural Examiners and worked closely with Senator Barbara Boxer as a consultant on environmental and planning issues during her 10 years in the House of Representatives.

In 1996, Schiller was elected to the prestigious American Institute of Architects College of Fellows for significant contributions to his profession and to the community at large.

Hans Schiller is survived by his wife, Lotte; children Peter and Anita, and grandchildren, Shauna, Alison and Ryan.

Hans Schiller, environmental activist of Mill Valley, dies

By Carolyn Alcott

Independent Journal reporter

Hans Schiller, a Mill Valley architect, champion of liberal political causes and the environment, died at home Thursday. He was 80.

Schiller was born in Breslau, Germany, and as a young man fled the Nazis. After finding asylum in Palestine, he attended both Hebrew University and the American University of Beirut.

In Palestine, he joined other Zionist insurgents pushing for an independent Israeli nation and belonged to a special military strike force led by future Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion.

"That's the kind of commitment that Hans always demonstrated — being willing to go to war for his cause — although in later years he was an outspoken

peace activist," said San Rafael attorney Isidor Bornstein.

Schiller also met his mentor, architect Eric Mendelsohn, in Jerusalem, and was accredited as an architect in 1940 by the British government.

The 50-year Marin resident met Bornstein in the '50s, when both served on the California Democratic Council. "He's been the classic liberal Democrat ever since," Bornstein said.

Schiller and his wife, Lotte, were leaders of the Marin peace movement during the Vietnam

War. The pair also promoted environmentalism and world peace through local politics.

For a 10-year period, Schiller worked closely with Barbara Boxer as an adviser on environmental and planning issues during her terms in the House of Representatives.

"Hans selflessly shared his time to enhance and protect the precious environments of the Bay Area, the state of California and his beloved home county of Marin," Boxer said yesterday.

"I relied on his insights and thoughtful views on many matters over many years," she said.

The "cultured, articulate gentleman" was a formidable political committee chief, Bornstein said.

Schiller once chaired the Bay Conservation and Development Commission and served as president of the California Board of Architectural Examiners.

Along with his wife, Schiller is survived by his children, Peter and Anita, and grandchildren, Shauna, Alison and Ryan.



SCHILLER: 1976 file photo

Thinking Out Loud

Something was missing at Barbara Boxer's recent fund-raiser in Marin. It was the presence of Hans Schiller, who died a few days earlier at age 80. Hans and his wife Lotte had been perpetual fixtures at local Democratic Party functions for decades. They were a soft touch for benefit tickets and quiet providers of counsel and hard work. The media frenzy in Washington and New York these days is an example of politics at its worst. Hans and Lotte were grass-roots politics at its best.

—Steve McNamara

This manuscript was not reviewed by the
interviewee, Hans Schiller

Hans Schiller has been an architect for fifty years, forty of which were spent in the San Francisco Bay Area. But his has not been the peaceful life that this quiet profession would indicate. A life-long political activist, he was a spy for a short time and bore arms despite being an avowed pacifist.

This ^{adventurous} ~~complex~~ life began in Breslau, Germany, where Schiller was born on November 30, 1917. He and his mother moved to Berlin in 1931 upon the death of his father, which occurred on young Hans' thirteenth birthday. In Berlin he observed the brutality of Nazi street gangs and the rising influence of Hitler Youth in the schools. Unwilling to conform to the demands of these bullies, he was attacked and subsequently barred from all Prussian schools.

Before Hans and his mother emigrated to Palestine in 1935, he was involved in helping others sneak across the German border to safety. Although arrested twice by the Gestapo, he was not detained or harmed.

Upon settling in Jerusalem with his mother, Hans studied Hebrew and finished his high school studies. At the time he thought he would become a doctor like his father, but Hebrew University had no medical faculty at that time, and there was no money for Hans to study abroad. He became employed in the building trades and at the same time joined the Haganah, undertaking night patrol duty to protect the settlers from marauding Arabs.

Schiller was able to attend pre-med school at the American University in Beirut, and it was here that he spied for the Haganah. This lasted for less than a year before his fellow students became suspicious, and it was safer for him not to return to the university.

Through his future father-in-law, Schiller obtained an interview with Eric Mendelsohn, a leading architect who worked in England as well as Palestine, and was taken on as an apprentice. They both tried to enlist when war broke out in 1939 but were turned down by the British military. Schiller continued his Haganah duties at night while working in the architect's office during the day. This continued even after Mendelsohn left for the United States.

After his marriage to Lotte Bernheim and the birth of the first of their three children, Schiller was inducted into the British army and sent to Egypt. Following the usual training period, Schiller was assigned to map-making duties. During his free periods, he hiked into the surrounding desert, and it was on one of these explorations that he discovered a cave in which there were priceless, museum-quality samples of early Egyptian artifacts. These are now in a lighted case in the Schiller livingroom.

From Egypt, Schiller's group was sent to Italy, where they were stationed near Sienna until the end of the war. Upon being demobilized, he returned to Jerusalem and architecture until receiving an invitation from Mendelsohn to join him in this country. He, Mrs. Schiller, and their young son arrived in San Francisco in 1947.

They have resided on a hilltop in Mill Valley since that time. There are more than sixty steps that lead up to the house from the small parking area below. Tall trees now block the view from the diningroom windows where once could be seen the surrounding hills. It was in this room that the interviews were conducted, beginning in June 1987 and ending in September 1987. The years Mr. Schiller spent Europe and the Near East were covered by Eleanor Glaser, Suzanne Riess interviewed him regarding his professional activities in the United States, and Malca Chall reviewed with Mr. Schiller his political activities in California.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name HANS JOACHIM SCHILLER

Date of birth 30 NOV 1917 Birthplace BRESLAU (THEN GERMANY)

Father's full name MAX SCHILLER

Occupation PHYSICIAN Birthplace LESCHITZ (THEN GERMANY)

Mother's full name ALMA ADA ARIS

Occupation REGIST. NURSE Birthplace PREUSSISCH HOLLAND (THEN GERMANY)

Your spouse CHARLOTTE (LOTTE) BERNHEIM

Your children IAN MICHAEL; PETER DAN; ANITA GABRIELLA.

Where did you grow up? BRESLAU, BERLIN, JERUSALEM

Present community MILL VALLEY, CA

Education HIGH SCHOOL (BERLIN), HEBREW UNIVERSITY (JERUSALEM),
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT (LEBANON)

Occupation(s) ARCHITECT/PLANNER

Areas of expertise ARCHITECTURE, CITY PLANNING,
ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Other interests or activities POLITICS, PUBLIC SERVICE,
THE ENVIRONMENT, ACHIEVEMENT OF GLOBAL PEACE,
CONSULTANT TO BARBARA BOXER, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Organizations in which you are active AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF
ARCHITECTS, CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Interview with Hans Schiller, Interview one

Date of Interview: 6-23-87

Interviewer: Eleanor Glaser

Transcriber: Shannon Page

Begin tape 1, side A

Glaser: --with Mr. Hans Schiller. I'm going to ask him a question now, to see how his voice picks up. What day is this, Mr. Schiller?

Schiller: You shouldn't have asked me that! [laughter] It's too early in the day. Let me check. It's Tuesday, 6/23, and it's ten oh two.

Glaser: What would one do without a clock or watch that tells the date, right?

##interruption

Mr. Schiller, where were you born, and when?

Schiller: I was born in Breslau, which was--and still is--Salsia, at that time of course Germany, which now is Poland, and is called, I believe, Wroclaw. I was born on the 30th of November, 1917, which incidentally happens to be the birthday of Winston Churchill--a few years earlier.

Glaser: And tell me about your father, please.

Schiller: My father was a doctor in Breslau. He was a specialist in two fields; one was internist and secondly, he was a radiologist. He was both teaching at the university hospital and was, during World War II, was the physician in charge of the area.

Glaser: Did he get his training in Breslau?

Schiller: No, he got his training in Heidelberg, and in Vienna, and in fact, he was one of the assistants and research assistants of Roentgen in Vienna. He [Roentgen?] was the inventor of the x-rays; the use of the x-ray in medicine.

Glaser: What was your father's name?

Schiller: My father's name was Max, Max Schiller.

Glaser: And when was he born?

Schiller: He was born in Liegnitz, which is also in Salsia. A very small town, just a few miles away from Breslau, actually.

Glaser: Did you know his parents, your grandparents?

Schiller: The only grandparent I personally knew, because the only

grandparent alive, was my father's father. His name was Salo. He lived in Liegnitz; he was a rather respected merchant in Liegnitz, and had a--I couldn't really say what exactly. [pause] Well, actually, clothing for men and boys, mostly, but he also had other things in his store in Liegnitz.

Glaser: Did you visit him there?

Schiller: Yes. I did visit him, of course--I think he died, oh, when I was five or six at the most. So, I have a memory of him, but not a very extensive one, as that. It was a, for those days, typical grandfather-grandchild relationship. He was very pleased and very proud to have, at that time, I was his only grandchild. Later on, I think he still did see the birth of at least another grandchild, a cousin of mine, a child of my father's sister.

Glaser: Was that his only sibling?

Schiller: I'm sorry?

Glaser: Your father's only brother or sister?

Schiller: No. It was not my father's only sibling; I had another uncle, who was younger than my father. My father was the oldest of the three. He may have seen the birth of yet another grandchild,

maybe of my--a cousin of mine who was a daughter of [thinking] my uncle. That's a possibility, but I'm not entirely certain. I mean, I could establish that, if that is of any--I don't think it is of any importance, probably.

Glaser: No. Was it a close family? After your grandfather died, you maintained relationships with--

Schiller: Yes. It was a very close family. Let me say this; my father's younger brother was also a doctor, and of course, my father, being somewhat older, a few years older, was already established as a doctor when he [my uncle] became a doctor and he assisted him [my father] in the beginning. My aunt's husband was a doctor, and he too later on worked with my father and for my father, for quite some time in his radiology practice. None of my father's siblings are alive, nor is he. My father died on my thirteenth birthday.

Glaser: On the day?

Schiller: Yes. On the day, which had--I think had some profound effect on a child.

Glaser: Oh, that's shocking!

Schiller: Well, yes, but I did expect him to die. He was very sick for quite some time; he had a heart disease, and had had two heart attacks. He had one heart attack from which he recovered, sufficiently well that he continued to work even though he was warned--and knew better himself. He worked too hard, and promptly got another one. He did not recover from that one. It had been dragging on for probably two or three years, in which he was bedridden and got worse and worse and worse. So, that just did happen, on my birthday. So I had to grow up real quick.

Glaser: Yes. Tell me about your mother.

Schiller: My mother, whose name was Alma Ada Aris [spells], was born in East Prussia. She, too, had two siblings, a sister and a brother. The sister was older, but was actually a half-sister. A different father, who had died by the time my mother was born. In fact, before she was conceived, because my [maternal] grandmother remarried somebody else, obviously, and so my mother had a different father from her older sister. She had a younger brother, who also was a doctor, and also worked with and for my father later on.

Glaser: That's quite a family of doctors, isn't it?

Schiller: Yes. Right. And my mother was a registered nurse.

Glaser: Where did she get her training?

Schiller: That's a good question. I do not really know. I believe in Berlin, or thereabouts. [thinks] No, she probably also was trained in Heidelberg, for one reason or another, because somehow they must have met!

Glaser: And you think it was in Heidelberg?

Schiller: Yes. Well, they were only one year apart in age, and they either worked together--and I really do not know, strangely enough. They married in 1914, in January of 1914.

Glaser: Do you know anything of their courtship; did they talk about that?

Schiller: No. Well, certainly my father didn't. I mean, I was too young to be interested or to find out anything about them, really, at the time when he died and the years before that.

Glaser: Was there a reticence at that time about talking about those things?

Schiller: Oh, yes. Oh, of course. Of course, my mother never talked about

anything that, or tried not to talk about anything that might be even remotely construed as sexually related. Which, of course, amazes me now, and at that time actually no end, since both of them were medically trained. My father was not reticent to talk about--I mean, my father did in fact very early (which was very unusual in those times), obviously before my thirteenth birthday--in fact, much before that. I guess I was about nine or ten or eleven when he started talking to me about sex education. Very matter-of-fact, and quite scientifically, and made it very clear that at any time if I had any questions, not to hesitate to ask me [him]. "I should have," he said, "all the answers. If I don't, I can get it for you."

Glaser: One would think that, as a nurse, your mother would have the objectivity to do the education, too.

Schiller: Yes. Well, my relationship with my mother was a very strange one anyway. As much as one can say at that early age, I was always very attached to my father, but I didn't see my father very much. My father was always very busy, and usually had left the house before I was up. Later on, he had part of his practice in the house, but that made absolutely no difference. That was one end of the building, and I was at the other end of the building, and certainly during practice hours he was totally removed from any interference. Though he was very--I mean, he appeared to be very

close to me, and was always willing to make some time to discuss matters if I wanted to, it was just difficult to do so, simply because he was working practically all the time.

He used to take night calls, so he was always gone. Some of his practice was quite far removed. It was also not that common in those days--he had a car and a chauffeur, so he didn't hesitate to go almost anywhere.

Glaser: Tell me about your mother's family.

Schiller: My mother's family, essentially they were grain merchants and horse raisers.

Glaser: How far from Breslau was this?

Schiller: No, that was in East Prussia. Her family was totally in East Prussia.

Glaser: Was that an agricultural area?

Schiller: Yes. Actually, she was born and lived for the first few years of her life in what was known as "Preussich Holland."

Glaser: "Preussich" meaning Prussian?

Schiller: Yes. Well, the name--it was a tiny little town.

Glaser: In Holland, like the country?

Schiller: No--yes, Holland like the country, yes. In fact, it was usually spelled P-r Holland.

Glaser: What would that be today?

Schiller: Well, I don't know--it's Russia now. East Prussia is Russia. That's--and West Prussia, what used to be West Prussia before World War I, is Poland, and adjacent parts of Germany are Polish. East Prussia, as you may know, is--you probably have heard of a town by the name of Koenigsberg. That is the largest town in East Prussia. It's along the Baltic, and it is between [Dunsig?] which was West Prussia originally, and the Lithuania.

_____ Lithuania, the Baltic, small Baltic satellite states of Russia. And the Russians took that part, all the way up almost to Dunsig in the--but the Poles have Dunsig.

Glaser: Now, Breslau, when you lived there, it's a city on the Oder, right?

Schiller: Yes.

Glaser: What sort of a town was it? Or should I say, city?

Schiller: It was a city. It was essentially a university town, even though it was--it had one of the oldest universities in the world. It was somewhat provincial, nevertheless, you know. [laughs] It was a city I would guess now at about six, seven hundred thousand people. It was of course, since Frederick the Great, it was totally Prussian and totally German. Nobody knew--of course, there were some people who knew to speak Polish, but essentially it had nothing to do with Poland. It was quite remote and removed from Poland in every part of the way.

But, historically, I guess it must have been Polish at one time, as far as one can establish these things.

Glaser: That's that area that went back and forth many, many times?

Schiller: Probably did.

Glaser: Was there a cultural life that your parents took part in? Did they have the time; your father sounds so busy.

Schiller: Yes. Well, strangely enough, they did and they didn't. I mean, my parents would usually have guests at least once a week. One

evening was set aside for that purpose, and that was mostly for chamber music. My father played violin, and rather well, and so three or four people would come to the house, and there would be chamber music. There wasn't much else; as you say, there wasn't enough time for anything. But I am very much aware of that, because those usually were days when I was permitted to stay up a little longer. In certain days, I would be permitted to sleep in my parents' bedroom, because that was adjacent to the living room, where the music was being played, so I could hear and of course fall asleep, and then would be moved to my room.

But, in the beginning my mother did help my father in his practice. It became quite a bit too hectic, and my father had a secretary and an assistant at the practice at home, which was separate from the practice that he had where he had his x-ray machinery. It was at a different location. Only after his first heart attack, he moved to another location in Breslau, and we had a larger house then. He moved his practice and his x-ray lab right into the house. Only used it for about a year, and then unfortunately he fell sick again.

The one thing I do know is that, since it had something to do with my mother's reluctance to discuss anything of a personal nature, shall we say; but she did discuss with me and told me at one time--and later on, several times--that she was opposed to

people having children.

Glaser: Totally?

Schiller: Totally opposed. She was opposed to that, she was--in effect, admitted if it hadn't been for my father, who wanted at least one child, she would never have agreed to that.

Glaser: Well then, you were an only child.

Schiller: Yes. I was an only child.

Glaser: Fortunately for her, but not for you.

Schiller: I can't judge it, so I have no way of judging it. Well, yes, I would agree with you in many respects, certainly because I became responsible for her very early in my life, in my teens. I would say it would have been probably a help if--and help and perhaps not a help, because I would have been responsible for other children too, being the oldest.

Glaser: Did you feel that, when you were growing up, that your mother didn't want children? I mean, in your relationship to her.

Schiller: No, not--well, she was a disciplinarian, in contrast to my

father. My father only had to look at me crossly, and that was terrible punishment. She could physically punish me, and I would shrug it off. Which, I guess, you develop that kind of an attitude. Well, she was extremely strict, so it was a love-hate relationship, shall we say.

Glaser: But strict German parents are not the unusual thing, anyway?

Schiller: Oh, of course not; no. No, no. Absolutely not.

Glaser: What were your mother's activities?

Schiller: That's an interesting question in a way, because--well, in the beginning, in the first few years that I was alive, she was still helping my father as much as she could. I had a succession of nannies, so she was continuing to work. I was being taken care of by a nanny.

Glaser: I gather that that's not unusual for a middle- to upper middle-class German family.

Schiller: No. That certainly isn't, and what was perhaps somewhat unusual is that, though it started out with a German Kinder Fraulein, who was a fairly old woman, very nice, and very sweet, Catholic, who dragged me to all masses [laughs] and to all monasteries and

churches--and I still occasionally go. But not because I'm a Catholic or not because I'm very religious in any particular way, but because I apparently had a certain affinity for the Catholic church, in certain ways. Only in certain ways.

Later on, however, I did have for quite some time an English nanny, and that certainly has helped me. When I left Germany, not that much later really, I was able to converse in English. English in that sense was not a foreign language for me. I also had a French gouvernante at one time, and for some reason she never managed to teach me French.

Glaser: What other house help was there?

Schiller: There--oh, my mother did the cooking, shall we say.

Incidentally, even though she had a kitchen helper, and she had a maid for cleaning purposes, live-in both, she insisted on doing the cooking.

Glaser: Did she do the marketing also?

Schiller: Yes.

Glaser: Was that a daily chore?

Schiller: Yes, of course.

Glaser: Can you remember how the house was furnished?

Schiller: Oh, yes. It was originally furnished in a somewhat, to me, nondescript style, very heavy oak furniture, which--and the dining room in a tremendously heavy table, extension table. Endless, you know. And very heavy chairs, upholstered. Buffet along the wall, which had been a wedding gift to my parents. In their bedroom it was a much more contemporary maple furniture, and my bedroom it was totally white, a very straightforward; very contemporary. What would you like to know? About floor covering? It was very, in certain ways, very European. Oh, of course, then there was the drawing room, it was all leather; leather couches and leather setees and side chairs. The rest of the wood, including the library portions, were all oak with glass doors.

Glaser: Did you go into the kitchen; do you remember what that's like?

Schiller: Yes, I very often did go into the kitchen, because my first nanny used to spend some time just sitting there, doing needlework, darning, and things like that. So I would hang around there. Anyway, there was always something to eat. Since I was born in the worst time of the winter of 1917, when Germany really--there

was hardly any food at all, very little milk, no eggs, no meat-- which is hard to believe nowadays, looking at me--it was definite concern that I might not survive. Ever since, I've therefore developed a certain liking for food, I guess, which I guess is understandable.

One of the reasons that, even following the war--

##end tape 1 side A, begin tape 1 side b

One of the reasons that even following the war Germany had food problems was the terrific inflation. My father had a certain advantage--he had certain disadvantages, but he had certain advantages. The disadvantages were that he didn't care about money. He was totally dedicated to his profession, and didn't--never bothered to find out whether people were billed or if they had been billed, whether they had paid. And if they didn't pay, well that means they couldn't afford it, and that's all right. But certainly during the inflation it became very very terrifying, unless you were a terrific money manager, and unless you were paid at the time that people received treatment, and the money received was given in--handed into the bank at that moment. If it was handed in next morning, it was worth half of it, or some fraction of it. So, even going to the bank with a wheelbarrow full of money didn't mean that you could buy much more than a loaf of bread.

That, as I say, he had advantages, that some of his patients were people who lived outside of Breslau. Some were farmers, some were peasants, some were people who owned a great deal of land, and rather than paying in deflated currency, they brought food, potatoes, a ham, a chicken, or whatever. So, while others perhaps had difficulty to get decent food, at that point, during the worst time of the inflation, (this must have been around 1924), we always had good food and had things that others would never see--at least, others in the city would never see.

Glaser: Did you also obtain foodstuffs from your mother's family?

Schiller: No. Well, I should have said that my mother's family, her parents both died when she was very young. She was just a few years old, I guess about eight or nine. My mother was then brought up by an aunt and an uncle of hers, who the uncle was a brother of her father's in Berlin. So, she was moved early, and her family kind of fell apart. I mean, they were--and I can't tell you where the other three children--oh, the oldest sister, I think, was already a nurse at that time, or was either studying or becoming a nurse when the parents died. She was considerably older.

It might amuse you, too, that the oldest sister's father,

whose name was Cohn, was born in San Francisco. So my indirect grandfather--he isn't really my grandfather--though quite often, just talking, I do say my grandfather did come from San Francisco, in fact was born here.

Glaser: Do you know the details of that?

Schiller: Yes--well, I know that much, that he was second generation--he was the son of an immigrant to the United States, lived in San Francisco, must have done rather well, because as a comparatively young man, he decided to go to Europe to look for a wife, which was not uncommon in those days. He found a wife all right, but decided to stay with his wife in Europe. I've always heard, "How could he be that stupid?" [laughter]

Glaser: I'm trying to figure out if the reason that the family came to San Francisco was the gold rush, but I think that that would have been not--?

Schiller: His father, or grandfather--I'm not quite clear about that. Entirely possibly, yes. See, my mother was born in '88, her sister--

Glaser: The gold rush would have been only forty years before that. That could account, yes--

Schiller: Yes! Absolutely. And her sister was ten years older, at least. May have even been twelve years older.

Glaser: Well, the death apparently scattered the family, there's no doubt about that. Well, tell me about your schooling. Did you go to a private school?

Schiller: Well, no. I did not go to a private school.

##[telephone interruption]

Glaser: You started talking about your schooling. I had asked you if you'd gone to a private school.

Schiller: Oh. No, I did not go to a private school. I went to public school, and I'm trying to establish why it was that—I went to school a year early. Was it that I went a year early, or that I had been privately tutored and then therefore went into—I'm sorry, I can't tell you for sure. In any case, in assuming that had continued to persecute me for the rest of my life, I was always too young for everything. Until, all of a sudden, I was too old for everything. [laughter]

Well, not only that, I only went for three years to the

[lower?] public school, that began to be called _____, frankly, and so it normally was four years. And therefore, got into high school gymnasium, as it was called, too early, one year too early--more than one year, one and a half years, or whatever it was. And then finished high school much too early, but that's a different story.

Glaser: Tell me why you went into a public school? I would think that, given your family status, you would have gone to a private school.

Schiller: Well, let me say something else about that. Now, politically, my parents were both very liberal. I can only guess at these things. Obviously, it was not being discussed with me. I think they did believe that--they believed in public education, rather than special kind of education. Which did not mean that I did not have a benefit in additional education, like piano lessons, and language lessons obviously. From the very beginning, whenever my parents went on vacation--that was something they did, strangely enough, they did go every year for three to four weeks during the summer, and for one to two weeks in the winter. I always was with them.

So, I had seen from my earliest years, I had seen quite a bit of foreign countries: Switzerland, Italy, parts of France,

Austria, Czechoslovakia. It had an early impact on me. I would come back to school and listen to what some of the teachers had to say, and say to myself, "That just isn't so." As far as teaching was concerned, even during almost all times of the Weimar Republic, it was quite nationalistic, always with a chip on the shoulder, Germany was treated shoddily by the Allies, that other people just weren't as good as Germans—and that hadn't been my experience. It annoyed me. I remember that very clearly, that even as a child I was annoyed by that kind of teaching, which got me into trouble very early.

I had also been brought up to speak up and say what I believed in. That didn't sit too well at any time in Germany.

Glaser: Herr Professor didn't approve.

Schiller: Yes. Well, to get back to my education, I went to the gymnasium, which was—there were two types of high schools in Germany. One is called Real Gymnasium, which was dealing with the more technical aspects of education, or rather toward—not the technical aspects of education, but of life. Towards the more technical aspects of math. I believe that the Real Gymnasium did not—if it did teach a foreign language, it may have been one, and if so, I think it was voluntary.

Whereas, I went to what is known as Humanistisches Gymnasium, humanistic high school. I had, from the first day I went there, to the last day, one hour of Latin every day. That was my first official foreign language in high school. After three years of Latin, one hour every other day of Greek was added to that. And still, no living language. At the same time, you had a choice of either French or English or Italian or Spanish.

Glaser: When did you learn German?

Schiller: Oh! German, of course. That's taken for granted. No, German had to be at least one hour a day. In fact, it became more than one hour a day, because it was then subdivided into writing and literature, etc. Since I did know--since I spoke English and my French was [pause] halting, shall we say, I took French to start out with, and then because we had been in Italy, and I picked up a little Italian, I took Italian in addition.

Glaser: Well, it sounds--is it?--to relate those to a college, as if your Humanistisches Gymnasium would be like a liberal arts, whereas the Real Gymnasium would be to prepare one for a profession such as engineering, or--

Schiller: Or anything else, yes. Not, however, you would have had difficulty to enter medical school or law school unless you had

been to Humanistisches Gymnasium.

Glaser: Where did one get the science background, then?

Schiller: Well, we did have science, too. But much later. And math, not to the extent that you would have had in other schools. I think--well, of course, the first science we had starting from the first year in gymnasium was biology. Then, two years later, they added physics, and a year after that chemistry. So we did get all of that. There was a much heavier demand on what you had to do.

Glaser: Did this mean that you had a much longer school day?

Schiller: No, I don't remember--

Glaser: To cover all of that is really something.

Schiller: Well, either that, or you had to study at home. No--you had a very long school day, actually. I think you did. At least until three o'clock or so. There was just--not a long break; they had just ten, fifteen minute breaks in between. But not like you have here, an hour's break for lunch, or something like that. Just didn't eat that much [laughs]. Or whatever you ate, you ate rather quickly.

Glaser: Then you didn't go home for lunch?

Schiller: No. Did I? [thinking] You know, I really cannot remember. I don't really know. The curriculum--well, first of all, you have two more years in high school than you would have in the United States, so anybody who matriculates from high school has roughly equivalent of the lowest university degree.

Glaser: Do you mean that those two years are the equivalent of a B.A.?

Schiller: I think an associate--A.A.--yes. I would think it's about that.

Glaser: Did you have to go to school on Saturday?

Schiller: Yes.

Glaser: For a full day, or a half day? Oh, forget it. If you don't remember it, it's not important.

Schiller: [laughs] Well, a probably reasonably full day. I mean, it was a six-day week, no matter--life was a six-day week, really. That wouldn't strike me as particularly strange.

Glaser: Now, you have spoken about the teachers, the professors, that you

did—or, does one say "professor" in the gymnasium, or is it just a teacher? Did they have that title?

Schiller: They had the title "professor," most of them did. Some didn't, but then they were just looked down upon. Herr Professor.

Glaser: You've spoken of those that you didn't like. Did you have any that you did enjoy?

Schiller: Oh, yes. I had many that I did enjoy, and I guess this is typical for anyone, that if you enjoy a teacher, you learn more, and if you don't enjoy a teacher, you don't learn much. Now, my first professor in mathematics I liked, and he was excellent. Whatever I know, which is little, about math, I learned from him. The next few years, I had a terrible teacher in math. Oh, he also was our physics professor. So I always had a greater liking for physics than I had for chemistry. We had a terrible chemistry professor, and we had a terrible math professor. Afterwards--in fact, he was somebody who was probably an alcoholic; he appeared to be drunk at all times. Didn't care what we did, couldn't explain anything, and as long as we did our homework so he could enter that it was done, all he cared. As a consequence, I became—I didn't pass in math, in the higher classes, even though I had been—not only had I been an A student in math, I had assisted the professor in teaching, and physics, I

was his assistant. Which fell by the wayside with a poor teacher. But, that's life.

Glaser: Did you have a goal for yourself, or did your parents have a goal for you when you were in high school?

Schiller: I don't think so. Well, my mother I'm sure always had the same goal: _____. But she didn't—not at that early stage, where my father was alive, it wasn't being discussed. I was only being discussed as a matter of fact afterwards. Of course, I had to be a doctor; there was just absolutely no way out of that, and I was going to be one.

My father, I do not think, had a goal for me other than to give me the best possible education. Of course, if I had the aptitude, I would have gone to university, etc. But I think I would have had a reasonable choice; I mean, I would have been able to choose on my own what I really wanted to do. Yes, in the last few years of high school, I had a goal for myself, and it had nothing to do with medicine. I was either going to be a writer or a sculptor or an actor; somewhere in the arts, but not medicine. I didn't rule out medicine, let me put it this way. I liked medicine, but I was personally more intrigued by the arts. So, that's—none of which has come true. [laughter]

Glaser: With this heavy school load, did you have time for hobbies?

Schiller: Yes. I did have time for hobbies. First of all, my hobbies were quite minor, shall we say. Since I spent a great deal of time a) in school b)out of school doing homework, or c)attending to my piano lessons, and reading voraciously--I was reading absolutely everything that came to my... There wasn't much left. I did very early take some photography, including development of films and printing, which happened to be also my father's hobby, which I guess I inherited in certain ways. From a very early age, I may have been about not quite one year old, and I couldn't really walk yet, I was taken skiing and did ski [laughter]. In fact, I skied at that time better than I walked. As long as my father was alive, we went skiing every winter.

Glaser: Where did you go?

Schiller: In an area which is called the Giant Moutains, Riesengeberge, which is on the border between Germany and Czechoslovakia. That was where the closest high mountains to us [were], and usually on the Czech side because they had better snow conditions.

Glaser: Surely you had a stamp collection.

Schiller: Yes, of course I did. It didn't interest me.

Glaser: Every human boy has—

Schiller: Yes, of course. In fact, it was _____. It did not really interest me. Well, I had other collections. I think I had a beetle collection, butterfly collection. And I was, much later—at the time when I got involved in physics, I was constructing rockets.

Glaser: Really! Way back then? I didn't—

Schiller: Yes. Well, rockets had just--were being used at that time in Germany for propulsion of motor cars, just as an experiment. In fact, that was the first use of rockets in Germany that moved anything, was a car. In fact, I think it was Opel who constructed the first rocket car. They were tried out on the what was known as the "Avus" [spells], which was the first freeway or motorway in anywhere in the world, which was constructed between Berlin and Potsdam. It was used for racing occasionally, and for try-outs of this rocket car. That intrigued me.

When I went a step further, I was intrigued by the idea of using it for propulsion to get out of orbit of the earth. Way back then. I had an electric railroad, which of course, every

boy had an electric railroad. Instead of running it around in circles, I built a ramp, and put a flat car on that ramp, on that rail, and loaded it up with a certain gas [makeshift?] which I manufactured myself, and at one time blew up my whole room, including the windows out [laughter]. I think that's the one time that my father was a little cross with me.

Glaser: But normally, he encouraged your scientific experiments.

Schiller: I guess so, yes. In fact, I'm lucky that I got away unscathed, because there was test tubes, glass; I filled them with that gas mix which I generated by separating water into oxygen and hydrogen. That mixture was very inflammable, very explosive. I loaded that mixture into a test tube, and then when I was ready, went with a match and [snaps fingers]. And in fact, I did manage to get the little flat car moving all the way up the ramp and start out in a trajectory and fall down in the room. So, I've done that a few times, until one time I tried to make too much of the gas.

Very early, too, I used parts that were abandoned or discarded--

##[end tape 1, side b; begin tape 2, side a]

Glaser: You were talking about using the rejected instruments from your father's lab--

Schiller: Yes. Well, all kinds of implements and parts of the equipments that were rejected, or had gone wrong, ended up in my hands, and I was trying to build scientific, quote unquote, apparatus. I had built a scientific bench with diodes and end meters, where I could produce electricity of varying voltages, etc. Most of it was rather unsafe, shall we say, but I did it anyway.

Glaser: Did you have—you must have had time--tell me about your relationships with your classmates.

Schiller: My classmates--well, it's hard to generalize. I guess relationships with my classmates were always hampered by two things. One was, I was younger than they were, most of them, and even one year or one and a half years, or in some instances two or three years, is a tremendous difference at that age. And secondly, with few exceptions, one of which I have mentioned like math later on, I was an A student, which doesn't endear a child to others. And more than that, I was kind of strange. I was dressed, certainly in the beginning, differently. I had a different haircut; Little Lord Fauntleroy kind of haircut from most of the kids with whom I went to school in the first three years.

Glaser: How were you dressed differently?

Schiller: Better clothes. Probably mostly that, and I spoke other languages.

Glaser: Were you more sophisticated, is this what you're saying?

Schiller: Probably. In certain ways I was, and in certain ways I was a brat. I was also usually [the] teacher's pet. I mean, not intentionally.

Glaser: That's not an endearing thing.

Schiller: No, none of which is endearing. But it's really difficult for me to reestablish. I think by and large, relationships were fairly good; I obviously had some friends, I know that we had parties at the house, certainly on my birthday. I usually had twelve to fifteen children there. Those were kids who, some who went to school, neighbors, etc.

I did have during those years one or two close friends, with whom I spent most of my time, and essentially this has remained for the rest of my life.

Glaser: Were there school clubs, like a Latin Club, or a Camera Club?

Schiller: No; not that I know of. Of course, you know, there was something else—you had obligatory religious instruction at school, which of course doesn't yet exist in the United States. I attended that, but you had your choice during the Weimar Republic to attend any religious instruction. I found that--that intrigued me, and I've been probably in every religious denominational instruction there was at the time, simply because I wanted to find out what was the difference, if any? I found that, essentially, there really wasn't much of a difference. That's why I could never quite, even at that time, not understand what it was that supposedly made the difference between various people and various religions.

Glaser: Did you have any Jewish affiliation at home?

Schiller: No. Well, I mean, there was never any question about the fact that we were Jews. But if you mean, was there any observance--?

Glaser: Observance or attendance at a synagogue?

Schiller: No. Well, let me qualify that a little bit. My mother came from a totally non-observant family, and her parents already were totally non-observant, and probably before her parents, probably

her grandparents were not really observant. She, too, there was never a question that she was Jewish. Her brother, for instance--she was, as I mentioned earlier, she was brought up by an uncle who was definitely Jewish, who had married a Catholic, and it's worth while noting that both my great uncle and his wife, the Catholic, were taken to a concentration camp and exterminated, and so was their child.

On my father's side, my grandfather, while my grandmother-- at least, so I'm told--was still alive, they had a kosher household. I think he--my father used to say that he liked to come and have dinner with us, because then he could eat whatever he liked. Which was not--we didn't have a kosher household at any time. So much for that. My father would hold a Seder on Pesach--Passover--and I think he did observe Yom Kippur.

[laughs] Very selective.

Glaser: Did they say Yiskor, the prayer for the dead?

Schiller: Yes. I think that's the only time that my father would go to synagogue, would be on Yom Kippur. I don't think my mother ever did, but I don't know. I may do her an injustice. She may have.

Glaser: Did you have a sense that there was an affiliation with the Jewish community in Breslau?

Schiller: Not per se; my father's closest friend was an attorney, who was Jewish, who had married a Protestant wife. They just had grown up together. And he had another fairly close friend, they both were Jewish. I guess yes, I would say there was the closer friends were Jewish, but I think that was more a question of what they were than who they were. It was a level of education, or the level of working together, or having grown up together, or something like that, more than anything else.

As far as I can tell, going back that far, my father certainly--both my parents were totally accepted socially. It made no difference whether they were Jewish or not. I know that many of the people who were my father's patients belonged to, before World War II, was aristocracy, and for reasons unbeknown in the Weimer Republic, still claimed to be aristocracy. Very many very Prussian people--and that applies incidentally also to some professionals. Some of the doctor friends that he had were not Jewish, even though it's always been said that all doctors were Jews; that, of course, is nonsense. He had, yes, some Jewish doctor friends, but he had a lot of Christian doctor friends. One of his bosses who came quite often to have dinner with us, bosses at the university. He was known throughout Germany as a heart specialist, had a title--I don't remember his name now, but it was so-and-so Von whatever.

He in fact was the one who treated him during his final illness. So, though I would say with many of the people we had nothing in common or my parents had nothing in common politically. They did have apparently quite a bit in common otherwise.

Glaser: Was there a distinctly Jewish neighborhood in Breslau?

Schiller: No. There wasn't—or, if there was, I was not aware of it. In both instances where we lived, it certainly wasn't. In fact, there were very few Jews where we lived, if any. [They were just at?] different ends of the city, actually. I don't think so.

Glaser: Tell me about your father's death. What happened then? Was your mother able to sell his practice?

Schiller: No. I don't think so. My mother—as I mentioned earlier, my father's attitude to money was, you know, _____.
Nevertheless, as far as I am able to reconstruct now, he left a sizable income behind, or sizable belongings behind, an estate. Sizable by German concepts at the time. But, it was all very difficult to hold together and one of his closest friends, the attorney, helped my mother do that. But my mother said from the very beginning that she wished my father would have involved her

in financial matters. Money was something that was never discussed. I know that at one time, I was in the next room, in my parents' bedroom, and the door was slightly ajar, and it was during the inflation time and my father and my parents were sitting together in the living room. They were discussing the fact that he had to do something because with all the work, there was not enough money to pay something—whatever it was.

I was terribly shocked. They were discussing a concept, something that I had never heard them discuss before, and never ever since! Money just was something that was beneath their dignity to concern themselves about or discuss.

Glaser: Did it frighten you to hear that?

Schiller: Yes, it absolutely frightened me. In fact, I was so frightened that I do recall that I said something to my father the next day. He frowned for a moment, and then he realized how I must have overheard it. He said, "Don't concern yourself. Money is not something that anyone should ever be concerned about. It's really not something that you—I don't know why we discussed it. Don't worry about it. Money is just something that one has to have to pay for whatever one buys. Well, for reasons that are too difficult to explain to you right now, sometimes even though one has the necessary means, they are not readily available. And

that's really what we were discussing, but it's something that is never discussed when you're with friends, never discussed at the table. If you have to discuss money, you discuss it with your banker. But not with anyone else."

He said, "Money is really not important in life. The important thing is that you do what you do, do it right, and that you have a purpose in life. Everything else doesn't matter." It is something which has deeply influenced me, because I would say until quite recently, I have never considered money important. Essentially, it's very difficult for me to consider money important, even now that I know that it has a definite purpose, or that unfortunately it is needed for certain purposes. Or that, when one is reasonably young, and is not concerned about money, there comes a time when one will have to be concerned about money.

But my mother was just complaining essentially about the same thing, that my father never let her participate. I said, "Did he ever do anything about it?" She said, "No." He didn't either. And therefore, nobody knew exactly what the situation was, and it took some time to establish. We found a great deal of money that was, even at that time, never been billed, never been collected, and we didn't do anything about it either, at that time. But there was essentially--my then guardian, namely

my father's best friend, and my mother and I established that there was enough a) to live reasonably comfortably b) under normal circumstances, which already didn't exist any more. It was end of 1930, November 1930.

Glaser: Was inflation still on, you mean?

Schiller: Yes. Well, no, not inflation, but politically, things weren't right any more.

Glaser: Was that the year of Hitler's push, the [beer hall?] push?

Schiller: No [thinking]. I'm sorry--if you want me to look these things up, I can.

Glaser: Not at all.

Schiller: Okay.

Glaser: How did your mother handle her grief, at your father's death?

Schiller: Well, she was a person who didn't show emotion very much, except occasionally.

Glaser: Did that hinder you in your coming to terms with your loss?

Schiller: No. I mean, I would say at that time, it wasn't a question of my coming to terms with her; I was still a child, I was just thirteen. Of course, I mean personally--I was grief-stricken; but more than grief-stricken, for some reason I blamed myself, which is nothing unusual, for my father's death. I had nothing to do with it. But somehow, I felt responsible. But more than that, a few days earlier, before his death, he had talked to me and said, "When you and mother are alone, you will have to take over, and you will have to be the one who will have to take care of her." And that was lying on my shoulders like a tremendous load at the time, and he was not entirely wrong.

Well, in many respects, she was not what you would call a rational person. Don't misunderstand that, it doesn't mean that she was disturbed or irrational in that sense. But, she was a very strong person, and a very opinionated person, which I didn't realize until much later. As long as my father was alive, he had kind of overshadowed her, in his opinion. He was a very soft-spoken person, and a very gentle person generally speaking. He still was a very forceful person. He was very short; he was much shorter than I am, and I'm short. Still, he always occupied a somewhat commanding position.

It is very difficult to establish what went on in my

mother's head at the time. I had hoped that she would continue the same friendships that my parents had, but she started to withdraw more and more, and instead was concentrating on what she considered "doing the right thing by me." Namely, to make sure that I was going to get my education, etc. etc., which of course is perfectly legitimate and understandable. But, what she really was doing was she [pause], how does one say that? To put it very simply, I think it's best stated in one sentence: that she used more _____ more often as time went on. "After all, you must realize that the only reason I am alive is to take care of you. If it weren't you, I wouldn't be here any more." [laughs] That puts another guilt trip on you, of course. And, no no, she had no purpose in life; she made very clear. Absolutely no purpose, other than to take care of me.

Well, within two years, I had proven to myself and perhaps to her too, which didn't make it any easier, that the decision had to be made by somebody, and I was making the decisions, and I was taking care of her, rather than she was taking care of me. That is the reason, for instance, that we left Germany. She would not have left Germany. But it became a very difficult relationship, until her death in the United States. Don't ask me when. If you want to know, I will find out.

Glaser: Did she live with you in the United States?

Schiller: Oh, yes. Yes. Well, this is the thing. See, she lived with me, with my wife and my children all the time, at all times, and was still taking care of me. Or, if she wasn't taking care of me, she was blaming me for the fact that she had—she was dying a pauper. Because, if I hadn't forced her in the first place to leave Germany, and in the second place to leave at that time Palestine, now Israel, she wouldn't have lost everything that she had.

Glaser: Did you continue to live in that house that was partly your father's office, after his death?

Schiller: No. Only for a very short time; within I guess about six months, we sold everything, whatever could be sold, gave away what had to be given away, and moved to Berlin.

Glaser: Oh, that must have been a terrible wrench for you.

Schiller: Yes, it was.

Glaser: You lost your father, and then you lost your background.

Schiller: I lost my father, I lost my two best friends. And, a budding friendship with a girl. Terrible things to happen, in addition

to everything else, yes. Yes. Perfectly true.

Glaser: Was Berlin overwhelming in its size and the bustle of it?

Schiller: Well, no. Because, I'd been to Berlin quite often. I had quite often stayed with my great uncle and great aunt in Berlin, which incidentally was in East Berlin, what now is East Berlin. That's where they had a business.

Glaser: What was that section called?

Schiller: It was Brandenburger Strasse, but I don't know what the particular quarter was called there. But that is where I made my first political acquaintances, both on the extreme left and the extreme right. Because, it really was actually a very proletarian neighborhood. Factory workers, etc., and unemployed. Also the first time in my life that I had seen police--

##end tape 2 side a, begin tape 2 side b

Glaser: --so that the tape comes out a little bit. Okay.

Schiller: This [Berlin] is [the] one place where I had seen police brutality for the first time, but as time went on, unfortunately, police brutality was not restricted to these areas, but became

more common all over Germany, and certainly all over Berlin. No, when you asked originally whether it frightened me to be in Berlin, no, it didn't at all. Though I had great difficulty to tear myself loose from my school, my best friends. It was my father's best friend who helped me a great deal and talked to me at the time a great deal. He realized the difficulties that I experienced, and he talked me into accepting that. He said, you know, educationally and politically, it is much better for you to be in Berlin than to be in Breslau, because as I expect things will deteriorate politically in Germany very fast, and in more metropolitan areas and more tolerant areas, probably the better it will be for you.

Glaser: Could you have stayed in Breslau; was there any reason for moving to Berlin?

Schiller: No. The reason that we moved was really my mother's desire to be close to her family, or the remnants of her family, namely my great aunt and great uncle, who brought her up. But that was one of the reasons. Secondly, my father's brother was in Berlin; he had gotten married much earlier, and he was married to another doctor, both ophthalmologists, and both in practice together in Berlin. I don't know where my aunt and her husband, my father's sister, were; I don't remember now. I think they were still in Breslau.

One other reason that my mother wanted to move was that her brother was in Breslau, and she had totally broken with him. There was no relationship left. I will never know why; I don't even know whether he might have been still alive when we were here, when we came here. He had moved to [Bogota?], and so I don't know what happened to him really. As I had mentioned earlier, he had married a German aristocrat, and there was a very strong enmity between my mother and his wife, I think. I think that had something to do with it, but she always denied that. It was all "my uncle's fault." I'm quite sure, knowing my mother rather well, since I did get to know her rather well in later years, is that she contributed her part, at least. I've always been a little unhappy about it, because I remember him as being—well, he was different. He was very tall; very dashing in appearance, and of course he was a cavalry officer in World War I; did all the things that Prussian officers would do like dueling, so that you would have scars on the face, and all these wonderful things.

But, nevertheless, he was always very nice to me. That's all I can say, of course. So, I do not know what happened to him, but it's a pity. But that was, I think, one of the reasons to leave Breslau, because her brother was in Breslau, so at least there was a distance. And I have to say that my mother's aunt

and uncle were really the only grandparents I ever had, that I was aware of, other than my father's father for a very brief time.

Glaser: Did you literally live with them, or near them?

Schiller: No, no. We lived at the--we were almost as far removed as we were in Breslau--no, not quite. We lived at the West End, we lived in Grunewald.

Glaser: That's a very nice section.

Schiller: Oh, yes. It's a very nice section; it took a good hour by underground to visit, and that was just fine. We'd visit once a week or so, on the weekends.

Glaser: And that was enough to give your mother the feeling of support?

Schiller: Yes.

Glaser: Did she become less withdrawn after the move to Berlin?

Schiller: No. Actually, if anything more withdrawn. She became more and more withdrawn, if that was possible at all, during the rest of her life. She found it scandalous that we had children.

[laughs] But once they were here, they were hers, not ours.

[laughs] She was very possessive, and since she couldn't have me the way she wanted me, my oldest son was a good substitute.

Glaser: What did she do in Berlin? Did she have no outside activities?

Schiller: No; she was reading, writing letters to I guess my father's best friends, cooking for me. As a consequence, I was like this [makes rounded gesture; laughs].

Glaser: I assume you lived in an apartment?

Schiller: Yes. Very nice one, very elegant apartment. We had taken some of the more modern furniture with us. My father and my mother had added some--the music room, which was all new furniture. It was very nice, and new library. It was a very, very elegant apartment.

Glaser: Do you remember the name of the street you lived at?

Schiller: Teplitzer Strasse. [spells]

Glaser: And where did you go to school?

Schiller: Grunewald Gymnasium, which was supposedly the best school in

Berlin. That was a new experience too, because in contrast to the _____ Gymnasium where I had been originally, Johanneum in Latin--

Glaser: Did they call it Johanneum?

Schiller: Oh, of course. It was also humanistic, but with it, you had in the upper classes, you had a choice to branch out and become more--go more towards the Real Gymnasium, if you wanted to. But you could also continue exactly where you were, and something else which really was a major difference: it was co-educational.

Glaser: At your age, a whole new world!

Schiller: How shocking! [laughter] Very few girls, mostly boys, but still, it was co-educational.

Glaser: Did that add spice to your life?

Schiller: I don't think so, no, because I was a newcomer. It didn't add much, and particularly, I know there were all kinds of scandalous goings-on, that I was aware of, and again, I was much younger than anybody else. I only remember one thing that one of the teachers had to leave, and very soon, one of the young women had to leave, too. They very soon moved to Vienna and had a child.

That's why she had to leave.

Glaser: Did you say they moved together?

Schiller: Yes. And of course, this was all discussed in greatest detail; "the talk of the day."

Glaser: I would think so!

Schiller: Yes. Particularly, since there were so few educational institutions that were co-educational. There were private schools at that time; quite a few of the private schools were definitely co-educational, but the public schools were not.

Glaser: How did this compare to the schools you had gone to in Breslau?

Schiller: Well, the one in Breslau perhaps was more rigid, and the one in Berlin was more liberal, in attitudes and teaching and enforcement of discipline. Almost in every respect, it was more liberal.

Glaser: Did you have the--did you choose the same curriculum that you had in Breslau?

Schiller: Essentially, yes. I mean, there were some differences, of course

I hadn't had as many years—I think I dropped Greek, because I had had all the Greek that I possibly could have had at the _____ Gymnasium. I had so much more Greek already, that then I would have had to enter a class where they were discussing things that years ago I had already learned and discussed. So that was different. Latin was not stressed as much any more, as it was in Breslau. Instead, foreign languages were more stressed, which was fine with me.

Glaser: Were you able to form friendships?

Schiller: No. Not really. I don't think so. It's difficult to say now. I don't think so, because I didn't stay long enough. I don't-- [thinking]—I don't think I stayed more than two and a half years. I took a while to get into it. Yes, I'm sure I was friendly with some people, but it was nothing that I could even— that left any impact on me.

Glaser: You must have been a very lonely young boy.

Schiller: Yes. I probably was.

Glaser: Was there an adult that you could turn to to talk to, and relate some of this?

Schiller: I don't know that I settled in any way at the time, because those were the years when I read even more than I had before, and I wrote quite a bit. I was being kept busy. I kept myself very busy. When I was—I started to do something which I have done almost throughout my life, that I would walk around and get inspired by nature or buildings or whatever; whatever happened to intrigue me, observing people. I know that I created a few little scandals of my own, that when a 14-year old writes an essay—a free essay, we were just asked to write an essay, free, whatever comes to your mind—on prostitution, I think that was not acceptable in Germany.

Glaser: Not even in bohemian Berlin?

Schiller: No, no, no, no. Not in the West End, no. Something must have been very wrong with me. I know, my mother was called, the question was raised—well, there was a very brief note somewhere that it's not a proper subject to write about. I had the impudence of asking the teacher, "Well, the writing was all right?"

"What has that got to do with it? Absolutely nothing?" I mean, the important thing is to write—"Why do you occupy your mind with that?" I said, "Because I can't help noticing it; I can't help seeing it. All you have to do is go to the _____"

Strasse." "Why do you do that? Are you going there at night?" I said, "I go any time I want to."

Well, of course, I have to add that I just read all of Dostoyevsky, and so I was trying to write a Dostoyevsky style, and I was writing about a mysterious person, who I called in my essay as Madame X, and who finally committed suicide. The concern was that a) either I had had an experience with a prostitute (which I hadn't), or b) that I was suicidal. I was neither one. [laughs] It was--what they didn't realize was that, you're being asked to write something, and I was quite aware of the fact--and I remember it very clearly, I was going to shock them. And I intended to shock. I wanted to see, was it the subject that was more important or the writing that they were after, or what? And I found out. The writing didn't matter; the subject was all-important, particularly when you're being given the freedom of selecting something, why don't you write about your last vacation?

Because it wasn't interesting! So, in fact then this was serious enough that my father's best friend, who came on a visit at that time, my mother showed it to him and told him about it, and he took me aside and he shook his head and he said, "You must know better than that. Why did you write that?" I said, "Is anything wrong with it? Is it well-written?" He said, "Yes,

it's quite well-written." I said, "What's wrong with it?" He said, "Well, you know you would shock them. Why do that? Why shock people?" Well, I guess it must have to do with being fourteen years old, you know, or fifteen or whatever; that you have that desire to shock people.

It is something that I've never quite lost, incidentally. I mean, to be very frank about it, I'm still shocking people. I mean, I'm not writing about prostitutes [laughs], that's not what I need. I've retained the ability to shock people, and sometimes I do it deliberately. Just to stir them up and find out what's going on.

Glaser: Do you have an anti-authority attitude?

Schiller: Of course I have. I always have had. I wouldn't have survived if I hadn't had.

Glaser: But that must have gotten you into all kinds of trouble at school.

Schiller: Oh, yes, it did. Very much so. Well, it really was, in certain ways, a very uneventful time. Except that the art classes were very good; I enjoyed those, that we had in school. I think there were one or two teachers—it's a little different from being a

teacher's pet and admiring teachers, and having a personal relationship with teachers. One or two I think I had developed a very nice relationship [with], a very pleasant one. That, I think, helped me overcome certain difficulties.

Glaser: Going to school in [Schalattenberg?] must have meant that you were more with your peers than you were in Breslau.

Schiller: Oh, yes. Well, actually, I don't remember now where the Johanneum was, exactly. But, you see, it wasn't a neighborhood school. It was in Breslau, too, the best Gymnasium. As a consequence, people from--well, more my peers were in that school than in the original prep school.

Glaser: Oh, I guess it was in the prep school that you felt you stood out, because of being better dressed?

Schiller: Yes. The only way I did stand out throughout my school years was my age. And, the fact that, though I was quite athletic, being a skier, mountain climber, and swimmer, long-distance swimmer, I was shorter than most--first of all, most of them were older. Secondly, many were taller than I was, and I was younger. That makes quite a difference.

Glaser: What was going on in Berlin at that time?

Schiller: Well, at the time, or very soon after we got there, it became evident that there was a movement towards the right, politically. First of all, as you probably will recall, Hindenberg became president, and was in the National Party--became the dominant party, the right-wing party. His offering to include Hitler in the government certainly didn't make things any easier; in fact, that was what got him his first foot into--.

##end tape 2 side b, end of interview 1

Interview 2; 7/1/87

Begin tape 3, side a##

Glaser: This is July the first, the second interview with Mr. Schiller. This is just a test run to make sure that everything is operating properly. [tests]

Mr. Schiller, in the 1930s, Berlin was a very lively, cultural place. It had the reputation of being more bohemian and easygoing, and more permissive, than the rest of Germany. While you were fourteen at the time, tell me what you were aware of culturally.

Schiller: Well, culturally, I guess I wasn't that aware. I came to Berlin exactly thirteen years of age, so during the next few years, I did become aware of a certain amount of cultural goings-on. For one thing, I was interested in music, and as a consequence, I went quite often to the opera--behind the scenes. I volunteered as an extra, and in this fashion I believe I did see and hear most of the operas in existence, at least those that were performed at the opera in Berlin. I was aware, of course, of the outstanding museums that were in Berlin, and did visit them quite often. But, what you were referring to earlier, I think are areas that were somewhat out of my comprehension and _____; I just was too young for that. I was aware of, in a remote way,

that Berlin was different from any other city that I had seen in Germany, or most cities that I had seen outside of Germany. Since I had never been to Paris, and the only other very large cities were Swiss or Italian cities that I had seen at that age, Berlin was different. Very different. Very lively and very--a tremendous amount of traffic, and quite international.

Though it became very obvious, even that early, in the early thirties, that things were changing. Particularly in Berlin. I was also aware of the political frictions that were existant in Germany and particularly in Berlin at that time, because my--at least once a week, visits to my great aunt and great uncle-- during those weekly visits, I became very much aware of the differences in frictions, political frictions between various groups in Germany. In the early thirties, the two strongest parties were the extreme left and the extreme right, the National Socialist Party on the right, the Communist Party on the left. I've seen a great number of street clashes and interference by police, including a certain amount of police brutality, which started to exist at that time, and became stronger as time went on. When I refer to police brutality, it's the unwarranted use of force, quite openly, the knocking down of people, sometimes innocent bystanders, or those who exercise the right of a citizen in a democracy to protest, without actually interfering with the--how shall I say it? They weren't really interfering with

government, commerce, or traffic, or anything, other than holding up a sign, or standing on the sidelines as a parade would go by, and making comments. That was, even at that time, enough for police to react and to use billy clubs and brutally smash them over the heads or shoulders and knock them down.

Glaser: Was this as early as your first year in Berlin, or did it--?

Schiller: Yes, as early as 1930, and then certainly in '31 and '32 it became stronger. I think the probably major lesson that any democracy can learn from what happened in Berlin or in Germany at that time, is that the so-called "Revolution," the Nazi revolution, was totally within the law, using the tools of the democracy, and gaining power, strictly on the basis of elections and then, as the Nazi party became the strongest party in Germany, and had the necessary votes, by parliamentary procedures to obtain more and more power. So it was a take-over by the Nazis that was totally within at least the apparent letter of the law, and legality of the Weimar Republic.

It is only after they had secured the power, and I would say they had totally secured power by 1932, not as most people think by 1933, that by certain mechanisms of Hitler's and the Nazi's in the [Reisstach?], that they managed to create extraordinary powers for themselves, for Hitler, and gradually took over to the

point that it became a dictatorship and it was no longer, by any stretch of the imagination, a free country, or a democracy.

Glaser: Did you see any of the police brutality when you were still in Breslau, or was this only when you got to Berlin?

Schiller: No. I had never seen anything like it, and the only time that I did see it was in, at that time, in the eastern part of Berlin, in the so-called proletarian areas, from the home or near the home of my relatives, and I think the other day you did ask me how to spell something, and I couldn't understand why you asked me for [brandbau?]-I had said Bermauer [spells] Strasse. That is where they were in Berlin.

I would say there was almost always something going on. For one reason, there was at that time in the early thirties and the late twenties--historically in the late twenties, but I was not aware of that--certainly in the early thirties, there were a great number of people who didn't have any work. You were more aware of that in East Berlin, perhaps, than certainly then in West Berlin, where you were not aware of those fluctuations as much as were people who lived from day to day and had work one day and no work for the next five, or something like that. And that, in itself, created frictions. You would see people hanging around, during the week, near the--what was it called? It wasn't

called—by us, it was called "Kneipe," [spells]. In other words, it came to a bar, but areas where you could--beer was dispensed, wine, and spirits, and hard liquor.

That's where they would hang out, and that is where quite a bit of political activities would go on, and you would also see that certain establishments were frequented by National Socialists, and others by Communists, others by Social Democrats. One group would occasionally go over to the other and start raiding it, and create a little bit of an upset, an uproar, and that is, I guess, I seem to recall that you would almost always see a great number of police who would respond to an alarm of some sort. It was very apparent that, in the early thirties, certainly by '31 and '32, they would always side with the National Socialists and they would not interfere with their activities. In fact, they would almost be part of it, and they would jointly harass the other political beliefs.

It is also perhaps interesting to realize that, if the Social Democrats and the Democrats had been able to come to an understanding with other smaller parties of the left or from the center to the left, that perhaps they might have been able to prevent the Nazis from gaining the power that they ultimately did gain. But, the fact that they were not united, the fact that they were not even willing politically to make a common front,

isolated the second largest party, the Communist Party, in no time at all. It was the political aim, strangely enough, of the Social Democrats and Democrats, and certainly the center parties, to close their eyes to anything that was done to the Communist Party, because they considered them their enemies almost as much as the National Socialist Party considered the Communists their enemies.

Glaser: The government at that time was socialist, the Weimar Republic?

Schiller: No, it was no longer socialist. The government was nationalist. Hindenberg's party, and von Papen--[I am] always a little shaky when it comes to exact days, I have to tell you that. To me, this is all condensed and it's all one area, one era, and it's very difficult for me to separate that, but if you want me to, I can look it up.

But essentially, it was a nationalist government. In fact, in either '31 or '32, Hitler was asked to become chancellor, and refused at that time, because he did not want to cooperate, or totally cooperate with the Nationalist Party. He must have--he played it all out to be, he wanted total takeover and total power, and he felt that if he had agreed at that time, to go into government as chancellor, he would have had to make too many compromises that he wasn't willing to make.

But he managed in no time at all, shall we say, the National Socialists in the Reischtag, managed in no time at all to have a vote of no confidence, in which they succeeded, against the then chancellor, who was appointed, and I think it was von Schleicher [spells]. That government was toppled, and I am not entirely certain when Hitler accepted to become chancellor. It was either late in '32 or early in '33. Very soon after that, the Reischtag voted him extraordinary powers, and first of all--the extraordinary powers were only voted after the Reischtag voted to make the Communist Party illegal in Germany. The moment the second largest party was illegal, he did not need any alliances with anybody any more because the National Socialists had the majority in the Reischtag, and absolute majority so they could essentially do whatever they pleased and proceeded to do so.

Glaser: You said it was the Nationalist Party that was in power. Was the Nationalist Party different from the National Socialist Party?

Schiller: Oh, yes. Yes. It [the Nationalist Party] was to the right of center, but certainly not--had nothing in common with the Nazi Party, other than that they were right of center. The Nationalist Party was an establishment party, of course. It was a party of the industrialists, and it was--obviously, Germany was a multi-party system, not like the United States, and still, I

would say, the equivalent of the Nationalist Party would be right-wing Republicans in this country. Comparatively--very conservative Republicans. I shouldn't even say right-wing. But I mean, those were people who were in support of the army, were in support of rearmament, and very strong nationalist feeling, and were in support of the heavy industry. In fact, that's where the money for the party activities came from, from heavy industry. From Bohlen Halpach, _____, the major industrialists in Germany, and later on, the people who did most of the armament work. Weapons manufacturers, and steel manufacturers, were the ones who were mostly financially behind the Nationalist Party.

Glaser: How did this, all that was happening, have an impact on you and your schoolyears?

Schiller: Well, it had quite a bit of impact. One of the first things that happened, even before Hitler became chancellor, and von Papen, was that the SESA, the brown shirts, Hitler's brown shirts, who were illegal up to that point--in other words, were not permitted to parade around in brown uniforms--were legalized, and were permitted to wear their uniforms. However, in public schools, there was a very strict law in existence in Germany that politics were supposedly outlawed, and that the wearing of political insignia, even a pin, was outlawed, certainly the wearing of

political uniforms was outlawed.

Starting in the late 1930 and probably beginning of 1931, this was mostly observed [in the breach?]. That was the time when the Nazis started to recruit students in high schools, and even prior to high schools, to join Hitler Youth, and then, on certain occasions, at first just here and there, and then later on more and more, they would appear at school, come to school in full regalia and uniform. First they had a pin, then they would wear a brown shirt, then they would wear a brown and the swastika armband, and finally they appeared with absolutely everything, including their daggers, which of course was illegal too. We were not permitted to bring anything that could be used in an attack on another student to the school, and in fact as I am personally aware, some of them were armed with pistols. Which would not be shown openly, but would be hidden in a pocket or pushed into the pants somewhere.

What became more and more apparent as the takeover by these groups of Nazi Youth [progressed], on a schoolyard in intermissions between classes, they would form little groups, and they would--did start quite early to attack those whom they didn't like for no reason whatsoever, other than they didn't like them. It was certainly sufficient if somebody was known to be Jewish, he was likely to be attacked. It usually was in the form

of taunting somebody, and then claiming afterwards that the person who was taunted--of course, they would never admit to having taunted anybody--had responded in some fashion, and that was--in other words, "He attacked us first," one person usually attacking ten, fifteen of the other bully boys. Then, of course, all ten to fifteen would jump on that poor individual, until blood was flowing and the victim of their attack would be on the ground.

At first, the supervising teachers would interfere, but gradually they got--I think they started to understand that interference with the Nazis was not desirable for their own good, and they became more and more reluctant to do anything about it. They would look the other way. In fact, it became rather evident quite early on, so before '33, that unless, as a Jew, number one you had first-class grades in class, secondly you were on your best behaviour, the likelihood that you would be able to stay in school was very minimal. When I say that, it is because I've been known to interfere in fights like this. Number one, I was older than the ones that were usually being attacked. Secondly, I had a very hot temper, and thirdly, I was in those days, I was white-blond, I was fairly strong--I was involved in athletics--I was not, quote unquote, "suspected" of being Jewish, and therefore was myself not the object of attack. I used to come to the assistance of those who were being attacked, whether

they were Jewish or were being attacked for reasons unbeknown to me, maybe political reasons, by uniformed Nazi Youth.

I remember at least three instances in those years where the chief attacker ended up with a bloody nose. That wasn't I. [laughs] So, I was called in one day to the principal's office, and he said to me, "Well, you know Schiller, your teachers like you, as you know, you're a very good student, and you shouldn't endanger your possibilities, but we won't be able to defend you if you consistently will attack Hitler Youth people. You shouldn't interfere in these things; you can't help it. This is greater than you are, greater than we are, and the best thing for you to do is just ignore it like we are forced to ignore it."

Well, I told the principal at the time that this was out of the question for me, that to me, this was a matter of principle, and I could not stand idly by while people were being attacked who were weaker, and for no apparent reason other than that the bully boys didn't like them. That it was against the law of the republic, and that I believed that the laws of the republic should be upheld. Well, I was told, "You must realize that Hitler is going to take over quite soon, and at that point this all will be held against you, that you will have to leave the school. You're close enough now to complete your high school training that you should do anything in your power not to

endanger that." Well, we disagreed and parted on that basis.

But I stayed in the school, and I also had told the principal that the moment anyone had to leave, I would leave voluntarily. I wasn't going to take any special gifts from Hitler or anybody else. I was not going to be treated differently from anyone else, and that he could count on it that the moment a person had to leave, either because of his or her beliefs or because of being Jewish, that I would leave, too.

Glaser: How old were you then?

Schiller: Fourteen.

Glaser: So you had two more years of school to go?

Schiller: Yes. I think so. Actually, three years almost. The day came much sooner, really, than I had thought at the time.

##end tape 3 side a, begin tape 3 side b

It had come sooner than I thought it would. The first indication was that I came down one day in a break between classes, to a school yard, and immediately was surrounded by a group of brown-shirted students, some of them from my own class, and they

started jeering and hoping that I would start a fight, which I didn't and I wouldn't. Finally, one of them came up to me and said, "I'll show you how we deal with those who defend the little Jew boys." He started yelling, "Jew lover, Jew lover," and before I knew it, I felt a very sharp pain in my chest, and I realized that he had--then everybody disappeared. I realized that he had stabbed me, with a very sharp stiletto--stiletto is a very thin long knife. I was bleeding a little, and it was right in the heart area, but I didn't feel faint or anything, still it was kind of scary. I went to a school nurse, who immediately got a doctor to check me, and I was checked and was told that it was within a matter of two or three millimeters from the heart. But that, fortunately, nothing had happened, I was given some injection against infection, and that was it.

The day after that, I was again called to the principal, and he said to me, "You know, I've been very lenient with you, I've warned you, and you haven't taken my remarks seriously. This is the last time I'm going to tell you this. If there is another incident of any kind, you will have to leave the school." Well, obviously, I reacted, I said, "I didn't do anything, I was being attacked!"

"Well," he said, "that is just as a reaction to your various interferences and attacks on them." [laughs] I just looked at

him and I said, "Does that mean I'm removed from this school?"

"No, no, this is a last warning. If anything else happens, you've had it."

Glaser: Weren't you very frightened to go back to school the day after having been attacked?

Schiller: No. I wasn't. I got my warning, quote unquote, and I was just-- you know, when you're fourteen, you don't believe anything can ever happen to you. Which of course, is very stupid. In retrospect, but... That's the way it was. I think it was quite obvious, it was intended not--though he could have easily killed me, it was intended to frighten me more than to--and give me a warning, than to do anything to me in that sense.

So I did continue to go to school, and then we had, a little later, must have been about a month later, I don't remember exactly when all this happened, there was a convocation, and I guess it must either have been the beginning of the semester or the end of a semester, where everybody was in the school auditorium, and we were being addressed by the principal and somebody else--all of which is perfectly normal and nothing special attached to that, and as it was common in Germany, on all such occasions, at the end there would be the National Anthem

would be played, and everybody was supposed to stand and sing.

Now, I have to admit that I had an aversion when it came to strong expressions of nationalism, in any country. I still do. But, I've always behaved properly; I would stand, like everybody else, and would be quiet, and certainly had no particular objection to the National Anthem that was still the same National Anthem that was used during the Weimar Republic--and this was still the Weimar Republic. It still wasn't Hitler's Germany--yes, it was Hitler's Germany but not officially so. And, as it ended, and everybody sat down, or started to move, somebody yelled from the balcony to stay, and to remain at attention, and in the balcony were all the Hitler Youth in brown uniforms, and they started singing the anthem of the Nazi movement, the so-called Horst Wessel Lied.

And that, of course, was totally illegal. That was officially not acceptable, it had nothing to do with the National Anthem at that time, and it was an expression of the extreme right, and a political act. And the law very strictly forbade that. Of course, nobody paid any attention.

Absolutely everybody, including all the teachers, including the principal, were standing at attention, and most of them were singing, too. And I sat down. Well, this was finished, and

everybody was dismissed. We left for the doors, and I was on my way home, which was not very far, it took me about a quarter of an hour to walk home, and somewhere, I had to pass a body of water, fairly large body of water--I can't remember exactly what it was--it's a lake of some sort. As I was coming very close to that lake, I heard a shot. I just saw a glimpse of a few brown-shirted boys from my class, who started running. In fact, they came running after me. My only possible reaction at that moment was, I had to hide, and I had to do something. So, I jumped fully dressed into the water and swam across, and escaped them.

I believe that I heard two or three more shots, but nothing hit me fortunately. So, I got home, and then there were some phone calls, anonymous phone calls, telling me if I would show up at school, they would get me anyway. I was then ordered again to come and see the principal, and was told that I was barred from attending any public school in Prussia. I said, "Well, how am I supposed to complete my education?" He said, "Well, that's your business. You've been warned. You can go to a Jewish school--" there were some private schools--"and see what you can do."

In fact, he acted cordially. In a way, he said he was terribly sorry, but he had absolutely no choice, because not only was I endangering myself, I was endangering everybody because of my intransigence and unwillingness to cooperate.

Well, that was probably true. So, let me back up here a little bit. The first indication that I ever had that there was something going on politically in the country, that was beyond the norm, was a day or two after my father had died, and in his will he had decreed that there should be an autopsy, because as a doctor was personally involved with the kind of illness that he had, he wanted science to know exactly what had been going on and why. And, the autopsy took place in Breslau at the university hospital, and his brother, my uncle; and my mother, and I, were driven in my father's car to the hospital, and then accompanied the coffin back to the cemetery from there.

It was comparatively late in the evening; it was semi-dark. The hearse--there were two types of hearses in Germany. One that was all glass and showing the coffin and the flowers, and whatever, it was considered normal for a Christian funeral. A Jewish hearse, which was totally enclosed, which was just a black car, and the only indication that it was Jewish was a star of David on either side. It was all black and there was a black star of David on it, almost invisibly, in essence. It was raised. We were driving through some lane, and I can't remember exactly where, and all of a sudden somebody was throwing dirt on the hearse, from the side of the street, and was yelling, "Dirty Jew."

That was the first time in my life that I had become aware that there were people who hated Jews. I was not aware of that at all. It was also the first indication of any anti-Semitic activity of some sort that I had personally observed. This became, of course, more frequent later on, in the next few years, though fortunately I didn't stay long enough around to find out how bad it could get.

Well, after this incident, after the incident where I was removed from the school, my mother and I and my father's best friend, who had specially come to Berlin to discuss matters with me, were discussing what to do.

Glaser: I assume that your mother was not aware of what led up to this, the danger in which you placed yourself?

Schiller: I think she was. The usual thing was, I think she had in fact called my father's best friend saying, "I can't control him, he's totally out of control, and he's endangering himself, and me, and everybody, and maybe you can talk some sense into him," you know. That was the usual thing. She felt he couldn't handle it any more. So, we all had a meeting, and my father's best friend did not--I mean, he did caution me not to do things that would enrage the Nazis in any way, but he also said to me that he fully

understood that my attitude, and he talked to my mother to tell her that he couldn't share her opinion that one has to take everything.

She said, "But what are we going to do? He's endangering us, and he was told before that nothing would happen if he would just keep quiet, and that he could stay, and here he is the first one to be thrown out of school, from the Grunewald Gymnasium. That's terrible! What is he going to do? He'll never be able to go to university," and I think it was at this point that I said, "Well, you don't even have to assume that I'll be able to, or that any Jew will be able to go to university in Germany in a few years' time."

"Oh, this is nonsense, our family has been in Germany for seven or eight hundred years, and we are Germans, and why should anything happen to us..." Well, I didn't share the opinion, and I do not really, I cannot establish now, any more, what it was that had given me the idea that one had to do something. But essentially, all my life, perhaps because of that situation, I've been an activist. I guess I must have been an activist at that time. I said, "You know, we ought to take a look outside of Germany." We've always gone out on vacation every year. "Let's see whether we can't go somewhere else where Nazis do not exist, and whether it might not be possible to continue a normal life

somewhere else." Well, "Where would you go? You were born in Germany, you are German. It's ridiculous, you shouldn't!" Etc.

Well, I can tell you actually what probably determined my desire to go, is because I had seen some ghastly parades at night, with torchlights, of Nazis in Berlin, in the Tiergarten, where thousands of them were marching through the streets. I was very impressed by the fact that this took over at a rate that was unprecedented, and that nobody tried to stop it; nobody could stop it. This was just--these were just parades, still there were always four or five or six going along side the parade on the sidewalk, and people who wouldn't jump to attention and salute the swastika in the accustomed manner were being hit by them, while they were being pushed off the sidewalk. So, brutality of some sort was always in existence. Plus, I've seen, on those occasions, people being knocked down, and then apparently being unconscious or semi-conscious, and being stepped on with boots and kicked with the point of the boot. I think that, even to have grownup, this would have been a scary sight to see. But, for somebody fourteen, fifteen years old, at a very impressionable age, that's something one doesn't forget.

The painful cries that one would hear from people who were knocked down, and then they would leave them; just leave them in the street. Nobody would attend to them, nobody would find out

whether they were hurt, or anything. They were just lying there and moaning. I just felt that, even though I might have been a German, this was not my country. I couldn't stand it, and I couldn't stay in a country where that was possible. There was no question at that time--of course, we all knew that Hitler had threatened to annihilate all Jews. You could read it in every paper, every day. And certainly, in the "Voelkischer Beobachter," which was handed out on the streets for free, you could see it.

The attacks on Jews, at least in the press and certainly in the Nazi press, were very outspoken and very clear what was going to happen. Of course, nobody believed it; nobody really believed that any civilized nation, and after all, Germany was civilized--sure there was anti-Semitism before, but I personally had never experienced anti-Semitism during the time that I was--until those last two years. I had never seen anti-Semitism at school or anywhere else, but it must have existed, and it certainly did exist in pre-World War I Germany. The generation before me or my grandparents certainly were aware of it. But, it was some kind of a benign anti-Semitism. Probably the kind of anti-Semitism that has existed in the United States too. And perhaps, in certain areas of the United States, still does exist.

But, certainly nobody tried to kill anybody because a person

was Jewish. So, I don't know what really influenced me to come to the conclusion that there was no life for me in Germany. In any--it also perhaps had something to do with the fact that one member of my family, the husband of my father's sister, who was also a doctor as I have mentioned, was a Zionist. He was the only one that I'm personally aware of who was a Zionist. He had always said, "Well, you should go to [then] Palestine and, you should leave early." The interesting thing is, well, he did. His family left. But, if I remember correctly, he left long after I had left.

But we came to a conclusion that we should at least go on a vacation, because everything else at that point was already difficult; if you--you could still go outside of Germany, and if you would go on a vacation, a certain amount of German currency was permitted to be taken out for the purpose of a vacation. But, if you had indicated that you intended to leave, then your accounts would be closed, and you couldn't withdraw anything from your accounts, and you had to pay a certain amount of special tax, and that was already in the last year before Hitler took over. In other words, in 1932. So, it was a very dangerous thing to leave, even to talk about leaving the country, other than on a vacation.

So, I think my father's friend managed to convince my mother

that we should really go and see where I could get an education outside of Germany, and where I might be able to go to university, and what might be necessary for that; what would they require. He also advocated, just in order to get some money out, that she take out a life insurance for me, and that she pay the premium in full for the life insurance, so that nothing would have to be paid, but once we were outside of Germany, that we could either buy it back, (of course there might be some loss, but still, you would be able to take money out that otherwise you couldn't take out).

Well, since she relied very much on his advice, certainly in financial matters, this was done. And, an insurance policy for thirty thousand marks was taken out, with the--it was a Swiss insurance [company]. She then bought a ticket to Czechoslovakia, where we had been very often. In fact, every winter, for skiing, I had a ticket only to the German side of the border. She went through to Prague, where nobody would bother us--a woman, she was forty-two or forty-one at the time. Nobody would bother her. But I didn't--I was advised not to go across the border officially, because I might have some unpleasant occurrence. It was unclear what, but the feeling was that they were looking for me at this point.

So, knowing the border extremely well, and having been

skiing it for many, many years, ever since I was one year old, I went across the border at night in a snowstorm, on skis. And then, going down on the other side, I took the next train and went to Prague and joined her.

We went from Prague to Switzerland, [Baslo?], where the insurance company was, and had a meeting there. She had the papers with her, and they had no record of the insurance. Well, they actually called the agent--we had all the information that she had with her--and the agent said, Oh, he just hadn't transferred it to them yet. It was quite some time, at least five or six months or so, since the insurance had been concluded. ##[end tape 3 side b, begin tape 4 side a]

As I know now, after the war, when the matter was further investigated, the money was never transferred to Switzerland.

Glaser: So your mother never got the money?

Schiller: No. And of course, it was confiscated, together with everything else. In fact, this was some arrangement, that the German branch of that Swiss insurance had made with the government, that in order to avoid any money being transferred into Switzerland, that they would act as if this was possible and, in effect, turn it over to a frozen bank account in Germany.

Glaser: Then, how did you have the money to travel further from Switzerland? Did your mother have enough money?

Schiller: Yes. She had enough money, because she had bought tickets in Germany, and had been able to take out enough that I had carried with me, which was another stupid thing to do. I had carried with me quite a bit of money across the border. Actually, there was a tremendous prison sentence on that, if you would smuggle money out of Germany, and later on of course--not at that time--later on, you would be shot. As simple as all that.

But, I made it, and I'm still here.

Glaser: Where did you go from Switzerland?

Schiller: From Switzerland, we went to Trieste by train, and from Trieste we sailed for Jaffa.

Now, we arrived--as everybody did at that time--in Jaffa, and from there went to Tel Aviv, which is--the two cities are almost one city. From Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, then traveled a little bit through the country. Though my mother enjoyed traveling, she always did, and enjoyed essentially what she saw, she made it very clear to me that that was no country for her,

and she would never be happy there. I had made up my mind that that's where I was going to be, going to go. What made it a little easier to make up one's mind in that respect was that another regulation came out in Germany that anybody who wanted to leave Germany had to leave practically everything behind in Germany. However, if you would go to Palestine and had a visa from the British authorities--it was British-mandated territory at that time--then the only way you could get a visa was if you would bring with you and show that you had with you, per family, one thousand pounds.

That was, at that time, quite a bit of money. So it was really the only place in the world, under given--certain circumstances, you would be able to take a fairly large amount of money with you. But that's perhaps a little later, that is what my mother then decided to do because that was the only way that she could get any money out of Germany. And obviously, without money, it would have been practically impossible to pursue an education or live in another country.

So, that is what ultimately persuaded her and again, with the advice of my father's best friend, and also my uncle who had told her that that really was the thing to do, and that since he had two children, he was going to go, and she should go with me, that is what ultimately happened. But also, the advice had been

that, no matter what else would happen, that I should stay out of Germany, should not come back. I should stay, if we decided to go to Palestine, or anywhere else, that I should stay in that country and that she should go back, and do the necessary things--sell things, keep things that she wanted to take along, have them packed, and get permission to leave. Otherwise, we wouldn't have gotten anything out.

So, after four weeks on this trip, she decided she was going to go back, and I had meanwhile decided I was going to go back, too. Perhaps I should go back to something else. After I was thrown out of school, I was looking at first for some activity to do things, and it had to be in an area and in a direction in which I had the feeling that I was contributing something against fascism, against Nazi--at least, that was the kind of goal that I had set for myself. I joined an organization which was called Habonim, which is Hebrew, and literally translated means, "The Builders."

It was a youth organization, and its main aim was to prepare young people in Germany, or also from other countries, later on, for a life in Palestine, which meant, not the accustomed life of becoming a doctor, or a lawyer, or a merchant--but to go into a kibbutz, a collective farm, and become a farmer. Or, a builder, or--all the various jobs that normally were not held by Jews, but

which were necessary to, in a country that was being built up, and of course, the philosophy behind it was to create a viable independent country, or viably independent in that sense that one wouldn't have to rely on other people for tasks like farming, like building activities, like driving trucks, driving buses, taxis--whatever is needed in all areas, and particularly those areas that normally in Germany were not being practiced by Jews.

So, it was at first, at least to the outside, it was nothing but a youth organization, like the Boy Scouts--except it was co-educational. But the Boy Scouts, my wife always tells me, in Germany were co-educational. She always very proudly said, "I was a Boy Scout." [laughter]

In any case, I became quite active in that. Within a very brief time, something else developed which I wasn't aware of that had that kind of an ability, in something that, in one way or another, has stood me in good stead for the rest of my life, namely that I became aware of the fact that I had certain leadership qualities, and I rose rather quickly in the hierarchy of that organization, and became quite influential in it. As an amusing sidelight, I have to say that when I was fifteen, and was one of the leaders of this organization, there was a meeting in Berlin of various groups of that organization, and since I was playing piano rather well at the time, as part of the program, I

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on, I would think. But then there was another organization with which it was affiliated, which was called Hechaluz [spells], which means _____? Both organizations essentially were I would say--well, if you put today's label on it, would be politically affiliated with the Labor Party in Israel. The Hechaluz was restricting itself to young people fifteen and up, and was preparing people very directly--didn't do anything else but prepare people for life on a collective farm.

It also did something else, of course, not officially. Unofficially, it had created an underground railroad, and was moving young people from all over Europe, mostly of course Jews, out of danger, or trying to move them out of danger, and transferring them, getting them to go to Israel, Palestine. And it was this particular aspect that I became involved in, or wanted to be involved in, when I decided to return from Palestine, from Jerusalem, to Germany, because I had figured out two things: it would have been very difficult for me to complete my schooling in Palestine; that is, my high school, because everything was of course in Hebrew. Though I had started learning Hebrew, it is a very difficult language, and I didn't think I would be able to make it in any reasonable time. So, the advice too from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem had been, to try to complete my high school years in Germany, if that was possible. And, as far as they were concerned, they would accept

any accredited—it had to be accredited, unfortunately--private school in Germany, as long as it was accredited to issue a certificate that you have completed high school satisfactorily. They would accept that, and I would automatically be admitted then to Hebrew University, to whatever studies I was interested in I might take up at the time.

So, between the two things--between the reasonable assumption that I might be able to finish my high school in Germany, and at the same time do what I wanted to do, namely get involved in saving as many people as I could help save, I decided to go back. There was really no problem at all, strangely enough. I got back all right, and nobody seemed to pay any attention to me. As a member of the Habonim, I got a Youth Pass issued by Baldur von Schirach, who was in charge at that point--Hitler had taken over, finally--it was '33. This was signed by him, and it did entitle me to be considered a Youth Leader, which is all very strange, because if I remember correctly, it didn't say that I was Jewish. It didn't say what organization I was in. But, it was apparently in an attempt to keep complete lists of all youth organizations and the people who were in them, so that at any given time, they could pull them in or do whatever they wanted to do.

They were not as organized as most people give them credit

for. At least, to my recollection, they weren't. It was strangely enough possible--with a lot of daring and bravado, to run circles--at times--around them.

Glaser: Now, you had to go back into school, in order--

Schiller: Well, I did go to a private school. There was no way--there was clear record that I was no longer admitted to any Prussian school, said. And then I probably could have tried Bavaria, or something else, or Wirttemberg, or anything that is outside of Prussia. But, no. There was no way.

So, I went to a private school, which was a Jewish high school, organized by an orthodox religious group. That was one of the most difficult things for me, because my religious background, other than that I had become bar mitzvah, and that only, as everybody pointed out to me, because the rabbi had a very pretty daughter, and I enjoyed going to his house. But I did become bar mitzvah, long after I should have become bar mitzvah, because of my father's illness, which was at my thirteenth birthday--I should have become bar mitzvah. I did become bar mitzvah a year and a half after that.

Glaser: You were then in Berlin.

Schiller: Yes. And that's the only time in my life that I religiously went to services. But, I'm afraid that the statement was correct, that everybody made about me, that the rabbi had a very pretty daughter.

Glaser: Do you remember the name of the high school you attended?

Schiller: I think it was named after somebody, I believe it was Adler, which was _____. But I can't tell for sure. It didn't play any role in my life. I mean, I went through it perfunctorily, I had no problem, I was a very good student, and in effect when it became evident that I wouldn't be able to stay in long enough, I asked for a special examination which you could do in Germany. You could be examined at any time, and if you passed it, then that was it. So here again, I did the wrong thing, I passed it, I passed the special exam, and it was pretty terrible. There was somebody supervising it, in jackboots and brown shirt and swastika, and cap--

Glaser: In the orthodox school?

Schiller: Oh, yes. Of course. He belonged to the Kultur Ministerium, ministry of culture, and education--as an observer. Not Jewish--oh, no! No, no. You could not get a certificate unless it was certified by the ministry. The only reason that they were

willing to certify it in my case is because I had a letter from the Hebrew University that they required a certificate, and that as soon as I had it, I would leave Germany.

At that time they were interested to get rid of as many Jews in whatever fashion that they could. But, the gentleman was very unpleasant; nevertheless, I passed. I passed without any difficulty. And much too early; much too early. So I was too young to go to the University, too--I was always too young for everything. It left me quite a bit of time to deal with the other affairs. It became tougher and tougher--we were permitted to wear a uniform. Everything in Germany was uniformed at that time. It was dark blue, with a blue shirt, but other than that, looked exactly like the uniform of the Hitler Youth--except it wasn't brown. Same kind of belt, same kind of _____ across the shoulder. I mean, that was essentially still in shape also the uniform of the Boy Scouts, which was not German, which came from the United--no, it came from England. Baden-Powell.

So, on the surface, the purpose was to on some days to go on a little trip, or an outing, and things of that nature, so it looked all very harmless. It wasn't quite as harmless as it appeared.

We were bothered quite often by the people who were just

around and saw us out in the country, marching around, or going to someplace, or sitting down and having lunch. Heckled--usually comparatively harmless. Except for two times that I remember when we were rounded up by brown-shirted guys, and taken on trucks to be interrogated.

Well, everybody was let go within an hour or so, after they all established who they were, or had their identification papers. They couldn't really, or didn't want to do anything, other than scare us. Generally speaking, it was "don't show yourself. We allow you to get together, but don't march around, and don't go on outings, that's strictly for non-Jews."

Glaser: Isn't that to keep it all very quiet. How could you learn to be a farmer? Did you have to have hands-on experience?

Schiller: Yes. What you would do is send people to Denmark. We'd get people out of the country, [they] were being outside, but prior to that, there is a period of indoctrination for about three to four weeks, to form an idea, to prepare them for what was coming, and what was going to happen to them. And teaching them rudimentaries of Hebrew, and all kinds of things. There were others there who spoke Hebrew fluently, which I certainly didn't. They were teaching Hebrew. And generally preparing both an attitude and in every other respect for a life on the farm, in

Palestine.

Glaser: Would those who went to Denmark return to Germany, or would they go from there to Palestine?

Schiller: Well, it all depended. It depended where they came from, if they were illegally in Germany, they wouldn't come back to Germany. And we had people who had forged papers. We had a service that would provide for forged papers, and just to get them out of Germany, from Poland, from other areas. So, it was somewhat complex. In any case, being one of the leaders, I was at these occasions when they rounded us up, I was detained much longer. I was quite harmlessly, I have to say, interviewed twice by the Gestapo, after--I mean, harmlessly, because they didn't hit me, they didn't do anything. They were raising their eyebrows, and they had never figured out whether there was a record as far as I was concerned.

Somehow, they wanted to know why I was working with these Jews, and the implication always--"You are just a Christian German? Why do you work with Jews?" This kind of thing.

Glaser: Schiller is not a particularly Jewish name, is it?

Schiller: No. It isn't. And both my first names are hardly Jewish--I

mean, Hans and Joachim--

##end tape 4 side a, begin tape 4 side b

Well, and I've had a number of occasions when I became aware of the fact that for certain purposes, it was very good not to appear to be Jewish, and I in fact--it gave me the ability to move comparatively freely in certain situations, something that perhaps to my shame I have used a number of times. Not really--I think the purpose was rather clear why I was doing it--

Glaser: One calls it protective coloration.

Schiller: Yes. And, so I really didn't have much of a problem, even the two times I was detained, and I was released both times. It was much, much later that I was arrested again, and that particular time I was taken to the central interrogation place of the Gestapo in Berlin, which was at Columbus House, with which I had later affiliations too. It was a building that at least I knew rather well and had admired from the outside, because it was a building designed by Eric Mendelsohn, for whom I worked much later.

That time I was arrested together with another man with whom I had been working, and when we got to the Columbus House, we

were left alone for a moment in some room. He whispered to me, "You know, Hans, I happen to like you. And that's why I am going to tell you something. I'm really a double agent. I'm a Nazi, I'm working for the Nazis. Of course, nothing's going to happen to me. We're just left here together so I can find out from you what you're really doing. I don't really have to find out; I know exactly what you're doing, and they know exactly what you're doing. If you get out again, I can only advise one thing: leave Germany as quickly as you can, because this will be your last chance."

Glaser: When you said that you worked with him, do you mean within the Habonim?

Schiller: Yes. Hechaluz, actually. I worked with him.

Glaser: He was a Jewish double agent?

Schiller: No. Well, he claimed—see, he also had protective coloration!
[laughs]

Glaser: So the group was infiltrated by Nazis.

Schiller: That's right, yes. And well, strangely enough, the interview as far as I can remember, which was very unpleasant, very tough, and

particularly knowing what already he had told me, knowing that supposedly they knew exactly what I was doing, who I was, etc. But, they were looking at that point for Communist affiliations. I didn't have any Communist affiliations. I've known many Communists, and I've--during the time in which we worked and tried to get people out, certainly I worked with Communists. And probably have gotten out a few, too--human beings, you know. I had nothing to do with the Communist Party, or have ever been connected to it in any fashion. But that's really what they were after, and it is amazing with what a straight face one can blandly lie, when one has to.

Glaser: Was there any point in lying, if they knew all about your activities?

Schiller: Well, you can still lie. I mean, not all activities. What he said to me, he said, "They know exactly who you are." Well, that meant they knew my background, they knew that I had--that I was the same guy who had been thrown out of Prussian schools, and who had early confrontations with the SISA and SS. So, that is really what they knew, and probably...

But, in any case, they apparently did not get what they were looking for--or they did get what they were looking for, I just don't know. After one night where I was released the next

morning, we decided to move as quickly as possible to get out of Germany. Well, my mother had applied, of course, for a visa, and theh visa at that point had been approved, so it was just a matter of getting some things together and leaving. And get somebody to pack everything, or at least arrange that everything would be picked up and packed and sent to Israel, Palestine.

So we left.

Glaser: Earlier, you had said almost in passing that you helped to get people--I assume you meant the Habonim youth out. What was involved in that?

Schiller: What was involved was to arrange to hide in certain places, with families, with people who were--we're talking about individual young people, you know. To outfit them so they didn't look like they came out of a little Polish town with sidelocks and everything--it depends where they came from.

Glaser: Were these mostly those who were illegal immigrants to begin with?

Schiller: That's right, yes. Also, it looked very much like the first attack would go against those who weren't quote unquote German. Or, who had illegally immigrated, and there were quite a few of

course, who had immigrated after World War I--whose families had immigrated to Germany. And certainly to the Berlin area, and they were trying to go against people who had "recently," as they called it, come to Germany first. They wanted to get rid of them. And then gradually, it included all Jews, something else again.

But the first attempt was against what they called "Polish and Galitzien" Jews. Gypsies--it was all the same for the German mind. It makes absolutely no difference. And, certainly anyone who one way or the other had come from Russia, because-- obviously, they are a Communist. Many of them did come from Russia because they were opposed to Communism! It was just too much to figure out. They wanted a pretext, and they didn't want at first to go against the German Jews, so it didn't--they wanted to try it out first. And do the more plausible thing. In fact, I have to say that there was a group of German Jews who wished they could have been National Socialists, and who made every attempt to convince Hitler that they were such wonderful Germans, that he should consider them for party membership.

This particular group applauded the idea of keeping Germany pure, and throw out all those Polackes and Russians and Galitzians--and they would have worked gladly with Hitler to help him with that. I mean, they considered themselves Germans first,

and Jews by religion--but just coincidentally so, and totally subscribed to this particular attempt. Of course, Hitler and the Nazis used everything that was played them their way, at least for a while. Then, they used this particular group to spy on other Jews, and find out what they were doing, who they were, and why they were. And finally, they took them to the concentration camps just like everybody else.

I am quite certain that there must have been a few Jews who managed to be--to ingratiate themselves sufficiently with Hitler, that they were--what did they call them? [pause] Something like Honorary Aryians.

Glaser: You were sixteen at the time of the decision to leave Germany?
Is that right?

Schiller: Yes. We left in '35 [thinking]--what was I? Seventeen. I was seventeen when we left.

Glaser: Tell me about the preparations for leaving.

Schiller: Just, we sold some of the things we didn't want to take with us; we gave a lot of things away. A number of things were taken by my great aunt and uncle, because they were convinced nothing would ever happen to them, because after all she was a Catholic.

I didn't quite share that opinion, but what was the sense? We tried to convince them to leave. They weren't about to. We got a moving company to pack everything, in a container--those containers in those times were wood. It's about the size of this room, that container.

Glaser: Which would be how many--?

Schiller: That would be eight by twelve feet, roughly, and eight feet high. It's big, but when you talk about furniture--we didn't take much furniture. We did take some furniture. We had bought in Germany before leaving a new washing machine, a new electric oven, and a range, and a very small refrigerator. Little tiny one about three cubic feet. That we took; took all the linen, all the suits. We had probably brought some extra linen, and shirts and things of that nature. Whatever seemed to be reasonable and could be used, we bought, because that was one way of getting some money out.

Glaser: And obviously, leaving like that, you didn't have to smuggle yourself across the border?

Schiller: No.

Glaser: And you had already said that with the British visa, you could

take a thousand pounds out.

Schiller: Yes. One thousand pounds--not per person. No, unfortunately not. For a family, per family. I think that's what it was. I may be wrong, but I don't think so. I think it was about the equivalent of sixteen thousand marks, one thousand pounds at the time. The equivalent at that time of at least four thousand dollars, could have been rather more before the war. Immediately after World War II, it would have been the equivalent of four thousand dollars.

That essentially was enough to live on--don't ask me how, but it was enough to live on in Palestine at the time, because a few years later when I started earning money in Palestine, my monthly income was four pounds. That was considered all right. A high income was eight pounds; that was a real high income.

Glaser: How did you get to Israel from Berlin? To Palestine from Berlin?

Schiller: The same way we did--well, directly from the Anhalter Bahnhof, which is one of the railroad stations in Berlin, to Trieste. From Trieste, on an Italian ship to--I think we went to Jaffa again; we had to. There was no other way really at the time.

Glaser: And where did you settle? You and your mother settled where?

Schiller: In Jerusalem. We had decided on that. The only--she was not willing to be anywhere else but in Jerusalem. That was a feeling I shared too; it's by far the most interesting and most beautiful city in Palestine.

Glaser: Well, especially since you had wanted to go to the Hebrew University.

Schiller: Yes. And at that time, that was the only place the University had a campus. That was the only campus at all. Of course, I knew at that time, and my mother knew and bemoaned the fact, that if I would go to the Hebrew University, I couldn't study medicine. Medicine was not being taught, yet. And so, instead, when I finally went to Hebrew University, I studied pre-medicine, in the hope that I would be able to go somewhere else, like England, to complete my studies. That did not happen.

Glaser: Was housing tight in Jerusalem at that time?

Schiller: Well, no, it was depending on how much you could afford to pay. We found a flat in a brand-new house in Jerusalem, where we were the first occupants, in fact. It consisted of two rooms, a kitchen, and a bath. This was certainly on a much smaller scale than we used to live before. But, we were lucky that we could

afford that, under the circumstances. That was all right.

Well, what else happened, of course, is that we had to pay a tax for leaving the country, that our account--or anything we had other than the one thousand pounds, in Germany, was frozen, and one account at the [Dreissmar?] Bank, over which we had no control. Once it was frozen, automatically every year taxes were paid out of that, and--

Glaser: What kind of taxes, if you weren't there?

Schiller: Well, I guess there must have been a small income still on the money that was deposited. And, anything else--of course, we have never seen any of it.

Glaser: You didn't get any reparations?

Schiller: Oh, no. Oh! Did we get any reparations? That's a different question. Yes and no. [laughs] We did--when my father died, when everything was settled, all the various bills had been settled, there was about a quarter of a million marks left. Which was a sizable amount in those days. Which, his best friend had then invested for my mother, and we had lived on it rather well, and at the time when we left after taking out the thousand pounds, there were still better than a quarter of a million marks

in the account. Of which I have seen practically nothing--ever. And in addition, there was some real estate from my grandparents in Liegnitz, which then by that time was Poland.

Glaser: Forget that.

Schiller: Oh, yes. Oh yes. We haven't seen anything on that. This is one of the reasons, incidentally, that my attitude was formed as far as money was concerned. I felt it was totally ridiculous to worry about having money, making money, because in my lifetime, I've seen that whatever my parents had during the inflation in Germany was lost, totally lost. It was a small fortune, I mean, they were doing all right. Both had made money, and both had money inherited. And then, when we left Germany, that was lost. Which was a fortune, essentially; it was lost. When I had managed to build up a certain amount of capital and real estate, in Jerusalem, when I came to this country, I had to leave it behind.

So, I've seen three fortunes, essentially, lost in one lifetime! So, that has an influence on your desire to build up a lot of money.

Glaser: And a certain sense of impermanence, too, I would think.

Schiller: Right.

##end tape 4 side b, end of interview 2

Interview 3; begin tape 5 side a; 7/8/87

Glaser: We stopped last time when you and your mother had moved to Jerusalem in 1937, and you were seventeen years old, and had moved into a new apartment.

Schiller: 1935. Did you say--? Right.

Glaser: And you moved into a new apartment with your mother, in Jerusalem, and what was Jerusalem like in that period of time?

Schiller: Well, Jerusalem was very beautiful and very interesting. It certainly had the feeling of being amidst history of thousands of years. It was all alive--it wasn't just ancient history, but things didn't seem to have changed very much ever since King David had lived there. One has to differentiate, of course, and at that time that was comparatively easy, between the old city of Jerusalem and the surrounding new parts, almost like a ring of suburbs. It was not a complete ring; it extended towards the south of Jerusalem mostly, a little bit along the road that came from Jaffa, Tel Aviv, up into the hills of Judea, and it also extended a little bit from there to the east, towards what then was known as Trans-Jordan, now known as Jordan. But it was lying on the crest of the various hills surrounding Jerusalem, and from many areas you had a view of the old city, which was still almost

totally walled by the old walls. It's hard to describe; it's a matter of feeling, it's a matter of looking at it, and it was very picturesque.

Glaser: Were there shortages of food then, or was everything ample, and shortages later when war started?

Schiller: Well, everything was available, or almost everything was available. There were not really, in that sense, shortages of food; it was a matter of what one could afford. The economy was quite different from certainly what it is these days, and certainly different from the European economy or the American economy. One had to get by with very, very little money, and one could. The food supply came from various sources. It came from the various Jewish settlements, whether they be communal settlements, or individual settlements, or there was a national organization of milk product producers, which was called Tnuvah [spells], which was excellent. So there was always a fresh supply of milk, of buttermilk, of leben, lebeniyah, and various other milk products. And eggs.

Then, there was the direct supply around Jerusalem from Arab peasants, who would come and hawk their wares, be it vegetables grown around Jerusalem in the Kidron Valley and in other surrounding villages, or chickens, which they would bring alive

and then slaughter on demand, and pluck on the spot [laughs], or eggs. There was always a great deal of bartering; they would start high, and swear they couldn't possibly go lower, and then if you closed the door and say No thank you [laughs] it would come lower. They would ring the bell again and say, "Well, all right. Today, we will give it to you for a little less."

Well, there were quite large sheep herds that the Arabs would drive in the open areas, right into the suburbs, for grazing. So this was one sort of meat. There was imported meat, beef. There were, later during the war, internal supplies including camel's meat, which of course was always eaten by the Arabs, but to formal Europeans it was something new and different.

Glaser: Did you ever eat it?

Schiller: Yes.

Glaser: What was it like?

Schiller: Well, it depends how old the camel was. If it was a very young camel, it actually tasted not terribly different from veal. The meat essentially is a little sweeter than veal, but it's hard to tell apart. There also was horse meat, incidentally, and in bad

times--I don't know if I've ever eaten horse meat; I think I have, probably.

Glaser: Without knowing it?

Schiller: Without knowing it, yes. That's entirely correct. And there was, later, after the war, and probably--yes, also before the war, frozen imports from Australia. That, by way of comparative quality, was much better meat than anything you could get otherwise. Before the war, you could get in certain butcher shops, which were catering to the English occupation force, pork--you couldn't get it anywhere else. After the war, some of the settlements, Jewish settlements, were growing pork as a matter of just, to produce income, because there was a demand for it, and whether they personally ate it or not was not the important factor. The factor was that it was income-producing.

Glaser: How soon after you arrived did you start at Hebrew University?

Schiller: Well, I didn't immediately, because the most important thing for me to do was to learn sufficient Hebrew, so that my going to the Hebrew University made any sense. In order to do that, I visited a high school, which was in Talpith [spells]. That is a suburb also of Jerusalem, lying on the road to Bethlehem, so straight south, really, of Jerusalem; not very far, a matter of maybe two

or three miles from the center of town. It's on a fairly high hill, and overlooks the old city of Jerusalem in one direction, some of the new portions in the other directions, and then straight east you see, on another hill, what was known as Government House, that was the British high commissioner's palace. This was sitting in the direction of Jordan and overlooking the desert, and the Jordan Valley. The River Jordan.

That high school--the principal and founder of that high school was an older sister of my uncle, Martin Nathan [spells], who had married my father's sister. Her name was Pauly Nathan. She had a private school in Germany, a Jewish private school in which Hebrew was an essential part, and was taught. So, I went-- I attended that school, at her invitation, in order to learn Hebrew and participated in the highest class, which of course-- not for purposes of learning anything, because I had my high school diploma at that point, but to learn Hebrew. It was, incidentally, at that school where I again met my future wife. [laughs] She had attended that school in Berlin, and was continuing in that school at this point.

As I had indicated earlier, she had changed quite a bit, was actually quite beautiful, and I had to admit that I was somewhat smitten. But, she had not changed her attitude towards me, which I can understand. She didn't really like me terribly much; I

don't know what caused it. I think she, after the encounter in Berlin, hadn't quite forgotten it or forgiven it. [laughs] Which is understandable. She had a very good friend, another girl, and with whom she was sitting together in class, and with whom she was always together. Her name was Chava--[spells] or probably if you--oh, it doesn't matter--after all, it's a Hebrew name, so--or alliterations or transpositions into another language, depending if you came from Germany, you would have spelled it with a "w"; in fact, she did spell it with a "w" and if you came from an English speaking country, you were using a "v", simply because those either in German or in English, would produce the same sound. Chava Schocken [spells].

Glaser: Was she related to the publishing family?

Schiller: Yes. Right. She was the daughter of the original publisher, and ended up being the publisher of Schocken Books. Well, since I obviously did not make any headway in any direction with Lotte, I guess a very long friendship started with Chava Schocken, and we were quite close, good friends for many years. But that's perhaps a somewhat later story. But, all I am saying is the next few years were--and the rest of my life--was kind of governed by the fact that I went to that school.

Glaser: Was this a boarding school, or did you travel by bus each day?

Schiller: No. Yes, I traveled by bus, but not a school bus. I mean, a regular bus.

Glaser: Did they have Eged buses back then?

Schiller: Yes. Oh, yes, of course. Those are all old established names and firms, all of these things like Eged and Tnuvah, which I understand is still in existence, were offsprings of parts of the Histadruth, which was a labor organization, and belonged to it. This was one of the largest builders in the--in fact, the largest builder in the country, contractor, was a part of the labor organization.

Well. To go back to that, I attended that school, and since all I essentially was doing was listening, I had to keep myself occupied and I sat in class with either a sketchpad or modeling clay, and did a little sculpture work, or sketching, or things of that nature. I did learn sufficient Hebrew to be able to converse and understand most of what was being said, in a comparatively short time; about six months or so, and I guess that's about as long as I spent there. But, being exposed to a number of young people, on the average of about three to four years younger than I was, I also got involved and heard about the political situations in the country, the needs for certain

service, like the nightly defense of settlements, of roads, of suburbs, and the lack of people trained to do so. I did learn and got in touch at that time with what essentially was an illegal organization, namely the Haganah--Haganah literally means defense, and was an organization of the Jewish Agency, or created by the Jewish Agency, which was the governing body of the Jewish community in Palestine. One could almost say, if you anticipated what happened later on, a government in exile, though it wasn't in exile; it was right there.

Those who would take care of the desires and needs of the Jewish community, vis-a-vis the mandatory power, which was _____. And represent the various interests of the Jews in Palestine. The Haganah at that time was a force of young women and men, there was never that distinction in Palestine; women participated fully in military activities. This particular organization had a philosophy which was true to its name: even though a military organization, it was strictly for defense, never for attack; wouldn't fire a shot in anger, would not use arms under any circumstances other than when attacked, and after an attack, where any one had taken place. Not in a retaliatory fashion either, but strictly to ward an attack off, and hoping to avoid being overrun by an Arab marauder force at night, or later during daytime.

The usual and normal attacks that occurred up and down were attacks from an ambush on a road, on a road from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, from Jerusalem to [Hivah?], which went through a totally Arab area. Nablus. Those were the most likely places to be attacked--or from Jerusalem down to the Dead Sea, which is a comparatively short trip, but quite--at that time--a dangerous trip, because it went through the desert, totally in Arab areas, and gave ample opportunity for an attacker to hide, and to attack out of art of the ambush. It usually was an attack at night, or at dusk or dawn, and at no time really in the years that I've been in Palestine was there ever complete peace. It wasn't, of course, on the scale of a real war; it wasn't on the scale of what happened after I left Palestine, but it was something that could have happened any time, anywhere. Even going on a bus at night from Jerusalem to Talpioth, which went through some Arab sections, or some Arab-Christian sections, actually. Attacks would happen. One, two, three shots fired at a bus were nothing very unusual.

So it was for that purpose, really, to prevent and give protection that the Havanah was formed, originally.

Glaser: Did the British provide any protection?

Schiller: Yes. It varied. At times, they would; at times they wouldn't.

Later on, and I can't give you the exact years right now, the British permitted what--or instigated in fact what they called "supernumerary constabulary," which means additional police forces, and they were supposed to train these police forces and in essence, all it amounted to was the safe handling of the Lee-Enfield rifle, which was the rifle that the British Army and the British police forces used at the time. Under very strictly controlled conditions, they would issue a Lee-Enfield rifle when you reported for duty, and fifty rounds of ammunition, and that is all that was ever provided for. And it was the Haganah which provided what you would call a pick-up truck, and the British called a "tender" for the patrolling of certain roads. Those were manned by the supernumerary constables. They would wear the uniform of the British police force, with one exception. The British police would wear something like an army cap, whereas the supernumeraries were wearing a fur cap, a black fur cap.

It was a high hat, really [raises hands up to show], round, and covered with black curly hair. You could tell at a glance whether a person was with the British court--a native--or a British policeman. So, during the time that people were on duty, they would wear the uniform and carry a rifle. None of which was very adequate, for a number of reasons. The arms that were used by Arabs at that time were quite often machine guns, supplied by either Germany or Italy, and an ordinary rifle is not much of a

defense against a machine gun. Or, they would use explosives like hand grenades, or mines, also supplied by either Germany or Italy. They would dig up a road somewhere, and place a mine, and then the next bus, or the next patrol _____ would run over it with disastrous results, obviously.

The [tenders?] that were running up and down to Tel Aviv from Jerusalem and [Tehaivah?] were in no way armored, so there was really no protection. The only protection was a hope that, when the first shots would ring out, they would miss and one could jump off the tender and seek shelter, and defend the spot in some fashion.

Well, I am mentioning that in some detail because I got involved with the Haganah, and was trained by the Haganah, and this is an interesting sidelight too. The real tough military training that certain people in the Haganah, I among them, got, was given also by the British. But, not by the British police, but by the British army. The interesting thing is that that was typical for British policy, and in not just the Middle East, but anywhere in the world. It is the British motto, *dividere et imperare*--divide and rule--that was really the basis of it. The British army, almost throughout certain sections of the British army, which were entrusted by the British government, to deal with the Jews--were training Jews. The British police was

training, at the same time, Arabs, and arming them. The two sides, the army and the police, did not receive their orders from the same place.

The British police was receiving its orders via India, and--
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--the orders at the policy governing these orders came from India House in London. On the other hand, the British army got its orders directly from London, but the two groups did not very often know what the other one was going to do, or how, or what the orders were or the policies were. There have been incidents, later on, in some of the uprisings--there were uprisings, from time to time, and those were strictly Arab uprisings. Pitched battles were fought, and the next morning--usually at night--when all the combatants had withdrawn from the area, there were still dead and wounded in the field. And further investigation would show that the dead and wounded were all British. That, on either side, on one side, Army personnel, and on the other side, Palestine police, British police, usually not in their uniforms, but disguised, looking just like Jews, in what Jews would typically wear--khaki shirt and khaki pants, or a blue shirt and khaki pants. On the Arab side, in Arab gear--headdress, etc.

Those were the, quote unquote, British "advisors" on either side. Of course, in a night battle, people get killed. Nobody

can tell who is who. There were quite a few such incidents. Of course, if there were wounded or dead on either side, the Jews and the Arabs would take them with them. They would leave behind--at least, we would leave behind those who were--the English who were dead. We certainly would not leave any wounded people behind. But it's only--there were some Parliamentary inquiries when that became known, and it was quite an uproar in London when it became known that the government had to admit, yes, for one reason or another, there were orders which appeared to be designed for a head-on clash between two groups, namely the British army and the British police. But it was essentially typical, I would think, of British colonial policy at the time, to be on both sides and to work against each other.

Glaser: What were you doing in the Haganah?

Schiller: Well, first--I was mostly going on these patrols, and occasionally I was just on guard duty at night in one of the suburbs in Jerusalem. Occasionally, whenever a new settlement was being created, the first few nights, when extra--other than the settlers themselves--extra Haganah personnel would be sent to reinforce the place, and to guard at night the new settlements. It was most likely that a new settlement would be attacked during the first days of the new settlement. I've been a number of times as far as Galil, and a number of times--but most of the

time in and around Jerusalem, and later on, on patrol duty, on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway.

Soon after I started the patrol duty after I was trained for that, I was in command of one of these tenders. I had six or seven people under me going with me. The organization of the Haganah at the time was very much that of any illegal cell, political or otherwise, anywhere in the world, I would guess, and therefore very much, for instance, like Communist Party organizations in countries where the Communist Party was illegal. Namely, that you belonged to a group of six or seven people, you did know the one person above you, and the people with whom you were in that one cell, and that was it. So you never knew where you really were in the total hierarchy. Though, later on, just before the beginning of World War II, I had advanced to a point where I believe I was the seventh-in-command in Jerusalem. I had a fairly large area under my jurisdiction.

Glaser: Was all of this going on while you were attending classes at Hebrew University?

Schiller: Yes, of course. There was no such thing as--whether you worked in an office, as I did later on, or whether you attended classes, or whatever else you were doing, you had at least three nights a week of duty. Sometimes more. So, one gets to learn to do

sleep--have a little sleep whenever one can, and to fairly normal spot in life, like working in an office, and still being on duty all night. But, as I--I cannot stress enough the fact that at no time did the Haganah ever permit, or actually attack, in any form, at all. It was strictly a matter of defense; you wouldn't use a rifle or a pistol or any other arms until attacked, and never before, and never any retaliation. That's important to stress, because I think it will explain something towards the end of my stay in Palestine, and perhaps even the fact that I left Palestine, because there was a major change in attitude--not in the Haganah, but in the country as a whole.

To me, to have spent in armed forces so much time of my life, and particularly what normally would have been my formative years--well, they formed me all right in some fashion [laughs]--and, later on, as a young man until age twenty nine in the British army, it is really very strange. Because, I was brought up as a pacifist. I personally--it may sound strange--as a child, and certainly in my teens, was a fervent pacifist, and did not believe in any warlike act or involvement of any kind.

Glaser: But you believed in defense, because you came to the defense of other students in Berlin?

Schiller: Yes, I did. I felt very strongly that every human being has a

right to live, and enjoy life, and has the same rights, same human rights. It was very, very difficult for me to get myself to carry arms, and as I have, use arms. I've often wondered at the time what would happen if indeed I would wound or kill anybody. I guess one doesn't have to wonder in situations like that, because sooner or later something like that happens. But I'm only mentioning that because it also points out that essentially, I had not changed. I still--all my political involvement here or in Israel was always directed towards peace and never towards any warlike action. I haven't changed when I say I still do not like the use of arms, and feel that the world would be a better place without it. But, I think I'm going too far ahead at the moment.

Briefly, to say what happened after I had acquired a certain amount of Hebrew, I went to the Hebrew University, and took the pre-medical courses, because at the time, there was no medical school in Palestine. It was intended to be built, it was intended to be created and of course, it was created, but at the time, there was no such thing. And if I had wanted to study medicine, and of course I was destined to study medicine--at least, my mother told me I was--and frankly, in a way, I had come to the conclusion that I would become a physician. I would have had to go to another country, and in all likelihood, I would have gone to England, if I could have afforded it.

Our financial situation was not terribly good. We lived on two or three pounds a month, my mother and I, which was perfectly "adequate," in quotation marks, in those days.

Glaser: That was like ten or fifteen dollars then, right?

Schiller: Well, before the war it was somewhat more, but--yes, something like that. But the economy was such that that was totally adequate. You could get a meal really for a few pennies, even in a restaurant. They had a totally different economy, very primitive economy at the time.

Well, it became evident that I would have to do something to--we couldn't just take from what little capital we had brought with us, and use it. We had to, at the time.

Glaser: Did your mother consider working herself?

Schiller: No. I don't think that was ever a consideration. It would have been also very questionable what she could have done, because she hadn't practiced nursing for years, and somehow, I guess she wouldn't have. See, the other thing was that she very clearly blamed me for the fact that we were in Palestine. And after all, we were in Palestine in 1935. The war didn't start until much

later, '39. During all those years, though there were some rumors what was happening to Jews, my mother would never believe it. She was exchanging letters with her aunt, who had brought her up, in Berlin, and everything was fine. And why don't you come back, and [laughs], this kind of thing. And of course, as far as I was concerned, it was totally out of the question. I wouldn't have let her go, and I wouldn't have returned obviously, and since she always told me that the only reason that she was alive was that she was living for me, she wouldn't have left me.

So, we had to find a way to live, and pay our various expenses, and enrollment fees at the university, and all that, and hopefully within one or two years, at least for me to go England to study medicine. I didn't consider, frankly, anything else at the time, any other country. I personally never had any animosity towards Arabs; in fact, I had some very good friends who were Arabs. I realized that politically it would become impossible to go to an Arab country and study--I mean, I could have gone to Egypt and studied medicine, I could have gone to Lebanon and studied medicine. In fact, I ended up going to Lebanon later.

But anyway, be that as it may, we had to do something, and I had heard from somebody that it was possible to buy, with your so-called Sperrkonto, which means frozen account, in Germany, to

buy all the materials to build a house in Palestine. The arrangements could be made to buy it in Germany, to have it transported. What you could not pay for in Germany was the actual erection in Palestine. That had to be paid out of money that you had in Palestine, or by taking out a bank loan or whatever. So, we made an arrangement to buy a house, not for ourselves--even though we did live in it--but as an income property too, which consisted of two stories and a penthouse. It had in it five flats, apartments.

We bought a small site in Talpioth, which I particularly liked, and my mother liked too, because of the beautiful view of the old city, and surrounding desert. Working with one of the large builders who handled this particular transfer from Germany and erection in Palestine, Palestine Building Syndicate, we ordered the house, which was a steel-framed building, with light weight concrete block fill-in for the outside walls and partitions, which all were shipped from Germany, including hardware, finish hardware, doors, even the very common floor finish in Palestine of ceramic tile. These were actually not ceramic tile; they were concrete tile with a light yellow finish.

The Palestine Building Syndicate, for reasons of needing the drawings for a building permit, was working with an architect in Jerusalem by the name of Rauh [spells], who became quite well-

known later on, in Palestine. Essentially, the design was fixed, or pretty much fixed, because it was a standard production of certain lengths of steel members, etc., but in appearance or the location of windows, you had a little leeway. Certainly in the arrangement of interiors, or in the arrangement of partitions; how you were going to handle that, you had some leeway.

So, he designed the layout for the interiors, and as part of the agreement with Palestine Building Syndicate, I was going to be employed by them during vacations as a laborer, on whatever they wanted me to do on any of their other jobs, including, if they wanted me to work on our own house. In fact, I did work. I started out as an unskilled laborer and of course I had to become a member of the Histadruth, the Histadruth being the labor organization, the union, to pay union dues, and in turn, got paid union wages. I started out and got four pounds a month, as an unskilled laborer. That was with hard, hard work. After all, during most of the time that building activities go on, it is extremely hot. It's very dusty, so it's between the heat and the dust, and working out in the open sun, and doing hard work like digging, or trenching--which is also digging--or moving dirt, or carting bags of cement--or whatever, any of this. But number one, it gave me an income, we lived on that income, and stopped using what little capital we had.

We managed, if I remember correctly, by some agreement with--through the manufacturer of the building products, which incidentally was Krupp, the munitions king--to transfer a little money so that we had enough to pay in Palestine for the erection of the building, where we took out a bank loan. The bank loan came from Bank Japhet [spells], which the director of that bank, who later on in the last few years, was about my age, was the son of the director who was the owner and director of that bank at the time, by the name of Ernst Japhet, was indicted recently for all kinds of scandalous [laughs] affairs, really. Anyway...

I fortunately have no memory for figures. I know we had never borrowed money--those were all totally new concepts to my mother or to me--certainly to me--to her too. For she had never dealt with money. It scared us both; I have to say I'm still scared these days; I've never whenever I could help it borrowed money, worked with anybody else's money. I'd rather forgo all kinds of things than to borrow money, which of course, considering that I happen to know quite a bit about the economy these days, and certainly in the United States that is the way the economy works, is because you are working with somebody else's money. [laughs] At the time it was out of the question.

It was a rather nice building, very well-built.

Glaser: How long did it take to construct it?

Schiller: Oh, about six months. Krupp sent a foreman from Germany to supervise it, who was a typical German. He was a National Socialist, hated Jews with a vengeance--of course, I was different. "Oh, you're not one of them." That kind of attitude. I have to admit that I hated him too. But, he was very conscientious, did a very good job, other than in his attitude towards Jews behaved perfectly correctly to us as the clients, and did everything he could to get us [do] a good job. That all these attitudes can be in one person's mind, embodied in one person, it's just hard to believe and understand. He went back to Germany after it was all done.

Now, we had a beautiful house; we moved in, to the top floor, a little apartment which actually was one large room with a little second room that had sliding doors, and a separate kitchen and bathroom, but essentially it was a studio apartment. It was the smallest. All the others were the same size [as each other] and had two bedrooms, living room, and kitchen. And bath, of course. It had central heating, which was unheard of, and it had hot water. Providing you could afford to pay for the fuel. [laughs] All centrally heated.

So, then of course, we tried to establish how much we would

have to lease it for to people, and--

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We found that, though it was much better equipped and a much nicer house than anything you could get at the time for any kind of money, in order to break even, we had to put a rent on it that was considerably more than you could get apartments for. Though we advertised it and did everything we could, it remained empty. I then thought it might be helpful and interesting and to get people interested in it, I built a model. It was the first model I ever built, so my first architectural attempt, of the house, and put an electric light on the inside so all the windows were illuminated, and we exhibited that in a shop on Jaffa Street, with a little sign saying that these apartments were available. It was a very strange thing; it was my tailor's shop. Very strange to somebody who earns the fantastic amount of four pounds a month should have a tailor.

But it was perfectly normal. Again, even tailoring of a suit or tailoring of pants or anything else didn't cost very much, and it is perhaps part of my upbringing wouldn't dream of-- at the time--buying anything ready-made. Of course, it had to be tailored. It lasted forever! It was worth it! [laughter]

Glaser: That's a very German attitude.

Schiller: Yes, oh yes, absolutely. It didn't cost us anything to exhibit the model in the tailor-shop, see? All the little advantages that one had. That didn't help either.

Then, somebody advised us to talk to the army, British army, because they always needed extra family quarters. So, I contacted the army, and they came out to inspect it and they liked it. For one thing, it was very close to an encampment in the Jerusalem area where the army barracks were, and the training grounds and everything else. In fact, you could see it from the upper floors, you could look over the next few houses and see that area. But they didn't have enough provisions for families there. So, the army agreed to take over the whole house, and at first they told us we had to move out, and then they said, "Okay, you may stay," because upstairs out of the reach, everybody--they just didn't want any "natives," quote unquote. That still was the attitude, together with British families; after all, British are British and natives are natives. Even though they had a British passport. It made no difference.

Glaser: Did you have a British passport?

Schiller: Of course. It was the only passport you could have in Palestine.

It was British territory; which meant--British, not English.

Glaser: As soon as you entered the country?

Schiller: No, not as soon, it took two years. You had to be there two years before you could apply.

Glaser: That meant you were a citizen?

Schiller: Yes. It said "Palestine" on it, and it was not blue like the British ones, but reddish-brown, but it said "British Passport" on it. It used to be throughout the empire; whether it was India, it said "India," or Canada says "Canada," but it's still a British passport. "But you're a native," there's the difference. Second-class citizen. We'll come to that in a minute, too.

But, they quartered four families; there was one master sergeant, and three sergeant families. They were all very nice, all their children were very pleasant, and we had a very good relationship, actually with them. But, taking the whole building, they just told us how much they were going to pay, "take it or leave it." It wasn't very much, but we broke even and in fact had a little bit over.

It was many years after that, until after I'd started to

work for Mendelsohn and did know about costs about building materials, and learned quite a few of these things that I realized that we could have built the same building with the same amount of money that we paid in pounds in Jerusalem, without having to use a penny in Germany. In other words, yes, we bought all the materials, the cost of transportation was all paid in Germany, but essentially, for what we paid the Palestine Building Syndicate to erect it, we could have bought customary Palestinian materials and built an equivalent, in size, at least, building. So the Germans just--it was another matter of just confiscating some additional money.

Glaser: But your money was frozen; you couldn't get at it anyway, so--?

Schiller: No no--that's correct. You're absolutely right, but it's just interesting that no matter which way it was handled, we were cheated. You're absolutely right. But anyway...

The army kept the flats for most--I think for, yes, for most of the war in fact. So we didn't have to worry about finding new people; that happened much later. I think towards the end of the war. I'm not familiar with it, because I was in the army [laughs] at that time, and not home. Anyway, then I think it was 1936 that I decided that I wanted to continue my studies and since it was--must have been '36--I had been at the Hebrew

University for about one year. I applied to the American University of Beirut, AUB. The famous--or infamous--American University of Beirut, that is so often in the news these days, for good reason.

It was one of those situations that it was not terribly safe to travel by land or bus to Beirut, which is a few hours from [Haivah?]. I had booked passage on a steamer, on a Greek steamer, from Haivah to Beirut. [pause] Well, perhaps before we go into that, I don't know whether my personal life has any interest--

Glaser: Of course! Of course.

Schiller: Of course. Well, as I had indicated, Chava Schocken and I were close friends, and Lotte was always [laughs] present too. We were a threesome, so to say, but other kids too. It wasn't just the three of us, but most--the three of us were always together. The others varied, circle of other friends always varied and changed.

We had been on excursions to the upper Galilee together. Of course Chava, being the daughter of a multi-millionaire, was provided by her parents with car and driver--unheard of in Palestine at the time. So, we were driven everywhere that we

went. We did see a lot of Palestine; some very enjoyable trips. Which was very common at the time, that you would stay overnight at the cultural settlement.

Glaser: Excuse me. You have not ever used the word "kibbutz." Is this deliberate? You talked about settlements, and you talked about communes, communal settlements--

Schiller: Well, a communal settlement is a kibbutz. That is--it's a Hebrew name for the same English word; that's really all kibbutz or kwuzah [spells]--

Glaser: I've never heard that word.

Schiller: That's a more common one, actually. I couldn't--I would have to ask Lotte now, I have forgotten what the difference is. There is a slight difference in philosophy between a kibbutz and a kwuzah, but they're both communal settlements. Then, of course, there's a moshav or moshavah. Those are not, in that sense, communal. Rather communal, but not really. In other words, each person has her or his own building, etc.

But it was--all of them were extremely hospitable. You could come almost at any time, stay overnight, eaten with everybody in the communal dining room. Occasionally, you would

help with a little work, but it wasn't required. You could leave some money if you had it; it wasn't required. It was really a country at that time that was full of idealism, and of support for each other, and people were awfully nice, and motivated by their own idealism. All of which has changed. Not all--but to a great extent. At least it had changed by the time I came back from Italy, from the army.

Well, in any case, I just mentioned that as an aside. I did--so we did travel quite a bit together. At the time, when we still had our apartment in one of the suburbs, Rechaviah [spells], at that time the Schockens were about one block away from us and had a rented house, a very large, very comfortable house in which they lived. There were two brothers, one a little younger than Chava and one--oh, I'm sorry. Three brothers. Two considerably older. Mrs. Schocken insisted that if I wanted to see her, well, I had to come to them, after she found out that she had visited me a number of times, and they had a terrible scene. It should be said too, incidentally, which is so different, I would think, from the way teenagers grow up today; it was all very innocent.

Yes, we would talk about love and wanted to get married one of these days, and all these things, but nothing was further from our minds than a possible affair, or sex, or whatever. It didn't

exist. I mean, it existed, obviously [laughter], but we were all too well brought up.

Glaser: Were the Schockens a first-generation Israeli family, or had they been in there for previous generations?

Schiller: Oh, no. They came from Germany. There is another connection, namely Mr. Schocken owned several department stores in Germany, Chemnitz, Dusseldorf. He had employed Eric Mendelsohn, who then became my boss and master, to design his department stores, which are rather famous, because they were the first departure, anywhere in the world, from a Greek temple doubling as a department store type of thing, you know? That you look at other department stores of the time, they were--had columns, stoic, and other Greek and Roman fantastic imitations, and behind it was hiding a department store. But the idea of enclosing it in glass and showing definitely that what was going on on the inside, to attract people to have these huge show windows. That was Mendelsohn's, and Mr. Schocken was quick to understand that that would help him. It was the thing to do. That is where he personally created the wealth that he had, was by building these department stores.

The books were really something else. He was very interested in books. He had a fantastic library, in Jerusalem,

which was also designed by Mendelsohn, and the house in which he finally lived in Jerusalem was designed by Mendelsohn. I worked on that later. But, there was his other connection. In any case, Mrs. Schocken felt that we were just too close to each other. I have to admit after all these years, yes, we were very close, and it was a great love. And, in essence, it was all very tragic, because Mrs. Schocken would never permit us to get married. That was obvious to both of us. It was just no way. She finally got her husband to talk to me, and he was a very nice man, actually. I mean, they were both very nice--let me not--despite all the difficulties that her daughter and I had with her, I understand it was protective, and understandable and all that.

But, as so many people who are very affluent, they have a feeling very often that a person who is close to one of them, is close because of their money. And nothing could have been farther from my mind. Money, as I have indicated, didn't mean much to me. But, Mr. Schocken once spoke to me and asked me what I wanted to do, and I told him I wanted to study medicine. He said, "Will you leave my daughter alone if I pay for your studies?"

I was terribly offended. I was terribly--and I told him I was terribly offended. I didn't want a penny of his, under any

circumstances. And I wouldn't leave his daughter alone. And she wouldn't leave me alone! [laughs] So finally, they decided to send her to England, where she went and studied nursing. Of course, hundreds of letters back and forth, during that time.

Well, she did break it off later. I didn't. That's something else. So, it was during that time that I went to Beirut, and as I said, I was on a Greek steamer, which was dirty, terribly uncomfortable; but after all, it was just one night. So it wasn't--the world didn't depend on that. I still had a German passport at that time. In other words, the two years hadn't been up, so that's why I say it must have been '36, I guess. For the fall semester.

Glaser: Was it a financial hardship to go there?

Schiller: Oh, yes. Well, we set a certain amount of money aside for that, and had Japhet trans--incidentally, there was a "t" at the end of his name, I'm sorry. Japhet transferred the money, but we were instructed that it should remain in English pounds or Palestinian pounds, which was the same thing at the time, until I was going to pick it up at a bank. The only reason it was transferred from bank to bank, and not that I didn't carry it, was that I was justifiably afraid that it might be stolen, on the Greek ship.

So we arrived early in the morning, and the French--Lebanon was under French mandate--the French officials came aboard, took my passport, looked at it. The next thing I knew, I was arrested. I asked why. They didn't speak English--or refused to speak English. Didn't tell me. I was thrown in a rather dirty cell, at the port, and for one day I got nothing but water. The next morning I demanded to see somebody or be able to make a phone call. Nobody spoke any English. I asked for the American consul--after all, I was going to the American University and that was American ground, supposedly. Nothing happened.

I was in there for three days, being fed nothing but bread and water, and I was filthy; I couldn't wash anything. It was unbelievable--hot, flies, dirt, and people who refused to understand a word I said. And then, after the third day--third or fourth--a gentleman appeared at my cell and, speaking in French, which I understood, said to the jailor to open the cell, and he [the jailor] was very polite all of a sudden, and opened the cell, and the moment he [the gentleman] opened his mouth, I realized he was an American. He said, _____ the first secretary, and I understand you have a problem--

Glaser: He was the First Secretary?

Schiller: Yes, of the American consulate. He said, "Why don't you come

with me and I'll drive you to the University? We have to go through some formalities first, just come with me." We went upstairs in the same building, and sat across from--it said on the door "Securite General." The officer who was sitting there, French officer, insisted on speaking German to me. I said, I asked whether he couldn't speak English. "Oh, yes," he said, "but you understand German; you are a German spy. We have been advised that you are a German spy, and that you would be on this boat, and what is your business here?"

I said, "I'm accepted at the university to study medicine." "Well," and then the American interrupted and said, "Look, I'll guarantee this man's whereabouts, and if you want to see him from time to time, I shall get him to you, and he is under our jurisdiction."

He said, "Well, that's fine, provided he never leaves the campus. You are to guarantee that he doesn't leave the campus, and I'll release him to you."

So, the American said Fine; he had said to me, "I'm sorry, but you will have to agree to that, if you want to study and not just return to Jerusalem, because the only other way that this can be handled is that I'll have you transferred in an American car to Palestine, because they won't let you go from here. They

won't put on another boat because they are afraid you might come back somewhere else."

Glaser: Did you ever find out who made that report, that you were a spy?

Schiller: No. Well, they had obviously had an intelligence report, which was very common in those days. I mean, there were Germans and Italians everywhere in the Middle East. There were agents of German and Italian government, trying to deal with the "subject nations," and trying to win them over to their point of view, and create difficulties for the Allies. I mean, it was all in preparation for the war. I did find out about it much more later on.

So, in any case, he took me to--I was released, and he took me to the campus. Arrangements were made by the University by the Dean of Men to--

##end tape 6 side a, begin tape 6 side b

So, arrangements were made by the University to drive me once a week to the Securite General to report. I always reported, and it was totally without any special event. It was just a matter of signing in, looking at my passport, giving me my passport back and going back to the University. The one thing that impressed me particularly about different attitudes of colonial powers, the

British, the French--the French were absolutely ruthless. As we were driving from the port, from the first interview with the Securite General, with the First Secretary of the American consulate, we were driving through downtown Beirut; all of a sudden I heard machine gun fire. I looked out of the car, and I saw French soldiers with machine guns, pointed at--it was an office building, fairly high, and I saw, as they were shooting with machine guns, a person fall down from the roof onto the pavement.

Well, what had happened was a Nationalist--all Arabs were Nationalist, in one form or another. Those who were politically active were Nationalist. --[the Nationalist Arab] had raised a Lebanese flag on that office building. Raising the flag was sufficient reason for the mandatory power to shoot somebody without any further warning, just shoot him in the act, and kill him.

In my second semester, during my stay there, I finally succeeded in not having to go to the Securite General, or being brought to the Securite General, but that I was permitted to go freely to Beirut anywhere in Lebanon. I finally apparently had convinced them that I was totally harmless, as far as they were concerned. I can hardly ever remember that I've been to Beirut, that not some shooting was going on. It was, between the French

and whatever Arab Nationalist forces were in existence at the time. It was Christians against Moslems and Moslems against Christians. When you read today's papers, these days, very very little has changed--except that the armaments are so much heavier, and therefore the casualties are so much greater. But the attitudes, the constant unrest, hasn't changed.

The other horrible thing that happened was that, when I finally, the week after my arrival, could--was brought downtown again, I also--I went to the bank. Inflation at that point in Lebanon was rampant. When I came to the bank, yes, they had my money, but the moment it had arrived they changed it into Lebanese money. So, this money which was supposed to last me for at least one semester was a little less than half the value, in one week. [laughs] Well, what choice did I have? I had no choice. I complained to Bank Japhet; never heard from them again on that. I was totally helpless, really, in that situation, except that I was very lucky that the Dean was really particularly nice to me, and turned out to become a real friend. He was very helpful, and tried to do whatever he could to make things a little easier for me. He was an American.

Not all personnel were Americans, of course, and there were quite a number of professors who were Arabs, from all kinds of countries, who had been originally at the University, at AUB, and

had graduated from AUB, and then stayed on, and became professors. It wasn't very--well, first of all, I had to pass the normal typical American admissions exam, to the University admission exam--there is a special name for it, and I have long forgotten what it is. But it's still in existence. If you do not come from certain schools within this country, for instance, University of California will make you go through that.

I had no problem at all; I passed it, and was admitted. I was admitted to the normal medical beginner's studies. But my mind, I have to say, was on all kinds of other things. I wasn't terribly intrigued anymore with studying medicine, for one reason or--well, I shouldn't say that. I was, in a way. But I was--there were too many other things that detracted me. I was a member of the Haganah, as I have mentioned to you, and when I informed my superior that I was going to study in Beirut, he said, "Wonderful. You contact so-and-so, and he'll assign you a job."

Well, I contacted somebody in the Jewish quarter in Beirut, and I have to say, it was Jewish quarter. It was a ghetto--not all Jews were living in a ghetto, but some Jews were living in a ghetto. They were a very tight community. I mention that because I had great difficulties with them later on.

Glaser: With whom?

Schiller: With the Jewish community. For very obvious reasons; I mean, I don't blame them at all, [laughs] that they had difficulty with me, because my assignment was, we were discussing briefly how I got into this and what was I doing at the university, and that I had managed--or the dean had seen to it that I would have a room of my own, which was unusual. We were supposed to share it with two or three people, at least; larger dormitories, too. But he said to me at the time, "You've had enough problems getting in here, into the country. I don't want to put you together with some Arabs. You may not be used to their ways, and it isn't easy, I can tell you that. So, provided that you take on certain duties as a student-overseer of a group of dormitories for me, I'll give you a room of your own." That's how it happened. Which was very nice--there was nothing in it, of course [laughs], and I had no money to put anything in it. I did have a folding bed, and that was about it, and my suitcase.

So, I met with this man, and he said to me, "Look, you got here with the assumption that you're a German spy. This is ideal. You look like a German, you speak German; you don't like an Israeli, and just make contacts with the Arab Nationalist movement. See what you can find out for us." So, if you want to call it that, I had graduated to intelligence service of the

Haganah. It became very clear, I made it public, semi-public that, yes, I was a German. My German passport was very clear. And pretty soon, I got to meet the beginning of the Arab Nationalist movement. Some of the people who later on became very influential and leaders in the Palestinian movement. I met them in the beginning, some were studying there--one of them was studying medicine--

Glaser: Habash?

Schiller: Yes.

Glaser: Is that right? George Habash?

Schiller: Yes. And, I learned a great deal about what was going on; I learned a great deal about the fact that the American University of Beirut was one of the two hotbeds in which the whole movement was fostered, and the people who were there weren't there to study--well, they studied, like I studied--they were there strictly to organize an uprising against France, and an uprising against England. And, of course, against the Zionist conspiracy. I don't know whether I got information that helped or hurt; I will never know. Whatever information I had, I transmitted. That's all.

I went home for a break between the two semesters, for a number of reasons. Number one, most of all, doesn't show to day but I was totally undernourished. I had no money; I was living on figs and tomatoes and bread; that's all I could afford. I loved figs and tomatoes and bread, and still do! [laughs] And most of the food was totally unpalatable to me; anything I could afford. Mainly in Arab restaurants, on the campus or outside the campus. Horrible! The mere smell of the food, while it was being prepared, just absolutely nauseated me. As I say, I was totally undernourished, and I had some kind of a tropical infection. It wasn't malaria as a doctor thought at the time. It may have been Malta fever. The outward appearance was very similar--shivering, and high temperature.

So between my mental condition, my physical conditions, etc., I just had to go home for a rest, which was short, but still it helped. This time I carried my money myself. I went both ways by bus, and nothing happened fortunately.

And I had done one other thing. I had a friend who was the creator, originator, of the Tel Aviv Zoo. It was a tiny little plot of land when it started out, hardly more than a building lot, somewhere in Tel Aviv, with wire mesh around it and wooden crates in which the animals were being accommodated. He was a biologist, and I had--that's another way in which I earned some

money while I studied at the Hebrew University. He was still at the Hebrew University in the year that I started. He kept at his house all kind of animals that he studied—snakes, and absolutely everything under the sun. He very often had to go on field trips; it was my job, and he would pay me a little something, to go to his house and feed all the animals.

From one of these field trips he came back and he had the most adorable little pup that he brought home. He had it in a shoebox. He said, "I brought you something." He opened it up, and it was this little bundle of fur. I said, "What is it?" He said, "It's a jackal." Well, it was just a pet, just a few days old. He said, "It will be very interesting to see whether they can be domesticated. Would you be interested to do that?" I said, "Yes, I would." I loved animals; I still do.

So, I had this little jackal, which I raised, first with a bottle, then with more meat. It was very attached to me, but was never really tame. Never obeyed any commands; it was laughing at me any time I told him to do something [laughs]. But anyway, he was very, very nice. Extremely intelligent animals.

So, I had returned it to him while I was at the university in Beirut for a semester, and then of course I went to visit it, and there was great joy on both sides. I just couldn't get

myself to leave it there again. So, I took it with me. I had actually informed the dean that I was going to bring a jackal with me, and he said, "You can't do that! Pets are not allowed!" I said, "No, it's a study object. It's being domesticated." He said, "Well, if you have any problems, we'll have to destroy it. So it's your own risk. And it has to stay in the room, and you have to feed him and you have to make sure and you have to clean up anything that happens. You can't take him outside, you can't walk him--" the room had a little balcony, so he was out in the open all right. He [the dean] said, "You must realize what the attitude of most Arabs is; Arabs detest jackals." Well, for good reason. They're mauraders, and they kill chickens. And anyway, dogs and any doglike creature for an Arab is an unclean animal, and they have absolutely no liking for them.

So, that's a national attitude which was just there, and so he was afraid, and justifiably afraid, that it would cause problems. Well, it did cause problems. But not the way he or I could have predicted. It became rather obvious that the son of the Arab friends that I had made, and I say "friends" in this instance in quotation marks, were rather cool to me when I came back. They had—their intelligence service had figured out that I had gone to Israel, Palestine. What was I doing in Palestine? Well, same thing, was contacting—"No, no, you haven't contacted any Arabs. We know that. You have been watched. You have been

talking to Jews."

"Well, yes, I've been talking to Jews, and after all, I have to find out what they're up to." I talked myself out of the situation, and everything seemed to be normal, except that generally speaking, they were rather cool towards me, and very little information was given to me, and I was never entirely certain that the information was correct.

Glaser: Excuse me. Why were you interrogated on the basis that you were supposed to contact Arabs in Palestine? Was this Nationalist group thinking that you were a spy on their behalf?

Schiller: Well, not on their behalf, no, but on--I was supposedly making arrangements for arms to be shipped to the Arabs from Germany, from--you see, I had letters from Krupp; everything was legitimate. Everything could be documented--which had nothing to do with arms, but with our house [laughs]. Well, they were just--it was a normal thing to do that when somebody disappears all of a sudden, like I did, sure it was vacation--but why would I then not go somewhere, perhaps in Germany or somewhere else? But why go to Palestine of all places? So there has to be justification for that.

They weren't exactly dumb. They didn't quite know yet what

they were doing, but they weren't dumb. Some of the leadership was extremely intelligent. Hateful, and hating, but extremely intelligent. So, my cover wasn't too good any more.

The other problem I had was that, in contrast to some of my Arab friends, the Jewish community in Beirut had swallowed my line totally, with hook and sinker [laughs] that I was a German, and a German agent. I had to be; I couldn't play two games at the same time. No way. Except for one person who knew--but he too couldn't say, "No, no, no--leave him alone." I was seen too often in the company of Arabs, and too often in the company of Arabs who were suspected of being Nationalists, and fanatics, essentially, that the Jewish community felt ill at ease. And after all, I did have a German name. I never changed my name in any respect for anyone, which is kind of funny. [laughs] I mean, with all my values and attitudes, I should have! But I didn't. I was born that way, and I stayed that way.

I will never find out who did what, but one day, towards the end of the semester, I came back to my room, and I didn't recognize my room. My first reaction was that the little jackal had gone berserk and torn everything to shreds. There was little to tear to shreds, except that everything had been pulled out of my valise, that my bedding was all over the room, that everything was--papers strewn all over, and torn, and part--torn out of

things. I got real mad, and I yelled at the jackal, who quickly went under the bed [laughs] to the farthest corner, you know, cowering under the bed. After a while, I coaxed him out, and there he came. In his mouth, he had a piece of cloth which was from a pair of pants of none of mine, and which was totally bloody. He put it in front of me, and he said, "Look, you're yelling at me for nothing! I was defending you!" And whoever it was, either the Jewish community or the Arabs, had raided my room, in my absence, and gone through absolutely everything, torn everything apart, and hadn't found anything of course. There was nothing to find.

In any case, I had to report the incident, because some of my books were torn, and some of my study papers that I had prepared were unusable. I talked to the dean and hoped that he would give me extra time to make up for it. He said, "I'm aware of the fact that you have been politically active here. That's strictly against the rules of the university." I said, "If it is against the rules of the university, how come the Arabs are permitted to be, not just politically active, they're going to marshal trainings and going to encampments and being trained with weapons; they have weapons in the university, which certainly is not legal."

Well, he said, "We are kind of dependent on the good will of

the Arab nations around here. So, we have to close our eyes to certain goings-on. But I think it would be safer for you, and better for you if you would not continue your studies here. Complete the semester, and don't come back."

Well, that's what happened. I should say something else, that during the time--incidentally, he did not live to see that. He didn't outlive the semester. That is one of the reasons, incidentally, apart from what happened, that I did not pursue the study of medicine thereafter. In fact, that's what--I had discussed with him a number of times that I wasn't entirely happy, and I wasn't entirely certain that I should become a doctor. He gave me every opportunity; in fact, I had no business to be in [and] watch and observe surgery, or even assist with some of it, because I was not that far in my studies, but he wanted me to get an overall view of what medicine was all about--or the practice of medicine. He knew that I knew what medicine was about, but the practice of medicine was something else. Certainly the first year you don't normally go and assist with deliveries, and things of that nature. He let me do all of that--under strict supervision of the professors involved. So I got an overall view.

He had some exploratory surgery, and he specified that I could be present. In fact, I said to him, "You know, that may be

very tough for me, because of our relationship. I depend so much on you, and--

##end tape 6 side b, begin tape 7 side a

He said, "That's exactly why I'm asking you to do it, because doctors very often are in stressful situations, and tough situations, that makes it very difficult for them to make the correct decision. I want you to see what it is like to be participating in an operation on a person to whom you have a personal relationship. It isn't that you should do that normally, but sometimes you may not be able to help it, and more than that, one does get attached to some of one's patients. If for one reason or another, one cannot stand that kind of thing, one should not become a doctor. That's why I want you to be present."

I was present, and it was found that he had incurable cancer, it was far too far gone. They did operate one more time a week later, in the hope to prolong his life for a while, and again, I was present at his request. He died on the table.

It was something I couldn't live with for a while. I had nothing to do with it--I wasn't the one who operated, certainly, I wasn't the one who even assisted, but I was present. I thought

to myself that, if this makes that kind of an impression on me, he's probably right that I should not be a doctor. The decision was made fairly easy for me. I mean, he would have been the one to insist that I would leave, but that was a private discussion. It was not that he had initiated any steps that would have removed me from the university; I could have come back. But, between the fact that I may have--may have--or that my cover may have been broken, and that I really did not want to continue to study medicine, that in addition, financially it was practically impossible for me, unless I had at the same time a steady, minimum income. And that, studying medicine in a foreign country, and having an income, is out of the question. It didn't work.

But, nevertheless, I could have--my intent was to go back to Palestine to work full-time for a while, in building operations. I had started an apprenticeship in carpentry, so I was no longer just doing unskilled work. I was still working for the same people. So, I felt I could work full-time for a while, and then hopefully have enough money to continue studies of one sort or another in England, even though nobody knew how long it would be before the apparently threatening war would come. It appeared much earlier that there would be a war, at least, and most people realized in Europe. I don't know why, but there were all the signs. It was just a matter of months, maybe years, but it would

come. It had to come.

So, I returned to Palestine, and very shortly after my return, Chava Schocken did come back from England, and we got together a number of times. Even though we had written to each other all the time, something had changed--not on my side--but somehow, I guess she was not willing to fight her parents. I may be wrong; I don't know. In any case, she broke it off very soon afterwards.

##end tape 7 side a, end of interview 3

Interview with Hans Schiller, interview 4

Date of Interview: 7-15-87

Begin tape 8, side a##

Glaser: July the fifteenth, 1987, the fourth interview with Mr. Schiller, on tape number eight, and I will rewind and listen back to make sure that everything is in order.

Before we go on to what happened and your career after you returned from your medical studies, I wanted to ask you more about how you--what were your reactions to Palestine, how you felt about it, when you arrived at the age of--was it seventeen? When you first came from Germany to settle.

Schiller: Yes. Let's see; that was in '32. Of course--yes, I was sixteen, seventeen, something like that. My reaction was actually very positive. What I found was a country that was developing, and was a tremendous challenge to the people living in the country and developing it. It was a very hard country, very harsh country, which had been neglected for centuries; in fact had been exploited by all the various outside owners of the country, whether it had been the Greeks, the Romans, the Turks, and the British hadn't been there long enough yet at the time to make a tremendous impact, have a tremendous impact on the country. It is, however, the Jews who were the only ones who were concerned

about the environmental condition of the country, and were trying to do everything they could to make the hills green again, and the valleys bearing fruit; all the kinds of things that the then native inhabitants didn't do, because essentially those who were living in the cities eked out a rather meager living in seventeenth century commerce.

They were still a totally feudal system. They were the absentee landowners, who lived on the proceeds of the people who were working for them, and essentially were little more than serfs at the time. There were those who lived in the cities and those who were essentially nomads, who lived in the countryside, but didn't do anything to replenish what they took from the countryside. They weren't growing anything--with exceptions, of course. Essentially two groups of rural Arabs--the nomads and those who are more or less settled in the area in which they happened to live--but used the soil, or what little soil there was as it was without ever improving it or replenishing it, because they didn't know any better.

Glaser: Did you respond to this harsh land; it's needs?

Schiller: Yes. I responded to it--in fact, I was--ignore now for a moment any political connotation. I was very much attached to it, and in certain ways, I am still attached to it, simply because of the

impression it made on me during the years that I lived there. It is awe-inspiring to live in a country where you're surrounded by history. And history not just of a few hundred years, but of thousands of years. And realizing that in essence it had been the cradle of three great religions, no matter whether you feel religious or not. I should also say, of three great cultures, and essentially the kind of culture that has been, and still is, the base of all western culture. One feels the harshness--perhaps the word harsh is not quite the right word. It isn't lovely--well, that's putting it in a slightly different connotation. But it is a country of--where you feel that at all times and wherever you are--it's a small country, but it's a microcosm, and within its borders it has the deepest point in the world, namely Dead Sea. It doesn't have very high points; the mountains around Jerusalem, the Judean Mountains, are not terribly high, but measured from the deepest point, which is within a few miles of the highest point, it is a tremendous difference. It has in it deserts; it had, at the time when I came, already some very lush, green areas in the upper Galilee; it has a beautiful lake, also below sea level, near Tiberias. That is a strange thing; I never quite remember, for one reason or another--the name of the lake in English. Well, it's in Hebrew it's called--and in Arabic too--Lake Tiberias. But of course, it's a lake around which Christianity started.

It has deserts, and when I say deserts, they're quite different from most of the deserts within the United States, because for 95 percent of the year, they're totally barren. There's absolutely nothing but sand. And evershifting sands, and—so they always create a different aspect, and in every light, they appear different. It is like a giant's hand was molding them at all times, and they have something very sculptural about them, and very attractive. And I can well understand the words of the Old or New Testament, in that respect, that people went into the desert to be by themselves and find themselves and find what they were all about.

Glaser: They say that every Israeli is an archaeologist. Did you do any digging?

Schiller: Yes. I did, but I started digging much later. I started digging during the time that I was in the army, and in fact I have a collection of things which you may look at if you want to.

Well, it is this kind of quality which throughout the years, whenever I had the time, I spent it by walking and going by myself, which was a dangerous thing to do, and something that at all times people would admonish you not to do, but then I always did things I was admonished not to do [laughs]. I would walk and walk and walk, and it has inspired me. It has formed in me

certain concepts of landscape, of relationship of history, humanity, the needs of man, and perhaps also the habitation of people. It formed certain images within my mind which have never left me, and which have perhaps stood me to good stead in my chosen profession.

Speaking about the people, those with whom of course at first I had direct contact, those who belonged to the same political movement, or had the same motivation probably that I had, were a very enthusiastic people. Very giving people; they didn't have anything, they would share everything with everybody. One shouldn't misunderstand that: it was not restricted to sharing it with people of the same race, if there is such a thing as race, which I deny; with people of the same religion--no. No such restrictions were placed on their generosity. They would share with their Arab neighbors; they would share what they had, what they knew--their know-how--and their methods of cultivating soil, of doing anything--building, and housecare, and education. What was beautiful about the spirit of the people in the country at the time was that it looked like there was no reason why Arabs and Jews couldn't live at peace. Essentially, they have the same interest. They had the same interest to improve the lot of their people, to enhance a land in which they were living, to bring education to people, and housecare to people. All kinds of concepts that did not exist anywhere in the Middle East for those

who were living within the Middle East at the time.

[large portion omitted by interviewer]

What happened was something very interesting. The Arab population at the time I came to the country was rather small. It numbered in the hundred thousands, not in the millions. And even at the time that I came, there had been already a tremendous influx from the surrounding countries; from Jordan, then called Trans-Jordan, from Lebanon, from Syria, from Egypt, and even from parts farther away. It was an indication that, here for the first time, in the Middle East, there was an opportunity for suppressed people to find their own; whether they were Arabs or Jews. They got an education, and to that I have to say the public education system was instituted by Britian, as far as the Arabs were concerned.

Glaser: What do you mean by that? Not for Jews?

Schiller: Well, the Jews had their own schools, for the greatest extent. And nobody bothered to provide anything. Whereas the government schools were essentially populated by Arabs, and instruction was in Arabic. So, since the Jews didn't ask for anything, they didn't get anything. They had their own schools. In health care, government services, government hospitals, also were

provided by the British, and were used almost totally by the Arab population. That government service, incidentally, didn't just use British doctors; they used Jewish doctors, they used Arab doctors. More than that, the facilities that came into existence, like the Hadassah Hospital, or the various other semi-religious or religious hospitals, Jewish hospitals, that were already in existence, and had been in existence, some of them, for a long time, were made available to Arabs.

You could always see long lines of people waiting to see a doctor, on the outside; camped out with their whole families, donkeys, camels--everything. This was new; this was something Arabs weren't used to. And they wouldn't hesitate, and they do not hesitate today from all I know, to use these facilities.

Glaser: When you say this was something new, you mean that they were not accustomed to going to hospitals?

Schiller: No. Essentially, in the surrounding countries, unless you could afford to be treated in a hospital, you wouldn't get any treatment. There may be a rudimentary kind of service--may have been--but it was so rudimentary that essentially people died at a very young age, because they lacked any sanitation, lacked any education in that respect. And any medical services.

[more deletions]

[end tape 8, side a; begin tape 8, side b]

Interference by Arabs in the beginning was comparatively benign, if you can call it benign, that occasionally a bus was ambushed, in a city an attack was made on a marketplace, and in the average, from time to time, there were small uprisings, resulting in a few deaths. But it was not the kind of pattern that developed later on, and certainly after World War II, where it took more the aspects of a full-fledged war.

Glaser: Tell me about the work that you did when you came back from Beirut.

Schiller: Well, before I get into that, I should really say one other thing, which is brief. You may recall that I felt that I had difficulties in Beirut, for political reasons, and I felt I could not continue. It was a very tough time for me. There was, among other things, one compensation. And that is that, again through the efforts of my dean, I was permitted to use the organ in the chapel of the university. That's the first time in my life, which I've done quite a few times since, that I would play the organ. It happens to be an instrument which I particularly love, and it also directed me into areas with which--or returned me to

areas in which I was very much interested. Namely, arts in general, music, performances, etc. I also joined a theater group at the time, and in keeping with my not-so-official role in Beirut, I played--and I forgot what the title of the play was-- but I played a German colonel. Apparently quite successfully. But that was just an aside.

Now, you were asking me what I was doing when I came back. I think I had mentioned earlier that, whenever I could, I had been working in order to earn some money, to defray the costs of my studies, and had been working as an unskilled laborer on construction sites. It was at this point that I felt I had to know quite a bit more about it, and since I did not intend to remain an unskilled laborer all my life, I went into apprenticeship, became an apprentice carpenter in a very short time, became--I had to be a member of the Histadruth, which was the union, and I became a full-fledged carpenter, and within again a very short time, became a carpenter foreman. I was able to read drawings, make sketches etc., and had learned rather quickly how things fitted together.

I used the time to learn as much about various building trades as I possibly could, so that I had very shortly after that, within the span of two years or so, a fair knowledge of almost any procedure being used on construction sites. I was

lucky that I had been working and was working for the company that had built our own house, and I had been working on that, too. The Palestine Building Syndicate was involved at the time, had gotten a contract for a tremendously large building, namely one designed by Eric Mendelsohn. It was called the Anglo-Palestine Bank in Jerusalem, which later on, after the Declaration of the State, became the State Bank.

This is a quite famous building, and was in many respects a building that was quite different from anything that had been built in Jerusalem to date. Being Mendelsohn, it was totally contemporary. It used, as any building in Jerusalem had to by law, the native building materials, namely a stone that is abundant in the Judean hills, but it used it in a different fashion. I don't think I have to talk about it because both publications, drawings, and photographs of the building are available.

It was also at this time, and I have indicated that earlier, that my relationship with Chava Schocken had come to an end. And, that I had very soon afterwards become a much closer friend with Lotte Bernheim, who was the little girl whom I met in Berlin, and who was the closest friend of Chava Schocken. Her parents kind of resisted my seeing her. I think it was the normal protection of father and mother, for a young woman, and as

far as her father was concerned, it was a concern that obviously I hadn't made up my mind what I was going to be. He was concerned that I might not be in a position, should I be serious about the relationship, to provide the means for both of us and, heaven forbid, children.

So, all understandable, but terribly irritating to both a young man and a young woman. No matter which way one looks at it. I didn't--I saw her quite often, and I did not--she had finished her schooling in Talpioth, and intended to become a teacher. This was a welcome opportunity for her parents to move her to Tel Aviv, where she intended to teach a seminary. So, in order to see each other, there were a few times when she would come home, or the few times that I could afford to go down to Tel Aviv. Nevertheless, we managed to see each other quite often--not often enough at the time, I thought, but in retrospect I would say quite often.

It became rather obvious to her father, who was a noted photographer, and was also a noted architectural photographer, and as such had taken pictures of all of Eric Mendelsohn's works in Jerusalem--I mean in Palestine--

Glaser: What was his full name?

Schiller: Alfred Bernheim. He was, as I mentioned, had taken all the photographs for Eric Mendelsohn, and he said to me one day, "Well, perhaps you would like to become an architect." Somehow, I still hadn't--wasn't quite reconciled and certainly under the pressure from my mother, with the idea of becoming anything else but a doctor, even though I had made the clear decision that under the circumstances, I couldn't. But perhaps, someday a miracle would happen, and I would be able to go to England and study medicine.

But nevertheless I agreed that I would meet with Mendelsohn, and particularly under the circumstances, since Mendelsohn had an office in London, was well-known in England, and had a lot of connections and influence in England and also therefore in Palestine, with the governing circles, he was one of the people who were often invited to Government House, to parties given by the high commissioner--that it certainly, as Alfred Bernheim said to me, it wouldn't hurt to make the acquaintance of Mendelsohn and perhaps get a little help with his influence.

So, he talked to him, and Mendelsohn agreed to see me. Which surprised me at the time, but later on when I knew Mendelsohn better, didn't surprise me, because Mendelsohn always liked to meet with young people, students, and people who were interested in architecture, and last but not least, people who

were interested in him. But he always took the time, and was quite gracious about it, in contrast to another great architect whom I met later on, by the name of Frank Lloyd Wright, but that's a later story.

A meeting was set up, and I was told by Alfred Bernheim to be on my best behaviour, of course. I didn't know what "best behaviour" meant. I've never known what "best behaviour" meant [interviewer chuckles]. I've had the unholy habit to say what I believed in, and to say so without hesitation, even when not asked. But when asked, there's no stopping me.

So, I came into the presence of a great man in his office in the windmill in Rechaviah. The windmill was an old structure which had been built in the previous century by--[pause] who was it?

Glaser: Sir Moses Montefiore?

Schiller: Yes, by Montefiore, and was with the intent of providing work for Jews who had settled in that area. It was a stone structure as everything else in Rechaviah or in Jerusalem. It had a very nice garden around it, with a very old fig tree, and I've often spent time under that fig tree, and so has Mendelsohn. Very often later on we have been sitting there, discussing the affairs of

architecture and of the world, more often that of the world than that of architecture.

I did know quite a bit about Mendelsohn; I had admired his buildings in my native city of Breslau, where he had built a department store, Petersdorf. Later on, in Berlin of course, I had admired his Columbus House and the metalworker's union building, and of course I was familiar with perhaps his most famous one, the Einstein tower in Potsdam. So, I knew that he was the contemporary architect in Europe, with international fame. And from that point alone, it intrigued me to meet him.

He was very pleasant; he told me that Alfred Bernheim had talked to him about me; that he had high respect for Alfred Bernheim's judgment, and that if he could help me, he would gladly do so. So, I told him that essentially I wanted to go to England and could he in any way see that I could get any help to become a doctor?

He said, "That's not what I understand you're going to do. I thought that you're working as a carpenter on building sites these days, and that's certainly good, because in certain ways that will prepare you to become an architect, and I thought you would be interested in that."

I immediately said that was only my second choice. He said, "How can architecture be anybody's second choice?" That was the first time that I felt a little bit of the edge, and a certain amount of arrogance that he had--perhaps was entitled to--but that I wasn't willing to concede at that point, or certainly not at my still comparatively young age. But, he then said, "Well, if you want to become an architect," and he totally shoved everything else aside, "if you want to become an architect, I certainly could help you to get into the AA in London." The AA is the Architectural Association, and at that time, the only reasonably contemporary school, teaching contemporary architecture in England. He had a number of friends there who were teachers there and had worked there, and he had quite a number of connections and would have been able to help me get in there.

Then, he said, "That is, if you really want to go to England and become an architect." And then, as an aside, he said, "You really never become an architect if you study in England." And at the time, from his point of view, that was probably correct. What he meant is not an architect who was going to practice the kind of architecture that he was practicing. Of course, he was a pioneer, in his particular way of working, and his way of designing, and an acknowledged master. His criticism of anything else but Mendelsohn's architecture usually was pretty biting. So

when he said, "You can't become an architect," [that] didn't mean that I couldn't become an architect and be licensed in England and everything else, but he didn't consider what they were teaching, even at the AA, what he would like to see people teach.

He said, "What do you think of my architecture?" I hesitated for a moment, and then I said, "Mr. Mendelsohn, I like your architecture, but it lacks something." And he bristled, and I've seen him bristle many a time later on in life--he said, "What do you mean?! What is it lacking?"

I said, "What it is lacking is the kind of use of light that has been made in the Middle Ages and later. You take one of the great cathedrals, and you walk in, and you see the play of light and shadow as a certain warmth, and a certain living presence that is not as cold as your architecture is, and not as unrelated to life as your architecture is."

He said, "You have to be crazy!!! How dare you say things like that?!"

I said, "Well, you asked me; it's my feeling." So he simmered down a little, and then he said, "I have to prove you that that isn't so. I'll make you an offer. I'll take you to my office, I'll teach you architecture, and then we'll talk again.

And we'll see whether you still feel, after you see how I work and what I consider and how I design, whether what you have just said about me is still true in your mind."

Then, he said, "Well, are you accepting?" I said, "Mr. Mendelsohn, it's a great honor to be asked by you. I can't afford to work for you. I have to earn a living. Unless I study and become an architect, in which case I shall work for half a year, take one semester, and work for half a year, and even if it takes me a long time until I'm through--"

"Oh," he said, "that's all right." Actually, he said, "It is common practice that great architects like me charge people to be admitted to an office and be trained in that office."
[laughs]

I said, "Well, Mr. Mendelsohn, that's another reason that I won't be able to accept."

"Well," he said, "I'm not like Frank Lloyd Wright, who charges all his people. I make exceptions. I do realize that you can't afford it. So I'll tell you something. You work for free; you work for a month, and you and I will talk again. If you still like it, we'll talk and see whether I still like it. And if I still like it, I may consider gradually to give you a

little money, if you're worth it."

Well, that wasn't exactly the best of all arrangements, but it was probably an opportunity, at least it looked to me at the time, to remain where I was, to continue some of the work I was doing--in fact, he had said as much. He said, "Well, as you tell me you're with the Palestine Building Syndicate, they have just gotten one of my major jobs, in the Anglo-Palestine Bank. I see whether I cannot have you on the job to start out with as my representative. After you have been trained for a month or two, then we will find out whether you really understand what it's all about; I could make you an assistant clerk of the works. So, then the Palestine Building Syndicate would have to pay you, and I don't have to pay you."

Wonderful arrangement, isn't it? I said, "Well, Mr. Mendelsohn, that doesn't answer the question--assuming for the moment that I would want to become an architect--that I shouldn't go to a school, and pass exams and get my license."

"Oh, fiddlesticks, nonsense! What are you talking about? You're being offered to work in the office of the greatest architect in this area, and I'm going to teach you! Who else can teach you all I know?! I don't believe in that. It's the wrong thing to do, to go to a school, mediocre schools. You'll be a

mediocre architect; you'll never know what it's all about when you have a chance in a million to work for Eric Mendelsohn."

Glaser: Did you have a feeling that, as this very first visit, that he viewed you as sort of a possible heir apparent?

Schiller: I don't know. Only that, probably not. But, it hasn't happened to Mendelsohn very often, that much I know, to be challenged. Much later, when we were quite close, and I walked out on him one day, because I couldn't take it any more--I mean, I was dead tired--he admitted to Lotte, he called her, he couldn't talk to me. He was so furious that I had walked out. He admitted to Lotte that he needed me, and he needed me because "he's intolerable," he said, "he's absolutely intolerable. He'll argue with me, he always argues." And then there was a moment's silence, and he said, "Nobody else ever dares argue with me, and I need that."

And perhaps the fact that I was brash--and I was brash!--and didn't show what he considered proper respect for him, but made it challenging to him, challenging statement, to prove to me--he felt he had to prove to me that he understood this fully, and in fact he did understand it fully, and that his architecture definitely was superior to practically anything else. That was a challenge, and it remained a challenge for him for the rest of

his life. It wasn't just a challenge later on, I mean--we were very close. He was still totally unbearable; the closer you became, the more unbearable he became--and he knew it. A few days before he died, he said, "I haven't treated you very nicely, I know that." That's quite an admission for a man who has never admitted to anything, you know?

Glaser: But that's sad to hear, isn't it?

Schiller: Yes.

Glaser: But did you start then with--

Schiller: I started with him, and then at the same time, when the job started at the Palestine Building Syndicate, I went there part of the time every day, and part of the time in the office.

Glaser: What happened after that first month?

Schiller: Well, after the first month, he called me in, and he said, "Well, Schiller--" it was always by last names, which is a German habit-- "you want to stay on?"

I said, "Yes, Mr. Mendelsohn, I would like to stay on, but I can't really afford it."

"Well, wait a minute! You haven't even found out whether I'm willing to keep you!"

I said, "Well, do you?"

He said, "Yes. I think there is some remote promise in you. And I'll tell you what. Business is not terribly good. But, I'll be generous. I'll give you a pound a week." Four dollars.

##end tape 8 side b, begin tape 9 side a

Well, that--

Glaser: So you said Thank You?

Schiller: Well, that plus what I was earning outside of his office, was a princely amount, and I was grateful, and I said Thank You, I'm willing to accept that. He said, [gruffly] "For the next three months, but no longer than that. We'll re-evaluate it."

Well, we have always re-evaluated, ever since and up till the day he died. I have stayed with him until the day he died.

During all this time, in addition to everything else, I was

doing in the office and working, I still was an officer in the Haganah, and whenever things became a little more confrontational as far as the Arabs were concerned, and they did become more and more confrontational, I would have to go at night on duty, either guarding the suburb of Jerusalem or guarding a new settlement, or later on, commanding one of the patrolling tenders on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv road. I'm only mentioning this because most people cannot imagine that you have essentially two jobs, and thirdly, spend a great deal of your time in uniform, as a peace-keeping force. I specifically mention "peace-keeping force," because that is what it was, and that is the way I could live with the concept. I couldn't live in any other fashion with the concept of wearing uniform and using arms, or carrying arms, except to protect whatever there was--lives, mostly--against attack.

It was not easy, I've indicated earlier, that the Haganah officially had no arms, other than the rifle being issued when you came to duty, and fifty rounds of ammunition, and you had to account for every round. Anytime that you had used a round, you had to write long reports why that round was used, even if it was just because you were fired at, and you shot at night into the air, not knowing whether you would do anything. But, unless you were firing back, the Arabs would advance on your position, and pretty soon they would be close enough to hurl a grenade, or use

machine guns, which they had.

So, it is an open secret these days--it was an open secret in certain ways at the time--that arms were being smuggled in for the Haganah, from European countries--certainly not Germany or Italy. They came from France, they came from Spain, they came from England, and they came from Czechoslovakia. So, these illegal arms came in in barrels, flour, or cement--whatever--or were landed at night when the British were, intentionally or unintentionally, asleep. It was because of that, and because there was a clandestine manufacturer of certain arms that could be primitive arms, that could be easily manufactured, like hand grenades, that were manufactures in garages or back-yard shops, at night. The penalty of being found with illegal arms became more and more severe. It finally, in the last year that I was around, in the Haganah, it was the death penalty. And still, one had little choice. In order to be effective, in order to even protect oneself when engaged in duties of this kind, one had to be able to match the arms that were being used and supplied to the Arabs by the Germans and the Italians.

I had an illegal machine pistol, a Belgian--actually, it probably was--yes, it was made in Belgium, but it was Parabellum 9 millimeter, which I have never used. I've carried it often--at great peril to myself--whenever I was on duty. But I got to use

arms that belonged to the Haganah, namely a machine gun that was a British machine gun that was hidden on the tender, under the seat, and as part of our uniform, when on these duties, were two ammunition pouches, British army issue, which were about ten inches tall, and they carried on two shoulder belts, one on each side, in which one would carry belts--that is, ammunition belts--for machine gun or hand grenades. And I do recall that one day, while I was going on duty, I was coming out of the changing room at the police station in Jerusalem, and one of the British constables who knew me rather well came--was walking in, and he looked me up and down, and he patted me on my two pouches, and he said, "You better be careful that you don't fall, you might break the eggs that you have in there."

Which was nice of him. He knew exactly what was there. He could have stopped me, asked me to open the pouches, and he could have arrested me right there. Essentially, they did not. And simply because they did also understand that if we weren't patrolling, they would have to, and that the few times that they were patrolling, and were attacked, they would hope that we would come to their assistance and rescue, which we have done. And they would equally hope that we would be able to repel such an attack. So, by and large, if you were on good relations, they would close their eyes and ignore it.

Glaser: Did Mr. Mendelsohn know that you were in the Haganah?

Schiller: Oh, yes. It was expected. It was expected that a young man, or for that matter a young woman, in one way or another, would participate. I mean, he would at times complain that I was-- "Where you have you been last night?! You're too sleepy! You're not doing anything! It's not what I want to see." That kind of thing. But, he accepted it. He had no choice.

Glaser: What were you doing for him those first few months when you were more or less being--

Schiller: I was under his chief architect, chief draftsman--he was an architect, but they were called chief draftsmen--who was in charge of the office, and he would assign me to do certain drawings, and he would tell me how, and he would watch me. He gradually explained to me everything technically that had to be done. Once I had acquired the knowledge of drafting and what I was drafting, and of course I had--because of my experience on the job site, I had a better understanding for detailing than most people did, even most architects, who haven't had the extensive kind of training--though it was very common in Europe that you would be required to work on a job site for at least half a year. That's nothing in comparison to what I had done.

I acquired very quickly the knowledge of how to detail, and of course, it also meant studying in addition. I had private lessons at the time given by the chief draftsman, on engineering and engineering calculations. Those were things that are essential; one has to understand. In other words, one doesn't have to be able to do it oneself, because it was common that you would either have a full-time engineer in the office, or that you would associate with an engineering office. In our case, in Mendelsohn's case, one of his partners in Jerusalem was an engineer, and he in turn had an engineer working for him, and one draftsman. So, that I would actually see the whole gamut of what an architect ought to know, and ought to do, including spec writing, because my English was good, and since Mendelsohn was doing among other things government work, I did prepare some of his specifications, and some of the correspondence with British government, mandatory power. At the same time, I could letter in Hebrew, which he couldn't, and did understand Hebrew and did speak Hebrew. So that was important in a way.

Well, that is really how I learned. I learned by experience, in an imperical fashion. Often I have said later on, I wished I had never accepted to work for Mendelsohn in this fashion, and it would have been much better for me if I had--and for my future development and certainly coming to the United States, it would have been better if I had gone to school to

study architecture.

Glaser: You don't regret becoming an architect, though, do you?
Bypassing the medicine?

Schiller: Yes and no. No. I do not--bypassing medicine was the right choice, for all kinds of reasons. I would have made probably a fairly good doctor. It runs in the family.

Glaser: But you're saying that you wished to have studied architecture in a different manner?

Schiller: Yes. I think I have missed a number of times that I didn't have any academic training, which does not mean that I didn't teach at Berkeley. [laughs] It is something that does no longer fit in today's world. I've often been called by people who have observed me and know me, been called a Renaissance person. But a Renaissance person does not belong in the modern age, perhaps. They have a tough time. You cannot know it all; the knowledge, the general knowledge that one has to acquire, even in the profession of architecture. It is so tremendous that most people, after they have acquired a general knowledge, a basic general knowledge, tend to specialize in one field or the other, or withing that field tend to specialize into just design, or just execution of the design--which means working drawings--or

just specifications, or the legal aspect of it. I have found today that I would have had a much easier life, and would have been more easily accepted in the United States--where I had no intention of going, incidentally--had I been trained in a university.

I was quite proud of not having been trained at a university, because in spite of all that--and I'm not saying that lightly about myself, and it isn't that I'm an unusually conceited ass--just a little--but I'm knowing it simply because I've seen so many who have come out of universities, I've employed people who have come out of colleges and universities, and who didn't understand what has to be done in real life. They may have known in theory many things I have acquired by osmosis. But, to practice and be efficient in your practice is a totally different story. This has something to do with the concept of education, particularly architectural education, at almost all universities, whether it is in the United States or in Europe. The interweaving of my duties in the Haganah, and under what conditions I could accept service in an armed force, and the reason I'm mentioning that--and I cannot stress it too much--is that all my instincts were for peace, that I couldn't under any circumstances, I had difficulty reconciling service in an armed force, and I was wondering often what would happen if, for one reason or another, I would knowingly hurt or kill a human being.

It was on one of the trips patrolling the highways, and was on the highway from Jerusalem to Hivah, but fairly close to Jerusalem. It was very early morning. The sun hadn't come up yet. All of a sudden shots rang out. We were being ambushed. The tender came to a quick stop, we jumped off the tender into the ditch. We returned the fire, and I led a charge up the hill from which the fire came. While this was going on, we're moving uphill, which is always difficult with arms and being fired at. The normal way of doing is for one part of the group to sustain fire and during that time, the other half will crawl forward, or move forward. So in this fashion we made our way up the hill, and it was my turn to crawl forward. Actually, I was upright; it was quite steep. The sun had just come up over the horizon. My eyes being riveted ahead of me from where apparently the shots had come, I saw within a few feet of me the glint of a rifle.

Before I knew it, I fired. It was an automatic reaction; I wasn't thinking. I wasn't doing anything other than bring up the weapon and fire from the hip. There was no return fire.

It was the experience of having killed a human being, was something that I will never forget. It was totally shocking. All firing stopped from the side of the attackers, as well as from our side. The man who had been lying in ambush had a brand-

new German machine gun, and of course there is absolutely no question, if I hadn't fired, I wouldn't be here. But I was so much in shock that I was just--told my people to get back on the tender and continue on. We all went on, didn't talk, didn't say anything. We were very quiet. I came into the police station, and returned my rifle, and was asked to fill out the report why one round was missing. While I was doing that, one of the British constables, who sat across from me to ask me what had happened and why, looked down on me for one reason or another and said, "Are you aware of it that you're wounded?"

I said, "No." He said, "Just a moment, stop all this," and he pulled my--I was wearing jodhpurs, British riding garb. I was wearing leather boots. He said, "Well, we'll have to cut the boots open," which hurt me no end, because they were my favorite boots. They were very elegant riding boots. He said, "Well, all right, I won't cut them. I'll try to pull it down, but in any case, you have a hole in them. If you don't have a hole just in the boots, it must go somewhere else, it doesn't come out again." [laughs] So he pulled the boot off, and I didn't feel anything. He turned it over, and out dropped the bullet. Then he pulled up my pants and took everything off that I was wearing, and said, "Well, you're lucky." It was just a little flesh wound, just grazed, but apparently had very little power--must have been early and just penetrated the leather of the boot, and that

slowed it enough so that it just scratched the surface, essentially. But I still have a scar there.

But all of that meant nothing, and I went home, went to bed. I didn't go to work, and didn't talk to anybody for a day or two. I was terribly upset. And all the rationalizing and all the saying, "Well, if I hadn't shot, he would have shot, and I would be dead--" all the rationalizing didn't help. That perhaps is the only explanation that I made the firm resolve that if ever the policy would change in the Haganah, I would not continue to serve in it. This became a reality only after I had come back from World War II service in the British army, but that will come a little later.

Well, we had all expected that war would break out, much before it actually did break out. It was not a matter of would it happen but when would it happen. We couldn't understand what was going on in the British government, the attempts at appeasement of Hitler, knowing fully well that he was playing for time. We couldn't understand that people couldn't see through some of his machinations, and some of the Russian machinations, of creating a non-aggression treaty, which meant both sides needed time. But the Russians needed time, and they were very much aware of it, after they tried to overrun Finland, and didn't succeed against a small country. But they weren't prepared to

defend themselves against an onslaught by Hitler's armies.

It is very easy to say all these things after the fact, and after the war. But I know we all discussed it often, and we had the greatest problem, that to understand why Britian, of all nations, would not understand what was being played in Europe. That at the same time, any postponement of the war was desirable, in a way. Something could have happened to Hitler. Something could have happened that would have avoided a major confrontation. It was clear, very clear, to people in Palestine at the time that when the Spanish Civil War broke out, that this was nothing but a training ground for Hitler and Mussolini to test their weapons, to try out what could be done. It was really the Spanish Civil War that reinforced Hitler's feeling that he could defeat the rest of the world, if necessary.

I know that I was at that time too, in a quandary. I have to admit that, though I do not normally have a feeling of hatred for people of any race or any persuasion, of any color, that I harbored an intense hatred of fascists, as a young man, and still do. And that was stronger than my unwillingness to serve in any armed forces. It was very difficult for me at the time not to go to Spain and volunteer. I was much too young. Later on, people found out they were never too young for that kind of service. It wasn't my fight, shall we say, but it was my fight, because it

was a fight against fascism--which is, at that time, was the only force that was willing to destroy the rest of the world, if they had their own way. But I didn't go. So my pacifist feelings probably were stronger than all that. And I also realized there is only so much a human being can do. And I had certain obligations, right where I was, and had certain obligations to my mother.

But knowing that the war was coming closer, the idea of going to England for any kind of study became more and more remote. Mendelsohn was still traveling back and forth between London and Jerusalem, where he had offices in both places. Every time he came back from England, he said, "This is probably the last time--"

##end tape 9 side a, begin tape 9 side b

Meanwhile, my involvement--Oh, "this is probably the last time," he said, "that I can do it," and in fact it was. At that time, less and less was being done in England, for one reason or another that I didn't understand, and more and more building activities were in Palestine. Mendelsohn had completed the house in the _____ for Father Weizmann, and the house and the library for Salman Schocken in Jerusalem was under construction and almost finished. The Hadassah Medical Center was under

construction and almost finished, and he got a master plan for the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus. That was the first time that he made me work directly with him. I no longer was working for the chief draftsman; I was working for Mendelsohn directly.

That's when both he and I discovered that I had a certain gift for planning of large schemes, and I for many years tended to prefer to work on city planning schemes rather than individual construction of buildings. As part of the planning scheme for the Hebrew University, he was also given the implementation of one aspect of--a comparatively small one--namely, a small university gymnasium. That's the first time that he turned over a job entirely to me, after he and I had worked together on the design, and then he turned it over to me for execution. This would [normally cause?] to be a job captain, because he would watch what was going on, but I produced all the working drawings and specifications. At the same time, he got two more jobs from the Hebrew University, or related to the Hebrew University: the Daniel Sieff Research Institute in Rehoveth, and the University Agricultural School, also in Rehoveth.

I did work on the Sieff Institute, only in the design phase with him, and then he had made, as he always did, some sketches for the agricultural school. He had troubles with it. The trouble was very easy to understand. He has been used throughout

his life, with very few exceptions, to deal with very large projects. This, though comparatively large overall, its scale was more domestic. An agricultural school, at least that was the concept, should not be in a multi-floor building. It should be a direct relationship between fields and the classroom. So, he devised a plan which was excellent, and which became a prototype for what was later known as the "California school concept." It didn't come from California. [laughs] It came from Palestine. It was a one-story building complex, around an inner courtyard, and opening out to surrounding fields. But he couldn't--he worked on it from a design point of view, and since never in his life had he used a gabled roof. All his roofs had been flat roofs. He was used to deal strictly in concrete. All his buildings were either concrete or a mixture of concrete and steel. Those were the materials he was most familiar with.

Glaser: But you had to use Jerusalem stone, didn't you, in Jerusalem?

Schiller: Yes. That was just the facing. Still, these were all concrete or steel buildings. But structurally, he didn't know--hadn't experienced where to put a gable roof on a building. It was at a time that I had been, as a youngster, to Italy, and it was also the time that I came across a book that was dealing with--it was called, "Architecture without Architects." It was dealing with examples of interesting architectural solutions that had grown

out of native cultures, whether it was in Italy or in the Middle East, or in India, or anywhere else in the world. And so it always intrigued me, when there is a direct response to needs by people to provide shelter. Some very interesting structures have been designed in that fashion.

I thought, this being the Mediterranean, that the type of roof that is often used on farm houses in Italy, Tuscany particularly, would be very suitable, both for the climate and in appearance to blend in into the landscape. As he often did, he would never admit that he had problems with something. He would dump it on my desk and say, "Try something. Let me see what you would do." And I did, and I designed a roof shape that intrigued me, which I thought befitting, and being more dynamic than an ordinary [hip?] roof.

He looked at it, and he screamed at me, as he often did. "It's all wrong! Can't do this! I don't want it!" But, I wasn't easily put off. I made a quick cardboard model, because I also realized what bothered him about his own design was that it was uninteresting. It wasn't dynamic, and usually his designs were dynamic. They were moving; they indicated a direction. But I also realized that he couldn't see certain things at times, in the two-dimensionality of the drawing. After all, a finished building is three-dimensional. The only way to do that, at least

for me, is to build a model. It's the easiest way to study it, to look at it, to change it, etc. He relied more on his sketching ability.

So I built a little model which showed the uneven sides, namely a very steep slope on one roof--on the roof facing the south, so that the south would get the least exposure, and which is important in a hot country. And, a long easy slope towards the north. He looked at the model, and didn't say anything. He said, "I'll take it to my studio," which was way up in the windmill, the top of the windmill. In between were his living quarters. He--I didn't see either the model or heard from him about this for two days. After that, I experienced for the first time what I've since then experienced many times. He would come back with new sketches, all incorporating exactly what I had shown in the model and on my drawings. He said, "Draw it up. That's the way it should be done."

Fortunately, I didn't make a mistake that I made much later in life, when I said, "But Eric, this is exactly what I gave you!" I did that once. And he exploded. Well, not this time. I just drew it up. He was particularly pleased with it. It was built, still standing. It became, as I indicated, later in the layout, mostly, but perhaps also somehow in appearance, the type of school building that was generally referred to as "California

schools."

As he often said, and I have to agree, imitation is the most sincere flattery. But, as in so many other instances, he has had an influence on the development of architecture of this century, which goes far beyond the innovative spirit that he personally had. Because, so much was imitated, so much imitated without understanding what he intended. So much was imitated in places where you would never have used the particular design, because it was alien to the surroundings. He always felt that it was important to match the environment in some form, even though it could have been a totally different [idiom?]. But still something that would not clash with the environment in general, whether it was a building environment or the natural environment.

Glaser: Did he have any contact with the Bauhaus movement when he was in Germany?

Schiller: The contact that existed between him and Gropius and others of the Bauhaus movement was strictly that they were contemporary architects, that they knew each other, that they would get together once in a while, but he had no connection with the Bauhaus as such. He was neither a leader nor a disciple of the Bauhaus, and his way of designs and his way of building is quite different from that of the Bauhaus. Most people cannot quite see

it because it is more expressed in detailing, and in certain concepts, and certainly in the type of shape that he used, than in the general principle to be without ornaments. For instance, he has used ornamentation in his design. The Bauhaus essentially did not.

They have certain things in common, but that is the commonality of the time, really, more than anything else, and the fact that they knew each other, that they were very much aware of what the other was doing. So you'll find that there is an imprint of a certain epoch in central Europe that forms the idea in the onlooker that there is a certain similarity, more than there actually is. Because his planning is totally different, and his development of an essentially static object, a building is a static object--at least, so we hope!--it still expressed a movement, a direction. The Bauhaus didn't. So there are great differences.

The Bauhaus also was of the impression that a building design that was fitting a place in Berlin or anywhere else in central Europe, would be equally fitting in a hot climate in Arizona, which it isn't. That's why it became what was known as the International Style, and certainly the use of extensive glass in Arizona, or in any other hot climate, is wrong.

Glaser: Or even in a cold climate.

Schiller: In a cold climate equally it is wrong, yes! Well, of course, there are ways to get around all that, and these days technology makes it possible to have very large glass areas and still be fairly well-protected. That was not available at the time. See, because so many of the architects and builders who came to Palestine from Europe had been influenced by the Bauhaus, so much without thinking was imitated in Palestine and that really, if you wanted to see what is known as "International Style," Tel Aviv is the best example.

Glaser: An ugly city.

Schiller: No comment. [portion deleted by interviewer] When it did start, on the first day of the war, both Mendelsohn and I went to British headquarters in Jerusalem, which were at the King David Hotel. We were received by a burly sergeant of the Air Force. He enquired of us what we wanted. Mendelsohn, who was a good deal older than I was, said that we wanted to volunteer for the RAF force. Though Mendelsohn had a fairly strong German accent, he could have passed for Englishman in many respects, of similar age, shall we say. The sergeant asked to see an identification, and Mendelsohn produced his British passport. He had a British passport, since he had immigrated from Germany via Holland to

England.

He said, "Well, I think you're a little too old, sir, to be accepted." And then he asked whether I could identify myself, and I produced a Palestinian passport, British but Palestinian. In his best cockney English, he said, "Do you really think we need you bloody natives!?" As you might know, the word "bloody" in England is much worse than a well-known and often used four-letter word in America. It was quite a shock.

Mendelsohn did complain about it to the adjutant of the high commissioner, and was assured that action was going to be taken to correct that. No action was taken in my behalf, nor in his for that matter, and we continued not to be able to volunteer. It is interesting, though, to note that though Mendelsohn had been now for years living in England, that he did not really in his office or with his family, speak English. He spoke German. It was very common in Palestine for immigrants from Germany to continue to speak German at home, even though most of them started to learn Hebrew, and the younger generation certainly, those who were still going to school, and even of my age, very quickly would converse amongst each other in Hebrew.

But, starting on the day that war broke out, Mendelsohn decided, "no more German." He spoke English in the office--I had

no difficulty with that. I had been reluctant for quite some time to speak German. So, our dream to join the British army for the time had come to nothing. It took quite a bit of time before that attitude changed. It had taken the advance of [Romel?] in North Africa and the Pinsa movement of the Germans through Syria, to bring the danger clearer to home to the British that they might lose the Middle East, and therefore the connection, through the Suez Canal, to India and the Empire, and the Empire was still in existence. The only thing that happened very quickly after the war had started within a very short time, there was an Italian air raid on Tel Aviv, which did a lot of damage, but did not hurt too many people. It became apparent that Palestine would be a target for Italian bombers. So, in great haste, the British organized what was called ARP, Air Raid Precautions. It was a civilian enterprise, essentially. It was still assumed that the Germans would not stop, or the Italians would not stop at using chemical warfare, even though chemical warfare had been outlawed. And a great deal of the training of the population, volunteers, incidentally, was in readiness or preparedness in case of a gas attack.

I went to a training course which was given by both civilians and the British army, at the YMCA in Jerusalem, which is right across from the King David Hotel--

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I went to the Air Raid Precaution school that was given by the British at the YMCA, right across from the King David Hotel, and graduated as an instructor in what to do in case of a gas attack. It became quite evident, after the first air raid, that the greater likelihood of immediate danger was collapse of buildings. To make certain that people who were in hastily arranged air raid shelters could be rescued, dug out, heavy building materials removed, etc., and the municipality of Jerusalem at that time--also of course under British direction--arranged for a course for volunteers in heavy rescue duties.

I became one of the commanders of the heavy rescue units, and a little later on was in charge of the Jerusalem area. And that of course, because of my architectural training and my knowledge of building practices, handling of heavy materials, cranes, etc. Fortunately, Jerusalem was never attacked. And equally fortunately, I didn't have to practice my skills at that time.

So, apart from being in readiness, I did function as an instructor and air raid warden in the area in which we lived, namely Talpioth. Which consisted mostly of making certain that blackout was kept, and that people knew where to go and what to

do in case of an air raid. There were lots of alarms, fortunately all of them false. For the first time in many years, there was every appearance that the country was peaceful. There were no attacks on buses, on markets, or anything else, and it looked like the population of Palestine could be united against a common enemy. It was very clear at the time to anybody living in Israel, or Palestine, that should the Germans succeed to invade one way or the other, either from the north or the south, into Palestine, that the Arabs had little to fear, and the Jews everything.

It was in this particular atmosphere that the Jewish agency started to negotiate, as it had done in World War I, with the British government, with a view of forming army units of volunteers to serve either in the British army or in a so-called Palestine Brigade, which was within the British army, but totally with its own supplies and own officers, and with the identity of coming from Palestine. It was at that time, after an agreement had been reached between the British and the Jewish agency, that pressure was put on by the Jewish agency, first of all on everybody who had been a member--or was, still at this time--of the Haganah, to volunteer. Pressure became stronger and stronger, and more and more people volunteered, and most of the people who volunteered went into the Palestine Brigade.

I should add that Lotte was still in Tel Aviv in the beginning of the war, and the attack on Tel Aviv, and the inability to establish for hours that anything had happened, whether by any chance she got hurt, became the decisive factor in my own way of thinking that everything should be done to move her out of Tel Aviv. In fact, I used the first best opportunity that I had to go to Tel Aviv, which was a day or two after the air raid, and try to convince her that she ought to move back to Jerusalem. She did, and it became equally evident that the only way we could continue to see each other would be to get married.

I don't recall at the moment the exact circumstances, why she couldn't or had difficulties living at home at the time-- that's with her parents--and I seem to have prevailed against all desires of my mother, on my mother, for her to agree that she could move in with her, stay with her in her room, while I was in mine. That was obviously not a good solution. I seem to recall vaguely that things didn't work out too well. The relationship with my mother started out on the wrong foot. I should say at this time that, when I was--when Chava Schocken was close to me, my mother always pointed out how much nicer Lotte was. At the time when it became evident that I was no longer terribly interested in Chava, but more interested in Lotte, and certainly at the time when I asked her to move in with my mother, she could not enough berail the fact that really, why didn't I continue my

friendship with Chava, rather than Lotte?

It was rather evident that, no matter who it was, it would have been the wrong person. So, I should say we decided to get married. I'm being told that it wasn't I who decided that. But, I rather think of it that way. The one difficulty I had, which was a strange one, to get married, was that under British law, for Palestinians to get married, you had to abide by the religious laws of your persuasion. In other words, there was no civil marriage available, and you had to go to a rabbi and be married if you were Jewish, and to the equivalent cleric, Moslem cleric, if you were a Moslem Arab, and to a priest if you were a Christian Arab.

I resisted that notion. I have to admit that I didn't think marriage was really necessary, as long as two people agreed that they wanted to be together. I felt everything else was totally unnecessary. Well, society thought differently. So, a rabbi was selected who promised me that he would abide by my wishes and not say anything--say the minimum of the traditional prayers and declare us man and wife. He didn't quite abide by that, and if it hadn't been for the fact that Eric and Louise Mendelsohn--Eric was my best man--Eric stood behind me during the ceremony, and I remember and still feel it, got a kick in my pants when I started to open my mouth and say, "That is not what we agreed upon."

[laughter]

Well, actually the ceremony was brief and painless, and we went home early in the day, accompanied by Lotte's parents and by the two Mendelsohns, and had what in Palestine at that time must have been considered a sumptuous meal, which my mother had prepared. After everybody had left--oh, I should mention one other thing. I had, in order to get some money out of Germany, not only brought some furniture with us, but I had also brought a harpsichord, which, since I was mostly interested at the time, and still am, in baroque music, was the ideal instrument, as far as I was concerned, I didn't have an organ. Anyway, it was kind of difficult for a Jew to get to an organ in Palestine at the time. This was the ideal instrument; it was small, which was befitting the kind of accommodations we had, and very much in character of the time.

I do recall that, as part of the celebration of our wedding, after the lunch, I gave a brief recital on the harpsichord, and since both Mendelsohn and Mrs. Mendelsohn were very interested in music and particularly _____ baroque music, it was a reasonable success. Well, they soon enough disappeared, and Lotte and I got into our work clothes, because we celebrated our wedding by preparing the room in which we were going to live. That was in the same house, our house, and we had to sublease one room in an

apartment one floor below us. So, she and I spent the afternoon whitewashing the walls and the ceiling in that room, and whitewashing is a messy operation. It took the rest of the evening to clean the floors and move in one bed.

I don't think we did state when we got married; it was on September 24, 1940. It took quite some time until it became obvious that sooner or later, the pressure on people who had served in the Haganah and who generally could be considered able-bodied men would become great enough that they would have to volunteer for the British army. Particularly, as it became evident that Rommel succeeded pushing Montgomery in the western desert practically up to the Egyptian border, and one could expect that any day Rommel would succeed with his Africa Corps to invade Egypt.

It became also evident during that time that the Egyptians were not particularly reliable allies. [portion deleted by interviewer]

It was another year and a half after we had gotten married, and my first son, Ian, was born in April of '42. The Battle of Alamein had taken place. The fact that I held the defense position meant that the pressure on me was not that great after that point. But the pressure started to increase, too. So,

though I've been known to have stated at the fact that I had a young son who didn't let me sleep, and we had only one room, and was crying day and night--he's been very good at that--and that really drove me out and made up my mind for me to go into the British army, probably is not quite true. Though, I think there were times when I believed it. It was a tough time, in many respects. There wasn't terribly much work, and Mendelsohn had left for the United States, where he had been offered a chair--or so he thought--at Yale. And where, in fact, all that had been offered to him was a visiting professorship, more the type of being a lecturer at various universities.

When Mendelsohn dissolved his office, he asked me to keep most of the still current drawings that were still under construction. Just in case construction would go on after the war--construction had totally stopped in Palestine. There was no money, no materials, and no people. As a consequence, he had no work, didn't have too much money, and when the employment at American universities was offered to him, he was quite eager to accept it. In England, everything had stopped because of the war effort. He personally had not been accepted into the army, as I had said earlier, and when he came to the United States, in contrast to what happened to him in Palestine when he offered to serve in some capacity, his offer was taken up by the United States Defense Department, and he acted as an advisor on German

cities, and the layout of certain plants, some of which he had designed. And in that way, he made his contribution to the war effort.

But he did tell me at the time he left that, should he not come back to Palestine and England after the war, that should I survive the war, that he would like to have me continue with him wherever he was in the world. And though, at the time that didn't mean terribly much to a young guy knowing that sooner or later he was going to be involved in actual warfare, and the questionable likelihood that this would ever become true, it still was a reassurance, and also from a human point of view, to realize that it wasn't just a relationship of employer to employee.

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It wasn't just an employer-employee relationship, but more that of a friend to another friend; perhaps more even than just a friendship. In any case, the situation was such that the only work that I could do, and I had to open my own office to do that, was looking for work that the army might give me, and in fact because of our connection to the army, through the people who were our tenants, I was asked by the NAAFI, which is the National Army and Air Force--Navy, Army, and Air Force Institute--which

was supplying the families of dependents of soldiers with necessary goods, and was similar to a post exchange in the United States.

They needed additional storage space, additional office space, and one of the jobs that I got was to design that at the time. I should say that after Mendelsohn had certified that I had been trained in his office, and that he considered me to be ready to go out on my own, and I obtained registration in 1940 or '41 in Jerusalem, and therefore was in a position to call myself an architect, and do architectural work on my own. So I got these rather smallish jobs, but they paid just enough that, for a while at least, I could continue to live roughly on the same basis I had been up till that time. But they became less and less and fewer and fewer, and in fact going to meetings with my employers or clients, who were all in uniform and were all officers of the British Army; it became more and more embarrassing as a young man not to wear a uniform. And of course, they were polite about it. They always said, "Well, you know, you could help us much more if you would join the army."

So, on December 21 in '42, I went to Sarafand, which was a major army base in Palestine, and joined the British Army. I was trained for about a week in Sarafand, and got one weekend off to go home and say goodbye, and was shipped to Egypt. Which is a

short distance really to Cairo, but under war conditions took eight to ten hours by train.

I arrived in Egypt, and Ismailia, which is roughly at the middle of the Suez Canal, and at the shores of a very large lake, an artificial lake, which forms the middle of the Suez Canal. Lake Timzah. And Ismailia was the largest training camp in the Middle East for the British Army. Square miles of black asphalt, which in that heat, that Egypt has most of the time, was practically unbearable. But those were the training camps, that's where you learned to march, and stand on parade, and get used to the hardships of being a soldier in the Middle East. The training course took three weeks, and that was comparatively brief, but I had joined the Royal Engineers, and was accepted. My army identification book shows that I was accepted as an architect. As a consequence, the usual story happened that within the first week, the training sergeant would ask whether, could I use my hands? "After all, you're an architect, you draw pretty pictures, don't you?"

I said yes, I could use my hands. He said, "Well, go and wash the latrines." That's the normal way, and I think that's in any army. It shows that you are no longer a human being, but a number--a number you don't forget, I think. 45813. It is kind of strange that the number thirteen--it's not a good omen to have

as your identification number in war, at least so some people thought. I have remembered and noticed ever since that my father died when I was thirteen, that I got into the army and got a number ending in thirteen, and when I finally got a registration number as an architect in the United States, it also ended in thirteen. And thirteen in certain ways has been a lucky number for me, even though it wasn't lucky to lose my father.

In any case, after three weeks of being trained on the parade ground, I had noticed a high-ranking officer coming riding by on a white horse every once in a while. It was pointed out by my training sergeant to everyone that this was Commandante of the training base, and that he was a full Colonel, and that he was a real hero, that he had a VC--Victoria Cross. And as he always insisted on stressing, there are very few VCs alive. It is the kind of decoration that is being given out to the very brave only after they have perished and died in war.

Well, of course, being a raw recruit, a colonel with his red braid around his cap and on his shoulders and on his collar, made a tremendous impression. And particularly if he was riding by on a white horse. One day, and I had just received my first promotion: Local Acting Lance Corporal [laughs]--that was an appointment made probably by the master sergeant, and only temporary--he needed somebody to do his dirty work for him. What

is was, among other things, they had had of course my background, and found out that I had been an ARP trainer--Air Raid Precautions trainer--and so they said, "Well, you have to go here through gas training, so Schiller, you take this group and explain to them what to do with their gas masks."

So I was doing that, and then was chasing them across the training ground at double time, meaning they had to run--which is difficult enough in that heat without a gas mask on--with a gas mask on. And let them run around and run around until it became obvious that they couldn't take any more. Meanwhile, I had to yell and scream at them, and do the things that an infantry trainer normally has to do, which is not very pleasant. It's not pleasant to be on the receiving end, not very pleasant to be the one who does it. Once, while I was engaged in just that, I heard a voice calling out behind me, "Corporal! Come over here!"

I turned around, and it was Colonel, on his white horse. I came up to him and saluted, and he said, "What's your name, Corporal?" I gave it to him. He said, "I've been watching you. What's your background?" I told him I was an architect. He said, "Can you read maps?" "Yes, sir." "Do you know something about difference in terrain, and can you find your way with a compass?"

"Yes, sir." "Good. Well, I understand you speak good English." I said, "I hope so, sir." "Well, come to my office today after four o'clock, between four and four-thirty. I want to talk to you."

I did. He said, "I've observed you. You seem to make a good trainer. Rather than sending you out to another assignment, if you don't object--" Don't object?! In the Army? "If you don't object, I would like to keep you here for the next six weeks and assign you to the officer's training course, where you will train cadets who will become officers. Now, you realize most of them come from England, some of them come from Palestine, some come from Arab countries, and I hope none of that bothers you."

I said, "No, sir." "You may find that the Englishmen will look down on you and will consider you a native. I know better than that. But be prepared for it, and use your authority. As long as they aren't officers, you are their superior, and when things become real bad, you let the sergeant-major know. The sergeant-major always has my ear, and I shall see to it that they behave." It was never necessary, I have to say. It never happened. So, for the next six weeks, I was training young officers, and at the end of six weeks, he called me in again.

He said, "I'm very satisfied with what you have done. You have helped a group of young Englishmen who come directly from England get used to this climate, and you have made better officers of them, because they have the kind of training they couldn't get in England, because there are no deserts. Would you like to become an officer?"

I said, "Yes, sir." "All right," he said, "you will be in charge of the platoon that you have just trained, and in three days when there will be the final parade, at which time I give each one the commission, you will get yours, so get your uniform ready, go have it tailored, and in contrast to them, have the tailor make two holes in your [appellates?]." I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "I hope you realize what that means! You're going to be a full lieutenant, leftenant of course, and you will be in charge of that platoon until they arrive at their shipping point, wherever they go, you will go with them. You may remain their commanding officer, but that's beyond my reach, and I do not know that. So be ready for that, and immediately after the parade the next day, you're going to be shipped out of here. I can't tell you where, and I do not know."

Well, the parade came around, and he appeared, and he went around and I followed him, as he was giving each one his commission, and pinning the one pip on their shoulder. When it

was all done, he turned to me and said, "Now, Schiller, dismiss them." I dismissed them, and then he turned to me and he said, "I have something to tell you which makes me very sad. Your commission hasn't come, has not been confirmed by the War Office. It hasn't come through yet. It's probably a delay--I don't know why. It should have come with this group. It probably will come any day. Meanwhile, you have to go back into your old uniform and continue training people, until it does come. I want you to rest assured that I will do everything in my power to see to it that it comes through. It may take some time, but I promise you, you will get your commission."

Well, what could I do? I saluted and said, "Thank you, sir," and continued. It was not much later, about a week later, that he called me again to his office. He said, "Schiller, you'll have a difficult choice. I know your commission has come through. Which would mean that I'll give it to you any time as of now, and you would have to continue to train your people, and you will go with the next group as their commander. But, people refer to me as somebody who has done something heroic, and you know that of course."

I said, "Yes, sir." "Well," he said, "only a fool is a real hero. I did what I had to do because my men were involved, and if I hadn't done what I did, they all would have been killed. So

I forgot about my own life, and I did what I had to do. I think you would do the same. But to claim that I was brave is stupid. I'm not stupid. Neither are you. There is no such thing as being brave and not having any fear. Being brave means that you realize how afraid you are, and still do what you're forced to do. And I think I see that kind of quality in you, but you have certain gifts that could be of importance to the war effort, quite apart from what it might do in peace. I leave it up to you whether you want your commission or whether you want me to send you somewhere else. Just so you can make your own decision.

"If your commission had come through the day that I promised it for you, the people I sent out went to Italy and upon landing, every one of them was killed. So, it is only natural to assume that you no longer would be among the living. I don't think for one moment that you want to save your own hide if others get hurt. That's not what I'm saying. But you have one of those rare chances in life that fate has been good to you. So I want you to decide whether you want to use that opportunity, whether you want to become an officer, or whether you want me to send you to a survey unit--which is probably as much endangered as you might be in the field. And you have been in the field many a time--" by that time, I had. I had taken groups to the Western Desert; to do mine-lifting at night under fire, which is not a very pleasant job. I had to do that with every group of officers

I was training.

He said, "I'll give you until tomorrow. By tomorrow I have to know. I won't think any less of you if you decide to go to Cairo to advanced GHQ, and do what you know best; namely, draw things--draw maps, and have thereby perhaps a greater influence on the outcome of the war than you would ever have as an officer, even an officer as high as I am. That decision is yours."

I appeared the next day, and I said, "Colonel, I appreciate what you have said to me. I shall not accept the commission." He said, "That's fine. I expected you would do that, and I'm glad you did it." So, he turned around and said, "Good luck, son. I hope I'll see you again or hear from you in some fashion."

He sent me to GHQ in Cairo, and I was outside of Cairo, and one of the ancient caves on the banks of the Nile, where there was a total underground city that the Royal Engineers had put in there for purposes of printing maps, and drafting rooms, etc., which were reasonably safe from any bombing attack.

##end tape 10 side b, end of interview 4

Interview with Hans Schiller, Interview 5

The True Page 212 onward

Interviewer: Eleanor Glaser

Transcriber: Shannon Page

Begin tape 11, side a [really]##

Glaser: At the end of our last taping session, you were still with the British army, in Cairo. You were working with a survey unit, and there was an underground cave in which there--was that the headquarters?

Schiller: Well, it wasn't the headquarters. My particular unit, which was the 524 company of the Royal Engineers, was accommodated in it. They were huge--it was almost an underground city, because all our equipment, and that consisted of printing presses in seven colors, offset presses, for maps, and the photo-reproduction unit, which had a camera that was large enough that a person could stand inside of the camera, because it had to reproduce full size on glass plates the maps that were drawn. Plus drafting offices with all the equipment, were all accommodated with what the British called lorries, and we of course would call trucks. So that, we were totally mobile, and could be moved at any moment, as we experienced later on, when we were moved to Italy, that we had to follow the front and be close by.

There is one strange little sidelight that I wanted to mention about the Royal Engineers. The Royal Engineers in the British army is dealt with differently from any other army units. The enlisted men are being addressed as gentlemen. Nobody else in the British army, other than officers, is being addressed as gentlemen. But we were treated, in essence, much more like officers than enlisted men, because everyone, or practically everyone, within the unit, with exception of cooks and people who were dealing with matters of administrative matters, like secretaries, had a specialty. My particular specialty, which I partially was trained of there, and partially had some knowledge of before, was two things: The interpretation of air photographs, and the as you might call it translation of air photographs into maps. Either from the very beginning, in other words, from scratch; or for the correction of maps.

What we would get would be survey photos taken by the RAF, and we would compare them to known existing maps, and note the changes on the maps, and then reprint them. My later specialty was to evaluate air strikes, and to assess what damage they had done, and on the basis of those photographs, to draw target maps for the RAF, usually for the next day. So it was in a way highly sensitive, in a way highly technical, and essentially always quite interesting.

It is during that time that I developed my preference, namely to work late during the day or at night, rather than during day time. The reason for that was very simple. Working at night, number one I was totally undisturbed, and this kind of work requires quite a great amount of concentration, and great accuracy. Secondly, it left daylight hours for my own pursuits. It was therefore during this time that I started to explore the area around where we were quartered, and anywhere between Cairo and Helwan, was the area that I covered. That meant south of Cairo, up river.

Both sides, both banks of the river. Right across from where we were quartered were the steppe pyramids of Saqqara. It was a near coincidence that in my meanderings in the countryside, and my desire to cover the whole area, which essentially is desert, from Saqqara to Giza, which is about ten to eleven miles north, down the river, in a straight line. You could see the pyramids of Giza from the steppe pyramid of Saqqara. I just followed my nose, and went in that direction.

One day, not very far from Saqqara, I would guess about one to one and a half miles from Saqqara, I suddenly slipped into a hole--which I hadn't seen. There was no visible hole, but as you may be aware of, the wind action of the desert constantly changed contours and moves the sand around, and it had uncovered and

barely recovered an obvious hole in the ground. Because that intrigued me, and I started with my bare hands to dig, and found very soon that this was not just a superficial hole, but led into some chamber below ground.

From here on out, every free hour I had--well, it would take more than a free hour, but usually after all, the transportation available to me were my feet, and if I had the money to cross the Nile on a falucca, which is one of the native sailboats, or being taken across, which always resulted in a lot of haggling of how much to pay, and then not being left off the other shore unless I would pay a little more, restricted the ability to get there. And of course the tremendous heat, which was not unusual to have 105 and 110 degrees. Out in the open, in the sun, with the tremendous reflection of the sand of the desert wasn't exactly easy. But nevertheless, I managed to go that route a number of times, and within a few days, I had opened up the entrance to an underground tomb.

It had not been too badly disturbed, other than I would say by sand that had flown inside, and apparently had not been discovered, other than by predatory animals, and none of the two-legged kind. I found a succession of three different tombs, one above the other, dating back from several thousand years to the Hellenistic period, which was of course the youngest. I found

what isn't very often found in Egypt, coffins, two coffins made out of palm wood. They had mounted on the outside a carving of the person who was buried in that coffin, this is one of them [shows picture]. In typical fashion, they were very minutely carved and sculpted—

Glaser: That's the mask you're pointing to?

Schiller: Yes. But then, in a stereotyped fashion, were overlaid what is known as gesso. It's a mixture of gypsum and then is being painted. It was always very stereotyped. This happened to be the tomb of a husband and wife, and I have both masks. There was a lot of pottery, quite a bit of it broken. The usual things that you find in Egyptian tombs at the time. We needed new shirts because, being so short of water, we would wear our uniforms until the comforts of home.

Glaser: Did you have to worry about scorpions when you went into the cave?

Schiller: Well, yes and no. I guess I didn't worry particularly about anything. I think I had to worry a little bit more of being surprised by the Egyptian fellahim or nomads, who were very eager always to find things that they could sell to tourists. Because tourism during that time was practically nonexistent, for obvious

reasons, but still they could have sold it for cigarettes or blankets or other things to soldiers. At least in Cairo--not around where we were. So I had to worry much more about being suprised by some of the native inhabitants, whom I'd feel that it was just an easy taking for them to get ahold of it, and sell it. So I always had to cover my tracks, too, and close things up reasonably well so that it wouldn't be too noticeable.

I did find also a mummy, and it had a papyrus gilt mask. That was wrapped in the typical mummy cloth, which after better than two thousand years withstood a washing, in soap suds, and is still so strong that one cannot tear it. It came totally clean, incidentally. I had to be very selective of what I could take, obviously, because I had to carry it out on my shoulders. I had to do it so it wasn't too terribly noticeable, so it had to fit more or less into a backpack. The task started off of carrying out things that I would have liked to have with me, and I did restrict myself to things that were in perfect shape and had not been broken yet. I brought a little collection out of there, documenting where each one had come from.

I have to say that I didn't have much compunction, because knowing how at that time antiquities and finds were treated in Egypt, destroyed because they were taken out by marauders generally speaking, of which of course I was one too, and then

sold to people who didn't understand what it was all about, or what the value of it was. Plus the fact that I have to admit to a certain disdain for our Egyptian friends of the time, since they were the kinds of friends one is better without, since they had used every possible opportunity when things didn't go well for us to side with the Germans, and as our allies with our own rifles and ammunition, which we had given to them as allies, to shoot at us from ambush. As if we didn't have to worry enough about the Germans attacking us.

So my feeling was not terribly friendly and terribly kind, I have to admit.

Glaser: How long were you in Egypt before moving on to Italy?

Schiller: About a year and a half, I guess. I'll just tell you how I managed, number one, to get all this out of Egypt, and number two, get it home to Palestine. Which was not a very small feat. I have to admit I had the connivance and help of my commanding officer, who was intrigued by what I was doing, and intrigued by my finds. Since we were working on highly secret material, namely maps, we had the ability to move crates and cases and boxes from one headquarter to another without ever having to open it for anyone. Including, certainly, the local customs officials. So, when I knew that we were going to move out of

Egypt, or when it was reasonably clear that we would soon move out of Egypt, I packaged everything very carefully in a crate or in a box, which was labeled "Maps" to be delivered by courier at GHQ, Jerusalem. I was designated as the courier, and that was my last trip back home before knowing that I would go to Europe. I mean, I knew it, of course I couldn't publicly admit to anything. But I did know that we were going somewhere, to Europe.

That's one of the two times that I crossed the Sinai Desert by truck, rather than by railroad. I was on an army truck which was going to Jerusalem anyway, and it had my crate on it, and it had me on it. We got to Jerusalem, to GHQ, and there was a note to the map officer there saying that the courier was entitled to a small pickup truck, and was supposed to deliver it at a different address. That was being in Talpioth, at our house. That's how I got it there.

The most difficult thing, incidentally, was to bring it into the United States, much more difficult [laughs] than getting it out of Egypt, or for that matter getting it out of then Palestine. The only way that I could get it into the United States was to count on the lack of understanding of an American customs officer for what it really was. The fact is that pottery in the Middle East today is still looking pretty much the same, at least for the layman's eye, as pottery two or three thousand

years ago. So I had added to it some of the pottery that was available on any Middle Eastern open air market, for pennies. And had listed on the outside of the crate in which all this was accommodated that these were household goods.

Most willingly, I opened up the crate for the investigating officer, and he looked at it, and after removing some of the straw, he said, "What are you bringing all this junk in here to the United States? Don't you know we have better pots than that?"

I said, "Well, sir I didn't know," and I was attached to it, and my wife was used to cook in these utensils.

"Okay, close it up." [laughs]

Glaser: These were museum pieces that you had.

Schiller: Yes. They are. And they have been shown here, and I've loaned them to museums, and in all likelihood, though we have not yet decided what should happen to them, but ultimately probably they will go to a museum.

The other thing that I wanted to mention is, I said that particular time was one of two times that I went by lorry through

the Sinai Desert, but normally I was going on a troop train. Normally--there were only a few times that I was permitted to go home for a weekend or, once, a week.

The crush on these trains was unbelievable, and people would sleep in the baggage nets which were above the seats. Or sleep standing up, and I've learned to sleep standing up in a corner. Or, sleeping in whatever position you were in. One would sleep, because of the tremendous heat and the lengths of the travel. One basically was exhausted from these trips, and one was already exhausted before these trips, so no matter which way one looked at it, one would sleep.

Glaser: How do you get by train? There is the Suez Canal in between?

Schiller: Well, the Suez Canal can be crossed.

Glaser: You get ferry--train ferries?

Schiller: Well, you have bridges, and--well, the train actually crosses on a bridge. At Quantara. In any case, on one of these trips, my very special and prized possession, for which I had saved and saved and saved, namely a [liker? lika?]. In fact, it was an unusual one; it was a Russian-made imitation of a lika, because I couldn't afford a German lika. It was stolen. Though one

becomes very sensitive to being touched, but in all this pushing and throngs of people and constant stopping and going, you do not feel that something is being cut off you. In fact, it was a normal thing that on streetcars in Cairo, soldiers wouldn't notice that somebody cut through a watchband, and lifted it off them, and the next time they wanted to look what time it was, they had no watch. Pickpockets are fantastic in Cairo, absolutely unbelievable.

In fact, the one time Lotte came to visit me, she had only two possessions that she had with her, namely her whole English pound, which was tremendous, that she had saved in order to have some spending money in Cairo, and she was going to be there. And her passport, lifted on the first streetcar ride that she took. Without ever noticing.

In any case, my lika was gone, somewhere on the trip, and I didn't think I would ever see it again. I reported it to the appropriate units of the military police, and of course, they laughed and said, "Well, goodbye."

The next time, on my way back in fact, when I came to Cairo, I had to cross from one railroad station to another, to go back on the Helwan line towards our caves. I took a taxi--that was the only way I could make connection, just on time. He was

driving me through the a city of Cairo--from one station to another--and I was looking out of the window, and I saw a photo shop. Well, it is nothing unusual to see a major photo shop in the streets of Cairo, and he had a display of Likas in the window. And I saw that, in glancing. For some strange reason, I asked him to stop, and I jumped out and I ran across the street and I looked, and sure enough, which is easy enough to see because the inscription is in Russian, there was a Russian Lika. I was reasonably certain that it was mine. I don't know why--I had that very strong feeling, you know. It was mine.

So I went into this store and asked the owner to show me that Lika with the strange inscription. I looked at it, I opened it up, and I had engraved on the inside plate my army number. Yes, it was my Lika. So, I said to him I was going to take it, and he said, "Well, that's so much."

I said, "No. You misunderstand. This is mine; it was stolen from me." And I pointed to the number.

He got very excited and said a soldier had sold it to him, etc., etc.

"I don't believe it. I don't think a soldier had sold it to you." I threatened him with the military police, and with the

civil police. There was a great to-do. I managed to stop a policeman, who came in and assured me that it would be sealed until the matter was going to be straightened out.

In negotiation between the military police and the civil police, the Lika was returned to me two days before we went to Italy.

Glaser: So then, from your trip to Anli to Jerusalem, you went back to your post in Egypt, and left for Italy from there?

Schiller: Yes.

Glaser: And what was your destination in Italy?

Schiller: Well, the destination in Italy was southern Italy. We didn't know where we were going. We were not told that we were going to Italy, or anywhere else. We were being shipped; we were moved, lorries and all, to Suez, and from Suez we boarded a ship which was certified for 600 passengers. We were about 2,000--not just our company, but all the people who were on it. I was very lucky that I had been able to sleep on deck, and I found myself placed under a lifeboat, because the poor people who were below deck all got sick. Well, actually, everybody got sick, with some kind of dysentery. The smell, just anytime someone would open a hatch

and go down, was just incredible. It was awful.

One didn't really know what was going to be worse: to be attacked--after all, we did go in a convoy--attacked by the Germans, perhaps sunk, or being on the ship. In fact, many people didn't care any more, because they were so miserable, that anything that would have ended that particular journey would have been welcomed.

Glaser: How many days did it take you to get to your destination?

Schiller: It took about three or four days. I don't recall exactly. But we went by a very circuitous route. The only time in my life that I've seen Greece was that time, but I didn't see Greece. All I knew--

##end tape 11 side a, begin tape 11 side b

All I knew was that it was Greece, and of course Greece was occupied by the Germans. This was a time that they would attack relentlessly any ship that they could possibly attack. The number of daily sinkings in the Mediterranean were tremendous. So, I guess it was my personal good fortune that we weren't attacked. We got all the way to Italy, past Sicily--Sicily had been in our hands at that time. And beyond that, almost all the

way to Naples, was in Allied hands.

We landed in Taranto, and coming from Egypt in, I think it was fall, where it was still terribly hot in Egypt, to Europe, it was already terribly cold, at least for our feelings. We were quartered in tents, and in contrast to the American army, we never had any bedding or beds. We always slept on the ground. Didn't have anything but what was known as a mummy-bag, which was an army blanket sewn shut with a zipper. That, plus any blankets the quarter master was willing to issue at any given time, was the only protection we had. We didn't have any real protection against moisture on the ground, other than a so-called ground sheet, which was in short supply and I didn't have one at the time. It was raining torrentially, and since this was a so-called transit camp, which was not being maintained by a unit other than the people who would come into it, we weren't used to rains of that kind--not at this time of year, at least--had no channels to divert the rain around the tents, so the next morning when we woke up we were in the middle of a river. So to say. [laughs] It was just water running over the surface, but still we were totally wet and miserable, and our things were wet, and our belongings were wet. Everything was wet.

But nevertheless, the sun came out, and as it does in Italy, and it was beautiful, blue sky, everything was gorgeous. And,

everything else--for me at least--was soon forgotten, because I got a pass that I could go out for a day, and reconnoitre the surroundings. I was tremendously intrigued. I had been in the area as a child, but never since. I had been in Sicily as a child. I discovered what is known as trulli, which is a special form of rough and almost more than just rough, it is a way of using fieldstones, and arranging them in circles coming in the end to a point, to bridge the span within a fairly large room. They created the impression of rounded cones of pyramids, actually, which architecturally is very interesting, and also shows how inventive people are. Of course, without the help of an engineer or architect, to do things when they didn't have the materials that are normally being used to span roofs, like timbers. Italy is very short of timbers; always has been. So they developed this kind of a form. So I had a field day and several later on were moved to Naples, within a few days.

We were quartered in the Royal Palace, which wasn't very royal where we were quartered. Those were the advanced headquarters of the Allied armies. Pretty soon we were doing again what we had been doing in Egypt, except that we did it this time all out of our lorries, and very soon, as the front moved forward through Italy, we followed it. I remember very clearly that Rome was being occupied by Allied forces, and liberated. That Christmas was the first time--during the war--that I got

permission to go for a few days vacation--leave, to Rome. That was usually done by hitchhiking on lorries going in that--army lorries. Nothing else--there was no other traffic. Going to Rome. I saw the destruction that happened as the Allies had progressed, and the Germans had destroyed whatever they could. Ruthlessly destroyed whatever they could.

I had the privilege of being at St. Peters Christmas Eve for the then very unusual happening, namely that the Pope was leading the Mass. It wasn't--historically had never been done, on high holidays, that the Pope would read the Mass himself. But this was done in celebration of the Allies having liberated Rome, and it was a tremendous event to see all the various Allied armies, Poles and French and Canadian, Indians, and Palestinians, and absolutely everybody who served, Americans of course, Australians, New Zealanders, all assembled in the great church of St. Peter. It was quite an event.

In fact, the next day, on Christmas Day, the Pope gave a public and then private audience to--it was Pius XII still. Was it XII or XIII--I never know--but XII I think. I don't think there was a XIIIth. It was XIIth--who had been, before the war, and the Papal Nuncio in Berlin, so he spoke German of course. He spoke many other languages, as popes very often do. I was one of those who, for one reason or another, got into the so-called

private audience, which meant that we were received in a room in the Vatican, and he would go around and talk to individuals. He came towards me and he looked at my epalets which, for this particular audience, did say that it crossed Palestine. So he addressed me in Hebrew. He said, "Where are you from, my son?" in Hebrew.

I said, "From Jerusalem."

He said, "What's your name?"

I said, "Hans Schiller."

"Oh," he said, "hmm. So you speak German?"

I said, "Yes, Your Holiness, I do speak German, but I prefer not to."

He said, "I understand." But he did speak German for a moment. He said in German, "I do understand only too well." Then, he said, "Oh, did you go to school in Germany?"

I said, "Yes."

"Oh," he said, "in a humanistic gymnasium or Real Schule?"

I said, "Humanistic gymnasium."

"Oh," he said, "well, then, I might as well speak Latin with you." [laughs] And he quickly said a few things in Latin, and I was still reasonably fluent at the time. I've forgotten most of these things. So he was very pleased. He put his hands on my shoulders, and said, "I wish you everything of the best, and may God be with you, and that you come out of this war alive." He was very pleasant.

I did say to him, which at the time at least was the facts as we knew them. I said to him that I was grateful for his interference and help to Jews, and for churches having hidden Jews in many areas. He said, "Well, that's our duty as humans, and certainly we have to do whatever we can. It isn't always enough."

Well, apart from that of course to me, it was a tremendous experience, at that time, as an adult, to see Rome, and I had my camera with me, and I did what I have done ever since, that I have collected examples of architecture via the camera. Of course, I had only black and white film. Color film was not within reach for any of us. In fact, the British army had no color film. Practically none, and for survey purposes, the

Americans were already using color film. But we were the poor relations and poor allies, and we worked with black and white.

Of course, I couldn't use any film that was handed to us for official purposes, but I had the luck, which wasn't the luck of somebody else, obviously, to find a shot down German reconnaissance plane, and I was sent at the time to look at it, and see whether there were any instruments that were of interest to us, and that we could find out how the Germans were doing this. They were actually far ahead of any nation as far as survey techniques were concerned. We knew that. For one thing, they had much better cameras, much better instruments than we had. And also their technique was developed to a point which was far beyond what we had. So, for many reasons it was of interest to look at that.

I found, in that plane, in one of the cameras, 35 millimeter film, Agva. It's German. Which was so tremendously fine grain that I've never since found a film that equals it. It was a very slow film, but that didn't really matter. I've found enough of it, it lasted me for the rest of the war, and thousands of pictures which I took all over Italy.

I should really backtrack for one moment, if that is all right. This is a little bit out of order, I'm sorry to say, but I should go back for one moment to two occurrences during the

time that I was still in Egypt, and in fact still engaged in training officers. I had mentioned at the time that part of my duties consisted of taking the cadets during their training on a trip to the western desert, to the front lines, and to teach them--they had been taught how to do it, but to get used to front line conditions, and to lift mines, and to observe the duties of an engineering company in the front lines.

I want to mention two things: One was that, and that was near Tobruk, at a time when of course Tobruk had fallen to us, and we were expecting to be resupplied by boat. We were expecting a convoy to arrive. We had hoped for it; we were out of the most important commodity, namely water. Food was minimal at the time. We needed new shirts because, being so short of water, we would wear our uniforms until they would fall off us, because we certainly couldn't waste water on washing shirts and pants. We had to shave, no matter whether we had or didn't have water, or however little water--we always had water, of course. Under--the ration was two canteens a man a day, for everything. Two little canteens, for washing, drinking, cooking--everything.

Well, be that as it may, all these essentials had to come more or less by boat, and it was announced that a convoy of five ships was on the way and should arrive any time. Nothing did arrive, and the next morning a badly battered ship showed up, and

moored Tobruk. We went aboard to unload it.

We also had a ration; officers would get a bottle of whiskey every two weeks, and when there was whiskey, we were entitled to half a bottle in that time. So, here we were looking for water, ammunition, food, other supplies--clothing, etc.--and guess what? The only ship that made it through, that wasn't sunk, was nothing but whiskey. [laughs]

Well, there were a lot of New Zealanders, and Australians in the area at the time, and they welcomed us no matter what. But, I have to say that I was somewhat aghast, and many others were aghast, that that was all we could find. If it was possible, I would have learned to hate whiskey. Well, I don't. But it wasn't that important to me, shall we say.

But there is a little side story which is rather sad. A few days later, Tobruk changed hands again. It has changed hands a number of times in the course of the war in the desert, and we had to withdraw. We were told to leave everything behind, other than rifles and ammunition, and our backpack, and water and food sufficient to make it out of there.

Some of us had to go on foot; others were lucky and had been taken aboard various motor vehicles that were pulling out. We

came across a group of ANZACS--Australians and New Zealanders-- who were staggering along, in the tremendous heat in the desert, carrying their rifles, and carrying as much of the whiskey as they could possibly carry. Whole crates and boxes full of whiskey.

Glaser: How did you get your artifacts out at that point?

Schiller: Oh, no. They weren't there. They were in--I wasn't there yet. I didn't have any artifacts. I said, I'm going back some other time to the very beginning of my service, when I was on these-- every three weeks for about one week on the front lines.

I understand that they wouldn't let go; many many were caught by the Germans who overran them. Many were killed by the Germans, just because they insisted on carrying the whiskey with them. That's something that isn't easy to forget, that people can become so dependent on a material thing, whether it's alcohol or something else, that they forget their own safety, forget what they're supposed to be doing, just because here is a chance for them to have more of the same, and more than the other person.

But another strange occurrence I want to mention too. I should have said that during my years in Palestine and Jerusalem, as a very young man, long before the war, I apparently contracted

some mysterious tropical disease, which most doctors at the time thought was malaria but it wasn't. Some doctors later on had said it was Malta Fever. But it resulted in similar effects as malaria, namely sudden attacks of high temperature, and then after a few days it would subside. So nobody paid terribly much attention to it, but on one of these weeks in the western desert, I had another one of those attacks, and I was sent to a field hospital by my commanding officer.

It was in a large tent somewhere in the desert. Since it only attacks on certain times of the day, I was perfectly normal most of the time, and would walk around and felt essentially happy to be able to rest. One day one of the nurses came to me and said, "I understand you speak German."

I said, "Well, I do speak German, but reluctantly."

She said, "Well, I understand that. But we have a prisoner of war here who is in very bad shape. We would like to help him; we would like to talk to him. I would like to find out if there is anything that we can do for him. He's not going to make it; he's going to die. But could we ask you to help us? Because he doesn't seem to understand or doesn't want to understand English, and could you translate for us?"

I said, "Of course."

I remember very clearly when she said, he's been badly hurt and he's going to die, that I'd forgotten that he was a German. And I'd forgotten that these were the people who were shooting at us. I just--I walked into the room with her and a doctor, and I only saw a suffering human being. He was lying on his belly, and he had been caught in a burning tank. Couldn't make it out, or too late. His back was totally burned, totally charred. He must have been in tremendous pain. They had given him an injection just then, and I couldn't see his face, couldn't see anything other than a suffering human being.

I said to him in German, whether there was anything that I could do for him.

When he heard German, he reacted. He made a tremendous effort, and I must say tremendous effort, to turn his head and raise himself a little, to see who was talking--speaking German to him. He took one look at me, and we both recognized each other. It didn't change anything for me. He had been a fellow student in Berlin at the Grunewald Gymnasium, and one of those who had persecuted Jews and persecuted me in particular. I couldn't really have forgotten his face. I said to him, "Is there anything at all I can do for you?"

Instead of replying, he raised himself--it must have been a tremendous effort--and turned his head a little further, spat at me, and said, "You Goddamn traitor," in German. And died.

To me, that did shake me. That a person could be so full of hatred--he knew he was dying, obviously. He knew there was little anybody could do for him. But I mean, we would have done anything we could to help him. If he could have been saved, he would have been saved. If he wanted to dictate a letter--or anything of the kind, or say send this to my parents or whatever, it would have been done, of course.

Both the nurse and the doctor were standing there with me, and witnessed it, didn't quite understand and said, "What did you say to him?"

I told them what I had said to him. They were totally shaken by this occurrence. They had seen people die, obviously. And they had seen people hurt worse than that. But never had they experienced that kind of hatred, continuing hatred no matter in what condition the person was. It's a strange incidence of fate, actually, to run into somebody who one knows in war. It's something I haven't forgotten, obviously. And it did shake me. I too have seen people die, friends die, and none has really

shaken me as much as this occurrence, to see to what extent people, essentially normal people, can be influenced by a misguided movement to a point where they hardly can be considered human any more.

##end tape 11 side b, begin tape 12 side a

Well, I should go back to Italy. That was just an aside. And we come now to a time that the war moved towards Tuscany, and the Poe Valley, and by the time that it had moved in that direction, we moved with it. For the longest time during the campaign in Italy, we were in Tuscany outside of Sienna. That was in winter. It was bitter cold.

But, we were quartered or were going to be quartered outside of Sienna, slightly south of Sienna, in a place--and for some reason we understood to be called Santa Colonna. Colonna of course means column. I have always questioned that, and I think it was really called Santa Colombe, the holy dove. It was a typical hilltop--it wasn't a castle, but it was a, shall we say, at least a baronial farmhouse. It was very elegant, and several hundred years old. It had been used to quarter some part of the German army, until we got there. So we took it over, and our company took it over. It was a few miles south of Sienna, as I said, but within easy reach of Sienna, so we were able to use our

pickup trucks and go into Sienna on days off. Which was, perhaps, if anything in war can be enjoyed, that was enjoyable. At least to me it was most enjoyable, and it's an area of Italy that I particularly love.

We were quartered in the main house of those buildings, and it was totally surrounded--the whole complex--by a wall, which had little towers on it. At one point, one place, it had a very tiny chapel, built as part of the wall. The Germans had used the chapel, and had quartered two horses in it. Totally desecrated, of course. There was nothing in it any more, other than straw and horse manure. We knew we were going to be in that area for a very long time. We were told that from here on out, we were reasonably centered to all operations, and that we could set up our shops and our lorries, and drafting room inside the main building. And that we didn't have to worry about moving too soon again.

There comes a time, even in war, when one gets very tired of sleeping on the floor. And sleeping together with twenty others in one room, and eating the same mishandled food every day. And one of my friends and I--he was an architect, I was an architect; he is now in New York as an architect--decided we should see whether we could get permission from our commanding officer to clean out the chapel, restore it as much to decency as was

feasible without major means, and whether we could move into that chapel.

Well, against all expectations, we got permission to do so. We cleaned out what really was a stable at that point, and scrubbed it all, and found that we could just barely squeeze in two beds. I should say that both of us had bought some folding beds in Egypt and carried them with us. So we didn't have to sleep on the floor. Which was kind of difficult and hard and cold. Of course, it was bitter cold, whereas the house had some kind of heating provision. This didn't. It was snowing, and raining off and on.

Looking at the chapel, there was a stone circular stair going up the wall. It was very narrow; you could just barely squeeze around and get up on the wall. I had the idea that we could build--close the entrance to that stair, with the exception of a small area, and use it as a chimney. And build a fire in it, as a fireplace. We did that. There was enough by way of vegetation and broken trees and things of that nature following the war, and not having been tended for years by the original owners and inhabitants, that we could every evening after work build a fire. Once we had built a fire, we decided we should talk to the mess sergeant and ask him whether we couldn't get the raw materials, rather than the finished product [laughs], and

made arrangements that we would get a few of these things. And the company as a whole, which was also tired of the bread delivery that we got from the British army, which was typical white British bread which tasted like paper--has no taste--and made arrangements with peasants in the area around us that we would give them flour, and they would bake some bread for us, and they would keep some of the flour.

So we had fantastic bread, and we actually found out that the army supplied us with excellent meat and vegetables, except they were invariably spoiled by the cooks. Both he and I developed quite a bit of ability to cook our own meals under difficult circumstances. I still like to do it, even these days.

We became quite famous, and some of our friends would be invited to feast. They had to provide some wine, and that was comparatively easy to come by. The wine wasn't very good--it was very, very, very young. But still, it was better than nothing. But we had some interesting little get-togethers and discussions in our little chapel. We spent quite some time there; I would guess about nine months.

Glaser: Was Sienna damaged during the war?

Schiller: No. Well, outside of Sienna, but Sienna itself was not damaged.

Strangely enough--yes. A few shells landed within the city walls but did not do any major damage. None of the Duomo or anything like, of importance, the Palazzo Publico, the central area--none of that was damaged in the least. Of course, the Palio was reinstated, and for the first time, we felt a little bit removed from the war, even though the war was raging on, and certainly in Florence was pretty soon in Allied hands, and by America, the bridges were still--at least, the Ponte Vecchio was spared. By a daring act of the Royal Engineers, of dismantling the charges while the Germans were still on the other side of the _____, and shooting at them. But for some reason, they did not manage to blow up--they blew up all the other bridges across the _____ except the Ponte Vecchio, which the Royal Engineers made a special project to save.

So actually, once Florence was in Allied hands, it became a joy to go there. But we stayed till V-E Day, in that location. After V-E Day--I should mention V-E Day. Shortly before V-E Day, all of a sudden we saw a movement on the roads from the front going towards Rome, or at least going south, of German trucks, German prisoners of war on foot, still with their arms, because we didn't have enough people to disarm them. But this proud German army, which we had seen often enough, and seen as prisoners of war, totally defiant at all times, all of a sudden was totally broken, disheveled, and without discipline. They

were marching under the orders of their own officers, and marching to prisoner of war camps, really. It was quite a change. All of a sudden! Within hours, the picture changed.

I was sent forward immediately--a few days before V-E Day, when we had occupied certain positions, to a German survey unit to take over all their equipment. I remember that I was going in a jeep to that location, and became very uneasy when I saw a German guard with a submachine gun, standing guard. But they were supposedly under our control, and as we drew up, he pulled himself up to attention and saluted. A German saluting me! [laughs] It was an incredible occurrence.

They were still very disciplined at that point. I met with the officer in charge, and took--looked at all the equipment, and they had complete lists, and everything was in perfect order. He handed me the lists, and from time to time he would say--in German of course--"Please be careful, sir. This is a very expensive instrument." [laughs]

I was careful, all right, and I looked at everything. Then, I got orders after I had returned the list to come back with an American transportation group, who would pick up all the equipment, and everything was thrown onto the truck. I told them please not to throw it, this was expensive equipment. "Oh, well,

German equipment. Who wants it? Who needs it?" You know. The attitude was so different between the American army and British army. I should mention that, in a way. The British army were certainly not physically as well-treated, because they didn't have the means, as the American army in the field. The Americans had everything--much too much of everything. Cigarettes, chocolates--we hadn't seen chocolates in I don't know how long.

They really had everything--uniforms. The uniform got dirty, you go to the quartermaster, get a new one. Not in the British army. It had to fall into pieces and couldn't be sewn up any more, before you got a new shirt. In every possible respect, and I must say that at the time, during the so-called occupation time of Italy, I lost quite a bit of respect for the American army. I was very unhappy to see that the ability to have everything was used illegally, and it was sold on the black market--openly, quite openly.

If a British soldier or officer was caught in dealing in black market goods, or in currency--all the kinds of things the Americans were doing, he was court-martialed. The punishment was very severe. Depends when it was, and what was involved, but generally speaking, it was extremely severe. Much more so than stealing something in peace time.

Anyway, we didn't have anything that we could really get rid of, because we didn't have anything that we didn't need. But what hurt me even more at times, was seeing how the Americans treated food. Things were half-eaten and dumped in a barrel as you walked out of the mess. And here was a population around you, who had nothing to eat. Really, literally, nothing to eat. You saw these women with their children in their arms, begging to be permitted to take it out of the barrels--whatever had been thrown away. And the way some GI's would use that opportunity--and these were women who had only one interest any more in life, and that is to make their babies survive. The barter of a bar of chocolate or soap or cigarettes for their bodies, openly, and right then and there and on the spot, was something that I found so appalling and--I mean, I don't want to generalize. But it was something that went on openly; you could see it everywhere. And it was something that did not exist because it was treated as rape in the British army. And actually, at the time, you could be shot for it.

So, these differences kind of embittered me at the time, and I swore I would never, never set foot in the United States. There were other things. There was the way--which of course was a tactical decision, not by the individual airmen--to bomb at night, and to bomb only from high altitude. I realized that the higher the altitude is, or the darker it is, the safer is the

attacking force. But it has resulted a number of times unfortunately in bombs landing in the middle of the British army, of other Allied armies. There was never the kind of consideration that you would find between allies, or should find between allies of considering you one of them, and vice versa.

Glaser: How soon after V-E Day did you obtain your discharge from the army?

Schiller: [laughs] Over a year. There are only two more things. Is that all right?

Glaser: Yes.

Schiller: Well, after V-E Day I had, obviously, a little bit more time to attend to things that I liked to do. We were strictly an army of occupation at that point, so I covered as much of Italy as I could. I went skiing, which I hadn't done for years, on the Italian side of the Matterhorn, in Cervinia. Met two young women who owned a little hostel, and wanted to build a larger hotel--not major at all. So I started going there a number of times to look at the area, and designed a small ski hotel for them, which I think was built after the war, but I'm not sure. And I participated in ski races, on behalf of the British army, and my last race against other Allied armies--and the Swiss, and the

Italians--the British placed third, which was unheard of, because the British were not very good skiers. I was the one who did it. That was the last time I raced. After all, I was an old man; I was twenty-eight years old at that point.

But immediately after V-E Day, I was also sent forward, because I was used now quite often as an interpreter. I was sent forward to a place which is unusual in Europe. There are four countries meeting at that particular pass. It's Stilfserjoch. The place is called Stilf, and joch is pass. Namely, Austria, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland. I think I would have to check it. They meet there. The reason I was sent there, at this time immediately before and immediately after V-E Day, certain Germans tried to escape into Germany as quickly as they could, having obtained civilian clothes and claiming to be Italians, or claiming to be something else. So I was sent there because every effort was being made to keep certain people from escaping, particularly anybody who had belonged to the Waffen SS. They were the arm of the SS, the storm troopers, in the army, black-shirted.

I went as far as I could by train, and then had to do it on foot, going up to the pass itself. I was an old mountaineer, and I enjoyed that. As I was walking up there, I saw two people who looked like peasants, walking almost parallel with me, and

speaking Italian to each other. A dialect which I had great difficulty to understand. But what I understood very quickly was that they were very suspicious of me. They had never seen an Allied soldier, so didn't know what the uniform was, and thought I must be a German. Or something, that they didn't know, but in any case, one doesn't ask questions in war, one acts. They had decided they would--and that much I did figure out--they were going to waylay me and beat me over the head, rather than taking the risk that I might be a German.

That was at the time, of course, at the very end of the war, when large areas of Italy had been partially under the command of the partigiani partisans. I wasn't about to take that risk, [laughs] after the war had finally ended in Europe, to be killed by two essentially Allied people. So, at the next corner, where they were just coming around, I turned around, and I said, in Italian, first I said, "Hello, and Good evening, and how are you?"

Then, I pointed out that I was a British soldier, and that I was looking for Germans, like they were. And I showed my identification, and by this time, they did see that it said on my shoulder that Royal Engineers, and Palestine. Palestine, they didn't know what that meant, or where it was. I translated for them, very simple, "Palestina," in Italian, and Jerusalem. "Oh,

yes." Then they understood. Okay.

So, they accompanied me all the way to the pass, and at the pass, there was a unit of Bergsalieri. Those are Italian mountain troops who were manning the customs house and the border. I had no great problem to introduce myself to the lieutenant, Italian lieutenant, who was in charge of that. I asked him whether they had seen any Germans.

Well, they had somebody who had been caught a few days ago, and he was down in the lock-up. But he claimed he was an Italian, and he spoke pretty good Italian. He could come from way south, and they wouldn't know that his accent wasn't a normal accent. And of course, he didn't have any uniform, etc.

I said, "Okay, let me take a look at him, but don't open the door." There was a porthole, a tiny porthole in the door. I looked, and I saw a man in civilian clothes, lying on the floor, in a corner of the room. I said, "Now, be very quiet. When I tell you, you open the door and just don't say anything. Let me do the talking."

They opened the door, and I yelled, "Achtung!" Which is the command in German to come to attention.

The man jumped up like that [snaps fingers] and stood at attention. And I said to him in German, "Oh. So you are an Italian?"

##end tape 12 side a, begin tape 12 side b

So I asked the Bergsalieri to strip him, and I said, "Raise your arm," and he had the SS number tatoood. I said, "Mmm hmm. Nice Italian."

"Oh, they did that to me."

I said, "Yes, of course they did it to you. Where were you going?"

"Well, I wanted to go across the border because I want to find some work."

I said, "I'm sure." And then I asked the Bergsalieri to let me have all his clothes, and I went through everything there was. Absolutely clean, nothing in there. Not the label, nothing. But I was just feeling around, and right here in the bottom of the jacket, between the lining and the outside cloth, there was something rather stiff and hard. So I pulled out a knife and I ripped it open, and out came a Soldbuch, which is the

identification passport of the German SS, everything as predicted. Name and everything, and I said to him, "You're that careful, try to hide everything. You come across the border. You manage to get across, almost, because you have absolutely no identification on you. Why do you take the army identification with you?"

"Oh," he said, "that would be a terrible offense! I could be shot for having lost my identification!"

I kind of looked at him and laughed.

He said, "That's not a laughing matter! They would shoot me, you know that!" And then he said, "What are you going to do with me?"

He looked at my shoulder and he said, "Palestina?"

I said, "Yes."

"Oh, please don't kill me! Please don't kill me! I haven't done anything to Jews!"

I said, "It's not for me to decide whether you've done anything to Jews. You'll be interrogated, and you'll go to a

prisoner of war camp, special camp for the SS, where you'll be investigated. If you're clean, you're clean. If you committed any war crimes, that's a different story."

"Oh," he said, "but isn't it true? You belong to the Palestine army?"

I said, "Yes."

"Isn't it true they kill everybody?"

I said, "No. You mix that up with the SS; we don't. You did."

"Oh, no we didn't! We didn't! I've always been treating Jews nicely."

I said, "Mmm-hmm. All right, you tell that when you're being investigated, and you better have proof of that." In any case, it was this kind of occurrence that was very common. Great numbers of SS troops, officers and enlisted men, fled across the borders into Germany, in disguise in one way or the other, and managed to escape. Both, particularly the partigiani, the Italian partisans, who then also were after Mussolini and his mistress, at the same time. And the British army and, I assume,

the American army, were trying to man every post along the border in a very short time, in order to prevent that. Many were caught, but many did make it in one way or the other. It was impossible to do it otherwise.

My guess is that some were executed on the spot by some of the partigiani, judging by what they would have done with me. [laughs] I would say they were likely to mete out quick justice; not that that was the order of the day. The order of the day was to follow every reasonable procedure, short of protecting oneself. One was not to use any arms under any circumstances, unless being threatened or shot at.

Finally, I stayed in Italy at a different place, and I don't even remember. It was in quite a bit further--it was somewhere near Milan, and I don't remember location, place, name. Because I utterly disliked the area, and there was nothing of great interest to me, and there was no work to be done that was of interest to me. I was put in charge of--I was loaned to the quartermasters for--by the Royal Engineers, and was put in charge of a huge stock of uniforms and provisions, which wasn't exactly my interest, in any way. The war was over, at least in Europe, and I wanted to get home, because I hadn't been home for I guess about three years.

Again, not like the American army, who were already sent on home leave after about six months or so. I had applied for leave and finally was sent on leave, after about--over a year after the war in Europe was ended. I got notice that I would be sent on leave, and got orders to go to Casserta.

Casserta was essentially headquarters, Italy. It's near Naples. There I was reassigned for a few days to the Royal Engineers, and the commanding officer asked me to come in. He said, "Well, Schiller, I'm glad to see you can go home after waiting for it for over a year. But you're still in the army, and you're going to stay in the army."

I said, "Stay in the army?"

"Well," he said, "I have a little offer to make. How would you like to become a peacetime officer in the British army?"

I said, "Well, sir, that's very wonderful of you to offer that to me, but I would have to know a little bit more about it, because essentially I'm an architect, and I would like to go back to Israel--" Palestine, at the time-- "and see my family, and reopen my office. Essentially, I'm a civilian."

"Well, you've been a very good soldier, and you have had

some training outside the army and inside the army, that we could well use. I can tell you that you would be sent to Burma. And you would have a peacetime commission, starting as a captain," which in peacetime was very high. "Knowing you, and knowing the situation there, the chief engineer in Burma of the Royal Engineers is a major, now a lieutenant colonel," a lieutenant colonel, as he said, "but will revert to major on a peacetime basis. And he's quite old, and is going to retire, so you come in as his assistant, and I would be willing to predict that within a year or so, you would be a chief engineer in Burma. That's an offer that not everybody gets. Having served throughout the war as an enlisted man, I think that's quite an offer."

I said, "Yes, I have to agree, it is quite an offer. How much time would I have to decide on that?"

"Well," he said, "I give you until tomorrow."

I said, "I want to be able at least to discuss it with my wife!"

"Well, the offer only stands until tomorrow, and all I can tell you is that if you accept it, you get two weeks leave in Jerusalem, and then you'll report back as an officer, and will be

moved to Burma."

"Well, will I be able to take my wife and child with me?"

"Oh, yes. Peace time, you know."

"Indeed." Well, not knowing--not having been in Palestine for three years and essentially much longer than that, because a few days off and on that I had been on leave didn't really count, I wasn't so sure whether I shouldn't accept it. Well, it didn't take that long.

I was in his office the next morning and I said, "Sir, I appreciate the offer. I would like to go home."

"Well," he said, "you may be sent as a private back to the occupation army."

I said, "Well, that can't be helped, sir. I don't think I would like to make a commitment for the rest of my life without having discussed it with my wife."

He said, "I understand that, and I'm sorry that you don't accept it, because I think it's a magnificent offer. I know many a young person who would jump to it."

I said, "I'm sorry, sir. I'm essentially a civilian. I've done my duty, I've done everything I could, against my own persuasion. I want to go home." I went home. I was sent home, obviously I didn't go to Burma. Never did become the Chief Engineer in Burma.

Glaser: At that point, when you went home, were you separated from the British army?

Schiller: No, not at all. I was on leave for two weeks. Two weeks, and arriving in Port Said aboard a ship. This trip was much nicer, I have to say [laughs]. It was quite luxurious, in comparison. I had a bunk with one other--two bunks in a cabin. Food was good, and treatment was good. There were not very many people aboard. It was quite empty, in fact. This ship, before the Middle East, had gone back to England, and was on its way back via Italy to the Middle East to pick up more. So I arrived in Port Said, and was transferred immediately to the train. As we were coming close to the border between Egypt and Palestine, one of the railroad officers, the transportation officers, British army, came around and called for attention in every compartment, on every car.

He was an Indian. Quite a bit of the rail transportation

officers in the Middle East were Indian officers. He said, "We are going to cross into Palestine at any moment now. I want you to know, I know most of you are Palestinians who are going home on leave, but you haven't been home for a long time. As you know, when you are on leave, you are required to wear your uniform." And then he said, "And that is, as you know, a standing order of the British army. I would suggest to you that you break that rule when you get home, because you'll find that you're not received with open arms if you wear a British uniform."

Secondly, he said, "From here on out, when you go across the border, you're going to proceed very cautiously and very slowly, and when you look out, you'll see that we're being preceded by a little hand truck, that is coupled to the locomotive, and on it sit two civilians. Let me tell you, these are both Jews who are prisoners, who are imprisoned in Palestine for offenses against Britian," namely either carrying arms or having arms, or having participated in a raid of some sort. "And the reason they sit in front of the engine is because it is our hope that the insurgents will not blow up one of their own. If they're being blown up, you're going to get blown up. So I just want you to be aware of the fact that you're not coming back to people who love you."

It was quite a rude awakening to be received in your own

country after a long war, which in part, I would say, you had fought on behalf of the people in that country, and at the request--or the suggestion, at least, shall we say, of the Jewish agency and other Jewish groups. We didn't really know what it was, who it was, that we were supposed to look out for. Nothing happened, but I found out very soon that some troop trains coming in from Egypt had been blown up, as an attack against the British, not necessarily against the returning Jewish soldiers. In fact, my guess is that, if their intelligence had been any better, they wouldn't have, because they may not have wanted to harm Jews. And I say that very carefully. But the mere fact that they were willing to hurt people with whom I'd been fighting, who had been my comrades in arms, who had looked for me as I had looked out for them, was something that didn't sit well with me.

What sat even worse with me was the fact that I did not believe, and do not believe, in the use of force, and certainly killing, of people, in order to achieve your political aims. But be that as it may, we arrived in Jerusalem, and I understand how soldiers coming back from Vietnam felt. This was worse. Even on the short trip from the railroad station in Jerusalem to Talpioth, which is a few minutes, people made nasty remarks, nasty comments. I came to a country that I didn't recognize.

Glaser: You came back to a son who didn't know you, too, didn't you?

Schiller: Yes. That is correct. I came back to a son who didn't know me. In fact, Paul Lampl, my friend who had been quartered with me in Tuscany, near Sienna, in Santa Colombe, had come back two or three weeks earlier. When he went to visit Lotte and Ian, just to say that I was sending my love and hopefully I would come soon too, my son was rushing out, embracing him, and saying, "Daddy, Daddy, Daddy." Well, somebody in uniform, coming home... And when I came home, not only did he not recognize me, he was very shy and withdrawn, and I didn't get that kind of reception. He could have made a mistake again, you know. And I don't think he wanted to. He was four, four and a half. And after all, he was about a year when I left.

So, that was that. I don't know whether he was still--the decision and the run-in with Begin, the bombing of the King David Hotel, are really the basic reasons that I finally decided I wasn't going to stay. I did have some work, very soon--oh, I should say, let's end this chapter at least.

After two weeks, I had to return to Sarafand, which was the major camp, the largest camp in Palestine, and report back, and was told then that if I wanted to, I could be transferred temporarily to GHQ, Jerusalem, and that I should report there.

When I reported there, I was told I should make myself available for assignment, but I could go home and live at home. And I think two or three weeks later, I was informed that if I so desired, I would be demobbed [mustered out]. I desired! [laughs] I went again to I think Sarafand, turned in my uniform, got a new civilian suit, a hat, which I still have, a shirt, I was permitted to keep my underwear and army socks, and my great-coat, and of course my boots. And so outfitted, I was now a civilian. Anybody who saw me knew I was a demobbed soldier. It was so obvious, the style and everything was very English, of course, and nobody was wearing English suits. Or practically nobody was wearing English suits in Palestine. But it was a great help. You had new clothes. But most importantly, I was a civilian again. Just in the army reserve. They never made use of that, fortunately.

Glaser: So then you reopened your office?

Schiller: Yes. I reopened my office, and what I did was, at the time I met with one of the people who had worked with Eric Mendelsohn, who was working on implementing some of the designs that he had designed for the Hadassah Hospital on Mt. Scopus, enlarging it. In other words, the Hadassah was already built before the war, but it was going to be enlarged. So between him and myself, we did most of the drawings for that. That kept me rather busy, and

at the same time, Eric Mendelsohn had let me know that he wanted me in the United States.

So somehow, against my own desires, but still considering all kinds of other things that went into that, I decided to apply to go to the United States, and when the application was granted, which was about three quarters of a year, we left.

Glaser: How did Mrs. Schiller feel about this decision?

Schiller: Oh, she felt all right about it. I think one of the reasons--I mean, really the decision came about after the King David bombing, and my run-in with Begin, and having been attacked by persons unknown, but in all likelihood--I mean physically attacked, and shot at. But in all likelihood, people who were either with the Irgun or with the Stern gang.

Glaser: What was this run-in with Mr. Begin?

##tape interruption

Schiller: One has to understand that the population had grown tremendously during the last few years, during the end of the war, and there have been legal and illegal immigrants, particularly from north Africa and also from other areas, people from Europe who in one

way or the other, after terrible oddyseys, had ended up as an "illegal" shipment, and been stranded on the coast in one fashion or another. These are facts that are well-known and documented in all kinds of books.

But these were to a great extent people who had not come with any kind of preparation, enthusiasm, but in order to save their skin, which is understandable. I certainly had a great deal of sympathy and feeling for them. But they in turn weren't eager to do the jobs that were expected of them to be done, namely to be agricultural workers and construction workers, and in that nature, but they had a tendency to want to be in the city, and to do the jobs that would bring in a lot of money in a short time.

So, the attitude of enthusiasm and of dedication had been pushed into the background to a great extent. As a consequence, these people, when they didn't get what they wanted, were willing to band together and get it by force, in one fashion or another. It is always, when there is discontent, of one sort or another, that somebody who is willing to be a demagogue can use and utilize and direct people of this kind for his own purposes. What I'm accusing certainly the Stern gang and its leaders, and to quite some extent the Irgun and its leaders of is that they used the discontent among these people to build up a force that

would do almost anything that they asked them to do. It was essentially a right-wing fascist kind of thing, and that after having spent so many years of my life at that point fighting fascism and its consequences, was hard for me to take.

As everybody else who had been in the Haganah and in the army, we were back in the Haganah, and I found out that the Haganah too no longer was as pure as it had been. That it had been affected, and influenced by the Irgun, in its thinking, and that it was not strictly a defense force any more. The debate was raging on, newspapers plastered all over Jerusalem on the walls. Not newspapers in that sense, but proclamations of one side or the other. Including the one from the Irgun saying that in order to achieve their aims, namely to get rid of the enemy, namely England, and creating a state of our own, any kind of force must be used. Everything was all right, and unfortunately, if it would require the killing of innocent bystanders and civilians, that would be all right.

That is also the kind of thing that was discussed. I was one of those who was asked to participate in a negotiation between the two groups, between the Haganah and the Irgun. The Irgun was trying to say that we didn't need two Jewish groups acting as an army or defense force. We needed only one, and we should combine our activities and work together, etc. etc. I

didn't find any basis on which I could work with the Irgun, certainly not with the Stern gang. More than that, when one fine afternoon I was sitting in my room with the window open, I heard and saw the King David go up in smoke. It had been bombed. I took a photo of it which appeared on the front page of the Jerusalem Post the next day.

##end tape 12 side b, end of interview 5

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questions for Mr. Schiller:

- p. 283. Rehovoth is the way we are spelling it?
- p. 283. Salman, or Simon? which way was it spelled in the first part of the interviews.
- p. 283. something the transcriber didn't get. please fill in.
- p. 284. not sure just what the meaning was here-- "abstract"
- p. 287. six-vee. is that correct?
- p. 289. Bruno Casira? correct?
- p. 289. Ervin, or Erwin
- p. 317. strict development? or did you say unrestricted ?
- p. 361. do you have a fuller name for Mrs. Vasen?
- p. 396. full name of Wittich
- p. 398. looks like part of the tape didn't get transcribed. or rather, recorded. I don't have it here. I don't recall enough to flesh this out. can you get back into what the thought was. I suppose it is on the video if we want to be really meticulous.
- p. 414. I interrupted you--would you finish the thought--?
- p. 420. I have titled this subsection "The Moral of the Story." I wonder if you want to add something along the lines of what we are speaking of

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XIII

ERIC MENDELSON, MASTER ARCHITECT

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[Interview 6: Aug 13, 1987]

The Appeal of Architecture ~~DB 327~~ and the Creative Process

Interview with Hans Schiller, Interview ~~Q78~~

Date of Interview: Aug 20, 1987

Interviewer: Suzanne Riess

Transcriber: Shannon Page

Begin tape ^{15B} 8, side a##

##

Riess: Today we talk about Eric Mendelsohn.* And I see you have some articles ~~Riess: January, 1955~~ here.

Schiller: ^(Mendelsohn) Yes, ~~and he~~ died in September, '53. For the architectural form ^{um} I wrote ^[Jan. 1955] in which there was a posthumous ~~well, not just~~ an article ~~but~~ ^{included} which some coverage of his work that wasn't quite finished when he died, and when he died it was being published. All the photographs were mine, and this article ^{brought out} they bought about one half of it, which is amazing, without editing it. If you want it, it's yours. **

Since you were also interested in comments about Mendelsohn in general, I have here ^r excerpts from a letter ^I ~~he~~ wrote to Dennis Sharp in England, ^{He} ~~who~~ had written an article about Mendelsohn, ~~and had in fact covered a criticism, both positive and negative,~~ a critique, shall we say, of Mendelsohn's work in a book of his in England, with which I obviously disagreed in many instances. It was quite superficial. ~~But, so~~ This is ^{parts of} excerpts from that letter, and ^{the response to him.*} ~~there is one~~. ~~Well, that's all I~~ ~~have to offer at the moment.~~

** See appendices.

* from Aug 20, 1987. Tape 15, Side A.

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Riess: ~~Well, those are very good offerings, and I will footnote my~~ ~~ignorance about Mendelsohn and some of this stuff. But just one~~ ~~of the things, in zipping through the letters. In a very fast~~ ~~in one of Mendelsohn's letters he remarked to a correspondent,~~ ~~reader--in conjunction with this little remark of Mendelsohn's,~~ You have quoted Mendelsohn in the first of these articles: "When God created the world, he had no associates, so why should I?" ~~In fact, at the end of his life, it looked like he was~~ ~~wonder in fact how religious he was.~~ ~~becoming rather religious. How religious was he?~~ That certainly says something about his ego, but it also made me

Schiller: ~~No~~ he wasn't religious at all. He probably, in an off-handed way, acknowledged that there was a supreme force or being or something of the kind--no, he was not religious in the least. I mean, it's hard to say whether a person is religious. He was not an atheist, but that doesn't make him religious. He was very close in general terms to nature, easily influenced by grandeur of nature, but I think that's where it ended. The fact that he was building synagogues and temples meant very little to him in a religious sense, other than that he designed something to a greater force existing. And acknowledging the fact--which he did--that he was a Jew.

Riess: Would he have built a Christian house of worship?

Schiller: Yes. Absolutely. He would have built any house of worship, because essentially architecture was his mistress, and it didn't

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make any difference. He would have devoted as much thought and effort in a Christian house of worship as he would have in a Jewish house of worship.

~~Riess: So architecture is his mistress, who is his wife then, if you're going to use this metaphor?~~

~~Schiller: [laughs] I didn't quite mean it that way. Well, his wife obviously was Louise. [laughter] But, sorry to say, he had other mistresses occasionally.~~

Riess: ~~I don't know whether I'm sure the question is answered here, so I guess it will have to be really brief from you, but for me, tell me how Mendelsohn got into architecture. Did you talk to Eleanor about that? What brought him into the profession?~~ *architecture?*

Schiller: That is a little difficult to ^S ascertain at this point, really. ~~Well, he must have had~~—I think it was a conscious decision of his very early in life to go into the arts, number one, ~~and~~ secondly, while he studied in Munich, it was the center at the time for arts, and particularly ~~also~~ for performing arts. He was very interested in stage design, and some of his earliest attempts ^P during his study times were in the design of scenery. There are still sketches available where he sketched costumes, and one of the many things he has done in his life is design costumes even

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for Louise. Costumes, or clothes. And I think it is from this kind of involvement, involvement with artists, that he developed a kinship to the design profession as such, ~~and~~ beyond that, I think he did become intrigued with the "new" materials, which weren't really that new at the time, but which in his opinion were used to imitate what had been done in architecture and in structure before.

Riess: When did his vision fail? ~~or had that always been a weakness?~~

Schiller: ~~No.~~ I think quite young. I think he was twenty-seven or twenty-eight. He developed a cancerous lesion in one of his eyes. Fortunately, the eye ~~had to be~~ ^{was} removed--it's not fortunate, but I mean, fortunately by removal of the eye, he was without any real illness until his final one. Which was also cancer. But a different kind, and apparently not related at all to the removed cancer in his eye.

~~Riess: He referred in the letters to the pain in his ears, so at the very end.~~

~~Schiller: Yes. Well, the pain in his ears was probably caused by a cancerous attack on his lymph nodes. Essentially, it had been discovered it was a cancer in the larynx, and that was operated on, but from what the autopsy I believe had showed, it had spread~~

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~~all over his body.~~

Riess: Before he lost his eye, ^{did he} ~~was he doing~~ sketches on a different scale, or was he always ^{working} a small-scale [?]

Schiller: Well, the small scale had all kinds of reasons. I think it was basically caused by the fact that he didn't have the facility to do anything in a large scale, ~~and~~ I'm not referring to a scale of the subject matter, which was always very large, ~~but rather~~ the representation thereof, since all the early sketches, which really formed his vision of what was going to happen afterwards, ^{were done} ~~they're done~~ in the trenches. ~~(There was)~~ Neither ~~the~~ room, nor ~~the~~ facility, nor even paper large enough, ~~==~~

Riess: So it starts out being economy of means.

Schiller: Yes. But, there is something else to be said about that. I don't know whether it was so much the physical condition of his eyes, or if it was that it is much easier to design ⁱⁿ ~~on~~ a very small scale. ~~At least it is~~ ⁼⁼ maybe it is because I've been working with him so long that I too have acquired the desire to work in as small a scale as possible. You have a better overview of the total effect, and the total project, if you can keep it within a scale that is easy to see at the same time. Most people ^{only} ~~only design in large scale because--or work in large-scale~~

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drawings because it is easier to look at the detail and devise the necessary point-by-point developments that have to be done as you develop drawings further.

~~But~~ that is an aspect in which he ^{personally} ~~firstly~~ was never very much involved. He was involved by checking and seeing whether it followed his ideas, but it was something that he personally probably, except at school and in his first years, has never done since. It's always done by other architects, draftsmen, etc. So, it is very obvious that for what he was personally interested in, the small scale was ideal. But his ability in a very small scale to draw what could be blown up to tremendous size and still have the correct proportions and everything, was unusual. That was very unusual. And that he may have developed simply because he would be very close to the paper on which he drew, and in fact you had the feeling ~~that he was~~ that the pencil almost came out of his eye, as he was drawing.

Riess: It follows the thought.

Schiller: Yes. It has something to do with another concept that I have often wondered about. These days, the matter of scale is no longer important. Because ~~as~~ more and more of the physical drafting will be done or is being done by computers, and no longer by people in that sense, ~~and a computer has the capability~~

~~of drawing it when it is being~~ ^{can be} put into the computer, ~~do it~~ at a very small scale, and then you push a button and it enlarges all this, and amplifies it, and does all the adjustments necessary for the larger scale by itself. I would think that his thought processes were very similar to that. ~~And that in fact~~

Riess: His thought processes are similar to the way a computer operates?

Schiller: Yes. I know that I've always done that, ~~but I have an ability to think about something of this kind~~,
~~[telephone interruption]~~

It is a way that I have which is not very usual for architects. I'm not very dependent on trying out things on paper. I form pretty much everything in my mind before I commit it to paper. And that is not the normal and usual way. Most architects go through reams of paper, one sketch over the other, until they have what they want.

Riess: ~~So your image of this, coming~~ ^{So} in your case and in Mendelsohn's case, ~~right from the head onto the~~ ^{the design comes out} is fully conceived.

Schiller: Yes. But I would also say that Mendelsohn was never aware of his thinking process. I mean, I have for myself analyzed what I am doing and why I am doing it, and I've discussed that with him a

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number of times. No, for him, this ~~is an intuitive~~ was an intuitive thing. It's intuitive for anyone, no matter how you do it, ~~But~~ the design process is something that is intuitive, and you never know ^{whether} (will) you be able to design something. ~~But it's like most~~

Riess: You mean from moment to moment, there is that ~~is~~ uncertainty?

Schiller: From moment to moment. It is a creative process in certain ways, and I know that he ~~has~~ ^{had}—though he wouldn't admit it to most people—he had his doubts whether he could solve something, or whether he would be able ^{to know what} ~~to do in order to~~ get a solution.

~~Riess: So the idea, about the doubt of the~~

^Q Schiller: I think that no matter ^{the reason,} ~~what it is,~~ as you approach a project, and particularly when you first approach a project, there is always a doubt. ~~You~~ ^{you} will solve it to your own satisfaction, [?] ~~whether it~~ ^{it} will be possible to solve it. ~~And~~ [?] there's always a fear that this may be something that you can't handle. Which is frightening in a way, and intimidating, and I think most architects cover it by starting to sketch, and [—] ~~it~~ [↑] it will come to me, it will come to me, it will come to me.

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I hesitate to draw even that much of a line until it's all there, or I think it is all there. Then, I have no problem. I put it on paper and then I discover that this doesn't fit, that doesn't fit. Okay. So you start adjusting. But, ~~essentially you have to overcome at least,~~ I have to overcome that block of fear that this is something that I may not be able to handle, or may not be able to solve.

Riess: Do you have in your head designs that are waiting for a commission, [?] ~~and~~ ₌ does an architect have that?

Schiller: Some do. Mendelsohn did. I don't [/] because I've always been too busy in my life, much too busy in my life, to give in to things of that nature.

Riess: This isn't part of your imaginative process?

Schiller: No. Not mine. Mendelsohn's, yes. Very much so. I mean, all these thousands of sketches that he did were things that had to be put on paper. He had to do it [/] because those were designs that were coming to his mind [/] and he had to give them some expression.

~~Riess: Was he very responsive what I'm thinking about, when I asked you the question about religion, I was wondering whether you thought~~

Riess: In ^{books} one of the ~~pieces~~ that I read ~~something else~~ about Mendelsohn, ~~the~~
~~was~~ the person interviewed said, in answer to a question, that *Mendelsohn*
~~he~~ was not a Utopian, ~~and I certainly think of Wright as a~~
~~Utopian. What about that? Utopian~~ the idea of ~~Utopia~~ of a
~~Utopian~~ Utopian architecture is a fascinating thing, ~~there is~~
~~something~~ very grandiose ~~about it, it is~~ reorganizing people's
lives, ~~and~~ saying that life can be changed ^{by} ~~if~~ the buildings, ~~and~~

Schiller: Well, when you talk about reorganizing people's lives, and things
far beyond the concepts of pure architecture, I think that is in
the nature of many artists. Very few artists will admit to the
fact ~~that~~ *though*.

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* ~~## end tape 15 side a begin tape 15 side b~~

Riess: Why won't they?

Schiller: Because ~~particularly~~ these days, and particularly in the United States, the word political has a negative connotation. I don't want to talk about politics because we'd get into something totally different, but let me say this: Mendelsohn was a Utopian when it came to politics; he had very clear, to him, ~~very~~ very clear ideas of how people should behave, how they should live, what they should do, what their relationship ought to be, ~~and~~ I think it is in the nature of an architect, and certainly that of a planner, to go beyond the creation of houses and buildings, and habitats and all that, ~~but~~ to go into manipulating the lives of the people who are going to live in these houses and buildings and offices, etc.

It is almost--you cannot quite stop. There is a point where you feel that you are forming the outward image of civilization, or of a civic structure, that you ought to go beyond that and create the civilization, and create a civic structure that is ~~as~~ ideal as your solutions for that civilization might be. There is no question in my mind that civilization, or the lack of civilization, or of real architecture, or just building, has a

* Tape 15, Side B.

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tremendous impact on society. ~~And so~~ ^Q it is understandable, particularly in the times that we talk about, beginning of this century [^] and certainly we've been through all kinds of semi-revolutions and real revolutions in the sixties and the fifties, and later on — *it is understandable that*

People active in these times [^] in creating facilities for people [^] would also become interested in how these people lived and what they pursue and what their aims are and their ideas, their ideologies. And pretty soon you find yourself in a position where you want to influence, and Mendelsohn very much wanted to influence that. Never had a chance, really.

Riess: Was he a puritan?

Schiller: No. He wasn't. You see, we're all a conglomerate really of inherited and environmental influences. He couldn't help being a Prussian, ~~because~~ [^] he was born in Prussia, and he was raised in Prussia. And I'm saying that almost in a good sense, if there is a good sense to the word Prussian or the concept of being a Prussian.

One of the major concepts is, of course, that you put everything in order, and a very rigid order. ~~You want~~ [^] your place is here, and your place is here, etc. It is, in certain

ways, regimentation. I'm not saying that Mendelsohn believed in a regimentation. In fact, he didn't. Certainly not for himself. But, without believing in it, and without thinking that he was believing in it, he insisted on regimentation for ^{others.} ~~this.~~ He never expressed that--it was just clear from his actions. ~~He was at~~ the same time, he detested what he considered Prussian. *For*

~~Riess: That's hard to work around, I think.~~

~~Schiller: Or for instance, he was referring to~~ he loved music, but I remember very clearly ^{when} ~~that~~ he heard over the radio a Wagner opera. He turned to me and said, "Shut off that Prussian noise! I can't stand it!" [laughter]

~~Riess: He wanted an earlier German.~~

~~Schiller: Yes.~~

Riess: Was he self-critical?

Schiller: Yes. He was very self-critical. In fact, he used to say about himself, "I'm my own best critic." And the fact is ~~it's true~~ that most architects, when they find a solution ~~would~~ say, "Fine, this is great, this is fine." It works, it serves a purpose, that's all I have to do."

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Very often that is dictated by ^{the} economics of the job, and ~~the~~ economics of producing a design for a building, which after all is being paid for to a certain remuneration by a client, ~~but~~ that is something that didn't enter his mind. He would work and work and work until he was totally satisfied, even if it didn't produce money for him. And very often it didn't because of the insistence on excellence. ^Q He was very critical of himself, but he couldn't take any criticism from anybody else. [laughter]

~~266~~ 266Interview with Hans Schiller, Interview ~~26~~ 26

Date of Interview: 8/13/87

Interviewer: Suzanne Riess

Transcriber: Shannon Page

Begin tape ¹³ 13, side a##

*

Attitudes Towards ^{the} Profession

Riess: ~~have you here to answer all my questions about Eric Mendelsohn, and [Neitra?], and Schiller [laughs], and anyone that we can cover. I wondered first of all~~ when you became close to Mendelsohn, ~~whether~~ you were privy to any of his thoughts on some of his contemporaries, like ^{Richard Neutra?} ~~Neutra. He and Neutra had been~~

Schiller: ~~[laughs] Okay.~~ You shouldn't ~~haven't~~ mentioned ^{eu} Neutra as a contemporary, because ^{eu} Neutra was considerably younger than Mendelsohn. ^{But} ~~And secondly,~~ yes, he had thoughts about ^{eu} Neutra because ^{eu} Neutra was trained in his office in Berlin. He was just one of the many who had gone through Mendelsohn's office; he didn't consider him very highly, or--Mendelsohn had very little consideration for people working for him.

Riess: By consideration you mean respect? ~~one?~~

Schiller: Well, you can put it both ways. Mendelsohn had very little respect for other architects. Again, with exceptions. I would

* Tape 13, Side A.

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also like to say that I've met other very well-known architects, like Frank Lloyd Wright, who had less respect for other architects even than Mendelsohn. For some strange reason ~~they~~ *two men* had respect for each other. They would never admit it, but their behavior towards each other very clearly indicated that they had a great deal of respect for each other.

Riess: Was Mendelsohn a theorist; did he talk about beliefs?

Schiller: No. He was not a--well, he was a theorist in a way, ~~because~~ you mentioned ~~earlier to me~~ prior to the interview, that you were aware of some lectures that he had given. In that sense, he might have been a theorist. But essentially, his attitude was that architecture was not something to talk about, to write about, but just to do. ~~Well, when you refer to theory, if he tried to express in words, as he always did, of course,~~ *In his theories* the rules that he set up did not apply to him ^{self} necessarily. They applied to everybody else, and particularly those who were criticizing what he was doing, or who were critical in general of what architects were doing. ~~But~~ the rules that he set up for others were not necessarily his own rules. ⁹ He did write about architecture, he did speak about architecture, ~~and~~ to him, architecture was the mistress of all arts. ~~Everything else~~ all other arts were subordinate to it, but were part of it. In his approach to architecture, he tried to use other arts, visual arts certainly,

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but also music to a degree, to try to incorporate it in the total picture of what he was trying to create. But ^{as} far as he was concerned, there was really no other art than architecture, and architecture was the major art.

↳ He included in it certainly painting, and he included sculpture, and that was the reason that whenever it was feasible, financially feasible, which was practically never, to include works of art and other artists in whatever he was creating, he would do that.

Riess: ^{I've seen} ~~I understand that he~~ ~~one of the references~~ ~~is~~ to his wishing to do the interiors also. He insisted on furnishing the houses. This was a problem sometimes.

Schiller: Well, that normally is a problem. He believed in a total concept of a project, and certainly if he didn't have a hand in creating the interior as well as the exterior in the volume within which everything was contained, he felt he had failed. And essentially ^I agree with that. You cannot have a house created by one person and then have in it things that clash with it ^{and} and do not fit, physically or conceptually, so it is highly desirable that buildings are being designed, or at least supervised, from A to Z by the architect.

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Riess: Did he design furniture?

Schiller: Yes, he designed furniture. He designed furniture, and actually he insisted on going much further than that. He would design--or have designed, not necessarily that he personally would design it--other things that belonged to a house, like cutlery. Like dinnerware, and bedcovers, curtains. In other words, everything that had to do with giving the impression of it all having been created by one hand.

Riess: ^{If you} ~~To~~ think of architecture as the highest art, then is public architecture the highest form of the practice?

Schiller: Well, perhaps. He had a specific attitude towards that. The buildings that you might call public buildings, that he ~~has~~ created, were very few in number. The buildings that you would call residential were even fewer in number. He was not a residential architect. You can list the ~~residences~~, private residences, that he had designed--or certainly the ones that were executed--on the fingers of one hand.

Essentially, the first one that he designed was his own house in Berlin, in which he didn't have the pleasure of living very long, because of his leaving the country rather quickly after it was completed.

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Riess: ^{was} So that's about ~~1922, or '23?~~ 1933?

Schiller: ~~Oh, no. Much later than that.~~

Riess: ~~-----~~ '33.

Schiller: ~~Yes. Well, actually,~~ I don't recall right now exactly what year he left Germany, but it was very early, ~~too. It must have been~~ about 1933, '34, something like that. I think his house was designed in '28, '29, built shortly thereafter. So he had just moved in essentially, into his new house.

The second house that he designed was a house for Professor
 [Chaim] Weizmanⁿ in Rehovot in Palestine, who ~~then~~ became the first
 president of Israel. The third house he designed was for Simon Salomon
 Schocken, who was a prior client of his in Germany, ^{Mendelsohn} ~~who had~~ he
 had designed his department stores in various cities. ~~Well, then~~
 there were no further houses until he came to the United States,
 and here he designed in San Francisco a house for Madeline Haas
 Russell. And that was the last of the residential designs that
 he did. But multiple residences he designed in Berlin, at
 _____ and Dunn.

But essentially, he was an architect who designed fairly

Rehovot?

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~~277~~ 271

large projects, fairly large buildings, and certainly in Europe he had succeeded in getting a great number of very large projects, some public, some semi-public, and some in private ownership, like the department stores for Schocken. ~~But essentially,~~ that is what he preferred, ^Q ~~and~~ ^{when} then it came to a question of what he felt that an architect ought to do at the peak of his ability, or perhaps towards the end of his life, when he had the most experience, and I think that was not necessarily by choice, but because circumstances just happened to be ~~that~~ [?] that he ~~was the designer of in this case of~~ temples, synagogues, and community centers. He felt there was a certain poetic justice in that, because he was in certain ways rather abstract to design churches or synagogues or religious buildings. *So, while*

He was not a very religious man, ~~incidentally, but~~ still, he felt there was something in there that aspired to higher aims than just designing something for a client.

Riess: ~~But~~ his clients, ~~aside from always having money,~~ also always seemed to have been Jewish.

Schiller: Well, that is not true. Certainly was not true in Germany; certainly was not true in England; certainly wasn't true in Russia, and in Spain.

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Riess: [laughs] I stand corrected! In the Bay Area.

Schiller: In the Bay Area, yes. That is very understandable, because I don't think that anybody will dispute anybody who knows history of architecture that Mendelsohn was without question the best known and probably greatest and most influential Jewish architect in recent centuries. So that's it's understandable that his clients might be Jewish. Might have been Jewish. He didn't select his clients; the clients selected him.

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His Training, and His Greatness

Riess: How was he trained? Was he a "natural" architect, or did he go through a rigorous training?

Schiller: He went through normal schooling. He studied in Munich, and he ended up being what the title was at the time, a "master builder" -- in German, "Baumeister." Of course, he was trained as an architect, and equally, as far as the classification was concerned, he was a certificated engineer. Which, I would say, both appellations were totally incorrect. They didn't mean anything, as far as he was concerned. He certainly was not an engineer. His engineering ~~ability--ability I shouldn't say~~ His actual knowledge was comparatively minimal, ~~It~~ just wasn't stressed, ~~the~~ the stress of his ability was certainly in design and in his way of visualizing, making it visible for others--his imagination.

Riess: So he was dependent on ~~the people who knew~~ ^{others for} the engineering? ~~but~~ ~~he had a~~

Schiller: Yes, to a degree. He had almost visionary concepts, ^{of} what he felt could be achieved. ^{He} Always had to fight the engineers and assistants that he had around him, who always said, "But Mr. Mendelsohn, that cannot be done."

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"Of course it can be done! I'll show you how!" And he would take six-[?]vee pencil, soft pencil, and sketch it and say, "Look how it can be done." But it was always appearance. ~~Through~~ ^{such as} he had various clear concepts [^] that ~~architecture~~ ~~now just~~ contemporary architecture of his time, our time, ~~essentially~~ should express the engineering possibility of the new materials, as he called them [^] namely, concrete and steel, or a combination thereof, and reinforced concrete [^] and should not be used to imitate things that had happened before ^o because there were new possibilities for new forms and new shapes, [^] that hadn't existed ^{before} ~~because~~ engineering ^{caught} ~~hadn't kept up, with it~~ ^{until then,} from an engineering point of view, ~~using~~ brick and wood [^] and timbers, etc., or stone, ~~and~~ just could not produce the kind of architecture that he was envisioning.

I would say that he ~~has~~ made a major contribution to architecture. ~~It was just~~ ⁱⁿ that he was ~~essentially~~ the first one who deliberately designed for the potential of these new materials, at a time when nobody realized--including the engineers--that they actually did have that potential. Looking back, ~~from this vantage point, eighty years later, so to say~~ he had ^o these ideas in the last years of World War I [^] when he put ^{on} tiny pieces of paper sketches of what he envisioned structures would look like, and should look like. ~~So~~ that was in '17; we're now in '87, ^o ~~seventy~~ ^{seventy} years later.

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Looking from my vantage point now I say, yes, there isn't anything here he ever drew at that time. ^{would have been} Totally impossible at the time, ~~to for Execution, that could not easily be done today.~~ And in certain ways, he was even beyond the stages of what we consider possible today. ~~But there are~~ it is not because the material will not do it, but because our building codes are still far behind the times, and will not permit certain things, because they haven't been proven to be correct. So, I think that was probably his greatest contribution to architecture.

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~~great~~ is also an interesting thing to reflect on. What makes people "great," quote unquote? What makes for fame? He could have done all the things he's done all his life and be just one of the many successful architects, but not a great architect. That he was considered a great architect is perhaps again coincidence. And his willingness and desire to push himself into a place. It takes that, and the ability to realize what sets him apart from others, and to play on that, that creates that one person whom others ^{acknowledge} as being great. It doesn't necessarily mean

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that there aren't others at the same time who do as much, are as capable, are as great an architect or artist as he was. There may have been many who were greater, and have, totally unknown to you, or me, or anyone else, done things that exceeded that ~~what~~ ^{which} he did, or what Frank Lloyd Wright did.

But it's the combination of ability plus personality that makes a great person. And in his case, it was ~~very~~ simple. Not so simple. He spent the days that he had to sit on guard duty in the trenches in East Prussia on the Russian front in World War I ^{making} ~~to make~~ these tiny little sketches, and they were tiny for a very simple reason: he had to scrounge paper from wherever he could get it as a soldier. (He was just a private.)

Einstein Tower and Expressionism

He made these sketches, and then found somebody, ~~him~~ Bruno Casira, who was willing to publish them. And they were decried as "vignettes," ~~but~~ not architecture. And they were vignettes. Except that if you take some of these sketches and enlarge them a hundred fold, they still hang together, and still have a shape that is unique to him. There is the difference between just a clever little sketch, and something that expresses a much deeper thought.

As following the Casira exhibit, he met a young scientist by the name of Ervin Freundlich, who happened to be the chief assistant of Albert Einstein. The next--not really the first, but the first major commission that Mendelsohn got was to design the Einstein tower, the astrophysical lab for Einstein in Potsdam. That, ~~of course~~,

Ervin or Erwin?

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when it was completed, made him world-wide known. Because, that was so unusual, and so totally different from anything in existence at the time, and ^{it was} clearly trying to express the possibilities that were existant in materials like concrete and steel.

The fame of that building, as the design^{er} of the Einstein tower, has never left him. All other commissions that came after that, directly or indirectly, had something to do with that. So all of a sudden there he was. The interesting thing about the Einstein tower is that, because it was so short a time after the war, and certain materials like steel were practically unobtainable in Germany at the time, ~~that~~ it had to be changed in midstream while under construction. It was designed for just that--for concrete and steel--and he had to redesign it. Of course, he tried to keep the same shape and the same expression. ~~to him.~~ And that ~~perhaps, using the~~ word "expression," ~~that is~~ ^{although} ~~why~~ essentially he was an expressionist, ~~He would always deny~~ that. ~~But I will talk about him in a minute.~~

He used the same expression with other materials, in other words, in the wrong idiom. And many of those who at that time were intrigued by his design felt he was a fake, because he designed ~~it~~ in an idiom or in a material that couldn't really, or shouldn't really express that kind of a shape and form.

* ~~#end tape 13 side b, begin tape 14 side a~~

~~Riess: --being very precise here, let's at least make sure that-- at the time--~~

Schiller: ~~Yes. Okay.~~ ^{What he did} At the time, it was quite unusual. But more than that, it expressed something else which was news; namely, that it wasn't just ~~a~~ form expressing the use of certain materials, but the form also expressed a function. You might say that the Bauhaus tried to do the same thing. True, but later. And ~~if you had said~~, if anybody would say to Mendelsohn, that form follows function, he would have decried that as utter nonsense. ~~Because,~~ that would have put him inside the Bauhaus, where he didn't belong. He knew them all, he worked with them, he discussed matters with them, he argued with them publicly, and some of them were close friends of his, they had come to receptions at his house, etc. But he followed quite a different route.

~~Of course,~~ there was something else in his architecture that is not espoused by the Bauhaus. That's a certain romanticism in it, in both form and shape. It is something that he ^{was} never able to explain, ~~and~~ whereas anything that is used in the Bauhaus can be explained. But he himself couldn't explain it, and that's why he talked about the architecture ^{as} scribblers, referring to

* Tape 14, Side A.

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critics and people who were writing books about architecture, like [Siegfried] Gideon, whom he despised because of his book. Not personally, they knew each other, but he despised what he had to say about it at that time.

There is one other thing that should be said about him ~~that~~ ~~I said~~ that perhaps places him among the expressionists. And that is that in his opinion, and to a great degree in mine too, pigeon holes are not for human beings, they're for pigeons. And it is practically impossible, nor should one ever attempt, to put anyone just into one pigeonhole and say, "That's what he was." He was too complex a person and too complex a creative mind to be fitted in just one certain aspect.

Riess: Is there any particular credo associated with him, like "Form follows function," "Less is more," "Organic architecture,"--? ~~there's none?~~

Schiller: Well, ~~they~~ yes, since you're talking about organic architecture, perhaps. It is very clear when you ~~will~~ see him having designed things in different countries, in different surroundings, ⁿ ^{that} He was very acutely aware of where things belonged and where they didn't belong. When you go these days--though I haven't been there, but from pictures that I have seen, and even during the time that I was in Palestine, now Israel--^{when you} go to that country, you'll see

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something that people refer to as ^{6/} "The International Style." The next thing you're ~~going to~~ hear is Mendelsohn was the foremost exponent of the International style. Nonsense. ~~Because~~ what they did is, what they saw him do in Germany, they tried to imitate, without understanding why he did it in Germany. He refused to do the same thing he did in Germany, or anywhere in Europe, except perhaps if he had to design something in Italy or around the Mediterranean or in Spain. ⁹ He adapted his designs, or he created them specifically for the area in which he was working. Which meant that he was acutely aware of what is a fairly new art, environmental design. Not just for appearance sake, but for all kinds of reasons; for climatic reasons, for reasons of saving energy, etc. ~~his~~ his buildings in Israel have tiny windows, and they were slot windows, ~~not~~ horizontal windows, for a very simple reason: you needed very little influx of daylight because the light was so bright, and you certainly didn't want the influx of the heat.

² So there are all kinds of things that he did differently.

⁹ And then ^{you} come to the United States, and again the change in "style," if you want to put it this way. So ~~he was~~ in that respect too, he was very, very different from his contemporaries, even those who were "modern," quote unquote, architects. I didn't mean to put quotes around the architects, but around the word modern.

XIV MENDELSON IN AMERICA

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Schiller: ~~We discover that even the most beautiful people have feet of~~

Reasons. ^{also} for Emigrating

Riess: ^{did Mendelsohn come} Why ~~he came~~ to San Francisco? ~~is maybe not clear to me; maybe it's~~
~~clear to Eleanor. Could you tell me why he came here?~~

Schiller: ~~Hmm.~~ He came to the United States because he was offered a chair
at ^a ~~the~~ university, ^{This} ~~which~~ turned out afterwards not to be quite the
way he thought it was going to be. ^{because it turned out} ~~and~~ it was more a matter of
being ~~able to be~~ a guest lecturer at various universities.

Riess: Was this MIT?

Schiller: No. Frankly, I don't want to say--I don't know. I don't
remember right now. It was a time ^{when} ~~during which~~ I was in the
British Army, ~~so though there was an extensive exchange of~~
~~letters with Eric~~

Riess: So this is in the beginning of the forties, then, ~~that he is~~?

Schiller: Yes. He left in the beginning of 1941, ~~that he left Jerusalem,~~
and he left Jerusalem for a very simple reason: / There was no
work; absolutely none. He had closed his London office at the
start of the war for equally obvious reasons: / There was no work,
and it was kind of difficult. So, it was at that time that I had

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a brief discussion with ^{Salman} Simon Schocken, whether it might be possible to create a chair at the Hebrew University or at the Technion in Haifa for him, in order to keep him in Palestine. ~~That~~ ^{Salman} Simon Schocken ~~tried~~ at the time ~~and~~ was considering donating the major amount of money that was required. For one reason or another, it never came to it, and then came the offers to come to the United States. He finally decided, "well, I can go to the United States." He was a British subject at the time. "I can come back any time I want to, and in fact I want to, but meanwhile, why don't I go to the United States, and try it." *We had an extensive exchange of letters at the time.*

[Glaser]

I had also mentioned to Eleanor a funny--in retrospect, kind of funny ^{day} attempt on the first of the war in '39 to volunteer for the RAF, he and I together. ¶ So he felt for a number of reasons that he was not being used for the best purposes, and to his best ability to contribute something to the effort that was going on. It turned out that, though the chair as such did not materialize, ~~that~~ a number of universities were only too happy to have him here as guest lecturer, and in addition, the War Department decided to use his knowledge of industrial developments in Europe and particularly in Germany. He became a part-time advisor to the War Department in Washington. That of course, only after the United States had entered into the war after Pearl Harbor.

So that is the reason that he was in the United States.

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Q Now, while he was in the United States, he was looking around for a place where he might want to settle. He was used to travel all the time and was commuting between London and Jerusalem at a time ^{when} it wasn't exactly a "commute," you know. ^[laughs] By air. So, he traveled all over the United States. ^Q That was another ability I would say of both Eric and Louise. Neither one could drive. He didn't, deliberately, because he had only one eye and felt he would endanger people. ~~Of course,~~ Louise--I think she could drive, ~~but then~~ she had been used to being chauffeur-driven. It is kind of difficult to change one's style.

In any case, somehow they always managed to find somebody who was willing to drive them. I've done that for years. And ~~of course,~~ when you drive Eric and Louise, you supply a car, too.

Q They found a young architect ^{who was too honored} ~~with only two eyes~~ to take them on a trip to the West Coast. They came to San Francisco and Eric was absolutely enchanted with it, and thought, "this is it." I can fully understand it. He had a great affinity to the Mediterranean; he loved ~~it, loved~~ it in Italy, loved it in Greece, loved it in Palestine. Even though they are different degrees of being comfortable, ^{which} didn't bother him, incidentally, ~~he~~ didn't need any comfort. Personal comfort didn't mean anything to him. Quite different from Louise; personal comfort meant almost everything, almost.

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So, it reminded him to a great extent of the Mediterranean, particularly the light, ~~not today!~~ ~~[laughter]~~ ~~the light,~~ and the way it was situated above the bay, ^{and} the water, the water color, including the temperature, ~~and~~ after all, it is one of the more pleasant surroundings in the United States.

Riess: ~~But Los Angeles wasn't so shabby, it was, was it?~~

Schiller: ~~Oh, yes, it's just the~~

~~#end tape 14 side a begin tape 14 side b~~ # # *

Riess: ^{He} ~~Because it~~ had to be ^{at least} an urban center?

Schiller: ~~Yes, well,~~ it had to be pretty much an urban center, that is ~~the~~ some- other thing. That ~~is something~~ neither one in the long run found to their liking. It wasn't as cosmopolitan at the time as it is today, and even today I would question that they would feel at home in that respect. They were looking for a very cosmopolitan city. I mean, after all, they were used to Berlin, Paris, London, where they had lived at various times, Amsterdam.

Riess: So the culture of course ~~was lovely~~ in those places, and is it the people also who are more cosmopolitan?

* Tape 14, Side B.

Article #07311
The Master and the AIA

Schiller: Yes. The people are, strangely enough, even today, more cosmopolitan. ~~And certainly,~~ ^{attitude} some of that came to the fore very early, ~~and~~ I wasn't here when he started, so I don't know whether it was his own fault, or whether it was the fault of the architectural community. The chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the then northern California chapter, now the San Francisco chapter, of course knew who he was, and he was invited to lecture, ~~of course~~. He spoke with a very strong accent. He made up as he went along a language of his own, too. And ~~of course~~, nobody could correct his English, because after all, "I'm an Englishman." Number one, ~~and~~ number two, nobody could correct Eric Mendelsohn, period! He would use certain expressions that only I can translate, because I knew what they meant. But it was a language of his own, in a way. I shouldn't exaggerate; he spoke actually very good English, and wrote excellent English, ^A little influenced by the German mannerism, which of course is poison to English.

Riess: But this got in the way of his being drawn into the Architectural Society?

Schiller: Oh, no. No, it didn't get in his way, ^{but} he lectured and I suspect that he did what he has done with his students; he tried to shock everybody. Just stir them up, ~~because~~ ^{because} his credo, among

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other things, was that out of turmoil comes something worthwhile. Unless people are totally stirred up--out of chaos, in fact, ^{as} he called it, ~~out of chaos~~, only out of chaos, something worthwhile ~~was~~ ^{developed}. So he tried to create chaotic conditions around himself, and he usually succeeded. ~~And~~ I'm not so sure that he was right, that it always results in something desirable. I'm not positive. I mean, a challenge is good, I agree, but one can overdo it. And he was overdoing it.

~~So~~ by the time I came here, it was clear that though he was a member of the AIA, and of course everybody knew him, the rumors that were going around about him were wild; the stories that were making the rounds were even wilder; and the end result was that he felt ~~as~~ an outsider, which hadn't happened to him in England. He was received with open arms by the Royal Institute of British Architects, and he was made a fellow immediately. That usually takes a long time, to become a fellow. Here, though without question he still was the most famous member of the chapter, he is, as you point out correctly, essentially forgotten. And that is a little deliberate, I think, ~~because~~ ^Q when he died, he had not achieved what many lesser architects had achieved without any difficulty; to become a fellow of the AIA, to be awarded a gold medal of the AIA, ~~and no honor of any kind~~. ~~and~~ ⁼ he had honors from Japan, from Germany, before and after the war. He had ^{honors} certainly from England, ~~he had~~ from Russia, from France, from

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Holland—from all kinds of countries. And even the most obvious one was not given to him *here*.

Riess: What work in this country would you think might have ^{gotten him} ~~got~~ that? ~~to~~
~~him? Any?~~

Schiller: Well, you see, there were many things. First of all, it doesn't have to be a work. ~~It is very common~~—there are several categories in the American Institute of Architects for honors. Public ~~Service~~, for instance, is one of them, or service to the community, or service to the Institute. Then there is teaching, and then there is design. So there are all kinds of ways in which a person can be honored, without particular reference to a building.

Riess: But on what basis would you think—I take it that you think he should have received this?

Schiller: Oh, absolutely. ~~Because it's being~~ →

Riess: And many people, of much lesser—

Schiller: Of very little stature, in comparison. I'm not trying to belittle anyone. But just in comparison.

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Riess: ~~So~~ ^{given} it could have been ~~acknowledged~~ because ~~his~~ ^{of his} world-wide influential? ~~It doesn't have to be.~~

Schiller: Sure. ~~But you see~~ in fact, that is another category. You cannot be an American ~~in order~~ to get that. But you can ~~as~~ a foreigner ~~get~~ the acknowledgement of the AIA, become an honorary fellow. ~~In fact~~, that's a very high honor ~~and~~ is given to people from all over the world ~~because~~ they have accomplished something unusual in their own country or countries, ~~or~~ whatever it might be. So there are all kinds of ways ~~and~~ ⁹ I think he managed to be too overbearing and perhaps Louise helped in that respect. When I came here ~~there~~ ^{were} already, on her part at least--he didn't say much about it--many kinds of snide remarks about the architects in this town, very provincial and all that. I never put great stock in any of this, ~~and~~ I've certainly found in my life in the United States some outstanding architects, some ~~were~~ acknowledged and some ~~were~~ ^{not} acknowledged. ~~It~~ doesn't automatically mean ~~just~~ because somebody has so many medals and so many citations ~~and~~ so many titles ~~that~~ that is an outstanding architect.

~~But~~ I ^{had} have a different attitude, ~~but~~ then ~~I'm~~ considerably younger.

The Magnet

[in 1948] as

Riess: So he ~~in any case~~, set up his camp here, with your saying ~~at~~ at least seventy-five percent of his work occurring elsewhere. And

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then, in 1947, he ~~called you~~ wrote to you, told you to come. He also wrote to Victor Riess and told him to come. Is there an *even* larger group ~~even~~ that I don't know about that he ~~brought out~~? *encouraged to come to the Bay Area?*

Schiller: I don't know that he wrote to Riess.

Riess: Well, Victor Riess said that Mendelsohn asked him to come.

Schiller: That doesn't mean necessarily--I don't mean to be unkind--

~~Riess: I wasn't meaning to be quite so literal, either.~~

~~Schiller: No, I understand. No, there wasn't.~~ Let me put it this way: the connection between Riess and Mendelsohn is a one-time connection and had to do with carrying out some work in Jerusalem for Mendelsohn, for one of his buildings, namely the Anglo-Palestine Bank, on which he carried out the exterior ornaments, some metal maps inside the bank, and what is known as Mezuzoth.

~~Riess: Yes, two hundred mezuzoth on the Hadassah Hospital~~

~~Schiller: Oh, yes. Well, that is perfectly true. But you see, from~~
Mendelsohn's point of view, ~~he~~ and I'm strictly now ~~saying that speaking~~
from Mendelsohn's point of view--he was an artist-supplier. ~~is~~

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~~was~~ that doesn't mean that Mendelsohn didn't like what he ^{did;} in fact, he did. In fact, he acknowledged by just ordering things from him that he considered him an outstanding craftsman and a very good designer. But it's a very one-sided kind of thing. There was no relationship. It was strictly that; hey, there is a good man, let's use him.

Riess: ~~And so how might he then?~~

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Schiller: What probably ~~has~~ happened—I'm only suggesting, I don't know, I did ~~do~~ know Victor in Jerusalem, and ~~I know him there~~. I've known him here. ^{or what} What might have happened is Victor decided he wanted to go to the United States, and what do you do? You write around to anyone you know, like Mendelsohn. And he said, "Oh, by all means, come." You know? ^{91 On the contrary,} I never wanted to come to the United States. ~~for instance~~. And from the day he left Jerusalem to the day we met again, he kept on writing me and saying, "The moment you're out of the army, come and rejoin me."

Riess: ~~He's not saying "I need you," but~~ he needed you.

Schiller: Well, I don't know whether he needed me. It was more than that. It wasn't a question so much of need, but he wanted me to be here. Let's face it, he did like me. [laughs] That's in a way kind of strange. It's not to say that he didn't like Victor; he

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did.

Riess: I'm ~~just~~ interested in whether ~~once~~ he got ~~out~~ here, ~~how~~ he functioned as a magnet, ~~and as bringing people out of~~

Schiller: Well, he did and he didn't. I mean, some people ^{who} belonged to his family, like his sister and her daughter, and some people that were related to Louise, ~~he~~ assisted by giving affidavits, and writing that he would support--which you ~~can~~ ^{could} only do, I believe, ~~or could only do~~, with relatives. I was not a relative; even though he might have considered me one, ~~but~~ I wasn't. So that wasn't a question. I had to come out ~~on my own~~. On my own terms, ~~and etc.~~

Hans Schiller's Arrival and "Welcome"

But having written, and having asked me a number of times, "Come, come, come, come," I should really tell you how we met in the United States. ~~Because,~~ it is a little bit descriptive of how he functioned, or what his reaction was ~~to~~ on a human basis. We arrived in New York, and that particular week, which I knew, because we had corresponded, he was in New York. The moment I had a chance, I called at the hotel where he was, and said, ~~"Well, I'm here." I said something else. I said, "We are here."~~

"We? Who is we?"

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I said, "Well, Lotte and ~~Eric~~^{Dan}, my son, and my mother."

The next thing I heard over the phone was an explosion. "What??!! Who told you to bring your family? All right, well, we'll have to discuss it. I'll see you tomorrow at four o'clock," or whatever it was.

And you have to realize one other thing: ~~It~~ wasn't that he didn't know my family; he was my best man when I got married in Jerusalem, and Louise did some official function for Lotte, and it was great love on all sides. So it isn't exactly like we were strangers.

~~So~~. Lotte and I went to see him. The reception was as follows: "How dare you bring everybody with you?"

I said, "What do you mean, Eric?"

"How? I can't possibly help you!"

"What do you mean? You said I was supposed to rejoin you, and I was going to work for you."

"Well! I might have been able to give you enough money so you could get by personally."

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I said, "What was I supposed to do? Get rid of my family? Don't you realize that for the last five years I have neither seen my wife nor for that matter my son, and I cannot leave my mother, who is all alone in the world, by herself."

"Oh, that's ridiculous! You should have come here, you should have seen how things go, whether you find work, whether you find enough work to support a family, and then they could have followed you."

I made it very clear at that point that ~~it~~ was neither my understanding, nor would I have come, nor would I ~~have~~ ~~for~~ ~~given~~ ~~that~~ ~~matter~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~second~~ ~~time~~ ~~in~~ ~~my~~ ~~life~~ ~~that~~ ~~I~~ ~~had~~ ~~gotten~~ ~~rid~~ ~~of~~ everything I owned, and been unable to take it out of Palestine, so it was a tremendous financial sacrifice to start out with. Quite apart from the fact that being married and having a child and not being able to be with them for years, whether one happens to be in an war, is enough for any person once in one's life. In fact, it's too much that one time!

He absolutely was furious. And then he said, "Well, I thought I was going to give you some work, and would be able to. Things aren't going well at the moment. I don't even ^{know if} I can give you any work. ⁹¹ Have you bought a car?" Next question.

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(Let's stop the unpleasantness, let's go to something else.)

"Yes."

"What did you buy?"

And that sparked the next little explosion. I said, "I bought the only American car that I know, and have been using throughout the war, a jeep."

~~So that was~~ "I can't be driven in a jeep!"

I said, "You? What do you mean?"

~~"Well,"~~ "Well, I thought I might be able to pay you something for driving me from the office and to the office." Well, that was news to me, ~~because~~ in Jerusalem, he was always going by taxi. It didn't cost anything, you know. Pre-war Jerusalem, a pound went for almost a week for a family. ~~Obviously, that didn't mean anything, so he was driven~~ all of us, and some doctor friends ~~from the~~ ~~_____~~ Anyway, that was the next item. And then he said, "All right." He finally simmered down and he said, "Well, can't be helped, can't be helped." (That was one of his famous last statements: "Can't be helped.") "Okay, let's not discuss it any more, and now let's see what we do."

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Then he discussed with me how was I going to come to California, and I said that I had already worked out a route, going a southern route, ~~of course~~. (I assumed it was a little warmer because everything was under four feet of snow in New York ~~Not in the city, that particular day.~~) ~~So~~ it was ~~then~~ agreed that in one or two months I would show up, and then by that time, hopefully he would attempt to have me. If he couldn't employ me because he still didn't have enough work, then he would suggest me to some of his architect friends, whom I'm sure would have taken me.

And then he surprised me with something else, which he had never discussed before, which I did not know. He said, "Incidentally, don't you dare call yourself an architect in the United States."

I said, "What do you mean?"

"Well, you're not. You have to pass an exam. I had to pass an exam in order to be an architect in the United States. Of course, you will have to study for that, ~~because~~ frankly, if you think you're an architect, and you ^{think you} know anything of how things are done, here they are totally different. Even I have a little difficulty."

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It turned out that he always had a little difficulty, ~~and~~ which was very understandable because the concept of architecture, at that time at least, in the United States, was totally different from Europe or any other country around the world. What the architect was doing was quite different from what architects were doing in Europe.

Riess: He had to take ~~both a national and a state~~ or just a state licensing exam?

~~Schiller: Well, actually there is no national exam.~~

~~Riess: ... So he took it in California, then?~~

Schiller: Yes, ~~he~~ ^{he} was licensed in California. I'm not certain whether he was certified by NCRAB, which is the National Board of--

Riess: Architectural licensing?

Schiller: Yes, Architectural Registration Board, but C? Isn't that interesting? I've dealt with them for four years, and ~~we~~ ^{we} had such an adversary situation in California ~~on behalf of the state~~ of California, ~~that was NCRAB~~ ^{have failing} And I ~~had~~ ^{had} a ~~feeling~~ ^{feeling}, when I dislike something or somebody, I have a very faulty memory. It *disappears like that! [Laughter]*

Hans and Hottle's Cross-Country Trip * 310

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Riess: I want to ask
about your trip across the country, ~~and I know you volunteered to~~
~~say something about that without going into great detail. I'd~~
~~certainly like to inquire about the purchase of that jeep.~~ ^{Why did you buy} What
more uncomfortable vehicle could you have brought a group of four
people across the country in?

Schiller: Oh, it wasn't uncomfortable.

Riess: ~~But there's hardly room for there's no room for~~ luggage. You
had your mother, and your wife ~~and son.~~

Schiller: Well, yes, ~~But they weren't going my wife was going with me,~~
but my mother and my son were staying in New Jersey, ~~at the time,~~
waiting until we would find accommodations in California, and then ~~they~~
joined us here. Flew across country. No, not in the jeep.
But still, ~~we did travel,~~ if I remember correctly, we traveled
with enough to sustain us for long trip, and my wife's cello
in the rear seat.

Riess: Well, I hope it was carefully battened down!

Schiller: Oh, yes, it was.

Riess: ~~Well,~~ you must have been a quite unusual sight, ~~if you stopped in~~
~~any small towns. Just~~

* Tape 15, Side B, cont.

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Schiller: It was ~~still too~~ ^{so} close to the war that a covered jeep was not ~~being~~ so unusual. It was what was known as a civilian jeep. It was painted black, and it was quite new. It was second-hand, but reasonably new, It had only a few thousand miles on it. No, I don't think that was so unusual. The fact that, at the time, I spoke with a very strong British accent, in the South was very unusual. And foreigners--any kind of foreigners--were not too welcome, so to say.

Riess: Well, they probably couldn't distinguish British from any other accent, so just the fact that you had any accent would be--

Schiller: ~~I think they could, at the time. Yes, well, having an accent was certainly in that, as I say, it~~ ^{My accent} was very pronounced ^{ly} British, and I'm saying that deliberately because I had [^] from the time of two years earlier, the British army made available short little recordings to send home to wives and children around Christmas. I still have one of those, and I cannot believe my own ears.
[laughter]

Riess: ~~The reason it's fun to think about that trip across the country is I know that you had a strong response to the built city, when you arrived. It wasn't just Mendelsohn who was coming to these shores. And that you felt that it was fifty years behind, you~~
You once told me ^{America's cities were}
(when you arrived)

~~DN~~ 348

~~once said to me, and that America still is are.~~

Schiller: Yes, ~~I do~~, perhaps most vividly of anything. I recall about my arrival in the United States, was the very grey November morning when we arrived in New York Harbor. ~~Looking which~~ I didn't know at the time what was what, the New Jersey shore, and I have to say that I looked at ~~it~~ with disdain and great discomfort. ~~At~~ this, I said to myself, "This is a New World?" ~~and~~ after all, I did come from a country that was just in the process of being built, so to say. Palestine, later Israel. ~~The other~~ ^{There every} thing was not necessarily good architecture, but contemporary, and white. ^{here were} And all these various little huts [laughs] ~~that were~~ sitting on the shore, ~~which are~~ really the kind of thing I hadn't seen since the times that I'd been in Europe, ~~which was~~ only a few years prior to that, ~~and also~~ ^{It} ~~the~~ looked rather bedraggled, and it really appalled me, and if it hadn't been for the fact that I had little choice in the matter, I felt like staying on the boat and going back.

Riess: Was it coming from a ^{more planned} ~~sort of controlled~~ environment to the uncontrolled democracy of America? ~~or you might as well have said not, rather, this is a new world, but this is a democratic society?~~

Schiller: Well, I've never lived officially in anything else but a

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democratic society.

Riess: ~~But~~ planning and zoning, all of those things ~~that~~ ^a come so late to this country.

Schiller: But ~~that is, at least~~ in my view, ~~that~~ it is ~~even~~ part of a democracy to plan its future, ~~in~~ the interest of the people, ~~that~~
~~above~~

Riess: But that didn't happen in this country.

Schiller: No, it didn't happen here. It was exactly that, and the obvious rule of only one thing, namely the dollar. And that obtaining as many dollars as possible was aim enough in life, that was something that was totally alien to me, and I couldn't understand it, had no feeling for it, and it was actually appalling to me. ~~And speaking~~ ^Q since you do mention democracy, it did not become apparent at the time--this was 19~~47~~⁴⁷, after all--that I was entering a democracy, because the screaming headlines about the witch hunts did not speak of a democracy. They did not speak for a democracy. They were speaking of a democracy, but certainly a very strange concept of democracy. I did not consider it a free country. Often since, I haven't considered it a very free country. Not that I know of any other country that is in a better position in that respect, or much better position.

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Occasionally you see one or the other country that is. But only occasionally. And they all ~~revert to~~ ^{have their} Tremendous drawbacks.

Riess: But you ~~tested the resiliency of this country, and made this~~ ^{made this} country work, ~~in a way. I think that's one of the parts of your~~ ^{and} ~~story that we really haven't gotten to,~~ that you really have worked within it. ~~That's a good thing.~~

Schiller: Oh, yes. I mean, I'm not saying that this is my present opinion. It was my first impression, it frightened me, ~~It~~ actually frightened me.

Riess: You personally felt threatened.

Schiller: Yes. ~~I felt threatened by it.~~ I felt regimented, I felt my personal ideals were threatened, ~~and I certainly,~~ having been politically always fairly far, by American standards, to the left, I ~~had~~ ^{was} quite often felt that. But you also have to realize that feeling threatened is something that's inherent with anybody who has grown up in Germany, and particularly under the conditions in which I grew up. ~~And that,~~ to me, one of the most frightening things was, ~~with~~ and still is today, ~~is~~ a policeman in uniform with a gun. That's something that is an image that I've never lost, and something that occasionally has been reinforced and confirmed. After all, I ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~been~~ in a fairly

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prominent position in the Chicago convention of the Democratic Party, where I ~~ve seen~~^{saw} police forces riot, and ~~this~~^{it} cannot be described in any other way, ~~Not~~ suppressing a riot, but causing a riot.

So, it is understandable that certain images that occur are frightening.

Riess: When you headed off across the country^{in 1947} how did you chose^o your route? Why the South,[?] ~~of all places?~~

Schiller: Well, why the South?[?] First of all[✓] the assumption was, and it's an incorrect one of course, that this being a very severe winter[✓] ~~that~~ the southern route might be easier than the northern route. I would have tended to go north[✓] because generally speaking, no matter where I am, I am not particularly intrigued by southern parts of countries. I've been in many southern parts and loved some, but ~~actually~~^{a l a o} detested some for other reasons. But I did know quite a bit about the South, and I wanted to find out what it was all about. ~~and~~⁼ did they really have that strange accent?[?] did they really talk that way?⁼

Moreover, did they really behave that way? To me, ~~any kind~~ of racism of any kind~~or any~~ was unthinkable, ^o that a free country could be racist[✓] and treat members of its population as

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second-class or worse, was absolutely beyond me. I couldn't believe that that was possible in a democracy. ~~and~~ I wanted to see it. And I did see it.

Riess: Who did you talk to when you went into ^{southern} ~~your~~ towns ~~and saw~~?

Schiller: ~~Well,~~ I talked to people where we stayed overnight, renting a room. Talked to people while buying something, or eating in a restaurant. Or people in the street, asking for directions. It's just--all you had to do was look at street signs, or at signs saying, "Whites only," or "Blacks--" it didn't say "Blacks," it was "Colored."

Riess: Did you feel threatened in that atmosphere? ~~I should think~~

Schiller: Yes, I did. I did feel very threatened in that atmosphere, particularly because people generally speaking gave the impression of being suspicious of anyone who wasn't from their particular town or state, and certainly anyone who was obviously a foreigner.

Riess: ~~I want to get you across the country efficiently.~~ What ^{were the} ~~are other~~ highlights ~~for you, or is~~ ? ^{if the trip?}

Schiller: Well, there were a number of highlights. No matter how much one

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is aware of the vastness of this country, it is ~~an experience~~ to experience it. It's a tremendous experience I could not believe that it was possible to cross the country in any shorter time than we did, which was about six or eight weeks. One had to experience that, and I have to admit too, apart from its vastness, I was tremendously impressed of course by all the open areas and open spaces there, endless wheat fields, the endlessness in that. The size of the rivers, the crossings. Across the Mississippi.

I was nowhere impressed by its architecture. I shouldn't say nowhere--there were exceptions.

Riess: ~~Is there a vernacular sort of, did you decide, having gotten~~
~~across~~ ^{up} the country, ~~that there was a sort of~~ ^{you saw a} vernacular architecture?

Schiller: Yes. There was Main Street everywhere, and it didn't matter where you were really, it was [?] always Main Street. And the numbered streets, and the strict development. The commercialism, and it being dirty, and all kinds of things ~~that~~ left very negative impressions. And more than that, the impression of never again will I come to this state, or something of that nature.

?
 really

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At the same time, I was yearning for mountains somewhere. That flatness, flatness, flatness, you know.

Riess: It has to be heading somewhere.

Schiller: It has to! Something has to happen. It finally did, and the higher we ~~came and~~ got in New Mexico, Arizona, the more beautiful it became. And the more familiar I seemed to be with the landscape and everything else because it isn't that different from the Middle East, strangely enough.

Riess: The dry lands.

Schiller: Yes, that's right. But that too I didn't look for. I thought that there had to be a compensation for having left that behind. I felt that ~~there had to be~~ somewhere there had to be snow; somewhere there had to be green, ~~and~~ in fact, I did want to see a green valley again somewhere.

~~Well, of course, what I didn't see,~~ ^{then} I didn't see very much of the East, which I since that time have seen, ~~and~~ how green it can be and how green it is, in fact. But ~~coming towards,~~ finally we ^{ed} ending up in southern California, and the closer we came to northern California--this was ~~early spring~~ middle of winter, it was January. — *The greener it was.*

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~~Riess: So it was green, too.~~

Schiller: It was ~~green~~ ~~It was very green~~ very lush and very green. Of course, I assumed it was going to be that way all year round. It wasn't.

~~Riess: Well, you were certainly ripe for California by the time you arrived.~~

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~~Schiller:~~ Well, there were some things architecturally that impressed me. Some of the buildings that ~~are~~ dated back quite a bit ^{for} ~~by~~ American standards, quite a few centuries. They did impress me, even though of course they were imitations of what happened in Europe, and certainly in England. Jefferson's designs impressed me, which was also a parallel occurrence to what happened in Europe. After all, architecture ^{was} ~~is~~ a profession practiced only by gentlemen, ^{and} ~~not~~ necessarily to earn a living, ^{had} ~~you~~ ~~have~~ to ~~be able~~ ~~to~~ have a living before you became an architect. It's a concept that still exists in certain parts of the world, and strangely enough, I would say it's helpful if you have already a living when you become an architect. [laughs]

Meelings with Frank Lloyd Wright

Riess: Did you when you came to Los Angeles, were you interested in looking at ^{eu} ~~Not~~ ~~trator~~ Schindler's work?

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Schiller: No. I was not interested. I have never been interested in residential design. It's something that I have done quite a bit of because I had to, but it has never really intrigued me. In that respect probably I was just too close to Mendelsohn. ~~Whereas,~~ he didn't consider residential design architecture. ~~But,~~ what interested me very much was my encounter with Frank Lloyd Wright on that trip, ~~my~~ first encounter with Frank Lloyd Wright.

Riess: Oh. Had that been set up for you, ~~or did you just~~?

Schiller: No. Mendelsohn asked me, when I met him in New York on our arrival, he said, "Well, when you go through the country, I want you to go and see Frankie."--

Riess: [in Mendelsohn's voice] "An old chum of mine."

Schiller: Yes! Well, he was. There was no question about that. So when we came to Arizona we did go to ~~Tolyson West~~ ^{Taleisin}. Arrived at ~~Tolyson West~~ ^{Taleisin}, had no idea what to expect, what to see, what it was. We were brought into the presence of the great man and he looked me up and down and said, "Well, young man"--I was thirty--"Well, young man, what's your intention?"

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I said, "I'm going to San Francisco to join my former boss and friend, Eric Mendelsohn."

The first shadow crossed Frank Lloyd Wright's face, and he said, "Why?"

I said, "Well, that's one of the reasons I am in the United States."

"Is that a reason to be in the United States?"

Riess: *You were*
~~like being~~ straight man for this guy. [laughter]

Schiller: And he said, ~~well,~~ "I'll tell you something. You look around *in here,*
~~[Tally-ho!]~~, and when you have seen everything, I want to see you before you leave. I want to talk to you a little bit."

"Yes, sir, I'd be delighted." He turned Lotte and me over to his top man ~~at the time,~~ and I cannot remember who it was at this point, ~~and~~ *and* we were given the grand tour. It was impressive, ~~but~~ *not*, for me, from an architectural point of view, ~~but~~ *but* ~~it was just~~ *impressive*. The whole set-up, the organization that was going on, was very impressive.

We were brought, ~~after a while,~~ *after* several hours ~~actually~~.

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we were
 brought back into the presense of Frank Lloyd Wright and he
 said, "Well, young man, are you impressed by the show?"

I made my first mistake with Frank Lloyd Wright. I said,
 [calmly] "Yes, Mr. Wright, it's a great show."

Riess: In that tone?

Schiller: Yes. I stressed the word "show," which it was.

~~##end_tape 15 side b, begin tape 16 side a~~ ##*

If his eyes could have killed, I would have dropped dead at
 that point. He became extremely cold in his voice and demeanor
 and said, "Are you referring to a show?"

I said, "Mr. Wright, I used your words." (Another mistake
 that one should never make with great people.)

He said, "So, you intend to go back to Mendelsohn, right?"

I said, "Yes."

"You've made up your mind?"

* Tape 16, Side A.

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"Yes."

"Well, let me tell you something. When you came here ~~today~~, I had hoped that you might really be impressed by the architecture that you have seen today. After all, there is no such architecture anywhere else in the world."

I tried to make up for my obvious faux pas and I said, "Yes, Mr. Wright. I was very impressed."

~~Well,~~^h there might be some hope for you after all. Would you like to work for me?"

~~Riess: Oh, he puts himself in such a vulnerable position by doing that.~~

~~Schiller:~~⁹ I said, "Of course, it's a great honor, Mr. Wright. I would, except I have a committment."

Committment? When you're being offered to work for Frank Lloyd Wright, to work for a second-rate Mendelsohn? You can't mean that!"

I said, "Yes, I do."

"Well," he said, "I was just going to offer you to stay here

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overnight, and find out a little bit more about what makes Frank Lloyd Wright tick." [laughs]

I said, ~~"well,"~~ "it's awfully nice of you, and I appreciate that--"

"But," he said, and he cut me short, "under the circumstances, since you have decided to work for a second-rate architect, and never be an architect yourself, go right now."

Riess: He sounds so gratuitously unpleasant.

Schiller: It's unbelievable. Yes.

Riess: And I take it that it was unpleasant, ~~it's not that he's--~~

Schiller: Oh, ~~no~~ / it was meant to be. ~~It was~~ what he had to realize too is he did know--I mean, he asked me in the first encounter where I came from, what I had been doing. He knew I was new to this country.

Riess: And he knew you were unlicensed, ~~and you wouldn't ever be?~~

Schiller: ~~Well, he assumed, which is of course correct, that I was unlicensed, because~~ having just come to the country, I couldn't

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be licensed. He knew that only too well because he had the unfortunate experience of not having licenses in many states and having had run-ins with the various authorities, particularly in California for instance, where he never was licensed even though he built quite a bit here.

So he took it out on me, and in not a very friendly fashion, shall we say, and using these various not-so-subtle innuendoes ~~to~~ for me to understand that I was an absolute nothing, that I was given the chance of my life (and that may be true, you know.) Of course I had a habit that has never quite left me, and that was it didn't matter to me who I was talking to, ~~and~~ ^{where} I believed in something, ~~and~~ I was going to say it. I said to him, "Well," I appreciate anything you've done for me, Mr. Wright, and I appreciate having had a chance to meet you. But there is something that I believe in more than anything else, and that is a commitment. And a commitment particularly to a person I consider a friend." So that was that. He has never forgiven me, never forgotten ~~the~~ that first encounter, ~~because~~ I've met him many times after that, sometimes with Mendelsohn, sometimes without Mendelsohn, and including times ^a after Mendelsohn's death, At which point he behaved even worse, if possible, than the first time. ~~that~~ ^a that was in San Francisco.

It was about two or three months after Mendelsohn's death

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that he [Wright] came to San Francisco on one of his trips, and he had been invited by the northern California chapter of the American Institute of Architects for a lunch and a luncheon speech. ~~And of course,~~ there was an overflow crowd, as you can imagine. It was at some restaurant, I've forgotten where it was in San Francisco. I happened to sit ~~somewhere~~ at a table which was alongside an aisle.

Wright
 He was speaking on I've forgotten what it was about himself. ~~It's~~ a safe assumption at this point, and his ideas, of course, and that is why you do ask people like Frank Lloyd Wright and Mendelsohn to come and speak.

It was interesting and enjoyable, as such. As he finished speaking everybody got up, a standing ovation. I mean, a great master. Like royalty he came down along the aisle, followed by an entourage of people, neither looking left nor right, ~~just~~ head held high, He was marching out, not acknowledging applause or anything. It was beyond him. He came to the place where I stood, ~~when~~ ^{and} all of a sudden I didn't think he had looked he turned and faced me.

He said, "Well, didn't I tell he you he wasn't going to outlast me?" (That was referring to another conversation we've had at one time.) "Now what are you going to do?"

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I was so shocked at the time, I mean, ~~it was very close~~ It was still close to me, and Mendelsohn's death was not the easiest time for me in many respects. I just couldn't find an answer, frankly. For once I was kind of speechless. And he said, "I told you I'm immortal. He was just second-rate! He couldn't even live as long as I did!"

It was absolutely unbelievable and unreal, the pettiness. And under the circumstances, you know, so many years later. After all, it was seven years since I first met Frank Lloyd Wright, and since ~~our~~ ^{that} first encounter. In between, ~~we have~~ ^{had} been very civil, because most of the time I would meet with Mendelsohn and him at the same time, and so he wasn't quite as petty. He was petty, at all times.

has written admiringly of Wright.
 Riess: ~~But here is Mendelsohn, being a real sort of mensch about Frank Lloyd Wright, but Wright in his writings, does he ever treat Mendelsohn with the kind of scorn, ~~that~~ or fairness, or what?~~

~~Schiller: I don't think so. No.~~

~~Riess: And he probably didn't believe it. It was probably the issue between you and Wright that was much more--~~

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Schiller: Well, ~~it was easier to deal with~~ I mean, I will say ~~this~~ ^{as that as} much as it was given to either one to acknowledge somebody else and to be a "friend," I think theirs was a friendship. It's not in the common sense of the word friendship, though Mendelsohn was, as you pointed out, generous to him, ~~and~~ more than that, I think historically it is reasonably certain that it was ~~due to~~ ^{due to} Mendelsohn's bringing him to the attention ^{of} ~~to~~ Europe ^{Wright} that ~~he~~ did become ~~even~~ in this country as well-known as he was. ~~But he never did.~~

Wright

Yes, ~~he~~ liked to meet with him and he liked to spar and prove to him that he was a greater guy. ~~I mean, even with him--~~ I remember one little encounter which was by coincidence we were going someplace east, ~~I don't know whether it was~~ St. Louis or Cleveland, and Frank Lloyd Wright was going to Hawaii or someplace, ^{and} ~~but~~ we both met at the San Francisco Airport-- Mendelsohn and I, and Frank Lloyd Wright and one of his assistants, ~~at the airport, so~~ Mendelsohn steered towards him, and said, "Hello Frank, how wonderful to see you."

Frank Lloyd Wright said, "What are you doing? Where are you going?" Didn't say hello or anything. [laughter] He knew who he was. Absolutely no question.

Mendelsohn said, "Oh, I'm going east. I'm going to

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Cleveland," or St. Louis, or whatever it was.

Frank Lloyd Wright said, "For one of your synagogues?"

"Yes."

"Well," he said, "I'm building a synagogue too," which was true. He had just been given a commission to build a synagogue. "I'll show you what a synagogue should look like."

Mendelsohn took that in stride, and he said, "You know, Frank, you've always promised me you would give me one of your drawings."

Frank Lloyd Wright said, "I have?"

"Yes." And Mendelsohn said, "Well, I'd be glad to give you one of my sketches."

"Eric," he said, "how can you make such an exchange? Mine are valuable!" ⁹ It was almost unbelievable, you had to stand by and watch the fireworks, about nothing! Essentially, as a human being, he was petty. And I'm not saying that because he treated me the way he did, it doesn't matter to me ^{it} It didn't even, strangely enough, matter to me at the time. Though it should *have*.

Riess: In one of his letters Mendelsohn talks with admiration about Frank Lloyd Wright's Johnson Wax building in Racine. I think that has some of those spiraling forms suspended forms.

Schiller: Yes. Right. ^{Again,} ~~but~~ anything ~~again~~ that expresses in one way or the other ~~either~~ something that has grown as an organism ~~or~~ ^{Frank Lloyd Wright used to} ~~talk about~~ ^{ect} organic architecture, and the same with Mendelsohn. ~~and~~ still they have not terribly much in common, strangely enough, in their architecture. But in their concepts--that's something interesting too, because if you compare Wright's writing and what he actually did, they are two totally different things. They neither coincide nor do they agree with each other. That was true, incidentally, of Mendelsohn to a degree, that his writing was quite a bit different from what he actually did.

^A ~~Secondly,~~ one of the reasons ~~and there's no sense trying to~~ ~~put a different face on some of these matters than what actually~~ ^{→ Mendelsohn} ~~happened~~ ^{was} ~~the reason he~~ came to the United States ~~was~~ first of all, he knew the United States. He had been here in 1923. I

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believe it was. He ~~had then~~ at that time met Frank Lloyd Wright, who was ~~totally unknown in the United States, or practically unknown in the United States~~ ^{here} at that time, and as he claimed, ---

I have to just repeat his own claim--he discovered Frank Lloyd Wright. One thing is certain: ~~that~~ because of his, quote unquote, having "discovered" Frank Lloyd Wright, Frank Lloyd Wright became very well-known in Europe within a year or two thereafter, because he [Mendelsohn] did write about him [Wright].

9) As a consequence of having become so well-known in Europe, Frank Lloyd Wright became the well-known architect in the United States. It wasn't the other way around. Frank Lloyd Wright, as you may know, was a very embittered man towards the end of his life, because recognition had come so late to him. Of course, Mendelsohn claims that if it hadn't been for him, recognition might never have come. I'm just repeating.

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Riess: ~~But I mean, I think that both of these men probably have such~~
 stories that gather around ^{but} them, particularly Wright. ~~In fact,~~
 did Mendelsohn have ^{the} that kind of following that Wright had?

Schiller: Well, yes and no. No. ~~In certain ways,~~ towards the end of his years in Europe, together with some other architects and also painters, he tried to create a school, ~~and~~ I think it was in the south of France. ~~It never went~~ they never got anywhere with it. But there was ~~something,~~ there was an attempt at the time to create a school. He ~~has~~ often talked to me in the United States about doing something like that, rather than continuing being a practicing architect, ~~to buy a farm that was always~~ his idea ~~was~~ to buy a farm somewhere in Sonoma County, or anywhere along the coast here, which he really loved, and create a school.

Riess: ~~other words,~~ he thought ~~that~~ he had something that he wanted to pass on, and he didn't want ^{his students} ~~them~~ contaminated by standard schooling, I take it?

Schiller: Yes, and no. Well, the fact is that ~~standard schooling,~~ particularly, and I'm sorry to have to say that, I have taught at ~~Cal myself~~ standard schooling in the United States in architecture does not prepare an architect for what an architect has to do, in what you might call "the real world." In many respects. ~~And, in his time, in his days, when~~ he did teach, as you might know, at Cal ^{for} ~~but I would say~~ about two or three years. He had been teaching ^a the graduate ^{design} class. ~~At least he had one course, and his graduate~~

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~~that he was very responsive to place, to buildings, to the built form, or is so much more responsive to nature. And particularly~~
 Mendelsohn

Ries:

When he came to America, what engaged him in this country?

built forms

Schiller: Very little in ^{the way} ~~nature~~ of built form. ~~His~~ it was really the grandeur of the ^(country) ~~concrete~~ and of its landscapes, and its nature, that intrigued him. He had very little use--

[telephone interruption]

Ries: ^{We were} talking about his lack of use for what he saw in America.

Schiller: yes. As far as built form that intrigued him was concerned, I would say ^{yes} generally. ^{Going} ~~I can only go~~ by some of his lectures, ~~which~~ ~~were~~ the main lecture that he used to give in various places, he called "My contribution to contemporary or modern architecture." Which ~~was~~ ^{it was} obviously very much centered on what he felt he had done, ^{all} and after when I first knew him, he must have been ~~about~~ ^{in his} ~~not quite fifty~~ -late forties, so at that point, he obviously had already achieved a great deal, ^{achieved it} as a very young architect. ~~so~~ there was no question in my mind that, at the point when I first knew him, he was mostly concerned with what he had done ~~and~~ contributed.

However, these particular lectures contained references to a

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number of contemporaries, or slightly before his time. Through at the time when he mentioned them, still all alive, but a little older than he was. ~~It~~ all over Europe, it wasn't restricted to the Bauhaus or to people in Germany, ~~but~~ these were people from France and Holland, England, etc. ~~But~~ I think what he was doing to a great extent, ^{was} ~~that he was~~ tracing the history of ~~another~~ *the modern* movement, and showing how much of it was his contribution rather than that of others. Whether that was a conscious effort, I don't know. I don't think so, actually.

Much later, I found out that there were other built forms that intrigued him. That was then when I personally was very much intrigued by what I would refer to and is generally nowadays being referred to as ^{tec} "architecture without architects."

Riess: Oh, yes, I know that book.

Schiller: You know that particular book, yes. Well, there have been others before that, and in fact I have a book that is much earlier than that. But ~~about contemporary or contemporaneous~~ with my becoming very interested in this phenomenon, and I did study it, particularly in the Middle East, where it was very predominant of course, anywhere you find really old cultures, you'll find it. Certainly at a time when, during the war, when I was in Italy, I was very conscious of it and studied it, and took a great deal of

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photographs ~~of things~~, of building forms that intrigued me, ~~Some~~ very simple, some very complex, ~~But~~ all of them you could almost say organically grown. I mean, they grew out of the soil, grew out of ^{the} materials ~~and~~ and out of the culture of the people living there.

Riess: Often the forms are rounded, to a much greater degree than we'd expect to find in architecture.

Schiller: ~~Well, perhaps they're more rounded, but there are some that~~

~~telephone interruption~~

They are

~~but~~ often very cubic in appearance, cubistic, too. When you look at Arab villages, for instance, or many of the Italian villages that are built up in the hills, the ^{piling up,} ~~parting out,~~ the stepping, are very angular. Almost always relieved by a round dome or cupola -- ^{there are} ~~that has~~ of course technical reasons why they're shaped in that form. Those are countries where they have practically no timber and no lumber to span anything, so they have to do it by creating arches.

And Mendelsohn

Riess: ~~So he~~ admired that ~~too~~

Schiller: ^{Yes,} When I started sending him some of my photographs, I ~~did send~~ ^{sent} him ~~at one time~~ a selection, just a few of ^{the} my best photographs I'd

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taken in Italy, ^{and} I found that he was very much interested in that. ~~The one reason that~~ I know how much he was interested in it, because ~~he continued his lectures, at the time~~ he ^{(just} had arrived in the United States, and ^{he} continued ^{giving} his lectures in the United States, and when I ~~came to the United States~~ ^{arrived} I found he had added my photographs to the collection of slides that he ~~had~~ ~~in order to show it~~ during his lectures.

But beyond that, it was clear to me that he had, and I think I've said that earlier, that he had always studied those forms, maybe subconsciously and not intentionally, but he was very conscious of them, because he always tried to adjust his architecture to a degree, and reinterpret his own architecture. Reinterpreting existing trends in a particular locality where he was designing something. So that ~~was~~ even though it was totally different and totally contemporary, it had certain forms that were not alien to what had been in existence for centuries. But ~~it was not~~ his was never a case of imitation, of just, oh, well, if you're in the Mediterranean, build like the Romans did, ~~because you know~~. It was never that. It has always been reinventing the wheel, so to say.

In fact, this aspect made him different from most other contemporary architects, who would use the same thing, the same appearance, whether it was in a hot climate, a cold climate,

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whether it was Europe or America or Asia or anywhere else. He did not believe in that. I think modern thought or present thought in architecture bears that out, perhaps not so much in architecture but in regulation of architecture by governmental bodies, because they all have come to a realization that our means are finite and cannot be exploited in a way we used to exploit them.

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Hans Schiller, Assistant and Confronting

Riess: I derailed you. You were talking about standard schooling, and that in fact you had also taught. Did you teach a design class at Cal also; was that your--? *when you came here?*

Schiller: ~~Well~~, I ~~actually~~ started out teaching at Cal occasionally as his assistant. ~~And then~~ I would take over his class whenever he had to be absent, which was quite often, because he had at the time buildings going up in the East. Practically all the major buildings in the United States were in the East and Midwest, and

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very little out here. ~~So that,~~ at certain stages of the buildings, he had to go to the East Coast, to Baltimore, to St. Louis, to Cleveland, Grand Rapids--.

Riess: These were the synagogue commissions.

Schiller: Yes, right. Or meet with clients for other projects that were under discussion, there were a number of project that were never carried out. And in those times, I took over his classes, ~~in~~ between, and apart from that, also at his insistence, I was teaching a then-not-existent course, namely model-building. To him this was very important, as it is to me, for a very simple reason. He would ~~like to~~ state as one of his axioms to students that architecture is designed "around the corner." It's not just what you see on a flat sheet of paper. You have to know what's going on on the other side. The only way that you can really study it is by creating it at various stages in three dimensions. Though various people, various architects, certainly have different ability of imagining and seeing and thinking through things in three dimensions, he didn't normally trust the thought process. ~~It was~~ ^{than} more a matter of intuition, ~~and more~~ ^{it was} a matter of checking visually that the things were right.

The interesting thing is that he was very gifted in visualizing things on a flat sheet of paper, but exceedingly

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clumsy when it came to doing things with his hands--other than drawing, in which he was unsurpassed. And perhaps the greatest accolade I ever got from him and I can say that I haven't gotten very many accolades from him because that was not in his nature. It was to say at one time, "You know, your ability to design in three dimensions and doing it before you have it down on paper, and creating a building in three dimensions in a model is as much of a genius as my genius in putting it on paper."

That's a very big accolade, and it took quite a bit to get that out of him. Not that I tried very hard. ~~The only way that it came to that kind of an admission was that~~ after years and years and years of having been working for him, and essentially always being under pressure to do the impossible right now, which always resulted in hours meaning nothing, nights meaning nothing, weekends meaning nothing, just work work work and get it done. ~~It~~ had to be done by a certain time; it was done no matter what the cost--to me. Very often some of the things that were being done, developed in three dimensions, were obviously ahead of what he had indicated in his rough sketch. Even though he always said, "Everything is in my sketch." Yes, it was all in there, but well hidden. [laughter] You had to be able to ~~be able to~~ interpret considerably more than just knowing what he generally wanted. It meant actually designing beyond that.

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Q. The ~~is one~~ particular instance when he said what he said to me, I had worked all night to get a model ready which was supposed to be shipped that afternoon to the East Coast. It was a model of the first design for the memorial for six million Jews which was supposed to be built on Riverside Drive in New York. (Never was built.) ~~###~~ He was leaving the next day.

~~##end tape 13 side a, begin tape 13 side b~~

He was going to show what he had in mind to the board for ~~this~~ the particular monument. I brought it ~~back~~ ⁱⁿ in the morning to the office--I had a shop here ^[home] and I had been working in my shop all night. He looked at it, and he got terribly excited, and he reached in there and he said, "This is all wrong! You're doing it all the wrong way! I just don't like it, it's totally wrong! This has to come out, and this has to come out." Those were cast ornaments in a very ornate tower, ^{he had given me} for which ~~there were~~ no drawings, no designs of his, nothing at all, ~~and~~ just in keeping with the rest. I ^{to} ~~at~~ the best of my ability, had designed it.

I was very tired, frankly totally exhausted, and I knew how difficult it had been to do that. I just turned around and said, "Goodbye. Do it without me." Because he had broken it off. I walked out, got into my car, drove back here, and within a few minutes the phone was ringing. I wasn't about to answer it; I

* Tape 13, Side B.

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asked my wife to answer it.

She answered, and there was Eric saying, "But you have to understand, I need him! He has to come back! He cannot just walk out like that!"

She said, "Well, Eric, I can't do anything about it. He has decided, he has quit, ~~and~~ he's had it. And frankly, I don't blame him, ~~because~~ he hadn't had any sleep for several days, and he has slaved to get the darn thing finished, and the first thing you do is, instead of criticizing it, you break it. What do you expect him to do? Replace it?"

"Let me talk to him." I said, "No. I'm not going to talk to him."

So she told him, "I can't force him, I'm sorry."

"Well, you have to do something! It's really important! I mean, this whole project depends on that. And I can't go to New York, ~~and~~ everything was ready, and I should go to New York, if I don't show them the model. I'm sorry that I broke it."

That was the first indication that he was a little contrite ~~and she told me that~~. Half an hour later, "Is he willing to

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talk to me now?"

"Well, I'll ask." ⁹ So I did go to the phone, and I said, "Eric, there's nothing to be discussed. I cannot work on it any more, and I'm not going to." I was very quiet, actually. I said, "You have to realize that you can't behave the way you did."

"Oh," he said, "but you behaved like a prima donna!"
[laughter]

I said, "Well, all right, it doesn't bother me if you tell me I behaved like a prima donna, okay. So I behaved like a prima donna."

"Look," he said, "don't you realize there cannot be two prima donnas in an office!?" [laughter] By that time, I had to laugh--this was too much, you know.

I said, "Are you calling yourself a prima donna?"

"Of course I am!"

I said, "Okay, what do you want me to do?"

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"Do me a favor. Come back for a few hours. I'm sure you can fix this."

"Eric, it's broken. It was cast out of one piece."

"Well, ~~will~~ glue it together! I know you can do these things! I know you can repair anything. I have to have it, it has to leave! I've already made arrangements to go a day later." All right, ~~So he did leave a day later.~~ I came back to the office, ~~and~~ he took me into his office and he closed the door and he said--and he used to shout, normally--~~and~~ he was very quiet, and he said, "It's no business of theirs," meaning the other employees, "so please, let's discuss it quietly."

I considered this, [laughter], ~~and then~~ that is when he ~~made~~ ~~the comment,~~ he said, "Maybe I've never told you, and I should have, that your ability to create in three dimensions is as much of a genius as mine is to do it on paper."

I said, "Well, that's very nice of you to say, Eric. Now, what do you want me to do? I'll help you out in this one, I'll fix it, but that will be it."

So he said, "Can you make a new one?" "You said it was horrible, didn't you tell me?" "Well, you know how I am. It's

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something I hadn't envisioned, and it was actually very beautiful, ~~and~~ I couldn't have it on my building because it wasn't mine, ^{but now} if you don't mind giving it to me, I'll be happy to accept it."

Mendelssohn and Women Student

In that respect I would say he was quite different from Frank Lloyd Wright, because when it came right down to it, he was quite human. In fact, he was very human. And the trouble was that we were very close. ~~I mean, he had~~ later on in life, and during the last year when he knew that he was dying, he often said to me, "You know, I've been treating you like a son."

I said, ~~well,~~ maybe that's not good, Eric!"

He said, ~~well,~~ you're right. I have never been a good parent." He had one daughter and she's alive. He admitted that he had never been a good parent, and I knew for a person of his involvement and intensity to be a parent was practically impossible. That didn't mean he didn't care for his daughter; he did, very much so, as I have often seen. He cared very much so, and when things weren't right for one reason or another he was totally disturbed and perturbed. So that wasn't it. But in actuality he didn't have the time nor the inclination. "Anybody can have children. Anybody can bring up a child."

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Riess: A student is another matter.

Schiller: Ah, a student is a pretty big thing. And he was a very good teacher, and a very devoted teacher. Of course, he liked to shock people, ~~and~~ because he wanted them to think in different ways, ~~and~~ have different attitudes, ^{and} the first thing he would say to a class when they met for the first time ^{was,} "Now. This is your last year in architectural school, and you think you have learned it all. Good, ~~you've~~ learned it all, ~~now~~ forget it. Whatever you have learned is no damn good, and forget it. And don't tell me, 'So-and-so told me it was to be done ~~this~~, in this fashion.' Forget it! Absolutely forget it, because it doesn't mean anything, and it's no good."

→ That was number one. 9 Number two, he was a male chauvenist pig. ~~To him,~~ he had absolutely no use for women in the profession, none whatsoever. ~~There were a few who started at that time, there still are very [few] no, it has changed considerably, but still~~

~~Riess: But he didn't do anything to forward the~~

~~Schiller: No.~~ And when I say that he was a male chauvenist pig, ~~it's because~~ it isn't that he didn't like women. He did like women, but he wouldn't hesitate to shock them to the utmost. I remember ~~that~~

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^{him}
~~he was~~ leaning over a student, looking at what she was doing, like he did also in the office. He had no respect for anybody else's effort or work. He would grab it, pick it up, rip it out from under--^{though} I have to say ^{in his defense} ~~one thing~~, he couldn't see very well, because he had only one eye. He had to have things pretty close to his face in order to see them. But ~~that~~, again, you can do that in a polite and in a gentle fashion. He was not a gentle person in any way.

^{her work}
~~so~~ he ripped ~~it~~ out from under her nose, and totally tore it to pieces--I mean, not physically, just, "What is all this?! You call that architecture?" And she ^{said} ~~would say~~ something, and he said, "Do you have a lover?" ~~Of course~~ in those days, that was not the kind of language that was common, ^{but}

~~Ricos: No, not in the early fifties.~~

~~Schiller: No.~~ I remember that very definitely, ^{and} she looked up, and she was trembling, both because she was embarrassed, and also because that was a great man, you know, telling her that she was no good. She said, "No, Mr. Mendelsohn."

"Well, get yourself one, and go out in the open and make love under a tree!" In front of the whole class--and of course, everybody was snickering, as you can well imagine. He didn't

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think anything of that. Absolutely nothing.

Riess: But, ~~I mean~~, he wasn't unconscious of the effect that it was having.

Schiller: Oh, he knew exactly what the effect would be.

Riess: Well, what do you mean, he didn't think anything of it?

Schiller: It didn't matter to him. He had shocked her out of her senses.

Riess: Why was he so cruel to women, ~~do you think, in this case?~~

Schiller: Well, he was equally cruel to men. I mean, let's not say that, ~~but when I say that well, he would~~ it happens among women as it happens among men, that there are students who are not terribly gifted.

Riess: ~~So~~ he ~~probably~~ didn't find her a ~~very~~ gifted woman student.

Schiller: No. And among the few who had been students of his, at that time, at least, I cannot think of a single one who, in his eyes, was gifted.

~~Riess: I think that's probably so. There were very few of them.~~

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Schiller: ~~It's very possible, and I can't judge it any more because I don't have a clear recollection of whether that was so or whether but,~~
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~~I mean,~~ his attitude to women generally speaking ~~was well, it~~ was in certain ways very European, though actually I've always found that the average, if you can say that, the average consideration for a woman in Europe as a person, as an equal, has been much ~~more~~ ^{than} commoner in the United States. That, in Europe, too, women have not achieved their rightful place and what they should have achieved is of course due to the same kind of general education and concept that ~~women~~ women have to stay in the house and have ~~some~~ children, and that's that. That has of course existed, still, those who succeeded in Europe to be professionals--there was never any difference, ^[from men] No real difference, at least not in my time. I found that in this respect, as in many other respects, the United States was fifty years behind Europe when I came here at least. I'm not saying that that is the case today.

~~But,~~ I'm only mentioning it because when I said that he was shocking people, he did so intentionally, and as he put it to me at the time and many times afterwards, "For their own good."

~~Well,~~ in one other case, and I don't think it was the same woman, but it was another student, he said, "Well, so you want to

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be creative?" ~~I mean~~ I this was somebody who was already prepared and willing to answer back.

^{she} And said, "Mr. Mendelsohn, I want to be creative. That's why I want to be an architect."

"Mm-hmm." He looked at the drawing and it was very clear that he didn't think it was very creative, and after looking for a minute he put it back and he said, "Go make some children and be creative in that fashion; that's all you're good for."

Riess: That really is unforgivable.

Schiller: Totally unforgivable. Well, I mean from today's perspective, totally unforgivable. It has always been unforgivable, at any time, ~~don't~~ misunderstand me, ~~but~~ it was much more common ^{then} that something like this could and would happen.

Riess: ~~He sounds at least consistent, which is good. And perhaps he~~
his students were
 thought ~~you were becoming~~ inured to all of this.

Schiller: Yes. Well, because he had become inured to rough treatment. He's had lots of rough treatment in life, you know. I guess ~~one~~
~~does, to a degree, but only to a degree.~~ it has something to do with the mental set, ~~the~~ frame of mind, generally speaking, that you happen to have, whether you can really become inured to anything like that. *Perhaps one does to a degree, but only to a degree.*

~~Schiller: Well, he was and he wasn't.~~ ¶ He could be very generous, too. He was very generous to all the various members of his family, even the remote ones. He did everything he could to get them out of Germany; even at a time when he didn't have the financial means, he would sacrifice in order to do that. He was very generous with his time ~~anyone~~ where he felt there might be a promise. He wasn't holding back people who, in his judgment, were "good."

Riess: Ah. We haven't heard about them.

Schiller: I'm perhaps excluding myself a little bit, for I don't quite fit the category for a number of reasons, ~~because~~ I was more treated like a son, you see, and that has its good aspects and its bad aspects. In other words, I was there. I was there and I was clearly and openly being used. But, he did not deny ~~me~~ at any time to give me positive criticism. He never--with very few

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exceptions, very few exceptions--⁶acknowledged that I had done anything. That I had achieved anything.

~~Rieser: But there were some that he really enabled to fly?~~

~~Schiller: Well, there were things at other times, in his own mind at least,~~

he wanted to be generous to me. Whether he succeeded in doing that is a different story. There was never any question in his mind, and I know that for an absolute fact, because when you know you're going to die in a few days, I think one stops saying idle things. He made it very clear how attached he was to me, and made it very clear that, in his mind, he had given me everything that would make me a great success. Well, he may and he may not.

9 He may have wasted it on me, in part, because in contrast to him, I've always been reasonably a sensitive person, and retrospectively, I probably suffered more during the time that I was with him than I gained. ~~and~~ I'm not ungrateful; it's not that I'm saying I wished I had never been there. ~~Yes, I would never say that.~~ I would never say that, and I am grateful to him for ~~other reasons, for~~ many other reasons. Because, the things that he would not share with anyone, ^{else,} ~~mean~~ his own feelings, ~~or even~~ asking me for advice occasionally in human matters, in all kinds of things, clearly indicated that he considered me at least an equal, if not just personally very close to him.

9 ~~when~~ when I compare--and I have some comparisons, though I didn't know Frank Lloyd Wright remotely as well, I learned rather quickly everything I felt I had to learn about Frank Lloyd Wright in a few encounters that I've had with him. I would say that ~~the~~ Mendelsohn was much more human, and much more acceptable as a human being than Frank Lloyd Wright ever was.

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Landscape, Music *

Riess: ~~Well, good. I'm churning up a number of questions that I hope don't imply lengthy answers, because I don't want they're not that important. But, when you had said (he) earlier was convinced, as you are and many architects are, that you have to have some control of the interior if you're going to do the complete work. How about the landscape, and the outer presentation? How much did he work with landscape architects, or did he I guess maybe if you think about his city building, or let's say a hospital or something like that, where you have "hospital-scape" around it, would there be a landscape architect, or would he take it on?~~

Schiller: There would be [a landscape architect] in the United States. But only in the United States. Even then, the first landscape design he did too. ~~But~~ the landscape architect in certain ways would have been like an employee of his. ~~You~~ call it ~~an~~ employee or consultant, it made very little difference, ~~but~~ he was relegated to a position of carrying out the general idea of what he [Mendelsohn] wanted to see, ~~by~~ where to mass trees, where to mass flowers. I have to say one other thing about him in that respect, that he had a great interest in gardening personally. ~~He always had,~~ wherever he was, even in ~~and~~ water scarce ~~in~~ Jerusalem, he always had flowers growing all around him, ~~and~~ he loved trees, and he could spend sometimes hours to make sure that a certain tree is placed just so, that it would complement the

* Tape 14, Side A. cont.

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building and vice versa.

~~But here, at the first major building that was being built was _____ Hospital, which is a disaster these days. I can say something about it when and if you want me to.~~

Riess: ~~All right. Another small question:~~ you said that he thought that music was important in building. I don't know whether you meant that in a kind of idⁱomatic way, or whether ~~how~~ literally, ~~you mean that.~~

Schiller: Both. [laughter] How can I do that, right? Well, both idⁱomatic and ~~the~~ literal ~~way~~ in this sense: ~~Idⁱomatic, ~~yes~~,~~ because he loved music, and particularly certain kinds of music. He was ~~particularly~~ drawn to a music that was as structural as architecture is, and that of course is ^{the} music of Bach. But he never attempted to translate one into the other. That's why I'm saying, yes, idⁱomatic, in a way, but also in a literal sense. In the literal sense because acoustics in buildings are of great importance. It is also a science that is reasonably new in architecture, and is especially ^{that} ~~to~~ ^{True} these days, when you have an acoustic consultant if you really want to achieve certain things. (You don't always achieve them. I can think of a number of concert halls that haven't done what they should have done.) [laughs]

Riess: ~~It's really too bad~~ Not a science, quite yet.

Schiller: No. Well, it is, in a way, but it takes a little more-- ~~It~~
~~is and that~~ certainly is true when you ~~start~~ ~~when you~~ build
 buildings like the campus and community centers, ~~All~~ of which I
 think, yes, strangely enough, even though that is certainly not ~~in~~
 any orthodox sense true with Jewish places of worship--they all
 have organs, and choirs. These have, the ones that he designed.
 It's ~~nevertheless~~ up to the congregation what they want to do.
 And so ~~of~~ the musical aspect, ~~of~~ the playing of music, ~~and~~ the
 enjoyment of music became a very important and integral part. ~~So~~
~~in~~ that sense, ~~in the~~ literal ~~sense~~ music was important to him,
 and the enjoyment of music in every possible way. To which is to
 be added that his wife was a cellist, and they used to have
 concerts at home quite often, musical evenings, etc. ~~And so~~,
 Mendelsohn without music ~~I~~ cannot imagine. There was always
 music.

Riess: Would there be music playing in the office?

Schiller: ~~Not~~ Strangely enough, no. ~~And~~, I wondered about that, but he
 was not a very technical person. It was always my job to see to
 it that the latest developments in electronic innovation were
 available to him in one way or the other, and ^I did install his
 music system for him at home. And of course, I couldn't be
 spend for lesser purposes.

Riess: ~~Perhaps did he have not very much respect for~~ the environment in I wonder what he thought of ~~which he found himself;~~ perhaps as a European, the West Coast was not quite a culture ~~anyway?~~

Schiller: He didn't have much respect for it. He loved California, that's why he was here. He didn't love southern California, but he loved northern California. But that is because essentially he was a person with quite simple tastes, personally, as a human being. In food and in everything. He was a very straightforward person, very direct--maybe too direct at times, as you can tell.

Q. He did come from a background that in a class society was not high class. His father was a small business man in a small East Prussian town. As far as his behavior, as far as his appearance or his upbringing was concerned, he was never quite acceptable to the woman he married, who came from the other end of the spectrum. That has been a sore point to the very end. He didn't care--I mean, he was "The Great Eric Mendelsohn" who rubbed shoulders with the Prince of Wales in England and was received at all the courts that were still in existence in Europe.

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~~spared for lesser purposes. [laughter]~~

Riess: I've ~~heard~~ ^{read elsewhere} about ^{Mendelsohn's} ~~his~~ wife, ¹ ~~through these interviews.~~ People
"adored Louise, and sometimes the implication is ~~well, Eric-~~

^{that} Louise was wonderful, leaving Eric as a somewhat less wonderful person. [Schiller laughs] ~~That makes me want to ask about what his real community was. You say you had a kind of--did you have a social life with him? Were they~~ Was he part of a larger Jewish or artistic ~~community?~~ What was his community out here? How did he move into the scene?

Schiller: ~~Well, he--no,~~ There were friends that he had ~~and~~ who would come to his house and he would be invited to their houses. There is also the perhaps somewhat strange, from my point of view, phenomenon which I've never quite understood. That is ^{the idea,} not so much from Eric Mendelsohn, ^{that} but from Louise Mendelsohn, Eric is the Great Eric Mendelsohn, and "we have earned our right to be received and taken care of." It wasn't expressed in that sense. It was just, you could feel it when you knew them. And you could observe it, ⁹ ~~because well,~~ in later life. Louise would often say that the community ~~was~~ not the Jewish community, ¹ it was the Bay Area community, or the American community ¹ had not lived up to certainly her expectations of taking care of royalty. I deliberately say "royalty" because that was the attitude. Hers. He never considered himself royalty. There was a difference.

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9 Yes, of course, she could be very charming, she was a very beautiful woman. And certainly, very commanding in her appearance. All she had to do at any age, and I have known her since she was thirty-nine to her last days, so to say, when she was over eighty, I think--was always commanding. [pause] I have probably been as close to her as a human being can come close to a person like that. She was not a person to come close to.

That was true, I would say, with regret, as much as I could observe, in her marital relation to Eric too. It was true in her relation to her daughter. She was a very cold and haughty person. Enjoyable at times, but she had to have her way in everything. If you knew how to bow and scrape, I think you were acceptable.

Riess: She didn't find her equals among some of ~~like Mrs. Russell, or~~ ~~some of~~ the clients?

Schiller: No.

Riess: Was she able to advance his career through any of this? Were people ~~kind of~~ trying awfully hard to come up to her expectations in a way that was advantageous?

Schiller: I would think yes, in a different society. Not in the United

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States. It is really essentially anathema to the true meaning of ~~the~~ democracy to be expect to be treated as royalty. That doesn't sit well. I shouldn't say that there were ^{NOT} some people who were extremely kind, close friends, who did anything they could to help her, and I admire those people. I tried to help her whenever I could, after Mendelsohn died. But for me, she made it very clear: this was strictly a duty. I owed it to Eric.

Riess: That sounds a little bit like Frank Lloyd Wright's wife also. They bear the mantle of the great man, in great style themselves.

Schiller: Yes. ~~Well, I shouldn't~~ ⁹ she ~~had~~ led a very interesting life, obviously. She had known all the great and near-great of her time, all over Europe, and was received everywhere, because ^{and} I made the statement earlier ~~that~~ Mendelsohn certainly was the greatest Jewish architect. In the long run, I think it will turn out that he probably had the most long-term effect on architecture in this century, and perhaps beyond, of anyone living in this century. I'm not as presumptuous to say that he is or was the greatest architect, though Louise would say that without hesitation. I also have to say that, in spite of the fact that she had quite an insight into the arts of her time, and artists of that time, she never developed a clear understanding of what her husband really was doing.

Riess: Well, I'm certainly glad we've laid the lovely Louise to rest somewhat, [laughs] I don't misunderstand you, I just love that statement. You put it so nicely, ^{and} You do mean it nicely, ~~it's~~ ~~very~~

Schiller: I mean it nicely. When you go into my library, there's a picture of Eric and Louise. ^{If you} ~~I don't~~-look around, ^I ~~you~~ don't have many pictures around here, ^{so it must} ^{mean something.} That doesn't mean that I cannot have my own thoughts. I valued her ^I found it necessary to see her in her last days, and I would have ^{continued to} come even later to see her ^{had} it not been for the express desire of her daughter that I should not come again. I don't know why, and I will never understand it. I certainly didn't want to step at ^{that} ~~this~~ point on anybody's toes, particularly not on her daughter's toes, with whom relations from her mother to her hadn't been terribly good ^{at times}

Riess: ^{Where did they live here? *}

Schiller: ~~He was living~~ in a very nice apartment on Russian Hill, on Leavenworth Street. A top floor, which had a beautiful little roof garden, which he tended personally. ~~So~~ ^{that} ~~he~~ never stopped ⁱⁿ wherever he was, he was growing flowers ^{and} digging in the dirt with his fingers, [laughs]

Riess: And he was able to make enough money to swing that?

Schiller: Oh, yes. ~~Well, it was something to do I think~~ whether he was making enough money at that time I question. He probably was ^{at}

* Tape 14, Side B, cont.

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that point, but in the beginning ^{all} kinds of friends were taking care of his needs, and Louise's needs. The same friends who continued to do it for Louise after Mendelsohn died.

Riess: Who are these people? ~~Or are these people not to be named?~~ I mean, ~~I'm assuming that it's the~~ Haas family? ~~am I?~~

Schiller: ~~No.~~ To a degree, ~~to a degree~~. But there was somebody else, a Mrs. Vasen, who was the wife of the former German banker. Jewish. Her husband must have died before I ever met her, she was a very, very nice lady, ^{very} pleasant. She was a close friend of Louise's. I think she has--I've never looked too much into all these things.

Riess: There was a community ^{then}, ~~was it~~ an emigré community, or was it second generation? ~~am I?~~

Schiller: ~~Yes~~; I think she came out of Germany too. ~~am I?~~

Riess: On the same wave, or earlier?

Schiller: Same wave, but he I think was ^{an} international banker ^{and} probably had funds in other places. She died about a year or two before Louise ^{and} left her some unknown amount of money ^{too}. I've never tried to find out; it doesn't interest me.

A Job for Schiller

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~~Riess: He must have thought you were quite mad to move into this place,
and perverse, and everything else.~~

~~Schiller: No--~~

~~Riess: Little too far to be genuinely on call. [laughs]~~

When we arrived

Schiller: ~~Well, I mean, at first~~ we had to lease a room--that's all we could get--and that was difficult, because I had a child, such a short time after the war. People wouldn't take children in rooms or apartments or flats, or anything of the kind. We were in constant fear that we would lose that one room, and meanwhile we were going around in San Francisco and coming over here to Marin County to look for a place to stay, a place that we could "afford." We couldn't afford anything, really. We stumbled on this totally run-down house, and that was just about all I could afford. I had to take a mortgage, first time and last time in my life that I ever owed anything to anybody.

Certain stupid things that one learned as a child: "You mustn't spend money that doesn't belong to you, under any circumstances." That was so prevalent, at least, in Europe and certainly in Germany. ~~So, even~~ taking on a mortgage, a small mortgage--small!--was terrible. I had more than enough money to

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pay the down payment, and I paid absolutely to the last penny practically everything I had, just had enough money, because Eric had found a little work for me when I finally got here. Namely, to build a model for the Maimonides Hospital. "That's temporary after you've built it, you may be out, and you may have to look for other work, but I'll do whatever I can," and he did. I never did leave his office until he died.

~~Ries: In a way, I must come to a stepping point, but I would like you to explain on the last inch or a quarter or whatever here [of the tape] -- the fact that you feel that you've been an outsider speaks very badly of the whole situation. You're kind of shooting down my ideals of a community of artists and planners and thinkers that were here right after the war, that must, because it was a small town then, I think --~~

~~Schiller: Well, you must realize that I came to the United States on my thirtieth birthday, so I was looking from my present vantage, quite young. I considered myself rather old at the time. And considering the various experiences I have gone through in my life --~~

~~#end tape ¹⁴ side b, end of interview~~

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Mendelsohn's ^{have} Office, and Partner *

Riess: Tell me about Mendelsohn's office in San Francisco. Did he have a building, [?] ~~and~~ how many people did he have on the staff, [?] ~~and~~ how did it work, [?] ~~and~~ ?

Schiller: Mendelsohn's office was on Commercial Street in San Francisco. *And as* ~~The fact, which~~ you may or may not know, the term "commercial" had no bearing on what is normally known as commerce. ~~The name~~ ~~of~~ ~~as~~ he ~~used to tell me~~ ~~he~~ was very proud to tell me, ~~that~~ the name Commercial was because the buildings along that particular part of Commercial Street--which is quite short actually, only a few blocks long, six blocks long ⁱⁿ ~~on~~ all--were mostly brothels. And that was the reason for the term "commercial." ~~In fact~~ ~~he~~ was equally proud to--first thing he told me: "This office has been a brothel. We took out all the various partitions." And in fact you could still tell where the partitions had been. [laughter] ^{They} had been painted over and all that, but ~~with~~ ~~it's~~ ~~was~~ just a very mediocre job of remodeling. It was the kind of remodeling that you do when you have absolutely no money and just need some space. That's exactly what applied to him at the time.

The office had been in existence a few months before the time that I came into the United States, ⁷⁺ ~~and~~ ^{in 1948} had been formed ¹ with two young San Francisco architects. One was somebody who had

* Tape 16, Side A, cont.

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just been released from the army, or very recently been released
from the army, and his name was ~~Hill~~ Henry Hill. The other one ^[James Ekin Dinwiddie]
belonged to the Dinwiddie family ^N they were builders in San
Francisco ^{-- and he} who had been studying architecture and had formed a
partnership with Henry Hill. The two had essentially opened that
office, ~~and~~ Henry Hill must have run into Mendelsohn somewhere in
the east, in one of the university ^N lectures, ^{and} Mendelsohn has
always been willing to talk to people, particularly to young
people who wanted to talk to him. Hill used the opportunity to
talk to him, and during the talk Mendelsohn found out he was
going west, ~~he was going~~ to San Francisco, where he was hoping
to start his own office, etc.

I think it was Hill, though I can't swear to it, who drove
Mendelsohn and Louise out on one of the trips.

Riess: Another virtue, on his part.

Schiller: Right. They must have had a fairly good time with each other,
and they enjoyed each other's company. I have to say about
Henry Hill, whom I knew quite well, Henry was a good, gifted
designer, and particularly in areas that were of no concern to
Mendelsohn, namely residences. Which is nothing unusual ^{of}
~~course~~, most young architects start out with residential design,
and some never do anything else ^{of} the rest of their lives.

~~Riess: But these people was the other one Michael Galter? Is that the name?~~

~~Schiller: I don't know.~~

Riess: ^{There another} ~~That~~ is a name ~~that's~~ associated with Mendelsohn on one of ~~the~~ his San Francisco buildings, Galter.

Schiller: Galter? ^{Gallis} ~~Gallis~~.

Riess: Michael?

Schiller: Michael.

~~Riess: I'll go with that.~~

~~Schiller: I'm amazed if I remember a name, but that's all right.~~

~~Riess: But that's the Dimwiddie connection?~~

~~Schiller: I don't know how Michael ^{Gallis} ~~Gallis~~ got into a situation. I think~~ it was somebody who Mendelsohn hired at the time, and who became his chief draftsman in San Francisco. Michael also maneuvered himself into a position of becoming an associate.

Riess: I wondered how far up these people got. ~~I mean, certainly--~~

Schiller: Well, the firm name originally was Mendelsohn, Di^Nwiddie, and Hill. That became Mendelsohn and Hill, and now it's ended up Mendelsohn. In the very, very end, by using some blackmail, I would call it, Michael Gaddis--it's not a nice story, but I'm willing to talk about it--

Michael Gaddis ~~became~~ was listed as "associate," on the stationery. And listed as an associate on all the buildings ^{that} at the time ^{were} in the office. When I say blackmail, he had a very negative influence on Mendelsohn. He had convinced Mendelsohn that he wouldn't be anybody and couldn't operate in San Francisco if it hadn't been for Michael Gaddis, to a point where, when Mendelsohn got a commission to build a laboratory building for the Atomic Energy Commission, in Berkeley, at UC-- which is still standing there--both Mendelsohn and I had a suspicion, we can't prove it of course, that he created some difficulties when Mendelsohn had to apply for clearance. ~~and I+~~ ~~that-~~ ~~is~~ has never been quite clear to me, or to Mendelsohn, whether it was Michael Gaddis' suggestion, or whether it was indeed the FBI ^{that} suggested ^{ed} that, ^{"We'll} ~~he would~~ give a top clearance to Michael Gaddis, and you ^{ll [Mendelsohn]} only get a secondary clearance." (I never got any, on this job.)

He also played an unhealthy, shall we say, role on another job. Varian Associates, on the peninsula, where apparently even during Mendelsohn's lifetime he took over the job, ~~Varian~~ Varian Associates, ~~I wouldn't say~~ ^{Not that} ~~this~~ job but the next job that ~~Varian's~~ Associates handed out to somebody. Well, all kinds of strange situations. The greatest difficulties perhaps ~~were~~ ^{was} the inability ^{to} ~~of~~ coming to terms ~~with him~~ after Mendelsohn's death, ~~between~~ ^{for} Louise and him, ~~and~~ ⁼ he was not willing to make it feasible for her to get a reasonable settlement, or anything else. ^{There were} Very unpleasant negotiations that went through two lawyers. ~~~~~~~~~

He has been one of those who played on the conflicts that Eric obviously had at that time. He [Eric] didn't feel secure any more in having opened another office, in another country, and ~~then again~~ ^{under} ~~different~~ circumstances which were alien to him. ~~That~~ Michael exploited that to a great extent, without justification, shall we say. Or without in my judgment having made a major contribution. The comments that he made about him to me at times were not very complimentary, and it was very clear that he was exploiting the situation.

Riess: I guess I had the wrong idea. I thought that Mendelsohn, when he got here, would have been ~~sort of~~ lionized, but ~~what~~ you said

last week that that was just not the case, ~~that he needed these people in fact in his office.~~ How old was he when you were out here?

Schiller: He must have been middle fifties. I could figure it--middle fifties, shall we say. ^{A wall,} ~~And~~ after all, that was the fourth country in which he had built up a practice and opened an office. And situations and conditions were quite different at the time. ~~This is~~ really what I found most, to me personally, most appalling, was the status of architects in the United States. They hadn't arrived. ~~And~~ architects were essentially nobodies--they were some other businessmen, they were not professionals, they were not being considered professionals. Even if somebody was a great architect, whether it was Frank Lloyd Wright or Mendelsohn or many others that I could mention, they were not given the kind of recognition, or being considered anybody in particular, that they were given in any other country, and certainly in all western countries.

↳ That is a little difficult; quite difficult, I would say.

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~~Well, you wanted to know about the others~~
SCHILLER'S ROLE IN MENDEL
SOHN'S OFFICE

Riess: ~~Right. So that gives me a sense of the office.~~ Well, let's consider the I'd like to talk about one of his buildings as a ~~kind of~~ case in point. I'd like to know how he was with clients.

The Master and the Client

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Hospital [1950]

And so perhaps ~~the~~ ² Mimonides ¹ is the one that we should talk about, ~~unless you have~~ ~~were you~~ ⁼ how did he get that commission? Were you in on the presentation of the plans? I've heard nothing particularly good about the dealings that the ~~Jewish community~~ ^{hospital board} had with him, ~~in the presentation of the plans~~ ^{on that.} The ego, once again, was ~~in the way?~~ ^{in the way?}

Schiller: ~~Oh, yes~~ Well, that ~~is~~ ~~it~~ has something to do with overcompensating for his feeling of inferiority and being pushed around, something he hasn't been used to. Any time you did that kind of thing to him ^{it was} he would react, and a little difficult to take. Very difficult to take for him, and equally difficult for a client, particularly an American client at that time, where an image didn't exist, ~~an image~~ of an architect being somebody important. You could hire an architect, after all--it was just a matter of finding somebody whose fees were either a little lower or a little higher, depending on what you wanted. It still is that way, to a degree--not quite as bad any more, fortunately.

Riess: ^{I've always been} Well, ~~I'm~~ probably ~~the last one who truly is~~ impressed ~~then~~ by architects, ~~and~~ I truly am.

Schiller: Well, some are very ^{impressive,} ~~interested,~~ I have to say that. Some American architects are very ^{impressive,} ~~interesting.~~ ~~And~~ I'll tell you

something else about American architects which I ~~was~~ found out late^r in life, which I didn't know. Some of them are extremely well-equipped, extremely knowledgeable, extremely dedicated, without ~~having~~ insisting on that appellation of "greatness" about them. ~~But~~ are very substantial people, very good people, very knowledgeable people. ~~And~~ are not necessarily the most known, but some of the well-known ones too are very substantial.

~~But you see,~~ the trouble is, there are so few individuals who ~~will~~ hire architects for being a good architect. ^{There are still} ~~So~~ few institutions in this country ~~with~~ who know the importance of hiring an outstanding or good architect. It is usually a financial equation, and if somebody has recommended somebody as being a good businessman, and doing what you want, that is how most people select their architects. That's how the big businesses do, too. ~~But because of the size of some corporations, and~~ [←] some of the corporate architects who work for large large corporations ~~and~~ have produced outstanding architecture in the United States because it means advertising value for the corporation. The corporations, at this point, have come to an understanding of the value of that.

Riess: The image.

Schiller: Yes.

Riess: ~~So~~ how did the ²Mimonides ¹commission come to Eric Mendelsohn?
Was there a competition for that ~~one~~?

Schiller: No. There wasn't. This happened just before he came to the United States. He did tell me in fact about it when we met in New York, and said things weren't going well. ~~From~~ from all I can establish after the fact, he was given this commission ~~and I think~~ think there were some people involved who had known about him, ~~and~~ I think Elise Haas was one of those, and members of the Haas family. (Madeleine Russell was not involved ^{at} ~~in~~ that ~~the~~ time.)

~~#end tape 16 side a~~

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Interview with Hans Schiller, Interview ~~was~~ 7
Begin tape 16, side b##

Schiller: ~~And~~ I would say probably they ~~did~~ select^{ed} Eric because--well, he had world fame, and that world fame had traveled ahead of him to the United States.

Riess: It didn't make him more expensive, ~~to other people?~~[?]

Schiller: Oh, no. ^Q You have to realize that at the time, and that lasted until about twenty-five years ago, any member of the AIA would work for the same fee. Essentially the same fee. You could charge more, but you could not charge less. There was a minimum fee that was set for members of the AIA, and if you would underbid that fee, you would come before the ~~Ethics~~ Committee and would be removed as a member of the AIA. ~~And~~ that was challenged in courts twenty years ago, and the AIA was told in no uncertain terms that's price fixing, and you may not do that. ~~And~~ since that time, the AIA doesn't do that,

^Q And since that time, undercutting is the order of the day. Which doesn't make it nice to be an architect. ^Q So, no. And I'm quite certain he may have tried to get a slightly higher fee because he was well-known, but I ~~do~~ think ~~that~~ at that time.

Tape 16, Side B.

because he was just starting out, ~~that~~ he observed that rule and stayed pretty much at the so-called recommended fee, which is the basic fee.

Riess: ~~Well, to interrupt you, and I am sorry, but we'll get the same information just maybe from different angles.~~ One of the ~~criticisms of that~~ ^{criticisms of that} comments about the building seems to fly in the face of your statement that Mendelsohn adapted his work to where he was. ^{Wasn't} ~~because it was too~~ very much like a similar hospital in Jerusalem, ~~is it?~~ ^{San Francisco,} and inappropriate for ~~Sutter Street, that it~~ ^{was} too open, and balcony-ish?

Schiller: Well, I may have to disagree with you there. Because, well--that isn't the question. The question is really, was it appropriate for the climate in San Francisco? And the answer is yes. The way it was designed, yes. Number two: what did happen is that the committee that gave him the commission ^{in the first place,} also gave him a program very clearly ^{designating} this structure as a hospital for the chronic sick, which is quite different from any other type of hospital, or quite different in concept and in layout and needs ^{from} an old age home, for instance.

It was never used for that purpose. And therefore, if it was inappropriate in its layout or its use, it had nothing to do with Mendelsohn, because the changeover in ownership from one

committee to another happened when the building was finished, essentially.

Riess: ~~Well, what's the story on that?~~ They decided they didn't need that particular facility, ~~or~~?

Schiller: Well, they either ran out of money, or didn't need it, ~~or~~ meanwhile Mount Zion ^[Hospital] was being remodeled, and enlarged, and the decision was reached to put the chronic sick in ~~the~~ Mount Zion ~~or~~ something of that nature happened, and I can't tell you exactly what happened. But in any case, the program on the basis of which it was designed was no longer valid, ~~when~~ it was first being used.

Instead of having it changed to whatever it should have been used for at the time, they let it go. Some other group bought it from the first group, or refinanced it--and I can't tell you the details of that, because I was not involved in that. That is something I haven't been involved with with any of his buildings. I was strictly at the time, ~~as~~ his chief design assistant, and nothing else. ~~And~~ I did not deal with the arrangements or anything of the kind.

I did two things: I helped him with his designs, and I would go to a site and carry out certain ideas and supervise

certain ideas during the execution of the building.

Riess: So you weren't in a position to see how he dealt with the client?

Schiller: Well, I've seen ~~it~~ many a time how he dealt with a client, and ~~perhaps~~ a complaint that he was rough-shod and imperious is probably entirely correct, because I certainly have seen him with other clients. When it came to even his statements or responses to a client's questions. Q I do recall ~~that~~ ^{once when} he was being asked whether a building, it was a community center, would be somewhat like the community center that he built somewhere else. ~~that~~ he immediately blew up and said, "Well! Would you have ^{asked} Beethoven when he composed the Ninth Symphony, 'Mr. Beethoven, is it going to sound like the Fifth?' ~~and~~ Mr. Beethoven would have blown up right into your face, 'No! It's going to be the Ninth!' All I can tell you is, you asked Mendelsohn to design something for you, it's going to be a Mendelsohn." And the hell with you, ⁱⁿ other words, "Who cares what it looks like? I know what it's going to look like, and you're going to get an outstanding building, but don't you dare question me like that."

~~Well, apart from the fact that~~ Q he had the general attitude that a client normally doesn't know what he wants. ^{And} I say ~~that~~ very guardedly [^] but not so guardedly--most clients do not know, how can they be expected to know what they want? And it is a job

for the architect to help them to interpret their own ideas, what they want, or to prove to them that what they're thinking about is not achievable or not desirable for their particular purposes. But there is a happy medium, and that happy medium did not exist *for him*.

Clients were a pain[✓] as far as Mendelsohn was concerned, and clients can be pain^y I know that. But you don't quite admit it to a client that they are a pain, and he did not only admit it-- he told them that they were a pain.

Riess: And a committee of clients must be a greater pain.

Schiller: A committee of clients is somewhat difficult to take, unless you *are* ~~refused~~ to a committee form of operation. It is very difficult to deal with committees.

Riess: If they don't know what they want as a group, either.

Schiller: No. Even from the client's point of view, it is difficult to deal with a committee. Inside an organization which has a building committee, ~~it is for~~ the person who carries out ~~them~~ on behalf of the client[✓] the ideas that the client wants, or tries to tell the architect what it should be, has a rough rough time, ~~because~~ unless it's clearly established that there is a person who is the spokesperson[✓] for the client, and only one person

speaks. If everybody has the same right in conveying that idea, the architect can't possibly work. It's impossible ^{everybody} quarrels at all times. "I would like to find out, "I have a new idea, Mr. Mendelsohn." "I would like you to consider such-and-such." ~~And of course,~~ there is nothing more irritating and sometimes more disturbing than that kind of a quarrel, ~~and~~ those kind of things happen all the time. It's

~~but that's~~ a matter of disciplines on both sides, and the willingness and ability of the architect to educate his client. ~~So that, that's not--~~

Riess: Did you get sent in to do any of that client education, as a substitute?

Schiller: Not for Mendelsohn, no. Only after his death--I had to negotiate with some of them.

Riess: On behalf of the office, ~~you were still--~~?

Schiller: Yes. On behalf of the owner of the office, namely Mrs. Mendelsohn. It was interesting, in retrospect, that I got to hear a lot of that kind of thing. ~~And that,~~ I also got to hear complaints about Michael Gaddis, who did go later on on some of the trips with Mendelsohn for purposes of negotiation. I never

did go for purposes of negotiation, ^{I went} ~~but~~ strictly for architectural purposes--reasons of doing this and that.

Riess: Did Mendelsohn get repeat commissions, or did he burn out his clients?

Schiller: Yes. Throughout his life, he had repeat commissions. ~~For~~ ~~instance,~~ Schocken is a good example. Schocken has used him for every one of his jobs in Germany, and then for every one of his jobs in Palestine.

Riess: Wasn't he younger and mellow then? More amenable?

Schiller: You mean Mendelsohn?

Riess: Yes.

Schiller: No. I don't think he ever was. In fact, it is very likely--he did mellow a little, very little, in the last few years, but up to that point I would say he was more ferocious when he was younger.

Riess: That's true--mellowing is supposed to come with age, but crustiness comes, too.

Schiller: Oh, yes. You're right. And then particularly people who haven't been very mellow to start out with become very crusty.

Some do.

Madeline Haas Russell House
Madeline Haas

Riess: Was ~~Haas~~ Russell an enlightened client, involved with the plans? What was the relationship with Mrs. Russell?

Schiller: Again, this is a relationship I've seen pretty much only from the outside, other than the fact that ~~very early~~ I met Mrs. Russell very early in the proceedings. This job, too, had started just before I came to San Francisco. ^[Completed 1952] One of the first people I met outside of the office was Mrs. Russell.

Riess: She's Elise Haas's daughter? ~~Is that?~~

Schiller: No, ~~She's not a daughter of Elise Haas at all.~~ She is a daughter of a relative of Walter Haas's, ~~Walter Haas was~~ Elise Haas's husband. ~~She was a Haas, yes.~~

~~Riess: I know she's Madeline Haas Russell, and so I'm wondering which--.~~

~~Schiller: Yes. Walter Haas and Madeline--~~ ~~They were such a tremendously large family,~~ ~~_____~~ were cousins, actually. ~~Her~~ parents, Madeline's parents, ^{were} died very young. She ~~was~~ brought up ^{up} ~~she~~ and her brother by another aunt, Mrs. Lilienthal. I ~~dit~~

met Mrs. Lillienthal and her husband, and I've met Walter and Elise, but her parents I certainly did not know. But in any case, she was very young at the time, and expecting her second child, ~~while~~ the house was being planned and designed.

9 Mendelsohn confided in me and complained to me that he had this very lovely young woman as a client who absolutely could not read plans. Not only could she not read plans, "She doesn't understand my drawings!"

~~Anyway,~~ it was incomprehensible to him that somebody could not understand his famous drawings. He was ~~very famous~~ ^{for} his drawings, ^{They} were one of his great strengths, the way he did draw. And it was absolutely beyond him. "What am I going to do? ~~You're~~ ^{We're} going from thing to another, and from one change to another, and she cannot decide, and she--what do I do?"

I said to him, "Have you tried a model?"

"I can't afford it!" He thought there wasn't enough in the commission to warrant ^a that kind of an effort.

I said, "Well, you know, it is common that if a client wants a model rather than you, ^{the} client pays for a model. Why don't you discuss ^{it} with her, and find out whether it would help her if she could actually see three-dimensionally what she's going to

get."

Riess: It's interesting that she wasn't going to ~~just~~ take it sight unseen. There wasn't that assumption that he ~~would~~ just do it brilliantly, and that would be ~~in~~ that?

Schiller: Well, there was no question he could do it brilliantly, but she wanted to know. (She hasn't changed, Not one bit.) She wanted to know exactly, to the last little morsel, as ^[Mendelsohn] he realized at the time. ~~So~~ ^{And} I think her husband ~~at the time~~ was equally adamant ⁱⁿ of wanting her to understand and be happy, ~~and~~ exactly the way it was going to be.

Riess: ~~So~~ did you make a model?

Schiller: ^{Well,} ~~So~~ ^{and} apparently she must have approved an extra expenditure, ~~and~~ she was taken with the idea, but then ^{she} wanted to meet me, ~~and did meet me~~. That was when I was called into the conference ~~with~~ ^{where} both of them, Leon Russell and Madeline, were ~~both~~ there. I was introduced. The question was, "Do you understand ^{my} real difficulty," Mrs. Russell said, "is to--I want to see how every room is arranged. And Eric makes these fantastic sketches, but they don't mean anything to me."

I started to think real quickly ^{and} decided that the normal

model wouldn't do that. It would show the outside and the massing, and even if necessary colors and everything else, but had nothing to do with the interior functioning of the whole thing.

So I said, "Well, it's possible to do that, but it's quite a bit more difficult than an ordinary architectural model. It would have to be a model that you can take apart, floor by floor, so that you can look at each floor and walk around from room to room and see the relationship and where the doors are, where the closets are, and so forth."

That intrigued her, and she said, "That's what I want."

I said to myself, "I hope they haven't agreed on a price yet, because that is quite different!" But in any case, that's what I did, floor by floor, Mendelsohn breathing over my shoulder all the time--"Isn't it ready yet? Isn't it finished yet? You're bankrupting me! You'll have to do it on your own!"

Riess: Did you do it in wood or paper products, or how ~~was~~?

Schiller: No. I think it was the first one, at least to my knowledge, to use a then very new material, plexiglass.

Riess: Clear.

Schiller: Yes. ~~clear~~ I used it clear, and then whatever had colors or finishes on it, I would spray, ~~it was clear at first, for the simple reason that I'd experimented~~ ⁹ I was intrigued by all the things that one could get in the United States that were not available anywhere else in the world. ~~And I found, well, of course~~ I had some of the same tools that I still have and still use--namely a power saw, and with that you could make very accurate cuts in plexiglass, and it was very easy, very quick to assemble, because you just dip a brush in a solution, which is a solvent, and touch at one corner and capillarity soaks it all the way. It's the neatest and cleanest way of connecting things; ~~and~~ you hold it for less than half a minute, and it stays. You can go on and build more, and it doesn't pull, and it doesn't ^{do} things that ~~would~~ ^{wood or} cardboard or gypsum as they used to use do. ~~So~~ it was to me an ideal material, and I think I was the first one who's ever used it. People did use it for windows, in models. But ~~not for them~~ for the whole model ^{it} it was very expensive. It still is considerably more expensive these days, but at the time it was expensive.

Riess: How big was your model?

Schiller: The model was to scale, it was ~~quite a scale~~ 1/8 ^{scale} ~~square~~ [⊗]

~~eight square eight square~~ It wasn't very big; it was about this tall, about this big ~~big~~

Riess: About a foot by two feet.

Schiller: It's still at Madeline's house, under a plexiglass cover. Models don't usually last very long. This one is still there, and it's rather nice to look at. ⁹ That did the trick. I ~~did build~~ ^{built} it exactly the way it was drawn, and she could "walk" from room to room, make changes if she absolutely had to [^] and she did. ^{When} ~~Everybody~~ Everybody was agreed, ~~and~~ it was built.

The relationship with Madeline by Eric was by and large very good. He was imperious there too. When she wanted to combine her house's furniture that she had either inherited or bought or used, he put his foot down. She equally put her foot down. Having been Madeline's architect for much longer than Eric ever has been, I would say sparks must have been flying at times. Even though I'm probably much more accomodating than Eric ever was, even then we have our little tiffs, once in a while. It's all very loving, but we have our little tiffs.

Riess: ~~Why don't you finish with~~ Madeline Russell? What did you ~~then~~ go on to do with ~~her?~~

Schiller: Well, I did very little on her house. I can only tell you a few negative things, but maybe there are relevant in certain ways, because they also shed a little light on Eric's idiosyncracies and difficulties.

~~I believe that~~ it was either Mr. Russell or Mrs. Russell ~~who~~
~~don't know which one of the two~~ who recommended to Eric or asked Eric to take care of a cousin of Madeline's, ^[Mendelsohn] who had just finished his studies in architecture, and he put him on the job as superintendent on behalf of the architect and the owner.

This proved to me retrospectively that Mendelsohn technically ~~did not have all~~ didn't know all the things that an architect ought to know. You do not put somebody ^{just} out of school on a job and expect that person to have the authority and ability and experience to supervise a contractor, and to tell the contractor when he was wrong.

Riess: Parenthetically, is this the difference between American schools and European schools?

Schiller: Yes, to a degree, because in Europe it was customary, at least in my time, and certainly in Eric's time, that before you could pass your final exam, you had to have put in quite a bit of time on the job. ~~And, in fact,~~ in many countries, Germany having been

one of those, you had to have learned the craft. So ~~that~~ you're not only familiar with what is going on on the job, but at least with one of the major crafts so that you actually know what it takes to put something together. ~~I've gone through part of that~~

Riess: ~~So anyway,~~ ^{And} this fellow was ~~a~~ *novice*.

Schiller: No. ~~It's~~ ^{part} of the consequence is ^{not} blaming him at all, ^{he's} a very nice guy, and we're friends and all that. ^{As} a consequence of that, the building has leaked from day one. It leaked before it was quite finished. The leaks were never stopped. I think ^I ~~they~~ have stopped them finally, but it has meant rebuilding sections, and doing certain things, ^{which} shouldn't happen. ^{That,} and something else.

When Mendelsohn--I think I did mention it--when he first received me ^{he} said, "Forget that you're an architect, you're not an architect, you don't know anything." As he put it, "My American boys know so much more than you do, it isn't even funny. You better learn what it takes."

~~Riess: [laughing] These people that you hang out with!~~

^{And} ^[to the Russell job]
~~Schiller: Yes~~ I did go out ^{on} my own at one time ^{because} I was always

interested in buildings going up, and in construction, and how it was put together. I was totally aghast when I came back and I said, "Eric, I was on the Russell job--" and he said, "What ~~are~~ ~~were~~ you doing there?"

I said, "I went on my own."

"On your own? Did you ask for permission?"

I said, "No, I didn't. I wanted to see how it--"

"Well, what is it? I don't have much time." He was very short, because he knew I was going to be critical of something, and much later did admit to me how little he knew about these things, ~~much later~~ and he was afraid I would ask a question or point out something for which he didn't have an answer.

~~And~~ I said, "Do you realize that the way this building goes up is contrary to all rules and regulations, not only of the city, but of common sense and the way things are being built?"

"What do you know about this!?"

I said, "I happen to know that, and I can explain to you--"

"You don't have to explain anything! I know!"

I said, "Have you looked? This building is going to leak."

"Going to leak!" That was one of the worst words one could ever use. "What do you mean!" And he ~~yelled at~~ immediately ~~yelled,~~ yelled, "Mike! Come down!" (Michael Gaddis.)

Mike did come down. "Hans tells me the Russell house is going to leak. And Mike--" "What does he know?" He knew exactly how far he could go, you know? He said, "He should stick to helping you with design. He doesn't know anything about construction."

I said, "Mike, I'm not going to argue with you. In contrast to you, I've been working on jobs, and I know what it takes to keep a building from leaking. This building is going to leak like a sieve."

Well, he said, "Show me on the drawing what's going on." And I looked at the drawing, which I hadn't seen. I hadn't seen anything that was production at the time, in other words, under his direction. It was done by a very gifted, now, architect--he was not an architect at the time--but a very gifted Dutchman had done all the drawings. Beautifully done. I still have all the

drawings of that.

But we didn't know at the time. And nobody else seemed to know in the office, including Michael Gaddis, because it was all drawn the way it was being built. And I pointed that out, and he said, "That's nonsense. You don't know what you're talking about."

Okay. I was relegated to nonsense. "I don't know what I'm talking about." ~~There has been~~⁹ when I finally cleaned up the office files, and since this was a job that had just been finished--

*
~~##end tape 16 side b, begin tape 17 side a~~

~~Very briefly what was I talking about?~~

~~Riess: That, when you were thinking of handing the files to Mrs. Russell, you saw something--~~

Schiller: ~~Yes. And in fact, I think anything that was of interest was handed over to Mrs. Russell. I~~ ^I came across rather bitter correspondence between the owner and the architect about some difference of opinion, and some insistence by the owner that the architect pay for certain things. That was the first indication

* Tape 17, Side A.

I ever had that the relation was not that smooth at all times. And of course, nowadays, I do know it wasn't that smooth. ^{I know} There were all kinds of difficulties, and that Mendelsohn insisted on this and that. ^Q I also have to say that she is the type of client who has respected the man and his artistic integrity, and has always ^{only} with the greatest reluctance, changed anything, even ⁱⁿ things that are not directly apparent, even if it had to be done because of deficient details or something like that. Certainly changes in color, ^{and} and I know that her color sense is quite different from that of Eric Mendelsohn's, and very much incidentally like mine; she likes things to be white, real white, and not dirty white. —

~~But~~ it had to be done very gradually, so that ^{over} only years and years, any time something was repainted, ^{(it would become a little lighter.} ^Q ~~But~~ by and large she always did say, if something had to be replaced, what was it originally? What was the original color? ~~or~~ what was the original wood? And can't we duplicate that? ~~So~~ she's very respectful, and has always been very respectful and very attached to it, which is unusual ^Q considering their somewhat stormy relationship. ~~And of course,~~ ^{okay,} so much for that.

Mendelsohn's Papers

Riess: ~~That's terrific.~~ ^Q I want to ask you very quickly what happened to the biography of Mendelsohn that you worked on with Louise

Mendelsohn. Did that ever come out in any form, ~~or fashion?~~ ~~±~~
~~think we were--~~

Schiller: No, I didn't work on a biography of Mendelsohn's. ~~There are no,~~
~~I'm sorry. An autobiography.~~

~~Riass: Yes. Wasn't?~~

~~Schiller: Her autobiography.~~ What happened is that she was writing an
autobiography, and being Eric Mendelsohn's wife or widow, feeling
that she was now carrying the great man's mantle, which is a
common ^{feeling} ~~feeling~~ in widows of great men, ~~and probably in~~
husbands of great women, she felt that she had to talk about
architecture. Her technical knowledge of architecture ~~is nil~~
~~is~~ was nil. Her intuitive knowledge was very superficial. And ~~she would~~
~~she would~~ come out with rather, at times, pompous statements that
were totally, factually incorrect, and didn't mean anything, and ~~were~~
intended to perpetuate the great man's ideas, ^{and they} were hard to take,
~~but she understood~~ ^Q she would not admit to it, but she understood
it,
and therefore ^{she} would show me these passages and say, "Can
you do something about it?" Or, "What would you say? This is
correct? What do you know about it?"

Riess: What became of that whole task?

Schiller: Well, what became of it? it is also in Berlin, as everything else, ~~at the state museums~~ property of the state museums. It was intended--I think she was given a grant by the Museum of Modern Art to write it.

Riess: You mentioned that Berkeley could have had those papers.

Schiller: Yes. Berkeley had practically everything, everything that was leftover, most of the working drawings of Mendelsohn, all the sketches that were in existence, some dating back to since World War I, and which I had cared for in the interim a number of times. I kept them in Palestine and brought them with me and all the sketches of the Palestine and British period. All of that was collected and taken to the architectural school in Berkeley where he had been teaching, and was intended to be given to the University, provided they would take care of it, organize it and use it.

Riess: This was in 1953, or '54?

Schiller: Yes. Very shortly after his death, because the office had to be closed, she moved out of the apartment, etc.

Riess: And was it his wish that ^{it go to} the University of California ~~to~~

Schiller: Nothing was ever discussed about that, ~~and I have to say that~~ in contrast to another famous architect we were discussing, and the value of ^{Mendelsohn} ~~valuable~~ sketches, ~~he~~ was very much aware that they were valuable and unique, as such, ~~but~~ he never made a fetish out of it, ~~and~~ he didn't--well, he did keep most of them, because they have been published, etc., but only the best ones. ^{Everything else} ~~All the rest~~ would be crumpled up or ~~as~~ as he found out later, that some people would go into his wastepaper basket and take an original Mendelsohn, would then straighten it out, ~~he~~ would tear them up or burn them. ~~But~~ ~~he didn't want~~ if anything had to remain, he only wanted really first-rate things to remain. ~~and~~ he would have been very unhappy if he would know that he died without having ever had a chance to go through his files, just to see what was here, because many of the things he would have thrown away. In fact, most of them he would have thrown away.

Riess: Well, then I would think he would have made some arrangement ~~to~~ ~~protect these~~

Schiller: Yes. He would have made an arrangement, ~~and~~ like he ~~said~~ sat with Wittich for ever and ever, going over the first form of ~~these~~ his books, because he wanted it to be just so, and it couldn't say anything he didn't want it to say.

Riess: ^{William} Was it Wurster, ~~then~~ who was at Berkeley at the time?

Schiller: Wurster was at Berkeley, yes, at the time. He was the dean.

Riess: And he didn't receive it → ?

Schiller: Well, it was received, and then there was a little bit of correspondence, and then came requests from publications and overseas publications, and schools: "We would like to publish available sketches of this and this," or "drawings of this and this," and, "Could you give us information," ~~and~~ they would come to Louise and she would turn it over to me [—] I was general secretary and everything else [—] to respond to these things, ~~and~~ I would call the Ark--the Ark being at the time the old architectural building--and talk to the librarian and say, "Could you make such-and-such available," and the answer was always "No."

And then one fine day there was a new librarian, and I said, when there was a request for an exhibit from overseas, "Could you make such-and-such available?" "What is that? Mendelsohn? Who's Mendelsohn? What sketches? We don't have anything."

I had to tell Louise that, and we both were up in arms, and

we went over there, and found the sketches. Nobody knew where they were. I can tell you right now where they were: they were in the men's toilet room, which is not exactly the right spot to store sketches.

Riess: No! ~~any~~ full-scale drawings were also there, or just sketches?

Schiller: No. The full-scale drawings I had already removed. I think we did store that with Mendelsohn's daughter, Ester.

Riess: And writings?

Schiller: Writing, everything that was written Louise had kept, in her files. In fact, _____ [tape blanks out]--want me, overshadow that. And there was something to that.

H.S.: do you have a tape that we can fill in from?

XVII HANS SCHILLER'S CAKEER

Riess: ~~So I asked, this~~ working as a carpenter, ~~you would say that~~ this was ~~much~~ a time that you needed to take to clear your head, as you put it. ^{When you were} ^{after Mendelsohn's death}

SINCE 1953 "Headclearing" and "Reclaiming"

Schiller: Yes. Any physical work for me clears my head, and when I really have to decide what I have to do and want to do, I like to do some physical work. It's very helpful. And the time was such that I had to make a decision. Mendelsohn was dead. I did not want to work for anybody, I never did—I'm not the type of

person who likes to work for somebody else. But this was about all that I felt I could have taken; fifteen years with Mendelsohn was about the limit that anybody should take, and it's not just Mendelsohn--with anybody.

At the same time, I was not licensed in the United States, and I was sufficiently intimidated at that point still from all Mendelsohn had told me, Michael Gaddis had told me, that it was actually impossible for me to become licensed in the United States. I felt, ~~however~~, more than that, I was lacking many things; namely, what I didn't know is how the average American architect was going about the job. I knew how Mendelsohn was going about a job, and I knew that I would never do that. So, I worked ~~decided after~~ ^{for} six months ~~working~~ as a carpenter--and I mean as a carpenter, just plain ordinary carpenter, had to join the union in this country. I was a union member in Palestine, earned my keep all right, and was good and tired every night. Didn't have much time to think about anything.

After six months, ~~when~~ that particular job was finished, which was for a developer for whom unfortunately I have done a lot of work since, ^{and} I say unfortunately because nothing ever came to fruition, ~~and~~ I always ended up paying for whatever I had done, ~~paying~~ my own employers, and paying everybody else ^{it} was always promised, but it never happened, with the exception of

his own house which he built and for which I was paid a pittance.

Anyway, I decided ~~I'd better~~ I had to do something. Number one, I had one? Or two children by that time? ~~At least I had one, I know that.~~ I probably had two children at that time, And a wife, and had to worry about where the money was coming from, because as I've indicated, Mendelsohn did not pay me very much. He paid, but he did not pay me very much.

~~But~~ I decided I would ~~put~~ --it's the first time I have ever done that--put a resume together, and a little folder, not so little, about this size, with some drawings and some pictures of what I had contributed to Mendelsohn's ^[buildings]. I've always done that ~~whenever~~, even these days, ^{have} when I had to show a client what I had done. I've refused to do what most people do, namely to claim, "This was my building." I always said, ~~that~~ "this is Mendelsohn's, but what I'll show you ^{here} is my personal contribution." I would show the details that I had done, the designs that I had done, ^{and} it's still, strangely enough, a very impressive folder. Because it does show, among other things, that I was more than just involved with Mendelsohn's buildings as an employee, but that actually quite a few of the ideas which have been acknowledged as being reasonably good ideas did come from me--something I would never have dared say in Mendelsohn's

presence. The one time I did, I got a tirade.

John Bowles

Anyway, ~~so~~ with utter trepidation I set out and went to the AIA to look who was possibly looking for people, and I found a listing of several offices in downtown San Francisco of people looking for it. With great trepidation, I walked in to a firm known as Ward and Bowles, later known as John Bowles, AIA and then FAIA and all that. The secretary said, "Oh, yes, we are looking for a draftsman. Let me find out whether Mr. Bowles can see you now."

~~So~~ John Bowles came out and shook my hand and invited me to his room, and he said, "Well, tell me, where have you worked?"

~~I said~~, "I was with Eric Mendelsohn." And I could see something in his eyes, and I didn't pay much attention, but something, some kind of recognition.

He said, "As what?" And I told him. "Oh," he said, "can you show me anything?"

I did. He said, "Well, of course, we don't do this kind of thing, you know. We're just very ordinary architects, we do whatever comes along, commercial work, and this--you're doing good work, but not this kind of work. Would you be willing to do

that?"

And I said, "Yes, Mr. Bowles, I would."

"Okay," he said, "when can you start?"

I thought I hadn't heard right. I said, "Anytime."

"Tomorrow?"

I said, "Yes."

And so, "All right. Let's sit down, let's discuss that a little bit. What did you get paid at Mendelsohn³?" And I told him, not knowing--I had no idea what people got paid, you know.

I told him, and he said, "Would you work for me if I double it?"

I said, "Double it?"

"Isn't that enough?"

I said, "Of course I would!"

"Oh," he said, "well then, let's double it." And then he started telling me that he had problems, that he had a very good client, namely Macy's. And that they had developed some ~~store~~ ^{store} ~~fixtures~~ fixtures for Macy's, and partitions for the new stores that were going to be built--there was only one Macy's in California at the time. They were going to build in various shopping centers, and had I ever designed furniture or things of that nature? And I said, yes, I had. In fact, ^{that} I felt rather confident in that area.

He said, "Fine. Good, ~~well, I'll call you~~ ^{whose background is} come tomorrow [Ⓢ] and I just hired another man ~~who's worked on~~ strictly store fixtures, ~~he~~ ^{he} comes from a manufacturer of building store fixtures, so between the two of you ^{we} better sit down together ^{we'll} and set aside a new department which ^{deals with} ~~uses~~ nothing but store development. You ^{and he will be} ~~will be~~ the first ones, and we'll give you some additional draftspeople, etc." ⁹ ~~and for the next few years,~~ ^{I was} ~~and for the first two months~~ a designer for that particular Macy's store, and then ~~as~~ chief draftsman of that division, and later chief draftsman of his whole enterprise, which grew like Topsy. ⁹ ~~At the time,~~ I stayed five years, ^{"Hans,} ~~and~~ he called me in one day and said, "You know, we're growing like mad, and I would like you to be the assistant manager of the corporation."

I said, "Well, thank you, John, that's awfully nice of you. But what does that mean? Does that mean I'm out of the drafting room, of the drafts room, and have nothing to do with development ~~any more~~ of projects, and ^{I'm} going to see nothing but clients, and arrange contracts and things of that nature?"

He said, "Yes."

I said, "The answer is no, John. I don't want it."

"Oh! Didn't I give you enough money?"

I said, "More than adequate, John. It's not the money."

"Oh, well, you realize this will be a step ahead for you, and of course you're getting more money, and you participate in the profit and everything else, and you're part owner of the firm."

I said, "No, thank you, John. If ~~you take it~~ I have no control over the product as such any more, I don't want it."

He said, "Think about ^{it} (tomorrow) and let me know."

I thought about it for the next day, and it was very

tempting. I probably would have been a fairly rich man by now ^{and} ~~because~~ he very unfortunately is no longer alive, his son took over, whom I had trained as a young man, and I probably would be a co-owner of a very, very flourishing business. But ~~the~~ the answer was no, and I went out and did my own work.

Riess: There was no turning back at that point.

Schiller: There was no turning back. ~~I mean~~ I'm probably--during the time I was there, I was the only one who quit. Everybody else was fired, and I did the firing. On most of the firing, if John didn't do it, I did the firing. So I was the only one who voluntarily left. And throughout his life, we remained good friends. ~~And~~ in fact, what happened to me immediately ^{after} ~~and~~ and it didn't happen before I left, is one of his clients asked me ~~when~~ ^{whether} I would ~~if I would~~ design a factory for him, and I said, "No. John Bowles is your architect."

"Oh, but I don't want John. I've been working with you, and I'm so happy with you, and I want you."

I said, "No. I just won't do it." ⁹ And I called John Bowles and said, "Hey, so-and-so has offered me a job, and I won't take it because he's your client."

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He laughed and he said, "That's very nice of you. Everybody else in the United States would have taken it. Take it. I don't want it!"

Riess: That's a nice parting gift. So, when you set up your own office, then, what was your model, ~~from~~[?] you ^{had} had two very interestingly different ~~to~~ *experiences.*

Schiller: Yes. I have to say that anything I've ever learned about the way the business is conducted, and I've never learned very much about that, because it doesn't intrigue me, I've learned from John. But many of the technical aspects of how business is being conducted and how you produce working drawings and all this--in the United States, *this is quite different from other countries.* I've learned *from him.*

Licensing

Riess: Did you finally get licensed? ~~You did, didn't you?~~

Schiller: Oh, yes. I'm licensed.

~~Riess: But what was the ?~~

~~Schiller:~~ I immediately applied for a license--

Riess: *Where you were with*
~~Under~~ John Bowles?

Schiller: Actually, yes. In fact, I have a letter from him saying that it is more than due to me, to the department. But I had also a certain disdain for architecture in the United States, I have to admit that. You see, they're all snobs of one kind or another. Some are willing to admit it, and others are not that willing to admit it. ~~And~~ I had long figured out and knew that I didn't have to have a license to do ninety percent of the things that architects do, and that is still true, unfortunately, today. (I say unfortunately for other reasons.) ~~And, that~~ ^Q where I needed a license, I could employ an architect in my office or associate with an architect who had a license, ~~and not only were~~ ^{were} there ¹ two or three people who were fired at John Bowles's after I left who came to work for me, who were architects, and who could supply the license if I ~~was~~ needed one and wanted one, and then there was somebody whom I had met when I was teaching at UC in one of Mendelsohn's classes, and who meanwhile got his license and never had any work and always asked me whether he could have some work. I employed him at times.

"Building Design" Classification & the Board of Architectural Examiners

Riess: So that was a practical solution, but ultimately, ~~you decided to~~

Schiller: Well, what happened is that ^{while} what I was doing was perfectly legal at the time, it became illegal after a while because the AIA had finally ~~written some~~ -- there's a certain irony in ~~that~~ ^{this --} they had

gotten some legislation passed which created another layer of professionals who were called building designers. What I was doing essentially on my own I was no longer permitted to do unless I was registered by the Board of Architectural Examiners as a building designer. ~~I was~~ [laughs] I didn't want it. I didn't want to be an architect, leave alone a building designer, you know, ~~I am~~ ~~mean~~, inferior second-grade kind of architect. I created a few problems for the Board of Architectural Examiners at the time. I refused to accept the title.

They said, "Well, look. We have to take action against you ~~we~~ we don't want to." I was reasonably well-known at the time. I was known also for the fact ~~that~~ of my past association with Mendelsohn, ~~it~~ ^{embarrassing.} it could have been a little bit ~~of that~~. So, one fine day ~~it~~ it just arrived in the mail.

Then ~~what I did immediately after that, I applied. I had~~ I found out, ~~which I didn't know,~~ ^{it,} that I would have been entitled to ~~under very peculiar conditions, I could have become~~ ^{ed to wonder,} it ~~it~~ ^{hadn't} dawn on me how did Mendelsohn become an architect in the United States? Well, very simple: he applied for it, and of course everybody said, "Yes, yes, of course, Mr. Mendelsohn." But the law said very clearly that somebody who had been a principle for a number of years, in certain countries, overseas, is entitled to become an architect, provided that he or she

passes ~~a set of~~ actually, an interview. At that time it was a handshake situation. Which it isn't today; it is quite difficult these days.

Riess: So you could have gotten in ~~it~~?

Schiller: I could have. In fact, nobody informed me of that, ~~but then~~ ^{When} I realized that that must exist ~~and~~ I wrote to the Board of Architectural Examiners to send me the conditions under which I could become an architect. I got a very curious reply; ~~that~~ ["] we don't have it all set up yet, since the building designer situation. Building designers too were considered future architects, you know. It wasn't available; it wasn't sent to me, ~~and every time I had to renew, and I have of course done that,~~ ^{consequently that trick} I would write on my check, "~~paid under protest,~~" ^A every two years, when I had to renew my license or registration as a building designer, "~~paid under protest,~~ Please inform me why I have not been given an answer how I can become an architect."

It went on and on and on, ~~and~~ one fine day, when Jerry Brown decided he wanted to do away with the Board of Architectural Examiners, he asked me whether I wanted to serve on it. I said, "To kill it?"

He said, "Essentially, yes."

I said, "Jerry, don't you have something that's a little bit more positive than that for me to do." ~~====~~ [laughter]

*
~~##end tape 17 side a, begin tape 17 side b~~

Had you already
Riess: ~~X~~ bent Jerry Brown's ear on the subject?

Schiller: No, I didn't. He bent mine.

Riess: But he knew that you had been nudging *the board?*

Schiller: Well, a little bit, yes. Still nothing happened. No, I've never used my relationship with Jerry Brown or any other politician for any personal purposes.

~~Riess: No, but I mean~~

~~Schiller: No, not even that.~~

~~Riess: You hadn't even complained about the make-up of the~~

~~Schiller:~~ ⁹ He didn't know ~~as~~ _{as} far as he was concerned, I was an architect.

That's all he knew, and that's why he wanted me on the Board of Architectural Examiners to kill it.

* Tape 17, Side B.

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Five years later, when in the last year of where he could appoint anybody, I said, "Well, it's rather nice that you appointed me to BCDC, and appointed me vice-chairman, and probably I'll end up being chairman, but I'm very vulnerable, the moment you are out, I'll be out."

And he said, "Yes. I'll give you an appointment that at least carries some time with it."

And I said, "Like what?"

He said, "Well, would you like to be on the Board of Architectural Examiners?"

I said, "Okay. But not to kill it."

"No, no," he said, "that's ^{past.} ~~passed.~~ ^{No,} ~~and~~ I want you to be on the Board of Architectural Examiners." There was one position for a building designer, and three architects, and five public members. So I ^{was} ~~got~~ ~~as~~ the only building designer to be on the Board of Architectural Examiners. I'm the one who wrote the legislation to do away with building designers, ^{while} I was the building designer representing supposedly building designers. [laughs]
And though it ^{had} ~~has~~ been tried a number of times, prior to my time,

again had to be _____[?] the AIA, because they realized they had made a mistake. They just had created a monster with which they couldn't deal.

I'm the one who got the AIA, the building designer^v organization^v, ^{and} the building industry for the first time together, not to oppose it. I pushed it through, and our present governor amazingly enough signed it. So that was number one.

But before that happened, ^{and} I knew it was going to happen, I said, "This is ^a ~~the~~ time I am not going to be a beneficiary of legislation that I have written." And I submitted myself to take the exam. Didn't prepare myself or anything. I was in a position to make certain that none of the examiners knew me. The staff was instructed by me, "You find six people that have never heard the name, do not know who I am, do not know that I'm a member of the ~~Board~~, and will examine me."

It was a tough examination, and ^{man} ~~one~~ ⁱⁿ ~~it~~ particular wanted to prove to me that I was all wrong. And two of his colleagues finally nudged him, whispered to him, and he blurted out, he said, "They've just told me that I'm wrong and you're right. Well, I would have passed you anyway, because what I've seen is actually fantastic. But this, I can't believe. You have to explain to me sometime why you elected to use this particular

structure." Anyway, I passed.

Riess: That's lovely. ~~And~~ the composition of that board, why does it ~~include~~ ^{so many} ~~have the~~ lay people, if it is really architectural examiners?

Schiller: Well, the reason is a philosophical attitude of Jerry Brown's, ~~who~~ ~~has well, it says by all means by law, but~~ it was his impetus in the very beginning, when he became governor, to make all these professional examining and regulating groups consist of a majority, if possible, of the consumers, ~~of~~ those who benefit from it. The Board of Architectural Examiners is not there for the purpose of doing something for the profession, or protecting the profession, but to protect the consumer against practices that are not acceptable, not legal. And against the possibility that somebody does not have a minimum ability of knowledge in the field. ~~So~~ it is for that purpose really, and I think it is highly justifiable, ~~and~~ ^{It's} something that the professional has been fighting against, and we're now back to an even number of architects and non-architects.

Sym vander Ryn

Riess: ~~How did [Sym vander Ryn] =~~ was ~~he~~ involved with the board itself?

Schiller: No. Well, the state architect was normally not directly involved. The state architect, very often when he's interested, is involved in serving as a commissioner; commissioners are

people who administer exams. And still, even though I'm no longer on the board, I'm still a commissioner. I still administer exams.

Riess: Were you involved in the ~~whole sort of~~ solar buildings, solar excitement of the Brown years? ~~or is that not something that?~~

Schiller: No. My involvement with Jerry Brown was strictly political and as a friend.

BCDC and Richardson Bay

Riess: ~~And then, in the BCDC business I know a lot more about the early history of BCDC, in fact, how it came to be and the legislation. What was going what were the issues when you were involved? [Bay Conservation and Development (BCD)]~~

Schiller: ~~Oh, they were essentially still the same issues, to make certain, that~~ number one, that the bay would not suffer from any possible fills, or uses that would deteriorate its water quality. Secondly, to make certain that development alongside the bay within the hundred-foot strip--

*Sorry -
Please
forgive me*

Riess: Were there some particular development battles that you recall?

Schiller: Yes, there were lots of development battles that I can recall. *As* ~~Particulars, I think I was~~ this is ~~being~~ considered ~~as~~ the environmentalist county in the state. - -

Riess: Did you represent Marin? ~~then, in that case~~

Schiller: No, I did not. Jerry Brown's letter said I was representing 23 million people. ~~But~~ be that as it may. ~~I was~~ No The appointee of the governor is serving at large and is not intended as local representation. ~~All I can tell you, however,~~

9 the record will show ~~and does show~~ that my vote in Marin has been one hundred percent in favor of the bay ~~and~~ some of my great environmentalist colleagues from Marin usually voted for developments in Marin, all of which I have voted against.

~~Because~~ There is the wisdom in the legislation, ~~because~~ they were representing their district, They were elected officials, supervisors, representing cities ~~as~~ as counsel people or mayors, and ~~as a consequence that was~~ was what happened. They voted for the developments, ~~and~~ as a consequence you have a wall of buildings all around the bay, most of them standing empty now. There is not one that I voted for. In fact, I've been fighting against that. that I was "at large."

The other contribution that I made, against essentially the desire of the staff and at that time the chairman--I was not chairman at that time of BCDC--was to create a special area plan for Richardson Bay. Richardson Bay is ~~this~~ the part of the bay ~~and~~ from here to the Golden Gate Bridge. I fought ~~it~~ the plan through against the desires of some of my Marin

colleagues on the board, and did finally get it through, and have even been serving locally at the time when they planned the development of it, and—

Riess: ~~is~~ is non-development of it.

Schiller: Development of ~~the plan~~ that special area plan. Non-development is exactly what I had in mind, and in fact restoring some of its former features. ~~And of course,~~ ^{But} once you're out, you're out, and what's happening these days is not very satisfactory, ~~and~~ not to me at least, ~~it isn't satisfactory~~. It's ultimately going to reduce what little is left of Richardson Bay further. When I bought this house, I was able out of this window to see Richardson Bay. No more, because that ~~has been filled~~. ~~That~~ end of Richardson Bay has been filled.

~~Riess: Yes. How did Nordstrom's and Macy's get in there?~~

~~Schiller: That is a little bit further up, and that is a different development.~~

~~Riess: It's right on the — it is on the bay side.~~

~~Schiller: Yes. On the bay, but not on the Richardson Bay. Richardson Bay ends right here. It goes from here all the way to Golden Gate.~~

~~Bridge.~~

~~Riess: You'd have a big balling there, too.~~

Schiller: ~~Yes. Well, in any case, that I succeeded in, and~~ I succeeded in something else. ~~In fact, I remember in the East Bay~~ ^{It} this was one of my proudest days; ~~I would say~~ ^{when} on BCDC ~~that~~ I gave a signal to a bulldozer to cut through an existing dike ^{and to} ~~country~~ ^{re store} seventy acres of historic bay. In one moment, ^{all} I did was wave a, pardon me, red flag. [laughs]

Riess: That's wonderful. Which stretch is that?

Schiller: Well, it is reasonably close to the San Mateo bridge. It was, in fact, because of the San Mateo Bridge and the shadow it was casting on the water that they had to make compensation, and buy some form of bayland, which used to be open bay, and restore it. It's now a park.

Riess: The law can be so fascinating.

Schiller: Oh, that is absolutely fascinating, and I would say that it was not my doing, not at all. I mean, the whole board was involved-- the whole BCDC, the whole commission, was involved in that, ^{with the} ~~exception of~~ ^{one or two} who always voted against ~~everything~~ ^{any} of the kind.

But it just fell to me to open it that particular day, to wave the flag.

~~Riess: Were you a member of?~~

⁹
~~Schiller:~~ The same thing happened here ^{out where is,} at Macy's ^{and} ~~incidentally.~~ They had to compensate. ^{It's} a very complicated issue, ~~because~~ it has to do with the Golden Gate Bridge ferry, which has dug out quite a bit of land and is very detrimental to marsh land. In order to make up for that they had to restore a marsh just beyond Macy's. And that is ^{now} ~~all new~~ ~~that is~~ all restored marsh land that a few years ago was not in existence. There too it was my pleasure to officiate at the opening.

~~Riess: And is that going to be the last major piece of development over there, or is that the beginning?~~

~~Schiller: No, that's it. They cannot--~~

~~Riess: It's neat and contained, so far.~~

~~Schiller: Yes. Well, I don't like it, but it's-- there are things that one-- that's democracy, and I'm perfectly willing to accept that.~~

Riess: Were you a member of the Marin Conservation League? [?] ~~are you?~~

Schiller: I am not a member of the Marin Conservation League. ^{I am} ~~am~~ a member of the ~~conservation of the~~-statewide conservation league, Conservation Voters, it's called, of which the Marin Conservation League is one of its component parts. ~~The reason~~ ^{Marin Conservation League} I've been asked a number of times to join ^{but} I'm not a great joiner, number one. Number two, the help I got from them with the Richardson Bay plan was ~~so~~ definitely noticeably absent ~~that and~~ I don't feel that I have to belong to ~~somebody or~~ something that doesn't really do anything in the way of conserving when it has to be done.

Riess: So ~~this is the same~~, when you refer to your fellow Marin environmentalists, you're ^{putting} ~~saying~~ that in quotes, ~~that they are~~ ~~really~~.

Schiller: Yes. I had a tough time to convince them; I even had a tough time, strangely enough, to convince Save the Bay, even though Save the Bay and I had a very close working relationship. I'm no longer a member of it for similar reasons. I was a member of it during the time that I was on the commission.

I had carried most of the things that they wanted to be carried, and in fact, at times I went even further than they did. And still, I did not get any active help from them. They did

come to the hearings a few times, and then even didn't do that any more. I think by and large they've ^d come to the conclusion ~~that~~ ^{would} it never happened. And things do happen when I make up my mind that they have to happen. ~~And~~ that's why I'm a little unhappy these days, because I have not a chance in the world to do anything of the kind that I would like to do.

Riess: Because of ~~the~~ Deukmejian?

Schiller: ~~Well, because~~ not just ~~the~~ Deukmejian ~~situation~~; it's Deukmejian and the national situation. I have lots of friends in high offices ^{or} and not-so-high offices, but that doesn't make up for it because they are in no position to do much about it at this point. If it were up to Barbara Boxer to get me a position I would have it tomorrow. But in lieu of doing any of the things that I used to do, ~~and~~ I'm very close to her and I'm working for her and I'm enjoying her company, And enjoying what she is doing in Congress, ^{and} that makes up for it to a degree.

Riess: ~~Feeding~~ ^{Feeding} ~~Receiving~~ your ideas in that way.

The Moral of the Story

[tape interruption]

[reviewing the interviews]

Schiller: If you treat me as somebody who is a first-generation American, and look at ^{it} strictly ^{from} ^{of} in a point what happens to somebody who

comes to a new country, that again is an entirely different story. ~~If you look for instance in greater detail,~~ my whole life, *for instance,* probably would have changed one hundred percent if I would not have been intimidated when I ^{first} came here. ~~I've been told that--is~~ *The* fact, I was told by one certain Michael Gaddis ^{ll} that as a foreigner, you cannot be licensed as an architect, ~~so~~ that made it impossible for me even to apply in the first few years, until I became an American citizen.

There were other things of this nature. ~~There~~

Riess: ~~Part of your story,~~ and you could have found out on your own ~~and~~

Schiller: Yes. I could have. But see, it was kind of overwhelming on your own ["] to deal with all this at the same time. I had to find a home, which meant every minute I had ["] I was sawing and hammering here. And still am--I have not finished. There were these things, too.

Riess: So there's the life you had, the life you might have had. There is ~~the way of doing this,~~ ^{the} of just strictly the facts. ^{story.} We've already gotten much more than strictly the facts, ^{and} ^{as you maintain.} It's not boring at all, It's interesting.

Schiller: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Riess: And there's more to come, ~~and~~ the political ^{story} ~~whole~~ ~~will~~
~~be interesting~~

Schiller: That's right. Semi-political too. And I went on the Board of Architectural Examiners with a philosophy that was alien to the Board of Architectural Examiners. I didn't believe in licensing. I said so. The first five minutes ~~that~~ I was on that board, I said, "You better find out whom you've got as your new colleague. Let me tell you what my philosophy is."

The mighty organization of architects, the national organization of architects, the AIA, of which I'm a member and have been a member even when I was not an architect, which I could not use, I couldn't use the title until licensed, you could not use it, You pay your dues and you participate and all that, but you're not a member, has tried time and again to get legislation through regarding, for instance, the building designers. And I did in one attempt pretty much single-handedly against the begrudging votes of my colleagues on the board. They didn't want--I finally said, "Look. You don't want to do it. Okay. I'll go in there by myself. Without your blessing, and I'll push it through." And I can still say I'm a member of this board. In fact I was the vice-president of the board at the time. "I'm entitled to that title. And whether you do or do not want it, I'm going

to get it through."

When it looked like it was going through, all of a sudden I got five votes. When it came to the last hearing in the legislature, and it was clear that it was through, it was going to go through, every person on that darn board voted for it. They wanted it. In the three and a half years that I was on that board, I got three pieces of legislation through. Totally changing the laws governing the practice of architecture in the state. And the mighty AIA is still trying to get some of them through that they haven't been able to, and they didn't support a single one of them. They're happy that--

Riess: At a national level, they're trying to--?

Schiller: No, no. At--I mean, there is an AIA counsel, which is the state organization. And which has eight people who persue their aims in legislation and all that. Oh, every time I got something passed, they said, "Oh, thank you, wonderful." [laughs] But when I asked them whether they were going to support it, "Well, we kind of like what you're doing, but I don't think we want to give our name to it." It would have made it much easier, you know? Because I always had to prove that they didn't object. I got them not to come in and testify against it.

370 424

So, this is certainly one lesson that most young people don't understand, in this country, and certainly most newcomers do not understand, that if you want to do certain things, that one person makes a difference. It can make a difference. And that is probably the only thing why it might be worthwhile to look at me. I don't want the things that most people want. I didn't want wealth. Because, it doesn't mean anything to me.

##end of tape 17 side b, end of interview 6 or 7

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- Page Problem
- 426 Do ;you recall Mrs. Smart's name? Was it Muriel?
- 430 What is the exact title of the book?
- 430 Please spell Apenzeller correctly
- 437 Are you continuing your account of the Miller campaign; or have you melded the two campaigns?
Should I ask the question about Grader at top of page 439 before we talk about Adlai?
- 441 When did you leave the Resolutions Committee?
- 442 This is unclear so I'm deleting it,
- 447 Can you retrieve that name?
- 449 Do you want to give this to me so I can include it in the volume?
- 451 Do you want to put these papers into the Bancroft Library? I think UCLA is also holding the presidential papers of Wyatt and others. Think about where yours might go
- 452 Please write in his reaction to death of Martin Luther King.
- 467 Can you recall the name of the persons?
- 470 Could you fill in the missing sections of the sentence. We couldn't hear it.
- 469-73 There are uncertainties about the dates and activities you were discussing. I have deleted most of it and tried to pull together what I think you meant to talk about. Is it now clearer, with the addition of the question?
- If you want to discuss these other aspects of the committee's work, please feel free to write a paragraph or page .
- 473 Finish the sentence. We lost it when we turned the tape.
- 474 Is the paragraph clear? Please revise.
- 477 Is my addition of the words George Brown's case all right?
- 479 Did better than what? Fooled about what? Please add to the sentence to make it clear
- 482 "Which didn't mean I had resigned" Do you mean from CDC? Date of resignation.
- 482 Clarify or omit phrase, "not my inclination to" .
- 483 Meaning of phrase "they were all dissolved."
- 485 What should be the date here?
- 489 We couldn't hear the phrase.
- 491 Fill in the other position you were interested in.
- 496 Please answer the question.
- 497 Would you please point out some of those accomplishments,
- 501 Fill in what you "can see".
- 502 Could I have the dates on the commission.
- 509 May I have a copy for inclusion in the volume.
- 509 Dates on the board.
- 509 I missed the first part of your answer when I turned the tape. Please revise if I did not set in what you may have said correctly,

XVIII An Abiding Interest in Politics

425

~~Interview with Hans Schiller, Interview 8~~

Sept 17, 1987

~~Begin Tape 18, side a~~

Introduction: Book Censorship at Mt. Tamalpais High School, 1954

Chall: ~~Well~~, Since we're going to discuss your political involvements, I wanted to know what was the high school book-banning incident that caused you to take ~~the~~ ^{on the presidency of the high school} ~~PTA~~ PTA. What were they banning, and who were behind it?

Schiller: Well, before we get into that, ~~since~~—since you and I haven't been discussing anything so far, let me just reiterate ~~that~~ that since I'm very much living in the present ~~or will be~~ ^{or will be} in the future, for some strange reason, despite my age, ~~I~~—I cannot rely very much on my memory. We may have to augment it by rather voluminous files, which are available to you, incidentally, if that's of any interest. You mentioned dates a little earlier; I mentioned that I was terrible at dates, because the past doesn't mean terribly much to me.

~~But, I don't think that that's what you want to find out.~~ Don't worry about it; I'll do my best.

Chall: ~~Let~~ Let me say to you that I don't really care about the dates. Let me know what the incident was, just the incident.

Schiller: Well, the incident was at Tamalpais High School, or rather

Tamalpais High School District, and the meeting, public meeting of the board, was at Tamalpais High School Library, which is a very fitting place to discuss the banning or removal of books from the shelves. It was, and for once I have looked up the date, September 13, 1954. The persons instigating the removal of books or proposed removal of books was Tom MacDougall, a contractor, and if I remember correctly somebody who recently-- ~~was not recently, but~~ at that time recently--had been running for the board of the Tamalpais High School District, and had been defeated.

The other one was a Mrs. Smart--

Chall: Of course. Everybody knows ^{of} Mrs. Smart.

Schiller: Yes. They had raised the issue of obscenity, communism, and a few other such things, and after all, these were still the [Joseph] McCarthy times. It is not too unusual in those times. There was a threatened recall of the board unless they were doing their bidding. ~~It~~ ^{They} had brought with them a large group of people who were in favor of removal of these books. They had circulated excerpts which, as excerpts, made interesting reading, shall we say, [laughs] ~~But~~ were totally out of context, of course. You could do the same with the Bible; could do the same with Shakespeare, and a few other famous books and works of

literature.

I was very reluctant to attend any public meeting, or have anything to do, as I explained some other time, ^[in earlier interviews] with American politics. I felt at my ripe old age of thirty years, when I came to this country, I had lived more than one life up to that point, and wasn't about to get involved with American politics, which at the time were an enigma to me, ~~and more than that,~~ ^{They were} not just alien to me, but I kind of despised American politics at the time and looked down on it for a number of reasons. The red fear that came out of any headline at the time in the newspapers seemed so ludicrous to me, having known communism actually, and having seen it in action. Having seen communists, having worked with communists during the war, ~~and~~ it all seemed so totally unreal.

A friend of mine called in the afternoon and said, "There is this hearing going on tonight at Tamalpais High School, and I think you should be interested in that, because what they're going to discuss is censorship of books, ~~and~~ something that I know you have been opposed to in the past, ~~and~~ this is the time to speak from experience, ~~and~~ speak up and be counted." I protested loudly that I didn't want to be involved, and didn't want to have anything to do with it. Nevertheless, it bothered me, and then a few hours later, I showed up at the high school, with the full intent of sitting there, saying nothing.

I was not a citizen of the United States at the time, and felt that I really had no part in all of this.

Chall: But you had children in high school--

Schiller: Not yet. I had children, all right, but they weren't in high school. They were too young.

Chall: So it was just a matter of principle, then.

Schiller: Yes. It was a matter of principle, ~~and~~ I've never in my life done anything because it directly affected me, in one way or the other. Or practically never, shall we say. ~~for that matter~~ In any case, what happened was that, after the ludicrous accusations were made, and discussion went to a certain point, all of a sudden, very much against my own desires, I found myself raising my hand. That was the first time in the United States that I ever ventured an opinion or spoke publicly. It's something that ~~is~~ still, ~~in my mind~~, though I've long forgotten where it was, ~~when it was~~, that people still tell me ~~that~~ ^{that} they remember.

And I guess, in retrospect, I would have remembered too. I wasn't really aware of it, not that it mattered to me at the

time, that not being a citizen of the United States, and saying the things that I said, in those times ^{that} could very definitely have endangered me, ~~and~~ particularly since I had really indicated that, if something like this could happen in the United States, this would not be the first country I had left. I had left two countries, essentially for political reasons, and I wouldn't hesitate to leave this country--which I had selected intentionally because of its principles. I would leave this country too.

Looking at some of the press records, as I did last night, apparently ~~we~~ ^{they} say that what I said was greeted with more applause than ^{for} any other speaker. I don't think that what I had to say is what swayed the board. I hope it wasn't that. But it may have done something else; it may have given them the necessary courage to speak up and to decide the way they intended to decide. I'm convinced, knowing a little bit more about the people who were involved at that time, that their decision would have been the same as mine. However, whether they would have had the courage to speak up and decide accordingly is a different question. ^P I say that in retrospect, ~~and~~ because for the next I think seven or eight years, this was a recurring incident that crept up in different shapes again and again, ~~which~~ I was then involved in semi-official capacity, ~~and~~ because a year after that, I was proposed by a nominating committee of the PTA

of Tamalpais High School as president of their board, which was of course very strange to me.

no P I had not been involved with educational matters, but it was really on the basis that they felt ~~that~~ they were still under attack, and needed somebody who was willing to speak up.

Chall: Was it unusual to have an officer of the PTA whose children are not in that school?

Schiller: No--well, I guess so. It was very unusual. It was also, strangely enough, unusual to have a man. ~~In~~ In fact, there hadn't been a man in that spot before. But, it got me involved, and got me involved in legislative efforts. I testified later on in Senate hearings, on the same issues. And later on it was The Catcher in the Rye. ~~At~~ At that time it was The Field of Broken Stones, and a few others, like H For Heroin[e?], and a few other books which were quite innocuous.

title?

Chall: Well, it's current ^{problem} today too, so ~~she~~ ^{the book censor} still at it. Although I don't know whether Mrs. Smart is still around, but ~~she was very~~, ~~she~~ ^{activist in the censorship arena} she was the most well-known, I think throughout the whole state. Everybody knew her, ~~and who she was~~, and what she stood for, throughout California. So if you were battling her, you had a battle.

Schiller: Oh, yes. She had a very interesting way of intimidating people. She would get up during meetings with a little camera, which I as a photographer realized wouldn't work under the circumstances--

Chall: Not enough light.

Schiller: --and snap pictures of anybody who was talking. It was a clear indication: These were going to go to the FBI, or whoever, ~~she~~ she might want to send ^{them} to. [laughs]

Chall: Those were tough years. Is that any reason why your wife has been on the school board for so many years? ~~is that~~

Schiller: No. Since you mention that, my wife got on that particular school board, and was elected out of a field of nine in her first attempt at public office, and has been re^{re}lected four times-- only after our children had left the high school. It was again a matter ~~of~~ not, as so many ~~of~~ say, "I have to be on this board because my daughter, or my son, is in this school," ~~it~~ it was a matter of public awareness, and the desire to participate.

Chall: *Clem Miller's Campaign for Congress, 1956-1962*
~~That's~~. That's a good start. You said it was 1954, so it wasn't very long after that that you were involved, I take it, in Clem Miller's bid for Congress. Now, he ran in 1956, and was

defeated, I understand, by Herbert Scudder by something like ⁵ five percent, which gave him a feeling--or his backers--that he could try again. Did you work on both his *campaigns*?

Schiller: Yes. I worked on both campaigns. ~~o~~ I first heard about Clem when one fine day, my wife came home and said, "I've just seen something very strange. I went shopping, and at the shopping center, a man was standing on top of his car and speaking through a microphone and two speakers that he had set up in front of it, and he said his name was Clem Miller and he was running for Congress. ~~o~~ There was no audience. He was just talking." And that kind of intrigued me, because at that time, I was somewhat involved in politics, and I was intrigued all of a sudden by American politics, ~~o~~ particularly after the first Stevenson effort, which we want to mention later.

Chall: Yes, that's right. This was after that [1952].

Schiller: Yes, it was after that. And so I was definitely involved ~~o~~ at that time. ~~The~~ The moment I had become an American citizen, I did register, of course.

Chall: When was that date, of your American citizenship?

Schiller: In '55. Rather late. But I had too many things to worry about.

1: Well, we don't have to go into that. I just wanted the date.

1ler: That's right. And, so I was definitely involved in American politics, ~~and~~ I had registered as a Democrat. ~~When coming~~
~~about~~ The choices were minimum. Having come from two countries in which there had been thirty to forty parties, in all faiths, you know, to select one of two parties, is not that simple. ~~But I would say and it perhaps includes the Democratic~~
~~fact, and~~ What was much more important to me at the time was that a man like [Adlai] Stevenson very much represented what I thought politics should be all about. I didn't realize at the time, it has taken me until probably now, to realize that the way Stevenson approached politics and his bid for the presidency was such that his chances were practically nil, in the United States. And still would be today, even more so, I would think, than at that time.

In any case, I was intrigued that somebody was going to run against Scudder, and so I made it a point to find the man who was standing on top of his car, and speaking. ~~The next time, in fact, that~~ I saw him ~~standing somewhere~~ somewhere in the fields between Marin County and Sonoma County, with his car, standing at the edge of a road, ^{with} ~~and~~ the loudspeaker on, ~~and~~ holding his microphone in his hand. There was a bunch of cows,

and he was addressing the bunch of cows. [laughter] And that kind of humor, and his realization, ^{that} ~~that~~ he had to campaign all over. ~~And~~ he did; he never stopped campaigning. ~~It~~ intrigued me ~~and~~ more than that, I found him a very interesting man, a very straightforward man, and somebody who had a great appreciation of something that I was interested in, in the beauty of the environment, and people, ~~and~~ ^{I thought,} ~~In~~ every respect, a person who could not possibly win.

He taught me a lesson, that such people can win, ^{They} ~~and~~ can even win in a district, which then extended from the Golden Gate all the way to Oregon, despite the fact that the people in the district barely, if at all, share your opinions. As long as they understand that you're decent, straightforward, honest about your opinions, and whether you speak to the cows in Sonoma County or to those who believe they know it all in Marin, that you always say the same thing, and answer to the same question. And that, I found rather refreshing.

Chall: But he must have spoken to other than cows, in order to almost defeat Scudder the first time around.

Schiller: Oh, of course.

Chall: ~~What did you do after you met him?~~ What did you do after you met him? Did you take on

some assignments?

Schiller: I took on a number of tasks, ~~starting from putting~~ handing out literature, ~~and~~ campaigning door-to-door, ~~and~~ later on I did what I have done with many candidates, from presidential on down to local candidates, namely ~~that I have done~~ going around with them, ~~and~~ acting in certain ways--certainly much later--as an advisor, in certain areas. I just happen to have come very close to Clem ~~and~~ I was driving with him and Bill Grader, who was his field representative, through the district. I became familiar with the district. I knew the district almost as well as Grader, and definitely better than Clem, who of course was most of the time in Washington. I enjoyed it.

Chall: That's after he won?

Schiller: Yes. After he won. And certainly in his re~~re~~election campaign, I was involved in a number of ways. Also, he was a very difficult man to capture in photographs. His photographs were always posed and horrible. He was actually a nice-looking man, but he always looked terrible in photographs. Bill Grader talked to me at one time and said, "Why don't you go with us and try to catch him? He's used to you, he doesn't mind you. He won't change his expression when you take a photograph." ~~and~~ I did, and I took a great number of photographs of him, which were partly used and

partly not. Partly not because, at the time when I had taken most of my photographs, Clem died during the campaign, in an air crash. [1962]

Chall: Yes. That was quite tragic.

spell
Schiller: It was very tragic. However, ~~it was something that~~ I was involved at that time with the group, closest group that was backing him, and I worked with Bill Grader, and Nancy Swadesh, and Muriel Ape[?]rzeller, who was his field assistant, to continue the campaign. ~~It was the one time that~~ I it was the first time I think in California that a man was elected to Congress overwhelmingly after he was dead.

Chall: There was nothing--his name was on the ^{ballot --} there was nothing that could really be done about it.

Schiller: Nothing could be done. However, his opponent, Mr. [Don] Clausen, ~~had~~ had flown to scene of the crash. he owned an air ambulance service. And of course, he did everything he possibly could to endear himself to the public, ~~and~~ it was important to gain the time so that he wouldn't get the seat, because he was an absolute non-entity, to put it mildly. He was being manipulated by the party, and in fact, in some of his reelection bids, it's been said that he was locked in his hotel room ^{by his hand} so he couldn't speak to anybody.

~~by his handlers.~~

Chall: ~~All of which didn't mean that he~~ He won the next election. Now, was Bill Grader a poor candidate? [1963]

Schiller: Yes. Well, Bill Grader was in shock. And I was doing exactly for Bill Grader what Bill Grader had been doing for Clem. I was driving him from place to place, and I would wake him in the morning and say, "Bill, we have to go," and Bill would get up and he'd say, "Is Clem ready?" I mean, he was still totally in shock, and to switch over--he couldn't grasp it. Bill Grader was a man who had seen and identified Clem after the air crash. And still, he could not--Clem wasn't dead for him, and he wasn't campaigning.

But finally, during--everybody around him, everybody around Clem Miller, Bill Grader ² campaign said, "Let's drop it; let's forget it," and I insisted, "No." And I think I prevailed, and I really totally donated all my time ~~at the time~~ during the next six weeks--~~and~~ partly went by myself, partly went with Bill Grader--and did everything I could to campaign. And succeeded in getting Clem elected.

What happened thereafter was sad, but...

Is this a continuation of the above paragraph or change from Grader to Miller? Whose campaign?

Grader's continuing Miller campaign?

Chall: So, Don Clausen won.*

Schiller: Yes, and stayed in until quite recently, I think it's two terms ago.

Chall: Yes, he had a long time there.

Schiller: ~~Some~~, I've worked for everybody after that who ran against Clausen. And again, was driving through that district, with McCabe, for instance. McCabe had a large bus, and I was driving that huge bus through those tiny little very curvy roads at that time to go up all the way to Crescent City.

spell Chall: Did you, besides Nancy Swadesh, and Muriel Apfelzeller, [?] did you also work with Elizabeth Smith Gatov and Roger Kent and others in this campaign?

Schiller: Yes, of course.

Chall: How did you fit into their structure, which was the Democratic Party for northern California, really? Actually, not just Marin County.

Schiller: Oh, yes. We were good friends, to the present day.

Unfortunately, not with Kent. But with Libby Gatov. I fit in at

**He defeated William Shader in the 1955 election.*

times, and I didn't fit. Well, I mean, you want to know about CDC, obviously. In certain ways, I didn't fit.

Adlai Stevenson, 1952, 1956

Chall: All right. Well, then we can go onto Adlai Stevenson, which of course did come before. Were you interested in his campaign in 1952, or did you--?

Schiller: Yes. I was interested, but I was not a citizen. But I was very much interested. I've had the privilege and pleasure to have met Stevenson during the campaign a number of times--

Chall: His first campaign? When he was here in the county?

Schiller: In this county, certainly, he was at Roger Kent's. But also in San Francisco, ~~and~~ we had an exchange of two or three letters, which I haven't been able to find, but they are there. ~~and we~~ we were dealing with something that ~~was~~ I have pursued politically ever since, namely the question of disarmament, ~~and~~ particularly nuclear disarmament. And I know that ~~at the time we were~~ ~~referring~~ the brief correspondence was dealing with that aspect.

I certainly did support him in his next bid, ~~and as little~~ ~~as I can remember it, except that~~ He to me, of all American politicians, was the ideal politician, ~~and~~ somebody who embodied to me what I consider the ideal in politics, namely the good side

of politics, ~~and~~ ^{that} we read so much these days [^] there are dirty politics, [^] About politics being dirty. Whereas, when you look at the two campaigns, at least of Adlai Stevenson for [^] President, those embodied to me a dedication to the ideal and not anything that was demeaning as the word "political" ⁱⁿ these days, ^{or} it often is being used.

It was in the hope to perpetuate this kind of attitude, ~~and~~ ^{that I joined the CDC [California Democratic Council]. I also} ~~also comparing it all the time to the culture from which I came,~~ ^{compared our party government structure with the one from which} ~~Even though, I was born in Germany, culturally I was much more~~ ^{I came,} affected by British [^] than by Germany, because I left Germany as a young boy, really. I always found it was a pity that there was no use made of those ^{defeated candidates} ~~It~~ was so wasteful not to have a loyal opposition, ^{so that} ~~and~~ automatically ~~and~~ somebody who is defeated for president should form the shadow cabinet, and be heard as such. ~~and~~ such things of course do not exist in the United States.

Chall: Yes, they ^{often} ~~are~~ disappear ~~ed~~ from ~~the scene~~.

Schiller: They ~~are~~ disappear ~~ed~~.

Chall: ~~That's right. Well,~~ I guess the CDC was really ~~formed to continue~~ ^{formed to continue} the Adlai Stevenson political legacy.

~~#end tape 18 side a, begin tape 18 side b~~

Idea for the Peace Corps

One thing I should have mentioned ~~and I didn't mention, and~~ that goes back to Adlai Stevenson ~~and~~. After he had lost the second campaign, the party was in very sad financial shape--not only financially, it was in very sad shape. It was a question of keeping the party together and the finances together, ^{so} ~~that~~ he was prevailed upon by the party to go through the country with a series of lectures and meetings. I wish I could tell you exactly when it was ~~at~~ I think it was in January, the year after, in other words, January 1957, that there was a meeting in San Francisco. It was an issues meeting, called by the Democratic Party, which was divided into issues groups like foreign policy, and all kinds of issues.

I attended the foreign policy issue grouping, which was chaired by Hubert Humphrey. In the discussion, I brought up the question of what was going on at that time in the Middle East, and I pointed out that the reason that people were always talking about the Communist Danger in the Middle East was not so much that people were communists in the Middle East, but that the Russians had a technique of presenting their case, which was far superior to the American one. Namely, that they had something similar to the Peace Corps, and they required people who served in this capacity to be directly involved with the population, and living with the local population under the same conditions,

eating the same food and most importantly, speaking their language. It was not a matter of making communists out of them at the point; you cannot make a communist of somebody whose background is a feudal system. But bring him via nationalism to this century?

Hubert Humphrey was intrigued by that, and said, "Do you think that could be used by us in some fashion?"

I said, "Well, if you don't mind imitating what the Russians are doing, that's why I'm mentioning it. I think our foreign policy should not consist of giving money and arms, but should consist in a great extent vis-a-vis these countries, and developing countries, by giving them what our know-how is, and doing it not like a colonial power, but doing it on an equal footing."

After the discussion was over, he said to me--and this was a very interesting comment--"Do you mind if I tell Governor Stevenson about it?"

I said, "Of course not."

He did, and a little later, he said, "Governor Stevenson and I would like to discuss the matter a little further with you."

And we did. It was Hubert Humphrey who in the end gave Kennedy the idea of the Peace Corps.

Chall: Nice bit of background.

Schiller: Not only then, but I have always hoped that some administration would use me in some capacity in the Peace Corps, because it would have intrigued me greatly, ~~and~~ I have never been able to do it, and was never asked. And I've made the mistake perhaps throughout my life that I've never asked for anything. If something wasn't offered to me, it didn't exist.

Chall: You can volunteer to go into the Peace Corps, and go off to Africa.

Schiller: Yes.

Chall: Many people your age have done it. But that's different.

No, I have changed.

The California Democratic Council [CDC]

Schiller: ~~Oh, good~~ Well, it was two things that got me into CDC, ~~{California Democratic Council}~~. Number one is what you mentioned, foremost, namely that it perpetuated or tried to perpetuate the political ideals that were first enunciated by Adlai Stevenson. And secondly, that Clem, during the time that he was not a congressman, not elected, but in his first attempt and second election, was a member of CDC, and at that time in the very beginning was the first chairman of the Resolutions Committee of CDC, ~~and~~ Since issues intrigued me, and interested me, and since Clem interested me, and ~~Clem asked me to go with him,~~ ^{I was working with him,} ~~and~~ ^{he} had me appointed to the Resolutions Committee at that time. I stayed with the Resolutions Committee ^{until a few years ago.} ~~almost ever since,~~ ~~not any more.~~

date if you know it.

But, for many years, I was a member, and later ~~as~~ its cochair and then its overall chair. I was also at that time, during ~~the~~ Clem Miller's time, ~~I was~~ elected in this district as the director from this district, and represented the First District, which still ~~is~~ ^{is} the first district, on the CDC board. I was very early, actually, on the board. I was on the board when--

Chall: Alan Cranston was president?

Schiller: Alan was no longer president.

Chall: Oh, that's right; we're talking about 1958. Wyatt?

Schiller: Yes, it was [Joseph] Wyatt. Wyatt was president, and it was his successor, [Tom] Carvey, who appointed me to be chair of the Resolutions Committee. In between we had [Frank] Brand from San Francisco.

Chall: Brand was what?

Schiller: Brand was ~~in between~~ chair of the Resolutions Committee, between Clem and myself. At the time, incidentally, Sala Burton also served together with me, at the same time, on the board of directors of CDC. ~~He~~ I have known all presidents of CDC, ~~and~~ all those you have listed and then some. [laughter]

Chall: Yes, I know. My research ~~ended~~ *ended earlier than your activity in CDC.*

Schiller: That's very interesting that the stuff that I understand it in certain ways, and maybe that answers one of your questions, what happened to CDC.

Chall: That's right, yes. Well, we'll get into that.

*This is
not clear on
tape.*

Schiller: Let me just say ~~one thing, that we might get into it in certain ways, but~~ the things that I have done for CDC are all documented, and I still have all the various voluminous reports that were produced during the time, ^{which} ~~and~~ fully document what I have done. There is really no need to cover that in that sense. If you're interested in it--?

The Resolutions Committee

Chall: Well, no. As long as it is documented. Then let me ask you some questions about the CDC which you would probably have some feelings about. ~~We've talked about the Resolutions; what, in a~~ ^{The resolutions, to some degree,} ~~some people,~~ alienated the mainstream Democrats, and ultimately caused a real problem, before and after ~~Security~~. ^{[Simon] Casaday.}

There was a feeling that the Resolutions for equality of women, equality of blacks, recognition of China--all of these resolutions, which came up through the CDC, and received a great deal of publicity after they had been passed, alienated the mainstream Democrats. ~~And that~~ you had the problem of alienation among a lot of Democrats who were members of clubs.

~~All~~ ^A clubs weren't liberal clubs. That was one problem.

~~#~~ Another with respect to resolutions, I've been told, is that people who were really concerned about these issues--they were principles--would stay till the bitter end of a meeting, and that you might just have a handful left, because everybody else was tired and had gone home. This I understand happens also in ~~the~~

or used to, ^{or} maybe still ~~do the director from this district, and represent~~
~~district, which still was the first district, on the CDC.~~

Schiller: *more in the central committee.*

Chall: Next day you'd wake up, the newspapers would flash: "CDC Resolves--". And this, in time, created, I guess, schisms within the Democratic Party. ~~■~~ You already had elected a slate; ~~the~~ California was now--back in 1958--was Democratic, and these people wanted to stay in power, ~~and~~ They wanted the help of the CDC, but they didn't want to be faced with these issues. ~~■~~

Can you give me some of your ^{knowledge} ~~conclusions~~ of how the resolutions came up through the committee, ^{and} whether there were tensions involved even in the committee, ~~or~~ Was the committee generally one-sided, in their way of thinking *about the issue?*

Schiller: No. Let me say that I was quite instrumental in changing the procedure, once I was in charge of it. There was a very rigid procedure. Resolutions had to be in by a certain time, so ~~■~~ ^{they} could be duplicated, could be made available for public hearing prior to the convention, usually starting the day before, on Friday at 9:00 in the morning. I remember some sessions the next morning at 9:00, I was still sitting in the chair, trying to sift through everything, and trying to go through ^{it} all and listen ~~■~~ to all of the people who had something to say about it.

Chall: This was the Resolutions Committee chair?

Schiller: Yes.

Chall: ^{nine} ~~two~~ in the morning of the weekend of the convention, you were still working on the resolutions?

Schiller: Yes. ~~They had to be in by~~ Later on, ~~the~~ cutoff date was two weeks before that. They had to be in, ~~they~~ were being distributed to the members of the Resolutions Committee, so ~~they~~ ^{we} had an inkling what it was all about. There was a great number ~~of~~ ~~it was equally indicated in~~ The regulations ^{required} that obviously ~~the~~ ^{resolutions} had to be combined, if they were similar, and it was up to the Resolutions Committee to do this kind of editing, and to present ~~it~~ ^{them} in that fashion to the convention.

It was made clear that the great number just could not be handled by a convention, and that we would attempt to reduce it to not more than let's say thirty. Which is still a great number. Particularly if they are great in importance. I was very instrumental in cutting them down in size, but not changing their intent. ^I ~~and~~ improv^{ed} the language I hope. Because, unfortunately, I was and am a gram^marian and hate sloppy English. I found, to my great suprise, yesterday, listening to something, that even I had split an infinitive once. [laughter]

But, in any case, during the time that I was chair, things got on a fairly even keel, which has nothing to do with its content. The content was freely debated, ~~both on the committee--~~ anybody who had any standing, ~~and~~ even people who didn't have standing, ~~if I had the time, I would let almost anyone who~~ *-- it was possible on a time basis --* claimed an interest, ~~if it was possible on a time basis,~~ speak to the committee. So, all views were presented.

*The Effect of the Vietnam War
Seen in Casaday, CDC President, 1965*

The question that you raised is really one that came to its fore during the Vietnam War, ~~and~~ *I* was in 1965 at the convention, ~~and that was the second year that I was chair of~~ *I was* ~~chair at that time,~~ cochair₃ of the Resolutions Committee--that the famous and very mild Vietnam Resolution came up and was passed. And frankly, I'm very proud of it, even though I didn't write it. I sat in the chair, and I ~~remember that I~~ I think *I was evenhanded.* Not only at that time, people generally were confirmed that I was very evenhanded in any chair that I've been sitting in. ~~And~~ I've always tried to bring out all sides. I may have been arbitrary in cutting off debate at times, simply because I also had to stay on the agenda.

But, I felt it had to be said, and it was important. I think that showed perhaps the greatest moral strength CDC has ever had, ~~so~~ when, in '65, it^was the first Democratic organization ^{to} criticize a sitting president. I have to say two things about

it: I personally liked [Lyndon] Johnson. I hated his policy in Vietnam. I still think he was a great president, but still think that he was totally misled on Vietnam.

In '65, I was running unopposed for the vice-president of CDC--totally unopposed. And since I was unopposed, I was helping an old friend of mine, Gerald Hill, to run for the presidency, ^{and} ~~and~~ was campaigning for him throughout northern California. ~~I found at the convention when I was still unopposed on the~~
~~The~~ evening before the convention, while I was in Resolutions, handling resolutions matters, ^{and still unopposed,} ~~but~~ two people whom I'd supported and have supported since, ~~and~~ the Governor [Pat] Brown and Alan Cranston, were campaigning up and down the corridors, ~~I had to~~ ~~including~~ including the wash rooms, against Gerald Hill, and against me. It was particularly Alan Cranston who, at the last minute, put somebody in the race against me, just when it was still legally possible. ^{He} ~~who~~ never showed up at the convention, and never spoke. He was one of his appraisors.

Chall: What was his name?

name ? Schiller: Ford.

Chall: ~~Do you have a first name for him that you can remember--oh, well?~~
~~Look it up, and give, then~~ ^{they were supporting} as president, ~~it was~~ Simon Casaday.

~~Wasn't that the year that they were ?~~

Schiller: And Simon Casaday, yes. I had met Simon Casaday and found that he didn't really know what it was all about, what CDC was all about. He was an interesting man, and never while he was running did he indicate where he stood on Vietnam. Never. In fact, he was the establishment candidate. It's very fascinating.

~~Because~~ I had a very, very strong hold at the time on CDC, but I lost by two votes, ~~against~~ ^{against} a man who didn't appear, who didn't say a word, and who later became a Republican.

Chall: Which tells you what, ^{about} ~~at~~ that time? Tells you that the CDC could be manipulated by the party regulars, by the strong ^{mainstream} ~~mainstream~~ Democrats?

Schiller: By the office-holders. The party was not that strong. The party has never been that strong; it still isn't strong. But it's equally interesting that it didn't take terribly long--in '68, Cranston very clearly indicated that he had made a mistake. Pat Brown never said anything in that respect, ~~but~~ ^{but} Pat Brown and I have always been very friendly, and always liked each other. ~~And~~ Pat Brown ^{did} ~~was~~ not in that sense campaign ~~ed~~ against me. He did campaign against Hill, which was more important to him.

Chall: He campaigned against Casaday, within a year.

Schiller: Oh, yes. Of course. They both did.

Chall: They got him out of office.

Schiller: Yes. That is equally correct. But in any case, it is interesting perhaps, what you asked about Casaday, ^[on the outline] ~~and~~ Did I campaign against Casaday together with the majority caucus? No.

Chall: ~~Yes~~. Well, you did resign from the board. ✓

Statement available?

Schiller: I did resign, and my resignation statement is available to you or anybody else. It doesn't quite stress what my conclusion was later on within the next year or so. I did not object in any way to Casaday's attack--well, I shouldn't say that. I didn't object to Casaday's attitude towards Vietnam, but ^{to} the manner in which he did it. Which was totally nonproductive. He was a terrible administrator, he let CDC deteriorate. If you really want to know when CDC got its death blow, it was during the Casaday regime. That's very sad, because the man is extremely intelligent, has the right instincts, but politically didn't know what he was doing.

Chall: And had a very acerbic way of dealing with ~~other~~ people, I understand.

* At a meeting of the Board of CDC on November 13, 1975, Casaday refused to resign from the presidency, following a vote of 20-18 against his resignation. He noted that of the 24 members, 10 were not present. Following that meeting some officers and staff resigned.

chiller: Oh, terribly. But the equally interesting thing is that Simon Casaday and I, a few years later, became close friends, and Si ~~had~~ always said, "I wished I had listened to you, Hans. You were so right about what you said." I mean, there couldn't have been any question where I stood. I was opposed to Vietnam, and certainly had done everything I could to phrase it in a--or have it phrased in a--I didn't like this resolution. I've been accused of writing all resolutions; no I haven't. I have rewritten quite a few, I have written a great number. But this was not one of them, and I don't want to claim anything that I didn't do.

I like Si, and he has often said publicly and not so publicly how wrong he was in the way he had approached ^{his office-} That's really what it was about. I withdrew from CDC and from the board simply because I didn't want part of this destruction, and I knew it was going to be terrible. The only convention I didn't attend was the '66 one, in which Gerald Hill was elected.

hall: ~~Let me ask you,~~ You resigned from the board, but didn't you go back on the board after ~~the~~ Casaday?

chiller: Oh, yes, I certainly did. I was back on the board because Gerald Hill ~~had~~ appointed me as political action chair, and I served with him and under him, and certainly I was on that board, and

on with the Peace State in 1968.
 later) ~~late 1968~~

Eugene McCarthy's Campaign for U.S. President 1968

Chall: The [Eugene] McCarthy campaign

Schiller: Yes. Which of course was started in '67. ~~and~~ I was on that executive committee, and in fact I was ~~in~~ during the McCarthy campaign, ~~I was~~ the state chair for issues and platform for McCarthy. There are voluminous writings which you can have that ~~I did and~~ wrote for him, including, while I was traveling with him through California, a speech that I wrote for him and which he edited, and re-edited, and said, "Just wait, you won't recognize your speech this evening!" [laughter]

papers?

Chall: Did he work over his speeches the way Adlai Stevenson is ^{said} ~~supposed~~ to have worked over his?

Schiller: Yes. The grasp of what was presented to him is unbelievable. He read through a rather difficult technical matter which was dealing with city planning and conservation, ~~in~~ a fairly thick volume--read through it in no time at all, ~~and not only had he read through everything,~~ I had marked some questionable things in my own copy for discussion with him, because I thought they didn't apply to the situation. It was a speech, or rather a paper, that I had written for ADA [Americans for Democratic Action] the year before, for their convention.

The interesting ^{thing} was that he, in minutes, had picked out the very same points, every one of them. I said, "Here, senator, see--same question mark. "Good ~~out!~~" I mean, just like that. He still wanted to know, wanted to have an argument. If I had a good argument, he would have kept it. But since I questioned them, that was it. He was very interesting.

Chall: Did you have a feeling of deja vu when you were going around with him, ~~as if you had been going around with Adlai Stevenson?~~ ^{comparing him with} They were really very different kinds of people, but how did that ^{comparison} strike you?

Schiller: ~~Yes~~ Very different kinds of people. Adlai Stevenson was a kind person. Gene was a very acid person, and could be very destructive. Generally, and I am very careful what I say, at that time, for good purpose. Later on, at times, I think some of the things he did for not for a good purpose. But he was fascinating; a fascinating personality. The ability, for instance, to separate his religious belief from his political belief. ^{He} He was a very private man, ~~and I've been~~ ^{I was} with him at ~~two~~ two very strange times: One, when I had just found out from the Secret Service that Martin Luther King had been killed, and it was I who had to tell him. And his reaction I will never forget. There's a few times that I could see beyond the surface.

reaction-

The second time was ^{when} ~~that~~ I had to inform him that Bobby Kennedy was shot.

Chall: You were with him both times?

Schiller: I was with him both times, and both times it was I who had to tell him. He turned absolutely white when he heard that Bobby Kennedy had been shot.

Chall: The whole campaign was--

Schiller: Well, everything. Not just the--~~but you see,~~ He just turned to me and he said, "Make sure nobody disturbs me." And he went into his room. I came in once, just because there was no sound. And for a whole night, he was on his knees. The only time I'd seen the man exercise ^{ing} his religion. That was a very strange and very moving experience, and it did something. The only thing he said ~~was~~ I had left the hotel where we were, and I had gone to stand outside the hospital where Bobby Kennedy was dying, and when I finally came back, he was still locked in his room. I came in, he was still on his knees.

He turned around, and he said, "He's dead, isn't he?"

I said, "Yes."

He said, "That bullet has killed more than him. It has killed all of us, and may have terrible repercussions for the United States."

Chall: How did you manage, then, to go on with the campaign, because then it became a crazy campaign? The write-ins, and all that.

Schiller: He did and he didn't. He gave me the impression that he had lost all drive; he personally had lost all drive. And it was not the personal loss. And I have to say that, I think ^{for} ~~with~~ accuracy, that though of course anybody who is running for president, for whatever reason, has to have ambition. And Gene was no exception. He had tremendous ambition. But there was no ambition any more. He did what he did because he felt he had to. He owed it to Kennedy, he owed it to himself, he owed it to anybody who--on both sides--had been working on it and for it, and there was absolutely no question that he had to go through with it. [¶] But somehow, I always felt that he was almost totally absent. He was going through it perfunctorily, and even going through it perfunctorily, he was and is ^{probably} ~~probably~~, I haven't seen him in a few years--a mental giant. His thought processes, even if under a cloud like this, are still outstripping those of most ordinary mortals. His ability to analyze things, and the

way he would do it and go about it, was totally fascinating.

Chall: You ~~was~~ ^{you were} not a member of the California ^{delegation} ~~delegation~~ that went to ~~the~~ Chicago?

Schiller: No. I was in Chicago with him, as a staff member, voluntary, ~~and~~
~~_____~~ [telephone interruption]

Chall: I wanted to ask you about that 1968 ~~campaign~~ ~~I mean, the~~ convention. We all know what happened. How was McCarthy feeling at that time? How did he respond? That was in his favor, presumably.

Schiller: [laughs bitterly] He responded to anything and everything that happened. He went out of the convention--he was never inside the convention. He went outside of his hotel to the park where the opposition had assembled, and talked to them. I did accompany him one time, or tried to, because the moment we walked out of ~~the hotel~~, even though I had a floor pass, clearly ^a member of the delegation ~~and in fact~~ I had a press pass, because I was representing one of the local newspapers, and I was carrying a camera, and I had a Secret Service pin, which I had to have, anybody who was close to one of the presidential candidates ^{had to have}.

We were walking out of the hotel, and the Chicago police

captain just pushed me aside and stopped me, and he said, "Sorry, Senator, this man can not go with you. I can't stop you."

McCarthy said, "He will go with me."

I said, and I pointed to my Secret Service pin, that I was entitled to go with him, and he said, "I'm the law here," and there was a little--I tried to push back in, and he was holding a truncheon in his hand--

~~##end tape 18 side b, begin tape 19 side a~~

Schiller:

McCarthy.
 I was standing a little bit away from ~~him~~, the police captain hit the camera that was hanging around my neck and smashed it to the ground. It was totally destroyed. Well, McCarthy turned around and may have made some comment to him, about police brutality, and then said, "You'd better stay here, Hans. He won't hit me."

Chall: Pretty tense time.

Schiller: Yes. Well, it was a frightening time in certain ways, and to me a frightening experience--not this particular thing, but the whole thing. I was there a few days before the convention started, to help set up things for McCarthy, and stayed until it

was all over. To me, it was utterly frightening to see the activities that were pre-planned and were clearly pre-planned by the police and by the mayor of the city, ~~and~~ ~~It~~ It was something I couldn't quite deal with, to find in the United States a police force that creates a riot. They were rioting--the police were rioting before anybody else did anything of the kind. It was something that I did not think was possible in the United States. It confirmed some of the fears I had earlier, and some of the fears I still have.

Chall: Of what can happen?

Schiller: That's right. But I think, if it is of any interest, you might want to know what happened a little earlier, at the CDC convention at which McCarthy was endorsed. Or, as some people claimed, "We have never--" the CDC--"never endorsed candidates for presidential offices." A matter of semantics, shall we say.

Chall: I thought CDC had been set up to endorse, if the party couldn't.

Schiller: Yes. At the time, it was absolutely correct. However, not in national office, so it was claimed. I mean, whoever you were representing at the time, it had made the difference. At this convention, *on the evening before the convention (who was president),* ~~and it was Hill who was president,~~ Hill and I were *with* arguing ~~and~~ [Joseph] Holsinger, who was the northern chair for

McCarthy, ~~on the evening before the convention, just preceding~~
 I said, "The only way to get McCarthy endorsed is to bring it up on the first evening, when everybody was going to be there, or most people were going to be there," simply--so it couldn't be said afterwards, "It was done at the last minute."

Hill argued against it, Holsinger argued against it, ~~and~~ I may have exceeded my authority as resolutions chair. I called it up out of order the first evening, and neither one could do very much about it, because I was in the chair at the moment. It would have created a terrible ruckus if they had ruled me out of order at the time. ~~and~~ I think that actually Gerald Hill was quite amenable to it; it was Holsinger mostly who didn't like the idea. I had the resolution ready, and the resolution had been unanimously approved by the resolutions committee, but not necessarily to bring up at this time. It passed, ~~and~~ ^P I was very careful ~~somebody~~ as always on CDC ~~wanted~~ to have an amendment. I let that amendment happen ~~it~~ ^{it} wasn't important; it didn't say anything of any great concern. It was added to it, and it passed. ~~and~~ ^H Historically I would say that is why CDC supported ^{McCarthy} ~~him~~ and not Kennedy, because Kennedy was supposed to appear the next day, ~~and~~ I did it deliberately, and am willing to admit to that. And I'm willing to say that I was the author of it, and I think some of the things that happened afterwards were a result of that.

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Chall:

Well, to complete the McCarthy campaign, it was a write-in campaign, and those of ^{you} who stayed with McCarthy worked for the write-in, and were opposed right to the end to vote for Hubert Humphrey, is that correct? Or was there--there must have been some split in the ranks. There had to be; ~~or there wouldn't~~ ~~be~~ he almost won. ~~I don't remember what happened in~~

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~~California, what the vote was.~~

Schiller: ~~I don't remember how that was~~ The write-in was not in any way influential, really. No. And it was a very, very tough choice, and very difficult. I'm willing to admit that I did write in McCarthy, but I had been as close as one can possibly be to a man like that. I did not advocate it for anybody else. I had trouble with it. I had trouble with it because ~~I did~~ I did understand the wisdom of voting for Humphrey, if it would have kept certain people out of office. And particularly since Humphrey and I go also far back, and ^{did} I've always liked him. He ~~was~~ ^{was} always been very friendly to me, and very nice to me. It was difficult. Very, very, very tough.

Chall: The issue was really, will this man when he gets into office, end the Vietnam War?

Schiller: Yes. That was the issue. ~~And from everything I could see, and I had seen quite a bit, because~~ During the convention I was sitting in the press box directly above the rostrum where I could see and overhear all the manipulations that were going on, including the telephone line to the White House. Not a bell, but a red light which would start flashing, and every time it flashed, practically everything stopped, because whoever was in the chair was being called immediately to the phone, and had to hand ^{the chair} ~~it~~.

over to somebody else. And all attention at least from the press ~~and~~ where I sat was fixed on that person at the phone.

You could tell, almost, by what was being discussed on the floor, and what was going ~~on~~ when the phone rang ~~what was going on~~, that those two things were always related, ~~and~~ you could almost say, "It's going to ring now," and it did usually.

[laughs] So, there was a grave question ~~and~~ I will tell you that we tried; we tried and tried and tried, ~~and~~ I was in a meeting with representatives of all campaigns--the Kennedy people, with the McCarthy people, and the Humphrey people, trying to convince the Humphrey people, to accept something, a token. None of that was accepted. It would have been so simple. We didn't ask for much, we really didn't. ~~We~~ ^{We} wanted one little acknowledgement saying, "This war has to stop."

Chall: But they wouldn't.

Schiller: They wouldn't let him do it. He was close to doing it without authorization; I know that. But somewhere along the line, he didn't have the guts.

Chall: So, the party and CDC were at that point again in sort of disarray, would you say?

Schiller: Yes. They were in disarray, and I would say equally so. ~~One thing you should also realize, that~~ You asked the question of the difference between ^{the} party and CDC. This difference became less and less pronounced. In fact, quite a few of those who had been very active in CDC, in keeping with its teachings and tenets, to take over the party--had taken over the party.

Chall: Well, how do you mean that?

CDC members within the Democratic State Central Committee

Schiller: They moved into party positions. Sure, it was a little later in my case, but I was on the ~~Steering~~ Committee of the party, on the Executive Committee of the party. I was an officer of the party. I was the acting chair for a while under ^[Charles] ~~Manatt~~ ^{Manatt} for northern California, when we had to quietly drop the northern chair. [laughs]

Chall: When was that? Well, I have a--let's see if I can find it.
[shuffles through papers] ~~I made up a list~~

Schiller: Well, it must have been in '72.

Chall: Here's a list I made up a number of years ago, ~~when I was doing~~ ~~list~~ of all the chairs of the Democratic Party, ^{Merriam} ~~the~~ women, in both northern and southern ^{California, up through 1973.} ~~I did it for the Republican Party as well and I ended down here, because that's where my~~

~~work was ending. I also at the bottom of the page. See 1-27~~

Schiller: I'm talking about John Merlo, who had to be sidelined.

Chall: Well, Merlo--

Schiller: Under Jack Brooks. Yes. '72.

Chall: This is the year that ~~Manatt~~^{Manatt} was elected state chair. ~~and~~^{There} was a big battle ⁱⁿ northern California, between Brooks and Ann Eliaser. It was a rough one.

Charles Manatt vs George Brown, 1972

Schiller: Yes. I probably--yes, I know I did support her. I got along with Brooks. I had no problems. I voted for ^[George] Brown and not for Manatt.

Chall: Yes. That was a real campaign, wasn't it?

Schiller: That was a real campaign.

Chall: ~~Manatt~~ Now, there were people who felt that ^{there was a reason why} Manatt won, ~~and~~ ^{that} ~~it was~~ ^{it} ~~was~~ a, how shall I say, a putting down of all those forces who had worked for McCarthy. That's what the press said. Is that what you think?

Schiller: Yes. Well, no, I mean, most of the people I would say who worked for Brown had been involved in the Brown ^[U.S. Senate, 1970] campaign, well aware of the fact that Manatt had been very influential in ^{helping} [Jack] Tunney to beat him, ~~and~~ ^{Moreover}, it was being said of ~~Chuck~~ ^{Chuck} "Chuck wouldn't know an issue if it hit him." And that was total anathema to anybody having come from CDC, ^{or} ~~and~~ having been with McCarthy, or with Brown, and so it was rather obvious that ~~this~~, we didn't need another "party hack."

Chall: Manatt you considered a party hack, or Tunney? Or both?

Schiller: Both. [laughs]

Chall: Although there are people in the party who felt that ^{Manatt} ~~he~~ had been with the party many, many years, and was an exceptional administrator, and cared about the party, ^{Schiller: That is correct.} and all that, ~~and~~

Schiller: → ^{But from the}
Chall: ^A CDC standpoint, he might be considered a party hack?

Schiller: Yes. Absolutely. ~~and I have~~ ^{Well}, let me say this. ~~I didn't~~ ~~take very long.~~ ~~The reason that~~ I wasn't eager to get involved in an inter-party fight, and in administrative duties, and to become ^{apace} ~~in~~ order to be on the executive committee, you had to be elected at the convention, to be ^a district representative. It was a hard battle, and something I detested.

Chall: You had to run ^{from} ~~for~~ a district--*to be a representative from a district?*

Schiller: I had to run for it, and I had to run against all kinds of interests and some people, ~~who I should~~ ^{it} was somebody quite important in the party, and later on an officeholder here, a senator or an assemblyman, whom I beat. I managed to do that because the feeling ~~was~~ ^{was} this district ^{was} so strong for issues ~~and that Manatt would go~~ ^{and that Manatt would go} ~~that anything that was in time of that would go~~. My reason for that was strictly, I wanted to be somewhere where I could hurt him, or watch him. I'll be very honest about it.

Chall: And who was "he," that you beat?

Schiller: Oh, I don't know. It was totally unimportant who it was, really. It was not an unimportant person, shall we say. Somebody who was of great importance later on. My memory is very foggy, particularly--

Chall: It's probably in the newspapers.

Schiller: It could be, yes. I'm sure it is. In any case, I'm only mentioning that because that's the way I got onto the executive committee, and then ~~because~~ I became very active immediately, because I wanted to make sure that Manatt was doing what I wanted

name

him to do, and not what I thought Manatt was going to do.

Chall: Were you wrong about Manatt when you got to know him?

Schiller: Not entirely wrong. But it didn't take very long; we were battling each other for one or two meetings. Then Chuck said to me, "This is silly. Why don't we work together?"

I said, "You're absolutely right, Chuck. It's silly." Now, I had recognized very quickly that he was a fantastic organizer; he was an excellent chair, and for what he was supposed to be doing, he was a hell of a lot better, and I'm saying that about my very close friend George Brown, than George Brown ever would have been. George Brown would have been a disaster in that kind of a position. Oh, not as far as issues were concerned, obviously, but as an administrator.

Chall: It's very interesting that people will ^{nominate} ~~put up~~ and vote for people on the basis of principle ^{or issues} without realizing that that's not ~~what~~ ~~they're there that's not~~ the task that they're to be elected for, and that if you could surround the person who's a good administrator with the issues people, you might be able to deal with things in another way.

Schiller: Well, it was true at the time, and Chuck told me that. He said,

"They say about me that if an issue would hit me, I wouldn't notice it."

I said, "You make up your own mind about that. I'm not going to argue." Very soon after that, since I used to be a fairly good tactician too, when it came to handling of political situations, and parliamentary situations, of which he is a past master, he found out that he had come up against somebody who under certain circumstances was his equal, ^{and} ~~or~~ occasionally would defeat him. And he hadn't figured on that.

The California Commission on Platform and Issues, 1972

But I have to say one other thing about Chuck. When he found out that he was defeated, he took it with very good grace, and made the best out of it for himself. The very best out of it for himself. And that is how the California Commission on Platform and Issues was created. ^[971] It was my motion on the floor, and Chuck would certainly protest. Play it down, not speak to the issue, and just by a parliamentary maneuver, put it aside as he had been able to do with many things that he just didn't want to happen. And sometimes he was very correct and very right in not wanting it to happen.

He made a mistake. I had the votes. He shifted like that. The first time around he appointed himself chairman; he never did anything about it. He wanted to be sure if there is such a thing

and they want it, I'd better be the chair. And made me vice chair. On the next round, he made me the chair ^[1975] ~~together~~, and he said, "Oh, with whom would you like to work as a co-chair?"

I said, "Yvonne Burke."

He looked at me, and he said, "If you can get her, be my guest."

I called Yvonne and Yvonne was gracious, and said, "Yes, I'd be delighted."

Chall: What a team. ~~Is that the one that went to Kansas City? or is~~

Schiller: *She was at the first convention for Jimmy Carter.*

Schiller: ~~No, not Kansas City--yes, Yvonne was there, and I was there, but we're talking about that convention, and actually that was the convention in which-- [thinking] was it the first? Yes. It was the first convention for Jimmy Carter.~~

Chall: ~~That's~~ So that was 1976. That's when you and Yvonne Burke were co-chairs of what? Could I be clear on that?

Schiller: Of the California Commission on Platform and Issues. In other words, the national platform was written in California, for California, under our direction, and so was the first _____

*could not hear
message
outside*

_____. ~~The~~ first time where Chuck was the chair, but essentially never attended anything. He made sure of it in other ways, of giving me the right staff. Which is much cleaner than getting his fingers dirty.

Chall: So you took that platform issues to the national ~~campaign~~,
~~national~~ convention.

Schiller: National Platform Committee.

Chall: Yes. *What was the committee's assignment and how did you and Yvonne Osurke carry it out?*
Schiller answer the question.

Schiller: And both Yvonne and I served on the National Platform Committee at that time, and that was in '72--no, that was something else. I was also representing not just northern California, but California on the National Platform Committee hearings. That has something else--

Chall: What year was that?

Schiller: That was in '72, ~~and~~

Chall: That was the McGovern campaign?

Schiller: That was the McGovern campaign, yes. In fact, I had completely

*Chall
A.
Bunt*

forgotten, One does forget these things. I was the northern California chairman for public officials for McGovern [Shriver?]. I didn't think I had ever done anything for McGovern, I'm sorry to say.

Chall: But following the McGovern campaign, there was this proposal-- well, let's see, what was that? There was the so-called McGovern campaign ^{re} forms that--

Schiller: Yes.

Chall: It was called that colloquially, but it was something else--you were in on--

Schiller: I was--and I was representing at that point CDC's view, that was when John Burton was president. I was representing CDC's view, and I've always made the differentiation when I represented an organization, and certainly if I may add a few personal comments, and then represent my personal view, at which time I mentioned for the first time--that was in '71--the interim convention, and that should happen at interim--

Chall: So that was 1971?

Schiller: Yes.

*clarify
or
omit*

Chall: So that was actually before the McGovern--

Schiller: Campaign. Yes. It might interest you that the first time around, when Chuck, against his desire, became chairman of the platform commission, ~~that~~ he gave me a commission director, and the executive director of that commission was Gray Davis. Gray Davis was the executive director of that commission, ^{From there he} went briefly to the [Tom] Bradley campaign for mayor, ^{[of Los Angeles],} and from there was hired by Jerry Brown, and became his executive director. ~~and~~ I've always said to Jerry, had he--

finish sentence

~~##end of tape 19 side a~~

Conference on Democratic Party Organization and Policy, 1974
~~Interview with Hans Schiller, begin tape 19 side b~~

On the list you provided of your political activities you mention

Chall: The proposal at Kansas City, ^{regarding the} ~~the~~ preamble, ~~you say~~, which ^{was defeated.} ~~failed.~~

What was that proposal? Was that ^{the} the new constitution of the political party? *This conference adopted some rather sweeping changes in the Democratic party. Success.*

Schiller: Yes. Well, I had already during ~~the~~ the McGovern hearings, which ~~incidentally~~ were chaired by the vice chair here, ~~which was~~ Burch Bayh, ~~and~~ Burch Bayh and I had been friends for quite some time. It was very strange, because I had prepared the text as if McGovern was in the chair, and was making a commentary about Burch Bayh, and also had to make a comment about McGovern [laughs]. When you read something, and then to make sure that you don't mix that up was always my headache and my fear. I used to be much better, in speaking freely, not using any prepared text. But I had to in these instances, because it was handed out to the press, handed out to the commissioner, and all that. So I managed. But everybody laughed about the fact that--because they all had the other text in front of them. [laughs] How I quickly changed the positions of the two.

This is not clear - please advise

Chall: Have you any--you have indicated in your own outline that I have here, that ~~the proposal at Kansas City, the preamble, failed.~~ What was it that failed?

Schiller: Well, ^{mine} ~~it~~ was a proposal with totally different wording. The wording that was ultimately adopted was something that had been in there for, or available to the general public, or at least Democrats, for about a month prior to Kansas City. I found it totally lacking in inspiration, or saying anything. I made the point that it was important, under the circumstances in which the party found itself, ~~with~~ with greater and greater apathy towards participation in any party, leave alone the Democratic Party, to say something that perhaps might raise some of the issues that people were concerned about. And since I was very much aware ~~of~~ ^{that} ~~is, but~~ nobody reads platforms, nobody even reads documents at this time, it had to be a brief statement which, in capsule form, would state what the party stands for.

I discussed it beforehand with Terry Sanford, who was the chair of that Kansas City convention, and he was intrigued by it. But, there were of course other powers at work, and even though it was handed in on time, the text that I had prepared, it ~~was~~ ~~had~~ had never been considered.

I was in the not-so-fortunate position that despite the fact that I had been somewhat instrumental in even getting the thought across that there ought to be interim conventions, that in ~~the~~ ^{the} wonderful caucus system that we had, I did not get elected as a delegate, but only as an alternate. That was because I had to go

to San Francisco, ~~it~~ ^{it} was strictly San Francisco machine operations, that pushed certain people in whether they had anything to say or not. It was totally immaterial.

So, I did go, and I would like to make a compliment to Chuck Manatt. Chuck was extremely helpful. In order to get ^[manipulation] it on the floor, it had to have an enormous number of signatures. Chuck went all over the floor to get correct signatures for me, and so did others. I ~~had~~ got the signatures. So it had to come up. But I knew, ~~it~~ ^{it} wasn't anything that was going to happen. I did present it, I argued against the existing one, or the one that had been proposed. It was defeated. Which I knew beforehand. That's the way it worked.

Chall: There are now interim conventions, conferences. Do you think that they have any value or any effect on the party at all?

Schiller: No. I don't think they have much value, or much effect on the party. My main purpose in advocating it was totally different. It was to take the writing of the platform, the issues discussions, away from the influence of candidates and the pressures existing in a presidential campaign. ^{I wanted to} have the party determine without undue influence what it stands for, and then-- it's still my old English heritage, I'm sorry to say--have the candidates who share that belief say, that is the platform I

stand on. There have been a number of attempts in that direction, and certainly what California has been doing was in that direction, and has been imitating ^{ed in} two or three other states since. But, as everything else, it takes a long, long time, and it may one of these days happen, and if it does happen, I'm glad to see it. I may also die.

The John Tunney Senate Campaign, 1970, 1976
on your outline

Chall: I think we've probably covered all the issues, but you did say that during the Tunney-George Brown senate campaign, ~~the~~ the issue of anti-semitism arose. Was that an accusation made by Tunney?

Schiller: No, I'm sorry; I really didn't say that. What I did say was that Tunney accused Brown, at Stanford, in a confrontation during the primary campaign, of being anti-Israel, which is quite different from being anti-semitic. Which was totally untrue. It was based on the fact that we still face quite often, even with ~~progress~~ *Congressman* ~~with even~~ Barbara Boxer, that when ~~we're~~ *you're* opposed to the amount of money that the nation spends on armaments, and you vote on the budget, that very often money that is to go to other nations as foreign aid is being lumped in with this. ^P Though I do not know *all the facts* in George Brown's case, I happen to know in Barbara's case, that this happens, ~~and that's immediately your reputation~~, when she's opposed to the budget item as such, which has nothing to do with Israel as such, but with the greater issue, do we want to spend

is editing
correct

all our money on arms, that when she votes against that, that immediately the reaction is, you're not responsive to the needs of Israel. It's a far cry from that, because she is very much so in favor of Israel, and trying to help Israel. I know George Brown very well, extremely well; we have been very close during his campaign and ever since, and still are. ^{Incidentally,} ~~He~~ just got married.

Chall: Yes, I ~~just~~ read that the other day. Well, this did hurt his campaign, did it not? That accusation?

Schiller: That hurt his campaign. In fact, being done right here, in the Bay Area, where there are quite a number of Jewish families who ~~are~~ very actively ^{and very} ~~involved~~ effectively finance and support Israel, ~~This~~ had terrible repercussions. And he ^[Tommy] knew it was wrong; he knew that wasn't the case. And he used it in a cynical fashion, just in order to gain that advantage, which he didn't have up to that point. He was behind. I found it terrible, and frankly I had great trouble ~~in~~ supporting him in anything. And the interesting thing is, that when he ran for ~~re~~election, we had hardly ever talked since that time.

We ran into each other. ^{As} an officer of the party, I had to talk to him, ~~and~~ ^{he} was polite, but ^{he} didn't really like him. At the time when he ran for ~~re~~election, I got a call from him and he said, "I would ask you to introduce me at the CDC convention."

~~And~~ CDC didn't like him. And for me of all people to introduce him at the CDC convention--I said, "John, I can't do that."

He said, "Would you do it if I tell you that George asked you specifically to do that?"

I said, "John, if George asked me, I might do certain things. But I want George to tell me."

Within half an hour, George was calling me, and he said, "Do it for me. It's absolutely essential."

I said, "I agree it's essential that he gets reelected, but what can I do with CDC at this point, to be the one to advocate that CDC endorse him? It's never going to happen."

I was very uneasy about it, as you can imagine. I had to step out of the chair; I was chairing that convention, ~~and~~ I did introduce him. He didn't make it.

Chall: He didn't make what?

Schiller: He didn't get the endorsement. Nobody got it. That much is--I think nobody got it. But, in any case, he did better. I mean, I was fooled, he was fooled. But we just made it ~~and he did~~

*did better?
foiled almost sure?*

Chall: You knew that that would happen.

Schiller: I knew that. Yes. And it was no problem, ~~and~~ Actually, this is also one of those strange situations. He was very grateful, and sincerely so. I went specially to Los Angeles to sit with him, ~~and I~~, during election night, *But I* quietly withdrew and went home. I didn't even have the heart to say, "I'm sorry."

Chall: That was a pretty disastrous campaign.

Schiller: Yes, it was.

Chall: Well, the Democrats did it to themselves, to some degree.

Schiller: Well, of course. He did it to himself, too, in certain ways.

Chall: Six years before--that divisiveness, the schisms that developed, have long lives. That was a long life, because this was 1976, after all.

The CDC in the 1970s

Schiller: Well, you wanted to know why I was still on the board, and why I was still active in CDC. The reason is simple ~~and~~

Chall: And what was CDC at that time?

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Schiller: Well, CDC at that time was a little better, again, but not much. ~~We were~~ ^{We were} about ten to eleven thousand people still in CDC, but it used to be all the old ~~faces~~ ^{faces} and very few new faces. I felt there had to be a change. The reason I was still around is that the board of directors of CDC elected me to be the permanent convention chair at the time that Nate Holden, later senator Nate Holden, was running for president, ~~1971~~ ^[1971] ~~He~~ He was a vice-president and he had it put into his own mind—he was going to run, ~~and the~~ ^{There was no president of CDC at the time.} ~~John~~ ^[John] Burton had resigned, and his temporary replacement, Ernie Hartz, was in Japan on duty and work, something, and couldn't be there. So I was elected to run the convention, because Nate Holden said, "I'm the vice-president, I'm going to run the convention." I said, "You can't run a convention at which you hope to be elected, Nate!"

"That's racism!" ~~[redacted]~~ ~~Anyway, that's the first~~ ~~time~~ Nate, however, was very grateful for the way I ran the convention. He was elected, and at the end of the convention, in a very nice statement, said that he created a ~~new~~ job for me, because it was necessary for me to stick around, and to be the personal advisor and special assistant to the president. Sounds wonderful—"special assistant to the president." And then from that time on, I was reappointed as special assistant to the president as long as he was in office, ~~and~~ ^{then} Wally [Wallace]

Albertson was running for president, so this was the first black and the first woman running for president. ^[1974] Wallace Albertson, usually called Wally.

Wally continued that--of course I offered my resignation, I said, "Look, Wally. Just appoint somebody else for a change. You have to get new blood into this; new younger people." "No, no, no, I want you."

Well, as long as Wallace Albertson was president, I stayed in the same role. ^{DA} And though she was much more capable to run the rough and tough parts of the convention, than Nate, it freed her for other things, which essentially for a president during a convention time are much more important. So I used to run the convention and chair it, as temporary chair, in contrast to the first one, ^{Whom} I was permanent chair. When Wally Albertson knew she wasn't going to run any more, at the end of the convention, I announced that it was time for somebody else to step into this, and ^I resigned from that ^{position [19--]} which didn't mean that I had resigned ^[from CDC] but essentially I have not been seen in CDC any more.

note editing call-1?

my inclination clarify -

~~More that that~~ It's not my inclination, because the clubs in this county have died during the time. They started to die the moment I stopped being the district representative. I had ^{2007 members} ~~two thousand and seven members~~ at the time when I was running for

vice-president and was defeated, and my successor within weeks had it down to five hundred. From there on it went down, until all of a sudden they all were dissolved.

They all were dissolved?

Chall: There was one criticism about the CDC, even in its heyday, and that was that there was a lack of proper communication between the central headquarters and the clubs, that the clubs never knew what was expected of them, and vice versa, and that this was one of the problems of the CDC.

Schiller: Well, it is one of those difficulties in a large state, plus the fact that CDC never had money. This is one of those horrible things. I used to do all the work of distributing information to the press, and everybody else, right here out of my own office, — typing it myself, cranking it out on two mimeo machines which belonged to me. — That is one time at least, that in certain ways there was information going out. I was running an office myself, by myself. You know, you can't do this all the time as a volunteer.

Chall: Don Bradley says that this was always a problem with the CDC, raising money, ~~and~~ that they never had enough to really do a proper campaign, that they were always having to get money from the party regulars or the candidates.* He said that in those days — I don't know whether it's true any more, ~~but~~ liberals

* Interview with Donald L. Bradley, Managing Democratic Campaign, 1943-1966, on oral history interview conducted 1977-1979, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, Berkeley, 1982.

never gave any money. ~~They didn't give money,~~ the Republicans would really give and sacrifice, but that liberals even having the money felt that maybe fifteen, twenty, twenty-five dollars would be enough.

Schiller: In fact, the more affluent the area is, ~~the more~~ ^{My} experience has been that to raise money in Marin is much more difficult than to raise it in San Francisco, in the poorer districts. To get money out of Marin is practically impossible. You talk to some of the people who--and I don't count people's money, but who are affluent, very affluent, and you ask for twenty and twenty-five dollars, or heaven forbid a hundred dollars--^{It} doesn't happen..

Chall: ~~Let's go on into I did want to ask you a question about your original--~~ Originally, when you got onto the central committee, somebody had to appoint you. Who was that, do you know? It had to be a legislator, ^{an elected official, I think,} in those days.

Schiller: Yes. And I'm sorry I can't tell you offhand who was the first one who appointed me. ^[Jerry] Brown did appoint me when he was governor for the first time.

Chall: You went on before that I think, but that's all right.

Schiller: Yes, I was; and I'm sorry. I just can't remember which one of

the people actually did. Maybe--I probably can establish all of this. ~~because if I have something that's paper.~~

date
Other Civic/Political Activities, 197- to 1980s

Chall: ~~You'll have it on paper soon enough.~~ All right, then let me go on to what you called in your outline your "public life," which is really a continuation of your political life. Jerry Brown appointed you to BCDC, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, in March, 1978. I have the resolution [looking through papers] that I got out of ~~the~~, the BCDC offices.

Schiller: Well, I could have given that to you.

Democratic
Additional Background on Appointment to the State Central
Committee

Chall: Well, I like to be prepared. [laughter] Jerry Brown appointed you. ~~But~~ What was the reason? Did he know that you were interested in the BCDC?

Schiller: Yes. This goes really back to a time that he appointed me to the state committee. It was a very strange thing. Let me just mention that quickly.

I received a call late in the afternoon--it was about 4:45-- in the office. The person on the phone said, "Mr. Schiller?"

I said, "Yes?"

"This is the governor's office." I thought it was a joke. "Yes." "The governor wants to talk to you, just a moment." A voice which I knew rather well said, "Hello, Hans. Are you willing to accept an appointment from me?"

I said, "Depends what it is, Jerry."

He said, "I haven't got any time. It's a deadline! So say yes or no, are you willing to accept?"

What do you tell a governor when he asks you are you willing to accept an appointment? I said, "All right, Jerry."

He said, "Stay on the line, I'll be back, and somebody else will be later on the line to get details from you, but stay on the line. I'll be back to you. I have to call the secretary of state right now!" [laughs] It was, as always, at the last last moment, that he had made his appointments, and he was calling right then and there. He had to inform the secretary of state, still in time to get it on.

He came back within about a minute, and said, "Okay, that's that. Now, as to the conditions."

I said, "Jerry! You haven't told me yet what it is!"

"Oh," he said, "State Central Committe." Kind of, you know, shrugging it off. [laughter]

I said, "Oh, thank you."

He said, "Now, as to the conditions." There was a moment's silence, ~~h~~ what does one say to a governor when he tells you that there are conditions to an appointment?

I said, "May I find out what they are," just to gain a little time.

He said, "Of course." I was really worried, because I've been known to tell to people things that one shouldn't tell certain people. I used to have a fairly hot temper; I still do. Jerry said, "Number one, you don't owe me any explanation on how you vote." [laughs] I felt so relieved, and I said, "Thank you Jerry, that's a wonderful condition."

"And secondly," he said, "you don't owe me anything, and any explanation at all. You're your own person. You do as you please. Now, if you want to discuss something with me, you know how to get ahold of me, don't you?"

I said, "Yes."

Chall: This was his appointment of you to the Democratic State Central Committee?

Schiller: Yes. So that was number one. And, then after two years, normally, and I had been through this once before, or McCabe had appointed me--now I remember. George McCabe had appointed me. Normally, you stay on for two years and if there's no change, you're being put on again. And ~~I~~^I was curious that after two years I didn't get anything out of the governor's office saying that I was being continued. In fact, at that point, whoever the chair was at the time, I guess it must have been Manatt, was very interested in keeping me on there. I was on the executive committee, steering committee, and handling the platform. I didn't get any information.

Finally, I think I talked to Manatt, I told him, and he said, "You haven't gotten anything from anybody? Let me check around in the state, if anybody has anything left over, maybe they can put you on, and I can just ask somebody for a favor." Well, nobody had anything. ~~[Cranston]~~^[Cranston] Yes, somebody must have had something, because I did get something. I think it was [Alan] Cranston who did. It was no problem. ~~can't deny it,~~^{Cranston, and I} ~~had long been friends~~^{had long been friends} ~~long~~ again, you know. [laughs] In fact, I had helped

him with ^[Eugene] McCarthy at the time, for McCarthy to campaign for him.

I ran into Jerry ~~and somebody~~ ^{on something} else and I said, "Why didn't you let me know?"

"Let you know what?"

"That you didn't continue me."

"I didn't?"

"No."

Couldn't hear clearly
And then he looked around _____, "I didn't do that. I better talk to Grey, and find out why he dropped you."

I realized why Grey ^{er} had dropped me.

Chall: Why had Grey ^a dropped you?

Schiller: Grey ^{er} was very insecure, when I first met him. He was a very nice guy, and worked very hard ~~on~~ the first platform, but very, very, very ambitious. ~~Without asking me in the end~~ ^{He} asked me about everything, and he's been sitting here for hours at a time, going over the text of everything. In the end, he decided Grey ^{er} was

more important than the chair of the committee, and he wrote an introduction to the first platform, *It's not this one.* Prior to that. I wasn't mentioned. I mean, I was listed, yes, of course. But he didn't ask me whether I wanted to say anything. That was number one.

And then, there was the occasion in Los Angeles where the platform was to be adopted by the state committee, and it was a big affair. It was a lunch, and about two thousand people showed up. Cranston was the featured speaker, and it said in the program that he was going to introduce Cranston--*Gray*. *Gray* had started out without introducing the officers of the commission, *In* the very beginning, in the morning, when the hearing started, and very soon ^{*he*} lost control.

I hadn't said anything; I was just sitting there. All of a sudden, a very flustered *Gray* said, "Will you take over, please, Hans?"

I did. But this gave me a little insight into what made him tick, and I understand it. After all, he wanted to be in public office, and he made it. Now he's made a very excellent assemblyman, and during Jerry's administration he's done more than most people ~~know~~. But *Gray* was not very eager to continue me in any office. That too has changed, incidentally. He has been

very helpful to me, in legislation that I had written and pursued later on. So, in any case, Jerry said, "Would you like to do something else?"

I said, "Sure."

"Okay," he said, "I'll ask my appointment secretary to call you and maybe you can come and see her in Sacramento, and discuss what you might be interested in. If it's anything that I--where there's a vacancy, I'd be very happy to do it." But, Jerry being Jerry, I did go, I did indicate what I was interested in, and it was either the--

in BCDC.

what was the choice?

~~#end tape 19 side b, begin tape 20 side a~~

The Bay Conservation and Development Commission, 1978-1983

Chall:

How did he appoint you
~~to BCDC.~~

Schiller: Well, it took a long time. About a year after he had discussed it with me, ~~we~~ I called a number of times. I called Sacramento to find out, because I was told, be ready. I wanted to go on vacation, it was summer, and nothing happened. Finally, I found out. "Oh, yes. The governor has told me to take every step to appoint you; he's willing to appoint you, but he's also asked me to find two other people to compare you to!" And that was typical of Jerry Brown, and he insisted on interviews. ~~He~~ ⁵He didn't

interview me, he knew me too well. But he interviewed the other two, and then said, "Go ahead. Appoint him."

Even funnier was that shortly after he had appointed me, I saw him at a fundraiser in San Francisco, not for him, and he came by the tables, and he said to me, a little on the chiding side and a little acting envious, he said, "I'm being told that for once I've made a good appointment. What do you do to all these people? They all seem to know you and like you! What's the matter with you?" [laughs]

Chall: So, you went on the board, and then a few years later, you were appointed vice chairman. Joe Houghteling at the time was chairman, wasn't he?

Schiller: Yes.

Chall: And so it was after Joe Houghteling resigned or retired finally that you became the chairman.

Schiller: Yes.

Chall: Well, what was your interest in BCDC?

Schiller: Well, my interest was, again, nothing new. I have been

interested in the environment and environmental design, in planning, and certainly in the beauty of the bay, which I consider one of the greatest assets. ~~and~~ When I first bought this house, I could see the bay from here. It was filled. It was that kind of thing that made it very clear to me that something had to be done. ^P I would have liked to be involved in it, and I was involved in it. And more than that, than just involved, I had certain successes and certain disappointments. I probably was one of the most active commissioners the commission has had, in a long time. That is not to say anything against anybody else; it's just my style to devote myself to a great extent to things that--

Chall: Were you retired by that time?

Schiller: No. I'm not retired now, either. Sorry to say!

Chall: Oh. You^{were} certainly on a lot of committees, representing the commission on quite a number of committees.

Schiller: Yes. That is correct. I was particularly interested to take care of ~~the situation which was~~ one of the worst situations in the whole bay, namely Richardson Bay. I brought ^{up} ~~out~~ the idea of the Richardson Bay plan two years before the commission finally agreed to do something about it. At that time, Joe was opposed

to it, the executive director was opposed to it, and you don't get very far if the chair and the executive director are opposed.

My relationship to Joe was a strange one. I like Joe; I think he was an excellent chair. Joe was leery of me. He didn't like somebody who ~~was~~ obviously ~~somebody who~~ had political ambitions, as he thought I ~~was having~~ ^{had}. Very soon after I got on the commission--I think he'd done that with everybody who ever got on the commission--~~he~~ invited me to a very elegant lunch ^{at} his club--I forget which club it was--doesn't make any difference--~~he~~ ^{he} kind of lectured me a little bit ~~about~~ that I should get my feet wet before I become so active and say things. ~~and~~ After all, there are all these experienced commissioners who resent the fact that I'm making judgments and telling them about planning.

I said, "Joe, I appreciate all that. But don't you realize that I am the only one in this profession on this commission?"

"Well, you're not staff, you see." And he made that strict distinction, "this is staff, and this is your job as a commissioner. You are not supposed to involve yourself in these things." And the funny thing is, after I got to know Joe much better, and got ^{to know} everybody else ~~to know~~ much better, I was being told that when he got on the commission, years earlier, that he

had done exactly the same thing, ~~and~~ What he saw--and I don't blame him for that--is somebody might ^{who} want to push him aside. ^P He knew that I was close to the governor, and he had a feeling he wasn't that close to the governor, really. Which is true, in a way, simply because I had known Jerry since he was a young man, long before he had any political ambitions, and since some of his political "getting his feet wet" were during the McCarthy campaign, ~~and~~ I worked at that time very closely with the son of the governor. ~~After all,~~ After all, Pat Brown was opposed to anything we were doing at that time. It was my assignment to deal with Jerry, the son of the governor, who was going our way.

The assignment didn't mean anything. Jerry cannot be assigned to anybody, I can assure you. But, voluntarily on his part, he assigned himself to me, and it worked out beautifully. In certain ways, I've been able to say things to him that very few people have been able to say to him. In other ways, when I really want him, it is very difficult to get to him.

Chall: ~~And~~ The governor does appoint the chairman of that committee?

Schiller: Oh, yes. Chairman and vice-chairman. ~~And the other thing was Joe and I finally~~ I think there came a time when Joe understood that I was--I made it clear to him--that as long as he wanted to be in the chair, I was not going to interfere. But the reason

that it took ~~them~~ again a year until Jerry appointed me vice-chair, after there was a vacancy, is because Joe--and he admitted *it* to me--had called the office and said, "I don't want him as a vice-chair." He told me that. Joe told me that, and he was very honest about it and said, "I can't have that, because I have the feeling you want to push me out."

I said, "Joe, please do understand it. I have no intention of pushing you out. I enjoy the way you chair; I don't want to sit up there and chair. Even if I'm vice-president, I'm not going to sit there. I'm going to sit where I'm sitting right now."

"You would?"

I said, "I would." And he stopped objecting, and I got the appointment. Which was a strange quirk, because Joe is not that way. But somehow it meant very much to him to be the chair. And he was an excellent chair. Excellent chair. I regretted and resented that he quit at that point. Though I understand it.

all: You regret it, but why ^{*did you resent it?*} ~~what did I do with it? I look through~~

~~paper~~

~~Bill still holds~~

Chall: He'd been serving since 1971. That's a long time, for him; I don't know that he was chair all that time, ~~but I know that he~~
~~was~~

Schiller: No, he wasn't. He was a commissioner, first. Because he was the appointee of the senate originally, of Senate Rules Committee, and only appointees of the governor can become chairs or vice chairs. Anyway, this was--we're still very friendly, incidentally. I mean that sincerely. ~~And even to a point that~~
~~isn't really, really, really~~ Those months that I was--eight months--that I was in charge of BCDC as ^{the} chair, were some of the toughest, and Joe said to me a number of times ~~that~~ since that time, that he was grateful that I was persistent and stayed, because I managed to do a few things that wouldn't have happened.

Elaborate ->

That brings up ^{your other} ~~another~~ question: What about the Deukmejian appointees?

Chall: Exactly.

Schiller: Well, I managed, and I'm willing to say I managed, to make certain that there would be a continuity on the staff which was terribly important under the circumstances. Realizing that my direct successor, former mayor of Oakland, John Reading, wasn't--

by his own admission to me, I mean, I had lunch with him the day I turned it over to him--was not going to be very active, and wasn't very willing to be active. It was clear to me, also from meeting all the others that had been appointed the same day, whom I was supposed to train, together with the executive director, were not the active types that had been around for a long time. So it was terribly important to have continuity on the staff.

Michael Wilmar, who was the executive director, quit on me just at that point. And I understand it, because he had an excellent offer, paying a hell of a lot more, in one of the most prestigious law offices in the country. So he left. It was a question of making a quick appointment, and go through all the rigamarole that's involved in a public body making appointments of--hiring a director. In fact, the only appointee of the new administration that was on the commission at that time made it very clear that the governor didn't want him to make any appointments, ~~and~~ that you're cutting your own throat if you do it.

I said, "The commission cannot be without an executive director!" I hired, at Mike Wilmar's recommendation, to the commission, hired his deputy, Alan Pendleton, ^{He}~~was~~ had years and years of experience, is an excellent person, and I knew it would be in perfect hands. In contrast to Mike, who could be a little

contentious, Alan is very politic and can deal with almost anybody, and does so without offending anybody. It was a tough battle. I wasn't sure I would have the votes, and it was touch and go. I had the votes, and I pushed it through, and he's still there, and the new chairman is delighted with him. The new chairman, incidentally, is very friendly to me, and is absolutely no problem.

I would say the people who are replacements for all those who had to leave, gubernatorial appointees, under the circumstances--I've seen worse, I can assure you, ~~because~~ I've seen quite a number of commissions and boards recently, and know that it's a totally political process. ~~That's different--~~

JH Certainly BCDC had not been politicized. Jerry had appointed, and re-appointed, people who had been appointed by Reagan, had appointed people who are Republicans, and active Republicans, opposed to him. Strictly on the basis of whether he thought they were right for the job. It was never a question as to political adherence to a certain idea.

Chall: But with Deukmejian, it was, or it certainly appeared to be at ~~the~~ first, ~~there was--?~~

Schiller: Yes. In fact, one of the people that Jerry re-appointed, who was an appointee of Reagan's, a woman, who is a registered

Republican--

Chall: She was vice-chairman for many years, wasn't she?

Schiller: Yes. She stayed for years--right. She was very much opposed to Jerry. No, somebody else, who was a very active commissioner, very good commissioner, Barbara Eastman. Barbara Eastman attempted to get re-appointment from Deukmejian, and she in fact did see Deukmejian, or so I've been told. I can't swear to these things. Deukmejian supposedly asked her whether, why was she re-appointed by Jerry Brown? She said, "I was never asked what I believed in, other than that he knew that I was active in environmental matters. So I was re-appointed."

He said, "You were re-appointed by Jerry Brown. There are Republicans, and Republicans. You're not the kind of Republican I want." And she was right. But strangely enough, the person who is replacing her, another woman, is rather good, which surprises me at times when these things happen. But they do.

Chall: I think the BCDC in this area ^{has} become almost like apple pie, in a sense, but not completely. ^{there are} Still great dangers of what could happen, but it's not the same kind of commission, let's say, as the Coastal Commission, which he is definitely trying to destroy.

Schiller: Oh, no. In fact, it has always intrigued me why he wanted to destroy the Coastal Commission and not BCDC. After all, the Coastal Commission was modeled on the BCDC model. And does not control any more length of coastline [laughs] than BCDC does. It's because of all the ins and outs.

Chall: BCDC does have a strong hold *in this area*.

Schiller: Oh, yes. Also in the legislature, fortunately, and--

Chall: There are watchdogs all over the place, too, in a very small area, like the Save the San Francisco Bay Association, and some others.

Schiller: Yes. And the good thing is, BCDC really has an excellent staff, and it is entirely up to the executive director to run the staff, and hire the staff, and make changes, ~~and~~ I can only say that from all I can see, ~~and~~ ^{Five} I stayed out of it ~~and~~ ^{except} when I've been asked, I've been asked twice, to come back, because the new commission continued me as BCDC's representative on the Richardson Bay Committee. Richardson Bay Special Area Plan was created, and was carried out. I'm sorry to say that one of my colleagues, ^{a local supervisor, a Republican} who joined me on BCDC later, he came to the board much later than I did, and who I had hoped would carry out things, ~~namely a local supervisor, a Republican, who~~ generally

fill in what you have seen

has been quite good in his vote ^{But he} ~~on~~ has used the vehicle which I created of the Richardson Bay Special Area Plan and special agency for his own purposes and own advancement, without too much concern about what happens to Richardson Bay. And those things happen, unfortunately.

Chall: ~~Richardson Bay~~, you were fired obviously by Deukmejian, who would certainly want to put in his own appointee. But you did hang in there for nine months. ~~He~~ I guess, he waited.

Schiller: Yes. It's unusual. That is one thing, and beyond that, the commission itself, including the new members, voted to continue ^{on the Richardson Bay committee} until the plan, Richardson Bay Plan, was adopted. I was the one who presented it to the commission, ^{That} was the only other two times that I did go.

Chall: What about the ^{The State Board of Architectural Examiners, 19-- to 19--} State Board of Architecture Examiners? That doesn't seem to be a political kind of appointment, where you can make decisions like BCDC or the Coastal Commission or the Agricultural Commission, which can have a considerable amount of policy making--

Schiller: No, it shouldn't be.

Chall: What's the Board of Architecture, to the governor, except an

appointment?

Schiller: I can tell you what the Board of Architectural Examiners meant to Governor Brown. At the time, he asked me whether I wanted to be one or the other, and I said, "Well, it's up to you," and he said, "You are aware of the fact that I want to do away with the Board of Architectural Examiners. I think it's totally unnecessary."

I looked at him and I laughed, and I said, "So do I."

He said, "You do? All right, I'll appoint you to it."

I said, "Jerry, I would rather go to something that is a little bit more positive than to be killed."

He said, "Okay; all right." But at the time, during his last year as governor, it would have been evident, and it was evident to him obviously, since he wasn't running for governor again, and if he had run it's very questionable whether he would have made it, that ~~this was~~ ^{I did have a} not a term appointment to BCDC, ^{at the} ~~with~~ ^{at the} pleasure of the governor. So he was fully aware that whoever followed him would probably put his own people in there. So, as much as I would have liked to stay, there was little chance of that.

So, he said, "Okay, just so that you have some place to go, because I know you would like to do something, I'll give you a term appointment if you want one to the Board of Architectural Examiners. I'll give it to you now." At that point, the argument between him and the board had been settled, and he and the legislature had realized that it served a purpose, and should continue.

It had changed considerably in those two years, and he had his effect on it, exactly the way he wanted it. Namely, there was something that was a policy matter, namely that all these professional boards, licensing boards, were being used as a vehicle by him for the consumer to voice an opinion, and to take care of the consumer's interest. In several of these, he managed to get a majority of lay persons on the committee, and that was the case on the Board of Architectural Examiners. Of course, it is now back to even number of lay persons. If they could have changed it to a majority of architects, they would have loved to do it, under the present administration.

I had to fight my own colleagues on the board, and had to fight certainly the administration, by using what little influence I have with the great number of friends I have in the legislature, to get some legislation through, and to defeat other

legislation. During the time that I've been on that board, I've written three pieces of legislation, one totally revising the act that governs the activities of the board, including giving it a clear-cut mandate not to represent the profession but to represent the consumer interest. Also procedurally ^{to} bring it out of--the act was written in 1902, the original one ^{to} bring it at least to the 1980s. That was passed. ~~And~~ And finally I have done away with a two-tiered system of licensing.

There used to be a second-class license in the state of California, which was called Registered Building Designer. For lack of anything else, since I did not--funny thing, to be a president of a licensing board, not believing in licensing-- [laughs], but that's what I stated publicly, and they all knew it. I didn't believe in licensing; I did not believe that a profession like architecture in that sense should be licensed. Because, the ability of an architect can hardly be demonstrated in a test. Other people will say the opposite. I was finally forced to accept the title Building Designer because otherwise, whatever I was doing was totally illegal. It was given to me by the state, because they didn't want to get into a court case with me. I was ~~really political, and tried~~ ^{willing to go to court and try} the issue.

Chall: I don't understand. You are not a licensed architect?

Schiller: I am now a licensed architect. I'm now a licensed architect, and I'll tell you why. Because the final legislation that I succeeded in getting through, and having signed by the governor--

Chall: Deukmejian?

Schiller: All three pieces of legislation were signed by Governor Deukmejian. I don't think he knew ^{whose} ~~whole~~ legislation he was signing, which is all right. [laughs]

In any case, what happened is I did away with the second class of building designers, in that legislation. ~~I made to do~~ ~~was~~ This only very small remnant, ~~of~~ because you could no longer for years, for the last fifteen years or twenty years, be registered as a building designer. So, only those who kept up payment on their licenses, and had received them so much earlier, were still around, ~~and~~ ~~we~~ We were talking about in the state four to five hundred people, versus seventeen thousand architects. ~~They~~ ~~was~~ The legislation made them architects. That's not the way I became an architect. I want to make that very clear.

Chall: ~~I guess I didn't understand what you were saying.~~ I don't understand what the area of the consumer is in this whole matter of the Architectural Examiners.

Schiller: The area of the consumer is very clear. ~~Since~~ ^{The} mandate now says very clearly that the board is there for the purpose of certifying and regulating the profession, to make certain that the health and safety and welfare of the people of California is being safeguarded. You can test on engineering questions; you can make certain that there is a minimum of knowledge, and ability to handle both the laws of the state of California and the technical requirements. In that respect, you cannot ascertain whether a person is a good designer or bad designer; does horrible things or beautiful things. That of course would be unconstitutional in the first place.

But that is the area in which they are now being engaged, in which they test, in which they establish what is to be done. I think there is, if there has to be some such outfit, that to restrict it to certain things is good. I just wanted to say that when I realized, about a year before, ^{that} there was a chance that my legislation would go through and that I might be included in those who all of a sudden ^{were} ~~are~~ being handed a license, ~~which~~ I finally broke down and said, "I hate exams, but I'll take it."

I went through a very tough exam. Actually, there was one provision in the law that says if you have been a foreign licensed architect, you have to go through a double oral exam, rather than the full written exam plus oral, in order to

establish whether your knowledge and background is similar to that required of others who have studied in this country. ~~Some~~
~~So~~ If you fail the first one, you take the whole thing. If you don't, you are on the same basis as anybody else, and you take the oral exam. I passed it with flying colors, unfortunately. So, ~~some~~ a year and a quarter before the legislation was in effect, I was ^alegally licensed ~~an~~ architect, which I had been since 1941 in Palestine.

Chall: Now, when your term ended--it was a term appointment? ~~So~~ ^{So}, when your term ended, that's when you were not re-appointed, is that right?

Schiller: No, I wasn't re-appointed.

Chall: You said you were fired, but I don't know what that means.

Schiller: I applied for for re-appointment, and this makes interesting reading. My letter to Deukmejian ^{and the} application forms, ~~which~~ ^{These} are so highly politicized, to a point that nobody, in my mind, who has ever done anything in his life, even as a Republican, and ventured a statement publicly about anything, could pass that and be appointed.

Chall: Do you have a copy of that?

copy
Schiller: Yes, I have copies.

Chall: ~~We'll get to that at a later time, I see.~~ So you did file that, but he did not appoint you?

Schiller: There again, I could have been fired nine months earlier. And I again managed to stay for nine months, during which time I did something which had been tried for a long time. We ~~have~~ ^{had} been buying in California, as most other states, a national exam from a private outfit. But California, having about ~~twenty five~~ ²⁵ percent of all licensed architects, was not really represented on that board. ^{of the organization which developed the exam-} We had one vote at the convention of all the other states--one vote per state. And in some instances, there were states ~~and~~ and jurisdictions that do not have a single licensed architect, who had as much to say about the exam as we did.

We had disagreements about that, and even some legal disagreements, and it was under my administration as president that we severed the relationship, and a California exam was written right here. So this year is the first time that the California exam has been administered in California.

~~#end tape 20 side a, begin tape 20 side b~~

date.
Chall: *The County Design Review Board, 19-- to 19--*
What is the County Design Review Board?

Schiller:

~~It established~~ ⁱⁿ
~~was~~ a pilot program of this county, at a time when
 counties started to realize, certainly metropolitan counties,
~~that it was not just a matter of~~ that it was practically
 impossible to deal with the question of design or development, I
 should not really ^{say design,} ~~we're~~ not talking about design. Most people
 misunderstand that. The word design includes all kinds of
 things. Actually, we're talking about planning more than design.
^{It was thought}
~~that~~ communities should have a direct input in how they like
 their own area to be developed, and that a county planning
 commission--some counties are very large--is not the ideal
 vehicle to hold hearings to establish what a county plan should
 be, for that particular community, and that it was a matter of
 establishing all development along certain guidelines in certain
 areas.

So, what was being established was a community plan which
 covered the unincorporated area like this one here, running
 roughly from a boundary of the city of Mill Valley and Corte
 Madera on one side, ^{the} GGNRA, meaning ^{of} National Recreation Area,
 which runs right behind my property, and to Tam Junction, if you
 know where that is. That is where the Richardson Bay Bridge cuts
 across. ^{It included} ~~And~~ all that area, that Tam Valley, which is perhaps the
 most densely developed area, unincorporated area. ~~So it covered~~
~~all this area,~~ and this was the first trial balloon, so to say,
 of having such a design review board. ~~And~~ you wanted to know who

appointed me.

NOT (Michael Wornum, who was later an assemblyman, who is now again a city ~~council man~~ ^{Councilman} and at the time had been a supervisor of this district. Michael Wornum is ~~by profession, an architect, I should say--he is still alive, please don't misunderstand it he is a little younger, eight years or ten years younger than I am~~ by training and by profession an architect, so it was very natural for him to be interested in this kind of treatment. It was very much resented by county staff, by the planning staff, who felt it was a usurpation of their function. Ever since, I've had a little problem with some of the county staff, ~~and~~ particularly when I interefered again with Richardson Bay, which is also their bailewick.

But anyway, it was at the time a very successful experiment, ~~and~~ that was prior to BCDC. I was appointed to that, and I served as its chair for two years, I think. I resigned simply because I didn't want to do something that other people do so often, ~~that~~ they sit on one thing and they try for something else. I wanted to say, "I'm not doing anything; I'm available. If you want me, take me."

Chall: ~~Do you think that the plan that~~ You had to adopt a plan, and then the county had to finally approve it, I ~~suppose~~ ^{suppose}

Schiller: ~~The county finally then it would go to the county, it is being presented to the county.~~ The county did adopt it and accept it. ~~There~~ There were public hearings first on the planning commission and secondly in the board of supervisors. I presented it to both of them, and it was adopted. ~~only~~ Starting now, ~~its~~ ^{after} ~~considerable time, must be~~ ^{there are} at least ten years, ~~to have~~ hearings again to revise it, ~~TA~~ see how it worked out. People generally have been very happy. ^{TA} After I gave up on it, for a while somebody else, a woman was chair, ~~and it was~~ somebody who had been vice-chair when I was chair. ~~She had difficulty,~~ She is not an architect, or planner, or anything like that. She had difficulty ~~to cooperate~~ ^{in applying} the concept of design from the concept of planning. She would get into things like, "I don't like the geraniums you want to plant," you know, that kind of thing. Or, "That color is really not acceptable to me." This kind of thing. And she was very outspoken; very good person, actually, but ~~she~~ had difficulty, ~~with it.~~ And I think the staff saw its opportunity to do something, and for a year or so I understand the design review board was killed, and then was reinstated, But now ^{it} is only an advisory committee.

It was not advisory at that time. For instance, it also acted as a planning commission for the area. So anything that had to--anything ~~that was~~ ^e of comparatively ^{small} nature, like single

Schiller: Yes. Barbara has appointed me three times, I think.

Chall: ~~Well, that's not true.~~ Although the Democratic ^{State} Central Committee is not what it was in earlier days.

Schiller: No, it isn't. It's much more like CDC used to be in a way, in a way.

Chall: Awfully big.

Schiller: It's awfully big. ~~I~~ I have tried ~~a number of~~ ^{a number of} times, and I have proposals, to change ~~the committee's structure~~ the setup of the central committee, ~~a number of times~~. I've been involved in planning for it, and debating it, and arguing. Some of it has happened, incidentally, long after I brought it up. But most of it has not happened.

Chall: Well, it was an attempt to get everybody in on it. Equal ~~voice~~ ^{voice} ~~voicing~~, and it made it awfully big, so it's pretty hard to get an equal voice these days. All right, I think that we'll ~~conclude~~ ^{this interview - It has been most interesting -}
 Thank you -
 #the [redacted] [22]

Transcriber: Shannon Page

HANS SCHILLER AIA architect/planner
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"When God created the world he had
no associates; so why should I?"

E.M.

E R I C M E N D E L S O H N

"I have no confidence in the daily records of fame; I believe that history itself and history alone is the final recorder of everything a man does."

These words of Eric Mendelsohn come to my mind as I recall but a few reminiscences out of the vast human experience of fifteen eventful years, living, working and striving with him for the achievement and realization of his ideas.

This is no attempt at evaluating his art -

the past: I am still too close, time has to run its course,

the present: His work speaks for itself,

the future: History will judge.

Human closeness, however, puts it within my province to recall the man.

Sketchily, of necessity aphoristically, a fleeting glimpse here and there.

Unequal measure, different law applies to the genius, obedient to his own conscience, driven to fulfill his destiny, the cycle of his life returning onto itself: Cosmic awareness.

From Einstein Tower to Atomic Energy Research Laboratory.

"I believe that all original artists betray their individual significance in their first works - pregnant with new ideas - offering the best clue for everything that follows. For, when the first idea is deep enough, life is too short to expound it fully."

man of exuberant vitality, dynamic impatience, driving towards ever higher goals: "I never tire until the job is done."

But there always was a job to be done. Relentlessly working - weekdays at his office, weekends bent over design sketches in his tiny study at home: "To me design is recreation."

Astounding vitality; never a thought for the past, always living in the present, forming the future. Out of the morbidity of the trenches of 1917 comes the impassioned credo of human future: The dynamic sketches of "ARCHITECTURE IN STEEL AND CONCRETE".

At the apparent height of his career, leaving Europe's largest architectural studio behind him overnight, he starts anew in England and Palestine, commuting by plane from London to Jerusalem, undaunted by foreign language, foreign land. Though not really foreign - He felt at home. The Mediterranean, he loved its culture, its climate, its simple taste for life.

In 1941 again burning his bridges behind him, he set out for the New World. In 1945, at the age of 58 he started his last office in San Francisco.

He had an unusual affinity to nature. A quick walk along the ocean, almost an intoxication, an inspiration: "Dune Architecture"; the ripe, sun-warmed fruit from the age-old fig tree in his garden in Jerusalem, cheese, a loaf of bread broken open in his powerful hands were more satisfying than the elaborate dinners at social events all over the world and in his own house.

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Unabashed by meeting the "Great" of his time, witty and outspoken, he offended many. When, at times, this was pointed out to him he would plead absolute innocence, yet would not hide signs that he enjoyed the situation tremendously.

Of the arts music was closest to him, of music Bach's, almost an architectural concept in its simplicity of monumental construction.

Architecture to Eric Mendelsohn was art, in fact Art Supreme to which all other arts were subordinate and component. His desire to conceive beauty was only matched by painstaking attention to even the most insignificant detail in his buildings. Thus Henry van de Velde said of the Maimonides Hospital: "...a great and noble gesture towards the last step, that of pure beauty, without which it would have remained in the glacial region of calculation and mere technique."

A hard taskmaster, Mendelsohn drove those who worked with him mercilessly in the pursuit of perfection, but he drove himself harder. Every detail had to bear the imprint of his hand: "There is but one designer in this office, and that is Eric Mendelsohn." Conscientiously he would abandon scheme after scheme, laboring tirelessly in the quest for the flawless solution: "I am used to be my own, my most severe critic."

The most fascinating experience was to watch him sketch: "There is nothing more provocative to the creative architect than a blank sheet of white paper." One short moment of intense concentration, gazing into space beyond, the 6B touched in a point, lingered for a second, then the line started flowing in quick, determined dynamic motion, not to be interrupted - the pencil never leaving the paper - until it ended in the characteristic flourish of his initials. The sketch was his most powerful tool of conveyance of ideas, his test of ideas, the demonstration of ideas to himself and to others. This was not studious drawing, line by line, but the outflowing of inspired imagination, spatial writing transcending the two-dimensionality of paper: "Draw as you write; write as you talk; talk as you think."

The original (first) sketch was the criterion against which he would check all future development of the project, his own variations on the theme and the elaborations of those who translated its portents into working drawings, always cautioning: "Look at my sketch, there is everything in it." Thus in his great buildings it is evident that the complexity of detail and form is encompassingly envisaged in the simplicity of line of the original conception: "Only in reduction to ultimate simplicity there is mastery."

Acutely aware of the limitations of two-dimensional drawing in architecture, Mendelsohn always had models prepared from the rough preliminaries, more often than not from his first sketches, working constantly from model to sketches, back to model and finished drawing: "Good architecture is designed around the corner."

The impact of his revolutionary ideas on contemporary architecture, the elastic quality of his personality made him an unusual teacher. He never grew old. His almost boyish exuberance bridged the age gap with his students who were spell-bound after the initial awe was overcome: "Staying young is to communicate today's ideas to youth, for tomorrow is theirs." However busy, Mendelsohn always found time to listen to students, young architects, encouraging them, if he saw promise, but equally discouraging where he found little or nothing.

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He was highly critical of our system of architectural education: "Young man, go out and learn the intricacies of our profession, the craft, the techniques - design cannot be taught, it can only be developed." His approach to teaching was offer a tremendous challenge to his students. Semester after semester he bewildered his graduate classes in the first session with his provocative scope and language of the thesis. His usual and pleased comment: "They were flabbergasted." And they were indeed. This was his true intent, it was his axiom that "only out of chaos comes creation."

In his art he would not compromise, rather lose a project than be dictated how to design. To a prospective client, indicating that he would like something similar to the Park Synagogue in Cleveland, he replied: "My dear Mr. A., would you have asked Beethoven for the Seventh Symphony while he would create the Ninth? Certainly not! All I will say at this point, you 'll get a Mendelsohn."

Yet, there was humility, great humility in the face of nature, great art, close friends. There was tenacity of purpose, heroism. As a young man, at the very start of his career, he lost the sight of one eye. Though this must have been a terrible shock to a man creating three-dimensional form to be perceived by eyesight, this was no handicap, rather a further stimulus to make his structures more exquisite, more beautiful.

In spring 1953 Mendelsohn called me to his study. He was standing with his back to me as I entered, not bent over his board as he was wont to do - there was oppressive silence, not the music of Bach filling the tiny room, as was the custom while he worked. I was gripped by foreboding.

Without turning around he said simply: "Hans, I have just been told that I have but a short time to live." Unimaginable, Eric Mendelsohn, full of vitality, vigor, rarely found in younger men - "There is still much to be done, I intend to continue to live and work as if nothing had happened." There was no change in his daily tasks, if anything he would work harder than ever before, never any mention of the end.

Several months later, one afternoon after having completed the final design sketches for the interior of his temple in St. Paul, he asked me to drive him to the hospital. That night his main concerns were still his buildings, discussing design questions and asking me to take notes.

A few days later I stood in the loft of a small flower-bedecked chapel in San Francisco and played Bach's Art of the Fugue as he had wanted me to do, and I paid tribute to a great spirit, the master of his art who had given so much to architecture, created beauty and set it in majesty, my teacher and my friend.

San Francisco
January 15, 1955

hjs

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Excerpts from the response to Dennis Sharp, ARIBA, June 20, 1965

Mendelsohn as an architect, as an artist, as a person defies any attempt at classification. If he has to be put into a pigeon hole, then it would not be Jugendstil, Expressionism or Romanticism, it would have to be Mendelsohnism.

His credo was that architecture was art, in fact Art Supreme, to which all other arts were subordinate and component.

Incidentally, it is a quite common misconception that Mendelsohn's "music sketches" were based on music. Though it is quite true that Mendelsohn loved Johann Sebastian Bach because of the masterful use of point and counterpoint, of the inventiveness, the organic structuring of his music, it is equally true that he rejected Wagnerian music as barbaric, teutonic, unbridled. Music was but a physical convenience while working: Like others will draw a curtain to shut out disturbing light, so Mendelsohn would surround himself with a "curtain" of music to shut out all disturbing influences which might keep him from concentrating on his creative task. Of course, it had to be the "right" kind of music, it could not be music which might be a disturbing influence by itself demanding conscious or subconscious attention and reaction. Once he had settled himself in his study and his work, he would be quite oblivious of anything around him. The automatic record player, having come to the bottom disk of the stack, would repeat it endlessly for hours and hours.

The "expressionist interlude" (in the twenties) in modern architecture becomes more and more apparent at least in some of the more significant contemporary architecture in the United States, fifty years after Potsdam (the Einstein Tower), would you want to call this a revival, or would you be willing to concede that the heavy lid of the "sarcophagus" (Potsdam) is being lifted by a more facile use of modern technology, hence the more common awareness of the organic fluidity of the "modern" building materials for whose potentials Eric Mendelsohn designed their visionary expression half a century ago?

Far from either being the end of his success or his importance, 1933 did not spell the end of either importance or contribution of this architect. No evaluation of the man or the architect can be considered complete without either his Palestinian or his American period.

Proving again that it was impossible to classify him as an expressionist or as an exponent of the "international style", he proceeded to produce what, in my estimation at least, defined him as a truly great architect: he designed the Hadassah University Medical Centre on Mount Scopus, quite unlike anything he had ever designed before, not forcing a designer's heavy hand on the austere landscape and climate of the Judean mountains, but creating an organic outcropping of

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this ancient soil, in its expression as timeless as the centuries of history which have passed over this land and yet as immediate in its idiom as this morning's dawn. To mention other works of his of similar impact, though not necessarily of any similarity in design: the Anglo-Palestine Bank in Jerusalem, the Schocken Residence and Schocken Library, also in Jerusalem; the Government Hospital in Haifa, the residence of Prof. Chaim Weizman and the University Agricultural College in Rehoboth, which has had a profound influence on a development started ten years ago and thousands of miles removed, but in a similar climate and in similar geography, the contemporary California school building.

Finally, I would like to take issue with your concluding evaluation of Mendelsohn's American work and its contribution to the development of architectural ideas.

The Maimonides Hospital in San Francisco, though never fully completed as designed, definitely has had a profound influence on many subsequent structures throughout the United States; more important, perhaps, is my firm conviction that history will judge its influence by confirming Henry van de Velde's verdict: "... a great and noble gesture toward the last step, that of pure beauty..."

Equally significant are the dynamic synagogues of Cleveland, St. Louis and St. Paul and the unexecuted design for Dallas. In the United States, in the forties and early fifties, with eclecticism rampant in all architectural design, and particularly in church architecture, Mendelsohn's designs opened up unheard of avenues of approach, soon to be followed by a new wave of concepts in sacred buildings for all denominations, including the tradition bound Catholic Church. Inspired by the acclaim accorded Mendelsohn's community centers, even a Frank Lloyd Wright felt intrigued to "prove to the Jews that I can give expression to their religion that even a Mendelsohn is not capable of." (Stated by Frank Lloyd Wright to Eric Mendelsohn during a chance meeting in the restaurant of the San Francisco international airport late in 1952.) I do not believe Wright succeeded if his synagogue is offered as proof.

FUTURE INTERVIEW TOPICS
AS SUGGESTED BY MR. SCHILLER

1. Complete coverage of service in British Army, return to Palestine.
2. Photo exhibit of Arab architecture in Palestine and Jordan.
3. Run in with Mr. Begin.
4. Emigration and reasons for doing so.
- ✓5. Arrival in New York and Elizabeth, N.J.
6. Drive across country to San Francisco, 1947
- ✓7. Working with Eric Mendelsohn , 1947-1953 - more successes, failure
8. Working as carpenter for six months after Mendelsohn's death.
- ✓9. Working for John Bolles for five years until elevated to V.P. Did not want to be administrator.
- ✓10. Opens own office, 1958; unsatisfactory situation. Decision to be on own without staff to administer. featured at UC Berkeley

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

11. Book banning incident at high school; first male president of PTA.
12. Adlai Stevenson's first campaign
13. Involved with Clare Miller's congressional campaign
14. Became citizen, 1955
15. Miller as freshman in Congress created Point Reyes Nation Park; also proposed U.S. Disarmament Commission.
16. Involvement with California Democratic Council shortly after created by Alan Cranston. Attended first state-wide convention when Cranston was president
17. Served on CDC resolutions committee, later chaired it for many years.
18. Meeting with Hubert Humphrey and Adlai Stevenson re suggestion for Peace Corps-like organization.
19. California chairman for Senator Hartke's presidential campaign.
20. Highly involved in Gene McCarthy's campaign. Pushed CDC to endorse McCarthy--an historic first--he manoeuvred resolution.
21. Chaired eleven CDC conventions.
22. Proposed to national party to change conventions procedures: have discussion of issue at interim years.
23. Proposal, at Kansas City, re preamble was defeated.
24. Elected to state party. Run in with Manatt.
25. First and second chairman of California Platform Commission.
26. Worked on Jerry Brown's campaign, also George Brown (John Tunney lied at Stanford about Brown, said anti-Semitic).

PUBLIC LIFE

- ✓27. County Design Review Board
- ✓28. Appointed to BCDC by Jerry Brown; vice-chairman then chairman for one year. Fired by Dukemajian
- ✓29. Appointed to State Board of Architecture Examiners by Jerry Brown, ended up as president, fired by Dukemajian last year.

Notes on interview of 7/15/87:

Mendelsohn very difficult to work for. His last words to Schiller before his death, "I didn't treat you very well, did I." Considered himself a genius, but didn't charge Schiller to apprentice self with him--unlike Wright. Once saw Wright and Mendelsohn meet in airport. They circled around one another like children playing one-upmanship.

Re Bauhaus: International style intended to work all over world, but doesn't fit hot areas such as Arizona, where sun needs to be kept out.

When went out on own, most of work was fixing other architects mistakes.

Examples: needed to fix roof on Madeleine Haas Russell's home, and had to create space in Asian Art Museum where most of basement consisted of 8 feet wide aisles but little storage or office space available. Re Russell roof, told anecdote about Wright designed house with leaky roof and Wright's arrogant response to complaining client.

Schiller has some dissatisfaction concerning OH procedure. He's worried that he's babbling, that what he's recounting isn't important, that perhaps there won't be enough financing for all that he is saying. I tried to reassure him, and at lunch when I told Mrs. Schiller that he didn't seem to enjoy being interviewed, she said (in his presence) that there was very little he did enjoy. She indicated that this was due to his unhappy childhood; one wasn't supposed to enjoy anything.

I'm still trying to figure out 1) how to put his mind at rest, or at least change his negative reaction, and 2) try to get him to be briefer in his responses, especially since he's worried about costing too much. That doesn't concern me too much because so far there's been no money spent for research.

But I really wonder how much time he'll spend on the years with Mendelson in San Francisco.

He certainly is a complex man. If he doesn't enjoy being interviewed, why the audio-visual recording? He says he never thinks of the past -- so how is it his recollections are so lengthy & detailed?

Peace Corps

Schiller suggested to Hubert Humphrey--at some kind of brainstorming Demo party meetings in SF when or after Stevenson lost for second time--that America needs to get involved in grass roots way in underdeveloped countries, in a low-profile way, that Russia had "advisers" in Asia, living like the people did, that it was effective politically, and that we should do it too. Humphrey taken with idea, had Schiller present it to Stevenson too. Reported only in C S Monitor.

Schiller believes in politics. Not a nasty business, to him. (I suggeste that Latin-Greek schooling perhaps gave deeper meaning to the term.) A believer in the cause, and the political means of achieving it.

As citizen of Palestine he was a British subject. Feels US should have adopted Parliamentary system along with everything else it adopted from England.

Came to US 39 years go, 1947. Hard decision to give up a life he had made in Jerusalem (1st son born there) and come with his friend (Mendelssohn) or at his beckoning, to America. He got here, and struck by New Jersey shore and the shacks along there--not Beautiful. America was then and is now, 50 years behind. (In what ways?) In politics and in architecture both.

Schiller is against nationalism in any form, anywhere, Germany, Palestine or America.

Offered government jobs 15 years ago during Democratic administrations. Reiterates that architecture is what he does, but it is by no means the whole of him.

He and wife cross USA--6000 miles of looking around, zigzagging around, by jeep, when they arrived.

Squeaking of biographies, Mendelsohn's wife did one and it was with the help of Schiller, after Mendel died. Schiller questioned her, helped her get her ideas out, then the editors just picked out the "juicy" parts. Wante assurance that that was not how his o-h would be treated.

On Board of Arch. Examiners--or Commission of, as advisor. Got on under Brown, I guess.

When he came to America, he was thirty, and he had had enough "involvement" he felt. No more. But when there was a book-removing threat at Tam High during McCarthy days, he a foreigner, not a citizen, but OUTspoken, went down and talked them out of it. Next year he was chairman of the PTA. From there got into Marin Co, and eventually State and National politics.

Two sons, one a physician, head of ophth at Kaiser, Sacramento, 2nd in state department of Human Resources, in SF, a daughter, "problem: but the brightest of them all" is with Hewlett Packard, lives in San Jose.

Of "Shoah" he says he watched a little 1st night, and then a lot the second, and felt that it was much too long, and didn't have the impact a few tightly edited hours would have. Made him never want to ride the train again. (psychology-displacement of anguish).

Says his knowledge of German is nearly gone, though he wrote well in German in his teens, wrote fiction. definitely assimilated. This, America, is his country.

Referred three times to "if he is alive" and has had heart bypass operation, though brags at skiing the day before it and the season after it.

Bought Mill Valley house in 1947, before M V as built up, and the trees didn't screen the view of Mt. Tam. Rougher street then, smaller house, poor foundations. Why did he choose that perch?

Doesn't care about money, can hardly bring himself to bill his clients. One call while we were there had to do with a contractor leaving a painting outside, on a job for Mad. H. Russell.

Not interested in "relating" to interviewer. Very delighted to talk about himself. Proposes taping simultaneously, as well as video-taping the whole thing. Concerned about opportunities of reading and changing and seeing, etc., and he was reassured. Thinks he's going to say some devastating stuff about important Names, that hasn't been said before. Pictures himself as iconoclast.

Eleanor cynical about him. Both of us pick up on his utter willingness to talk about himself. Needs to be encouraged to name names and cite facts. Perhaps won't remember dates, but we can fix them into it.

As far as papers and so on, he probably has a lot, though one couldn't tell. He does have letters written during the war to his wife that Eleanor can encourage him to review to refresh his memory.

Proposed beginning with four hours of taping on Berlin and Palestine. Then 12 or so on the rest of his life. Could be more --i.e., Eleanor could come three times, rather than two, if beginning gets fruitful, and if the beginning is really setting the scene for the collaboration with Mendelssohn and the development of his political philosophy.

COLUMBIA FOUNDATION

1090 SANSOME STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94111, (415) 986-5179

January 2, 1987

Ms. Willa Baum
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California
486 The General Library
Berkeley, CA 94720

Dear Willa,

I write to inquire about the possibility that the Regional Oral History Project might undertake an oral history of Hans Schiller.

Mr. Schiller's early involvement in Jewish organizations in Germany in the 1930's and later work and studies in Palestine are of particular historical interest, as is his long association as chief designer with the architect Eric Mendelsohn and subsequent work for John Bowles in San Francisco.

The Columbia Foundation is very interested in an oral history of Hans Schiller and is willing to provide funding to the Friends of the Bancroft Library to undertake this oral history.

I have enclosed my notes on Mr. Schiller's background for your review. If you have any questions regarding this request or need more detailed information please let me know.

Sincerely,




Susan C. Silk

Enclosures

SCS/jh

President
Madeleine Haas Russell
Executive Director
Susan Clark Silk

Hon Schiller - 

Harriet Mann - 674-7515, U.C. ^{with} _{Fin}
Willa Baum - 642-3781
Bancroft Library - 642-3781

I used to live so totally in the day to day + very little for the future - I.

B. 1917 Nov. 30 some day in Churchill -

Breslau ^{German} ~~now~~ ^{Silesia} Wroclaw, - Poland -

- a Prussian

German Speaking

f. Max Schiller, M.D. - (Silesia, Liegnitz)

Alma Ada Schiller (Aris - maiden name,
R.N.) (East Prussia)

only child -

medical family - on both

first generation ^{sides} -
medical family -

mother's family grain merchants + horse breeders in East Prussia

father's father a merchant, owner of a clothing store

- schooling in Breslau

public gymnasium -

- first formal language in school was Latin + second was Greek + third was French

- English from nanny -

- not a religious family - on mother's side totally non-religious -
non-descendant + non-identified - uncle a
colony officer in German army -

mother a "drop" in late years - 2 -

Mother a professional R.R. office woman - didn't really want children -
father a kinder person;
father died on 14th birthday of heart failure

life shaped by fact that can't say no to a ^{strong w/} domineering
women -

- continued school ^{to front} - moved to Berlin ¹⁹³¹ 1/2 yr. later to
be near to mother's uncle + aunt who had raised her -

did not finish education - went to another gymnasium
but got into trouble - unbridled - + historically + politically
aware - utter dislike for National Socialism [early trips with
parents to visit other European nations + was aware of
world outside of Germany] became critical of teachings of old
professors who were jingoistic - resistant to tone + content of
teaching - early commitment to rights of others [participate
in many sports as an adolescent - didn't fit "image
of German / Nazi definition of Jew -] but couldn't stand
to see others badly treated - which started long before
Hitler in power - youth groups in uniform (brown shirts)
beating up on Jewish kids - politically identified kids
Hans' complaints to teachers + principal's always rejected -
was finally dismissed (Hitler probably Chancellor by
now) When Nazis at school rally would sing
their anthem + Hans sat down during the

Nazi anthem -

had also physically interposed when kids being
attacked by Nazi youth - gradually became
known that Hans was trouble -

at rallies - unbound Nazi youth attacked Hans

(14)

+ knifed Hava in the ribs - mixed heart -
officially thrown out of all public schools - two years
short of finishing -

no private school except Jewish school would
take him - finished next 2 yrs. - 1 yr. at Jewish
private school -

Hava's decision to emigrate to Israel - Hebrew
Univ asked that he take computer exam early at
Ministry of Education & Culture - passed exam

- in ^{the} beginning, restriction on Jews was first on those who didn't
have good grades - German teachers were good to him -
keep up good work - he just stops entering & you'll be
O.K. - hard transition to orthodox Jewish school

decision to emigrate to Palestine - they that made
Hava become active was the burning of Reichstag -
(one of Uncle's names & father's name was a Zionist
& from Zionist family) - Uncle suggested Hava must
will people preparing to go to Palestine - became a
member of Zionist Youth Organization Haborion
(a labor youth organization)

became interested + intrigued because of interest
in training people to do things that Jews in Europe were
did - skills necessary for building a society - agriculture
trades etc -

(4)

became a leader of Habonim -

met Lotte at age 13 - Hans 15 when
accompanied her violin playing on piano -

Palestine only country where could take some
money with you - 1,000 pounds allowed + required
for Palestine Visa -

- went to Palestine w/ ~~the~~ mother who went for "Hans's sake"
1933 to visit - + returned to Berlin - became very
active in Habonim + went partially under-
ground - getting people out of Germany -

worked with false identification idijy Hans
as part of military + Hitler youth -

arrests by authorities until his identity
becoming known - then decided to leave -

^{18th - 16} Spied out across Silesian / Czechoslovak
border - met up with mother + moved to
Jerusalem ~~1934~~ ~~beginning of 1935~~
for next 13 years lived in Palestine -

raised a pacifist - anything to do with war +
arms of any sort was objectionable - believing in idea
of pacifism - was nevertheless active but not
violent - but still was paramilitary activities

(5)

became
Officer of Hagana ("defense") -

While trained in the use of arms - no shot fired
unless in self-defense - & that was the philosophy
until the late 40's - pushed into more
aggressive stance by corruption for state as
official Israeli army - }

- Has trained by British Army as officer
of Hagana (British Army in Palestine
was pro-Jewish - British police force was pro-
Arab side would illegally train & arm it's
favored side)

35-36 - + on

- Has also under direction of British police -
to keep highway between Tel Aviv +
Jerusalem open - by supernumerary police
in command of 4 or 5 to cordone
close highway at night to keep it clear of land mines

- enrolled in pre-med at Hebrew University
- learning Hebrew - went to a school to learn Hebrew
met Lotte again - whose family had emigrated.

1933 -

attended Hebrew U one year then attended
American University in Beirut - also in pre-med -

✓ after one year in Beirut in college housing
had to leave -

influenced by friend who thought Has a German

Released to custody of American Consulate - ^{early member of Arab National Organization} Reint.

Hans

36 spy - infiltrated all Arab National organizations which were all begun at America U of Beirut AUB a training ground for Arab nationalists.

earliest leader of Arab + Palestinian organization at AUB - let it be known that he had been held by French as Germany spy - [German + Italian support for Arab nationalists]

- decision not pursue medical studies in Beirut - left Beirut (after staying in north of Lebanon - when returned to Beirut found his room completely ransacked - Arab nationalists had become suspect - (local Jewish community hated Hans because he was German))

back in Palestine 1936-37 -

hired by Eric Mendelsohn, architect - father's father - Alfred Bernheim - got Hans the job - architectural photographer -

36-42

Hans is apprentice after asking about which school to go to to study architecture - became personal design assistant - after 2 yrs. 1940 - became architect

~~Hans~~ 13 years worked for Mendelsohn in Palestine - 1942-1947/Hans inducted in British Army - 5 years of service - served in Egypt + Italy

taught officers training courses for British Army - within two months -

(7)

transferred to a survey unit - map making
etc - assigned to forward Allied HQs of
8th Army -

- back to Palestine - still in British Army
no rank

Back to Palestine now as "enemy" member
of British Army - concerned about attacks
on British Army by Jewish terrorists -

arrived Nov 30 1947 in New York to work
for Mendelson again -

(Has no longer an architect by American
licensing standards)

Came to S.F. late 1947 -

worked for Mendelson as

personal design assistant
until Mendelson's death in 1953 -

◆ ~~Mr Zim~~ - Maimonides
→ Carpentry for 6 mos after Men's death in
1953 -

John Bowles -

worked & design for five years
chief draftsman for steel division & commercial
division -

8

1958 - opened own office -

afternoon political involvement - began w/
book signing at TAN Hgh -
ADA -

SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

RESOLUTION
OF
APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE
TO
HANS J. SCHILLER

September 1, 1983

Whereas, Hans J. Schiller was appointed by Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor of the State of California, to represent the public on the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission in March of 1978, and appointed Vice-Chairman of the Commission in May of 1982; and

Whereas, he served as Acting Chairman of the Commission from January 1983 to August of 1983; and

Whereas, during this period, in addition to his other duties as a member and officer of the Commission, he ably and unstintingly represented the Commission on the Regional Airport Planning Committee, the San Francisco Bay Shellfish Program Policy Advisory Committee, the Richardson Bay Special Area Plan Steering Committee, and the Hamilton Air Force Base Roundtable as well as representing the Commission at many ceremonial occasions; and

Whereas, he has ably and conscientiously led the Commission as Acting Chairman during a difficult and long transition period; and

Whereas, he has tirelessly worked to protect the natural resources of San Francisco Bay for the benefit of present and future generations; and

Whereas, he is no longer on the Commission;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission does hereby unanimously express, on its behalf and on behalf of the entire Bay Area which it serves, its deepest appreciation to Hans J. Schiller for his generous and distinguished public service.


Chairman

H A N S J. S C H I L L E R

22 MADRONE PARK CIRCLE • MILL VALLEY • CALIFORNIA 94941

political background

- 1970 Hon. Chairman, Ballot Proposition 'A' (Marin Peace Referendum)
won by 54% of the vote.
N. Calif. steering committee, George Brown for U.S. Senate
Steering committee, Jess Unruh for Governor
Steering committee, Michael Peevey for State Senator
- 1964/70 Chairman, Committee on Resolutions,
California Democratic Council
- 1969 Testimony before McGovern Commission on Party Reform
- 1968 State Chairman, Committee on Platform and Issues,
McCarthy for President Campaign
Elected Sixth C.D. member, Calif. Primary McCarthy Slate
Member, McCarthy staff, Chicago Convention
- 1967 Elected member, Executive Committee, Peace Slate '68
Chairman, Southeast Asia Conference, Fresno
- 1966 State liaison coordinator, Anderson for Lt. Governor
campaign and California Democratic Council Volunteers
- 1962/65 First Cong. District Director, California Democratic Council
Volunteer campaign aide and member of all first district
congressional campaign advisory committees during that time
- 1962 Campaign committee, Congressman Clem Miller;
full time volunteer aide in posthumous election
- 1958/62 County chairman, Betts for State Treasurer
- 1956 County Coordinator, Stevenson for President campaign
- 1952 Precinct captain, first Stevenson campaign

*

Sacramento, January 23, 71

H A N S J. S C H I L L E R

22 MADRONE PARK CIRCLE • MILL VALLEY • CALIFORNIA 94941

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

- 1975/76 Co-chair, California Democratic Party Commission on Platform and Policy; Member, Democratic State Central Committee, Governor's appointee.
- 1974 California Delegation, Conference on Democratic Party Organization and Policy, Kansas City.
- 1971/72 Initiated creation of California Democratic Party Commission on Platform and Policy, served as vice-chair; Elected to Steering and Executive Committees of the Democratic State Central Committee; Chairman-Coordinator, Democratic Party Unified Campaign, Northern California; Chairman, Public Officials for McGovern-Shriver, Northern California; California Delegation Representative, National Platform Committee hearings.
- 1971 Permanent Chair, State Convention, California Democratic Council; Temporary Chair, CDC State Conventions in 1972, '73, '74, ~~and~~ '75, '76 & '78
- 1969 Author of 'Interim Convention Proposal' in testimony before McGovern Commission on Party Reform, ultimately resulting in the 1974 Kansas City Conference.
- 1968 State Chair, Committee on Platform and Issues, McCarthy for President campaign; elected to California McCarthy slate; served on McCarthy volunteer staff at the Chicago Convention.
- 1967 Elected to Executive Committee of Peace Slate '68. (Uncommitted California National Convention Delegation)
- 1964/70 Chair, Committee on Resolutions, California Democratic Council: First anti-Vietnam War resolution adopted by any Democratic organization nationally under this chairmanship. (Sacramento Convention, Spring 1965)
- 1956 County coordinator, Stevenson for President campaign; leadership role in all Democratic congressional district races since that time.
- 1952 Precinct captain, first Stevenson campaign.

*

H A N S J S C H I L L E R

22 MADRONE PARK CIRCLE • MILL VALLEY • CALIFORNIA 94941

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

- 1972/1972 Initiated creation of California Democratic Party Commission on Platform and Policy.
Served as Vice-Chairman of the Commission.
- 1972 Fall Chairman-Coordinator, Democratic Party Unified Campaign, Northern California.
Chairman-Coordinator, Public Officials for McGovern-Shriver, Northern California.
Co-Chairman, Operations Committee, DSCC, Northern Section.
California Delegation Representative, National Platform Committee Hearings in San Francisco.
- 1972 Spring State Chairman, Vance Hartke for President Committee.
- 1971 - Elected Member, Steering Committee, Democratic State Central Committee.
Elected Co-Chairman, Sixth Congressional District (San Francisco and Marin Counties) and Member, Executive Committee, Democratic State Central Committee.
- 1971 Spring Chairman, State Convention of the California Democratic Council.
- 1970 Honorary Chairman, Ballot Proposition 'A', the Marin Peace Referendum. Won by 54% of the vote.
Northern California steering committee, George Brown for U.S. Senate.
Steering committee, Jess Unruh for Governor.
- 1964/1970 Chairman, Committee on Resolutions, California Democratic Council. First anti-Vietnam war resolution adopted by any Democratic organization (spring 1965) under this chairmanship.
- 1969 Testimony before McGovern Commission on Party Reform.
- 1968 State Chairman, Committee on Platform and Issues, McCarthy for President Campaign.
Elected Sixth C.D. member, California McCarthy slate.
Member, McCarthy volunteer staff, Chicago Convention.
- 1967 Elected Member, Executive Committee, Peace Slate '68.
Chairman, South-East Asia Conference, Fresno.
- 1966 State liaison coordinator, Anderson for Lt. Governor campaign and California Democratic Council Volunteers.
- 1962/1965 First Congressional District Director, C. D. C.
Volunteer aide and member of all first district congressional advisory campaign committees during that time.
- 1962 Campaign committee, Congressman Clem Miller; full-time volunteer aide in posthumous election.
- 1958 & 1962 County Chairman, Betts for State Treasurer.
- 1956 County coordinator, Stevenson for President Campaign.
- 1952 Precinct captain, first Stevenson campaign

In first person...

They moved one floor down to begin their new lives

LOTTE BERNHEIM SCHILLER
Special to the Bulletin

JERUSALEM 1940 — it was not a time for frills, but we could not quite escape the wishes of our parents for some ceremonial recognition of our union.

So we hastily arranged with the kindly old rabbi next door to perform the wedding in his living room in the presence of our parents and a few close friends.

The ceremony was brief, but while waiting to sign the elaborately decorated *ketuba* (marriage contract), Hans whispered in my ear: "Make sure you don't forget what we promised each other: that we shall not feel bound by this ancient piece of parchment, that being modern, rational people we shall separate quietly, without fuss or attorneys, if we find that we do not get along. You do promise, don't you?"

And squeezing his hand in approval, squeezing real hard, I found myself more bound by this gesture than by the ceremony just performed.

Later we reassembled in another part of



Lotte Bernheim Schiller and Hans Schiller first met in Berlin before reconnecting in Jerusalem, where they married.

town at my mother-in-law's elegant penthouse apartment. It was surrounded by a terrace expanding over the entire apartment house. The view was breathtaking:

Jerusalem, the old city to the north, modern Jewish quarters, picturesque Arab villages and the road to Bethlehem sprawling in all directions, and shimmering in the

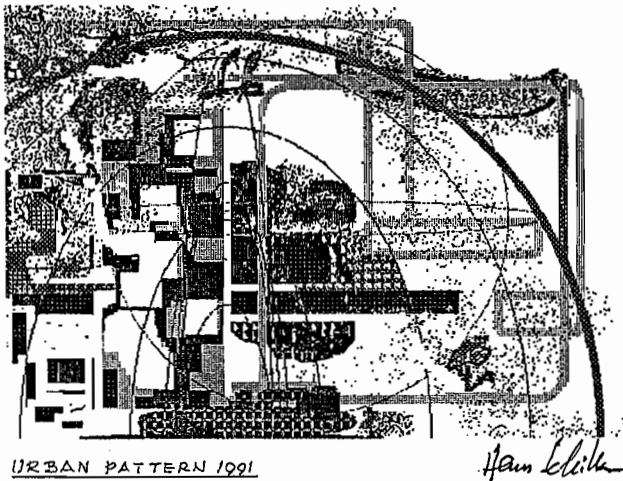
distance in shades of blue and magenta, the mountains of Jordan.

While we were enjoying the scrumptious lunch, one flight of stairs below the tenants were still in the process of moving out of the room which was going to become our home that evening and, as it turned out, for years to come.

Our guests had barely left when we changed into our grubbier work clothes and, loaded with brooms and buckets, descended to our new quarters. It was well into the night before we finally cleaned up and fell exhausted onto the mattress we had pulled to the center of the floor. It may not have been a typical wedding night, but it was a very happy one.

We have moved half way around the world. We own a whole house now, the spacious home in which we raised our children. And we are still together!

Lotte Bernheim Schiller and Hans Schiller, both born in Germany, live in Mill Valley.



URBAN PATTERN 1001

Hans Lubke

SEASON'S GREETINGS

With our best wishes for a happy new year and for the world at peace and in democracy... and that includes us! Let us keep and enhance our freedoms.

Dear MRS. GLASER,

I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR PATIENCE, AND I MAY TRY IT ONCE TOO OFTEN, BUT IT IS NOT INTENTIONAL. AS I TOLD YOU I HAD STARTED, BUT ALIEN HAD TO STOP. I AM WORKING ON AN "URGENT" PROJECT FOR MY OLDEST CLIENT, DID NOT HAVE CHANCE, WILL NOT HAVE CHRISTMAS OR NEW YEAR. - THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE A MOST WONDERFUL HOLIDAY & A GREAT, HAPPY & HEALTHY NEW YEAR! ONE OF THESE DAYS... CHEW! DO ENJOY & DON'T MIND ME!

Hans and Lotte Schiller

SEASONS GREETINGS

However dark the night may have been, let the light of peace, love and friendship shine on your path, all the world and on the newborn last decade of this century.

I KNOW I HAVE TO HIDE MY HEAD IN SHAME, AS MY RESOLVE AGAIN HAS COME TO NAUGHT. THE DEMANDS OF THE PRESENT & FUTURE STILL HAVE A STRONGER POW ON MY DIMINISHING TIME & ENERGY. IN ADDITION TO MY STILL INCREASING PRACTICE, I VOLUNTEERED TODAY TO THE CITY TO ASSESS DAMAGE; ASSIST IN THE QUACK EMERGENCY & I AM WENT TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE. I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR PATIENCE. IT WILL STILL PAY OFF. WITH OUR BEST WISHES FOR THE HOLIDAYS & THE NEW YEAR!

lotte and hans schiller

San Gimignano

Hans Lubke '74



THE DOLL MUSEUM
OKEN'S HOUSE
WARRICK, ENGLAND

Last year, at this time, we went to England, Scotland and Wales at the spur of the moment ... and you did not hear from us.
So, this festive season, we double our wishes for you:

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND
A WORLD AT PEACE IN
THE NEW YEAR!

Dear Mr. RIES,
THANKS FOR YOUR KIND NOTE. AND:
THE 'EINSTEIN TOWER', ACTUALLY THE
ASTRO-PHYSICAL INSTITUTE, POTSDAM.
OF COURSE, IT HAS BEEN USED BY ALBERT
EINSTEIN, HIS TOP ASSISTANT ERWIN FESHBACH
AND OTHERS FOR EXPERIMENTS, FIRST OF ALL
TO PROVE EINSTEIN'S THEORY OF RELATIVITY,
BUT THEN, ALSO, FOR CONTINUOUS ASTROPHYSICAL
RESEARCH & OBSERVATION. IT IS STILL IN USE,
TO MY KNOWLEDGE AT PRESENT - AND IN CONTACT
TO ~~OTHER~~ BUILDINGS IN THE WEST BY NEW DESIGNERS
WHICH HAVE BEEN DESTROYED, CHANGED OR (HANGED).
IT HAS BEEN PROPERLY & CAREFULLY MAINTAINED
lotte & hans schiller

PTO

By THE EAST GERMAN GOVERNMENT.
(I HAVE SEEN SOME QUITE RECENT
PHOTOGRAPHS OF IT).

HOPE THIS ANSWERS YOUR QUESTION.

I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO GOING
THE TRANSCRIPTS (MOSTLY WITH
APPREHENSION!)

HAPPY NEW YEAR,

Jan Schiller

Eleanor K. Glaser

Raised and educated in the Middle West. During World War II, spent two years in the U.S. Marine Corps Women's Reserve.

Senior year of college was taken in New Zealand, consequently A.B. degree in sociology from University of Michigan was granted in absentia. Study in New Zealand was followed by a year in Sydney, Australia, working for Caltex Oil Company.

Work experience includes such non-profit organizations as Community Service Society, New York City; National Society for Crippled Children and Adults and National Congress of Parents and Teachers in Chicago.

After moving to California in 1966, joined the staff of a local weekly newspaper, did volunteer publicity for the Judah Magnes Museum and the Moraga Historical Society, and was the Bay Area correspondent for a national weekly newspaper. Also served as a history docent for the Oakland Museum.

Additional travel includes Great Britain, Europe, Israel, Mexico, and the Far East.

Suzanne Bassett Riess

Grew up in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Graduated from Goucher College, B.A. in English, 1957.
Post-graduate work, University of London and the University of California, Berkeley, in English and history of art.

Feature writing and assistant woman's page editor, Globe-Times, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.
Volunteer work on starting a new Berkeley newspaper.
Natural science docent at the Oakland Museum.
Free-lance Photographer.

Editor in the Regional Oral History Office since 1960, interviewing in the fields of art, environmental design, social and cultural history, horticulture, journalism, photography, Berkeley and University history.

Malca Chall

Graduated from Reed College in 1942 with a B.A. degree, and from the State University of Iowa in 1943 with an M.A. degree in Political Science.

Wage Rate Analyst with the Twelfth Regional War Labor Board, 1943-1945, specializing in agriculture and services. Research and writing in the New York public relations firm of Edward L. Bernays, 1946-1947, and research and statistics for the Oakland Area Community Chest and Council of Social Agencies, 1948-1951.

Active in community affairs as director and past president of the League of Women Voters of the Hayward area specializing in state and local government; on county-wide committees in the field of mental health; on election campaign committees for school tax and bond measures, and candidates for school board and state legislature.

Employed in 1967 by the Regional Oral History Office interviewing in fields of agriculture and water resources. Also director, Suffragists Project, California Women Political Leaders Project, Land-Use Planning Project, and the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program Project.