

JACOB LEINWAND
RG-50.254.0015 (rec. 1986 in Sarasota)

Jacob Leinwand was Born in 1901 in Lemberg but moved to Vienna when he was 3 years old. He was one of 5 children, and his father owned a factory. The family was not terribly religious. He graduated in 1928 from a gymnasium under Zvi Perez Chias, the Chief Rabbi of Vienna. He originally thought he wanted to go to Palestine, but instead went to Medical School in Vienna and graduated in 1936. He personally didn't feel antisemitism until 1933. After 1938 the only place he could work was the Rothschild Hospital which cared for Jewish patients

Because he was a necessary worker, Jacob has a letter of necessity that prevented the Germans from taking him off the street. One nice German soldier told him he should get out of the country while he was able, and he took this warning seriously. He went from consulate to consulate trying to get exit papers, and he finally was able to get to Luxemburg. He was helped there by the Joint Distribution. Jacob was able to get his brother in law out of Dachau by getting him a ticket to Niger. At that time Germans would let leave camps if they left the country. In 1939 he helped get his younger brother to Luxembourg and his older brother to Belgium with the help of the Christian wife of a large department store owner.

After was declared Jacob felt he would be safer in France and he moved to Nancy, below the Maginot line. At that time, he was given a choice, as an enemy alien, of joining the French Foreign Legion or of go to an internment camp. He decided on the latter, where he was eventually made the chief doctor and one of his brother was his assistant. Jacob had a cousin in the US and received affidavits to emigrate there. He got his visa in Paris and then went to Bordeaux to an embarkation camp. In May 1940 he was able to leave from St Nazare on the SS Champlain and arrived in New York on May 17.

At a conference of many hospitals that were to select foreign doctors to be interns or residents, Jacob was selected to be an intern at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Lafayette, Indiana. He wanted to. Join the US army when war was announced, but he was not able to join at that time. He got his United States medical license in 1947 and practiced in Fort George in Manhattan until his retirement. He has 2 children and 2 grandchildren. His son lives in Israel and his daughter lives in Kansas City. Both his brothers survived and eventually came to the US. His mother died a natural death, but his father and sister were killed in the camps

Jacob states he has some remorse at taking reparations from Austria.