

Interviewee:	<u>SPIEGEL</u> , Alan	Date:	March 12, 1989
Interviewer:	Harvey Weiner		
Audio tapes:	2 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Alan Spiegel was born August 11, 1903 in Orahovicza, Yugoslavia into a wealthy Zionist family. He details his family history in Hungary including his grandfather being a Second Adjutant during the Hungarian Revolution. Mr. Spiegel studied medicine at Budapest University. He discusses the difficulty for Jewish students to be admitted due to *numerus clausus* policy and that he was dismissed in 1920, three months before graduation by a prejudiced faculty. An ardent Zionist, he then worked for the Jewish National Fund while employed in a family business.

In 1932, he married Elizabeth Boschan, in Cluj, Romania, where they lived until 1939. In Budapest, he had to serve as a slave laborer under the Hungarians. Mr. Spiegel gives testimony about working with Rezső Kastner and Joel Brand to exchange the release of over 1,000 Jews to Switzerland for money in 1944 and how he found out from one of the more humane German officers that their transport was destined for Auschwitz even though they paid. He details how he arranged to bribe other SS to have the transport sent to Bergen-Belsen instead. Two months later, a smaller group of 350 was sent to Switzerland of which he and his family were a part. He discusses how Kastner was condemned in Palestine for his actions. Mr. Spiegel also shares a vignette about how he secured the release of hundreds of Jewish boys and how small meaningful occurrences helped him have the strength to continue his work. He also relates memories about the Vizhnitzer Rebbe.

In 1947, Spiegel emigrated from Switzerland to the United States with his wife and daughter.