

--sponsors. We didn't have any sponsors, so the government was our sponsor. And after several weeks, about four weeks, we went-- or rather to say, my husband went along to the office to talk to our social worker [INAUDIBLE].

And he told her he did not want-- he wanted to make plans where to go. We wanted to get settled. We were told to keep in person, displaced person, government-sponsored. We were told not to stay in San Francisco, in the San Francisco area because there are too many that had their own sponsors. They didn't in San Francisco in that area, is my point, OK?

But if you had to-- were under this present order that they could [INAUDIBLE]. And of course, our friends that we had in Shanghai-- they were two, three families around San Francisco. And he wanted to stay close to them. So my husband said, we want to get settled? The boy-- we have a two-year-old boy in a hotel room.

Of course, after Shanghai-- the hotel room was pretty good because it was not spacious room. It was a good hotel, not an luxury hotel but a good hotel. And we could do all day whatever we wanted to.

And then my husband came to the-- our social worker. She said, what's your hurry? Take your time. Went up from Shanghai. But we wanted to go, and she gave us a choice, a choice-- not that we had to take the choice. If we wouldn't have taken any old place we would have gotten out of there. We were not forced in any way.

But the choice was Salt Lake City, Texas-- I think Houston-- and I don't for sure, but I think somewhere, Colorado. I don't for sure. So but then my husband said he wanted to talk it over with me. And she said, OK then next time when you come in, let me know also.

But our social worker got sick. So in the meantime, my husband talked to several people, and he said, Salt Lake City-- I would take that either way. They knew about the area, which we didn't. We didn't know anything about the place or anything. We didn't know anything about that.

But the area-- so we decided-- he wanted to stay to there as close to San Francisco. as possible because we had our so-called family, our friends, right there. That's why want-- why we went to Salt Lake. He didn't have any idea about the place or whatever.

And then, of course, we could take it. You are going to Salt Lake City. Aren't you scared? You know. But he didn't know really the story of it. But I had told my husband, and we had decided on that. He wanted a middle town, which I wanted. I did not want to go to a town like Berlin or Shanghai again.

Berlin had plenty of lesser parts and so on, but it still was what I call a stone city. So I didn't-- I wanted to get into a smaller area. Four seasons, of course the possibility to work. And I had already gotten wind at that time that the-- they were sent-- when they sent you, let's say to Denver or wherever, there was an apartment where you moved in. But if you had a kid, they would say, no kids.

So you had to start apartment-hunting, and I said, I don't want that. I wanted to know that I have an apartment, that you get into an apartment where we can stay. So to my surprise, this social worker said OK-- about 11:00 in the morning, after she got back from being sick-- I will call Salt Lake City and find out what kind of conditions there were with the apartment and so on.

And I told her I don't want it. If I have to move outside of it, I don't want to get apartment there. It was hard for most of the people. And so she said, OK. Come back at 1 o'clock.

She would call for us long distance. At that time, that wasn't in the book.

You mean?

Long distance phone to Salt Lake--

But you mean the treatment you say you weren't used to that kind of treatment?

No, no. Not treatment.

Or long distance technology?

Yes, because of the apartment to find out if we would have solid apartment, where we can stay with a boy, with a kid. That is all I wanted to know. All right?

And she said come, back at 1 o'clock. After that, I will find out. It was something long distance. At 1 o'clock, we came and she told us, you will not have to move, they said that they like children. But you even will have a small house. Yes. So we said, OK then. Can we go? What is your rush? I said we want to get settled. All right.

So we only wanted to stay over the weekend with our friends. And then-- so when-- now, I was unlucky in so far because he had guests then too. Otherwise, we would have gotten sleeping compartments. On the train, they gave you, saw to it that you had sleeping compartments. So it was January, end of January. No, that was already February when we came to Salt Lake, and at night.

And that little rascal of mine would not sleep. So I stood all night. I took him first to the smoking section. But I couldn't keep him there. So I stood all night, it was a really black night, in the walk of the train, the walkway. He would have kept all the people awake in our compartment. So I stood there all night.

And then I saw white something that looked-- sometimes I thought that looked like frost to me but I wasn't sure. It was snow on the ground that was. So I took at that time I think by train I took at that time, 20 hours. So we arrived in Salt Lake City at 8 o'clock in the morning. Got picked up from Mrs. White and another lady, and they brought us to the supposed house. This house wasn't-- that was not a house.

It was an apartment. a small apartment. So living room, a big living room, with a small bedroom, with an arch divided only by an arch. Of course, I was tired. And I was disappointed. But we did not have to move. As a matter of fact, we stayed in that apartment for four years. But we entered another apartment on the same floor, and made it a big apartment. That we had bedroom, living room. You know, it was cheap.

But I was horrified by the furniture, the type of furniture, the kitchen furniture, it was the type of furniture that we had thrown out in Germany, because the old-fashioned and so on. I was surprised.

But I was tired. And the next morning, when I woke up, I looked out of the window. And that was in part across [INAUDIBLE] area. And the weather was beautiful, clear blue sky. And that moment, everything, my disappointment was broken. It was really a good feeling.

That was our first apartment. Then we stayed with that apartment for four years before we bought a home. In four years we bought a home.

Now, you came here without jobs, right?

No jobs.

So you just basically arrived. What did your husband kind of quickly pick up and do? What did he-- that must have been an interesting period.

My husband, oh me, almost he made me paint. He came, I said there was a Mrs. White that picked us up from the train. All right. And there was another thing. When we came into the apartment, there was a closet door with shelves. There was flour, there was sugar, and all that stuff. And then an icebox, there was milk. There was everything, you know, with some food and so on, everything so that we had food there.

Now you have to know I came from Shanghai. In Shanghai, they didn't have spoilable food, more than one day. We didn't have any freedom. I came from Shanghai. So when I saw the icebox, an icebox with milk, butter and things like that, I don't know exactly what was there. But it was that we had food for the next couple of days at least.

And then that shelves, gee, that made me feel really good. You know? I was from Shanghai. And that make me feel good. But your question about my work, the next day, we had to go. We get up, and we had to go to Mr. White's office. He was a lawyer.

And he came there, and he asked us questions. What my husband could doing, what I, and so on. And--

Now was this-- excuse me. Was this was a connection that had been made with the social worker in California?

No, no. That was here from the community.

From the community.

That was here Salt Lake community, so that we had an apartment. OK, that is what the community took care from. The moment we arrived here, we had nothing to do with social worker anymore.

OK.

We had only to do with the community, Jewish community.

The Jewish community? The Jewish community?

Yes. They kept always in that apartment building, an apartment open. As soon as there was one empty, because it was a very cheap apartment building. OK. It was on Park Street.

So they were basically the Jewish community here in Salt Lake had mobilized to help refugees.

Right. They took one family a month. That's what they did all over. The communities of the people that didn't have any [BOTH TALKING]

So then this Mrs. White and Mr. White, were they part of the Jewish community?

Yes. And then you went to him the next day.

But let me tell you now. Mr. White, he asked us questions and so on. And then he said, educated us who was very outgoing. I always said to he could give him and hand him at the bottle. He wouldn't cry. He was very outgoing.

But a very outgoing boy, good looking. Yes. You have seen these pictures. And he asked, what do you want for the boy? You know, what do you want for him? I said, not for a million. I didn't know that man could sit down and write a check about 4 million, just like that. Mr. James White was one of the richest people in Salt Lake.

I didn't know that. I mean how funny. You give an answer and you don't even know that you could say, hey, yes, come on.

Yeah, right.

No, I wouldn't. But it was joking on that part. And then he asked my husband what he could do. And my husband was a department store show window decorator. A specialty-- he had a specialty, of course, to have he had that, there on the carpets. That's what he was training. And he said floor covering, what he could do, floor covering.

You could have just blown me over. He was a window decorator. So why he didn't tell him before but what he was then.

Oh, he would say anything. OK. Now you have to know in Germany, show window decorating, it's a very respected job, like architects and so on. They are very respected.

So when he told him that, of course, I didn't say anything. And then they asked me. I said I'm a dress maker, and I could work again. He said, no. You have to take care of the boy. Don't even think about working. OK. That was the way. Then that take my husband to one store, furniture store, that there was furniture and carpeting. And they offered him a part-time job.

And my husband said, I'm sorry. I mean yes. Yes, [? Karina. ?] He said, I'm sorry. I need the full-time job. I have a family. I guess they didn't expect that he would say anything like that. That he might say, hey, oh that's fine. But so the next day, he went here to the company that was called I&M, a big company. And they told him what-- and they said, OK. Talk to him. Ask him questions.

And of course, my husband knew everything about oriental carpets. But he never had laid a carpet, never had laid a floor. So he told them that in the time in between Shanghai 10 years. I don't know anything about tools anymore. Give me time that I can work with one of the layers. And then I get the tools that I need and so on.

He didn't tell at the time, that he didn't know anything about laying, not only carpet, but it was at time linoleum and tiles. At that time asbestos tiles and that we-- but that we didn't know asbestos so any which way. They said, OK. You seem to know about carpeting and so on.

You seem to know. OK. Start tomorrow. And we want to start that amount. And at that time, it was \$0.75 an hour. And of course, layers make much more. But they told him they'd make it, they'd even it out for him with overtime. They said he worked about 20 hours a week overtime.

But it was hard on him. But it was, I mean the job was hard on him, because he wasn't used to that kind of job. But to learn it, and take it didn't take him long.

On the first day of his job, he had learned to drive in Shanghai, driver training. So when he came to the states, of course, they asked him if he could drive. He said, yes. But he would have to have a driver's license. Now at the job, but they need it the first day. They needed something from the store.

And so the other layer told him to drive down to the store and get some stuff. He said, I don't have a license. I never drove here. You'll get by. That was the best day at the time here in Salt Lake. At first we were scared to death that he might be caught driving without a licence. That first person, that he was introduced to driving.

But it didn't take too long. We adjusted pretty well, as I say, and I'm adjusted well, you know, here. And we knew what we could do, what we couldn't do. But the way it started, that we had that-- the apartment was-- what do you call it now with the-- only a studio apartment, maybe a bigger studio apartment. So we had a kitchen, a carpet and eating in the living room. My husband didn't like that.

So we got after a short while, our landlord said he bought a refrigerator. So and there was a kitchen, the furniture where you put the dishes and so on. And he moved that along. There was lots of windows in that apartment. He moved that along the wall, so that I had not a big kitchen but I had a kitchen. All right.

Then he found wallpaper. So he put that in the back, and the refrigerator that was covered. And we had a kitchen, to the surprise of the ladies when they came the first time. What did you do? We had an apartment instead of a studio. And then, well, then I had made it a point for my son, he was used to only German speaking. Here his name is K. And that is a German name.

So when he was first born, what's his name?

K.

K is not a name. What's his name?

It's a letter. Initial. K.

So we started to call him only by his nickname. So he did speak really only German. But the moment I arrived here, and I said [INAUDIBLE] something that I made a home for myself. I started to speak to 75% English, 25% German. And I repeated what I told him. So that I had him already in summer that he could play with the kids. Because I felt children are cold. I didn't want him to stay there September.

And we had in that apartment building about 15 children. So, that's how I remember that. But he was really what-- he was a big talker, a small boy, but a big talker. But after a short time, he stopped talking. It confused him. It confused him. He had a nickname for the poem in German, [NON-ENGLISH]. You talk. [NON-ENGLISH] is just talking, you know, on the phone.

And he got the nickname [NON-ENGLISH], because he was always talking. So that's why we called him with that. His name, nickname was another one. But we called him that. And he would-- but then he stopped talking. And when my father came, he came about four or five months after us, he said, what's with the boy? Take him to the doctor, because he didn't talk.

And I had in the meantime talked of course with the doctor. And the doctor told me, don't worry about it. He'll pick it up again. Don't worry about it. And I had a lady in the neighborhood who had a boy. She was from Germany. She came over to this date, and she said, the same thing happened with her, that her boy wouldn't talk. After a while, [INAUDIBLE].

Then by and by, he talked German. And then about when he was about five, he would answer in English. He understood German. But he would answer in English. And then there was my sister-in-law who came to the first time from Germany to see my husband after all that happened, 33 when we left Germany, not 38 when we left Germany.

And that was '52, already and she stayed with us. But he still understood what she was saying. He lost that totally. I mean I didn't undermine it. But I wanted him to be fluent first in English. And I succeeded with that. But--

Now, does he speak German now?

Very little He took German in school. But that was something I insisted on. Because the family and so on, I didn't know that if he ever could get in contact with the family, that spoke German. So I insisted on German. He wanted to take French. But luckily, he had a teacher that spoke in dialect. Not Pole dialect, but Bavarian dialect.

And she didn't-- I used to beg a teacher, and we didn't want to end up here. So we went back with that. But yes, I think he took two years German in high school.

But then, if he doesn't speak it-- he understands a lot. He also could read and write.

So now how long-- did your husband basically build a business out of flooring? Did he ever leave the field of flooring? Or--

No, no.

He kept that field?

No after about, it was about three years or so, that was the company had 28 layers. And they were after the war. But at the moment he finally came in again, the people couldn't buy linoleum or carpet. It wasn't there. I spent it first for all for all for that. So the people are waiting for new stuff. That's why they needed more layers. So after I think about three years, he was laid off, not fired or anything. He just was laid off.

But as it happened, we had at the time when we came over there were-- you could not have private phones, only two lines, two families.

Party lines.

And he said, OK, you want a private phone? Make a business phone. And we have that number from that time on. But this number, he got when he was laid off, he got phone calls out of the phone book. And he was better off than he was working.

Oh, so he could--

That's how he started this business.

So he started his own business based on that layoff.

On the phone calls.

And he just kept on going.

And the phone calls. He didn't even wait for him being called back again.

So he just kept on going then, and he formed his own business. And what was the name of his business in Salt Lake--

[INAUDIBLE]

Wonderful. Now you mentioned before to me conversations that every now and then you would run into antisemitism here in Salt Lake. But it wasn't as big a thing as it was in, of course, Germany or elsewhere.

No. Oh I can't really say that, really, that I met too much antisemitism. Just but let's say there was another couple that it was probably you were thinking of. There was another couple that had come from Germany. All right. And we were invited by a friend that we had met through-- it was about the first or second week when my husband started to work for the I&M. They [? carpet-- ?] here today [? carpet sales. ?] And they were German, from his hometown.