



Martin's Story, Chapter 3

Well of course during the years things became more and more uncomfortable for Jews, there were all sorts of things that Jews were no longer allowed to do, most of them of course affected people who were older than I was and who were in work and had to leave certain types of work and so on, and also people who were financially better off than we were were not allowed to have non-Jewish servants and that sort of thing, and of course that obviously didn't affect me but what affected me at first was the general atmosphere. One heard in those days a lot of rousing stirring songs, because all political extremist movements composed rousing stirring songs and in fact it was a waste of some very fine melodies, words which were I'm afraid very very unpleasant, and also of course there were all sorts of posters about, propaganda posters and that sort of thing.

But the thing that had the most immediate effect on me was a change in the law in 1938 that from the beginning of the new school year which was of course after the Easter holidays Jewish children were no longer allowed to go to non-Jewish schools. So I had to leave the school where I was. Well the nearest Jewish school was a long way away and in fact my mother tried to see what would happen if I simply went back to my old school so I went and I was straight away sent home. And I then had to go to a Jewish school which was a long way from where I lived. It also meant that that school took children from all over the city and well for all I know it may have taken some even from outside the city, I'm not sure about that, but it meant it took a lot more children than it was built for, it was very much crowded, and there was a very very unhappy atmosphere because we all knew that terrible things were going to happen, everything was building up towards that. It was a very noisy, sorry a very nervous sort of environment where everybody lived in fear, and this included the staff as well as the children. And so I'm afraid that the education was disrupted by this general sort of atmosphere plus the fact that some of the children including me had long distances to travel which for young children is of course a very disturbing sort of thing.