

## Interview with ERNEST GLASER

## Holocaust Oral History Project

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Q. THIS IS PART FOUR OF ERNEST GLASER'S INTERVIEWS. TODAY IS THE 20TH OF DECEMBER OF 1990. AND WE'RE DOING THESE INTERVIEWS FOR THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT IN SAN FRANCISCO. AND TANYA ZATK IS HERE AS A SECOND.

AND YOU WERE JUST SAYING THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT SHANGHAI PROPER BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR?

A. Yes. What I thought would be interesting is, before talking about all the changes that took place during the Japanese occupation, as to what it changed from, what Shanghai was really like, not so much in my own experience as an individual, but in my experience as just a, really, a young adolescent in a city which was probably the most unique city in the world at the time. Because as I had explained earlier, there were these three distinct political entities that made up Shanghai: One being the Chinese city that was really outside of

the area that we were allowed to visit; and then two foreign settlements, one, an international one, and one, a French concession. It was called a leasehold, like Hong Kong is today still, and I believe, of an indeterminate length, totally administered as a French speaking and French political system.

Coming to Shanghai as a young man of barely 16, into an environment which was really a wide open city, was a mind-blowing experience. And you grew up very fast, going into some of the seedy sides of the city. It was wide open. It was called the Chicago of the Far East. But it was really much worse than, I think, Chicago was in its heyday.

It was a city in which the foreign population, at least, was primarily interested in making money. People moved to Shanghai to make a fast buck. Nobody really expected to ever die there as a foreigner. When they felt they had made enough, they went someplace else and enjoyed the money, because it was a stressful life, obviously. And so the type of people that lived there were adventurous, were gamblers. Even the businessmen were a very high-risk-taking variety of businessmen.

And with the exception of a few major institutions, like people working for corporate branches, like the employees of the Hong Kong and

Shanghai Bank, or the people of the Shell Oil Company, the rest of those were really people who were individual entrepreneurs, who saw opportunities where other people didn't see opportunities, or were willing to take a fantastic risk and invest heavily, and either lost all they had or made very well and waited for the next opportunity. There were innumerable gambling casinos, and fortunately, or unfortunately, some of the young immigrants found their way into those. Some of them, I think, did all right. And others lost their shirts.

There, prostitution was wide open in town. As a matter of fact, when you walked down (Nanking) Road, which was one of the major thoroughfares downtown, there were not just tens or hundreds, there were literally tens of thousands of prostitutes lined up on both sides of the streets for, I would say, miles, and each of them having their, what they call the armor, which was the guardians, so to speak, the business manager -- here we call it a pimp -- that would do the negotiations. And the little girl -- and many of them were still children really -- were the trapped victim of this whole thing.

Part of this happened, I think, because the demand was very high. Many of the people were, Chinese that were living in Shanghai, were refugees and were away from their families. They were political or

economic refugees because of the war situation. What I was told was that the majority of the Chinese population in Shanghai were refugees, Chinese refugees. So obviously, there was then the high demand on the part of those people for the services of those gals. And, but there were also very fancy establishments of that type.

For instance, the department store, one of the fanciest department stores in town, which was anything as good as a Marshall Fields in Chicago, you know, by the merchandise it carried, had one floor that was restaurants and bordello. And so, that was a high class one. And there was everything in between.

Q. WERE MOST THE PROSTITUTES CHINESE?

A. Almost all of them were Chinese, except for a contingent of Russian immigrants, who were white Russian women, who were, I would imagine, catering to the high income Chinese. I don't know. There were innumerable bars and innumerable dance halls. And these ranged from the real sleazy joints that were catering to sailors, because it was a port, and there were also these foreign soldier stations there, that I've talked about before. Like for instance, the U.S. Fourth Marines were stationed there. The British highlanders were there, and of course, the French had not only their own offices, but also the enemy soldiers who were there.

So it was a real collage there of entertainment.

One thing that's always amazed me was the size and the quality of these halls. One of the largest of the dance halls, which were ballrooms, one of them, which was in a very, relatively fine part of town, right close to where the race course was, on Bubbling Well Road, it was a huge place. And the dance floor was on springs, so you got more bounce to the ounce, you know. And they had Filipino bands that were -- this was the era of the big bands, and they were playing continuously. When one band stopped, another one would start up again. And there were any number of places where they had (ataxi) dancers. You paid your fee when you came in, and/or bought tickets, I guess. At that time, from what I saw in movies, I think that was prevalent in this country as well.

There was really nothing you couldn't get for money in Shanghai, except probably culture. There was a theater there, the Lyceum Theater in the French concession, which played to, I think, it was a reparatory theater, as I recall. And I remember, my first English play I ever saw, it was the Importance of Being Earnest. And it was a social event when people went there. The gentlemen were always in a dark suit, and ladies were in evening gowns. And I believe it was

through this fellow I mentioned before, Walter (Frenstov), who had connections to the British society really, that we got the tickets to go there. And so that was one of the types of entertainment.

The Americans had their own colony. I really don't know much about how they lived. I know that they had their own baseball diamond, and they had a quality school, the American school, which was really a very high society, high class school, not only for American expatriates, but also for Chinese who had upward mobility and ambitions to have their children have a better education than they themselves had.

There were terrific foreign restaurants. You know, we always think of Chinese food as outstanding food. And there were some very beautiful and large establishments that were catering to Americans and to foreigners in general. One of them was a restaurant that I recall had their kitchen out in the open to assure the clientele that everything was clean and proper.

There were a number of establishments, by the way, that were started by immigrants. And one of them that did very well, and the man that started this restaurant, I think, came to San Francisco and opened a restaurant here and did well here. So it was, from that

standpoint, an exciting place. But culturally, I don't think there was much there. Of course, in the British colony, the race course was the center of activity and social life, at least during the summer months. And that brings up the climate, which was unbelievable in many ways.

The climate was somewhat similar to what we had, what I grew up with in Berlin, very hot and humid summers, very cold and clammy and windy winters. But it was the extremes on both ends. While it rained during the summer in Berlin, we had monsoons in Shanghai, to the point where it would really open up. The skies would open up as if somebody poured a bucket of water out, and city streets would flood. And it was an inadequate infrastructure. Although we have it in San Francisco as well, before the big installation was put in that drained the City, but it was really way beyond anything that I had seen anyplace else.

And in the winter, you had these winds blowing in from the northeastern region of Mongolia, bringing in dust and bringing in very, very chilly air. And of course, houses were not insulated. They were, by and large, very drafty. And none of them had any central heating, so you had to bundle up, and you used charcoal braziers in the rooms. And occasionally, if you had the

money, you used petroleum stoves that had these wicks that you lit up, and that kept you warm, if you had the money to buy the petroleum, or kerosene, I should say. And so these were the portable heaters.

The other aspect of it was that you had these tropical summers in which you had, you know, in which diseases were bred very rapidly. And so what we had to learn very early on was how to deal with tropical diseases. Of course, I think I've mentioned that, before we left Germany, we were all inoculated against a whole variety of things, cholera, typhoid and yellow fever, so we knew what to expect when we got there, but we didn't know how to cope with it.

And even though we got our inoculations, the immigrant organization saw to it that there was plenty of information to everybody as to how to deal with the situation, but it meant a whole change in your daily lifestyle. You couldn't drink the water out of the tap, and we were used to drinking water out of the tap. You had to boil practically everything before you -- I mean, water for sure. You had to peel all fruit. And my mother even went so far as to roast -- no, roast is not the word. Well, singe is the word -- all the bread, the whole loaf. When we got the loaf, she would take it and hold it over a flame to make sure that all the bugs were

-- because who knows who handled that on the way between the bakery and our table.

One of the things that the doctors, the immigrant doctors, told us to do, if we ever eat things like leafy vegetables or fruit, that they recommended we eat from the nutritional standpoint, and yet, that were harboring parasites of one kind or another, was to get potassium permanganate crystals, which were purple crystals, dissolve them in water, and then you swish the food around in the water. And it was an oxidizing agent which obviously killed the parasites. And we did that.

The worst part of it was that you didn't know what kind of immunity you had, what you could get away with. And so you developed a certain fearfulness in going out to Chinese restaurants and, because you knew that they wouldn't take care of things. And then you started talking to some of the old Shanghai highlanders, who lived there 20, 30 years, who said, who would tell us, don't worry about it, you'll eventually build up an immunity like the Chinese. And besides, as long as you keep yourself well lubricated with whiskey, you don't have to worry about it. That's a natural antiseptic. Well, we didn't have the money for that, nor, probably, the inclination, but we did become laxer as we went along. And that caused a number of problems for people,

a goodly number of them who became very, very severely ill. Some died, especially as time progressed and people's health went downhill because of improper nutrition.

When we came, you know, by and large, people were well-fed, coming from Europe, and so there was a lot of resiliencies built into them, but it kind of went downhill from those, especially those who didn't have any money, who had to live in that (heimer) that I talked about earlier, where they were really fed bare existence, I mean, food to have a bare existence. And so they were much more susceptible to tropical diseases.

One disease, I don't know whether there's even an equivalent to that in the Western world, it's called sprue, which is, the symptom is, you just have unceasing diarrhea, and you dehydrate, and gradually you just die from it. And one thing the doctors told us, which I thought was very interesting, especially as things became worse in the later years of our stay in Shanghai, during the war, the doctors told us to take a bottle and, a beer bottle -- and in Shanghai a beer bottle came in quarts, none of these small bottles.

After you consumed a beer, you would fill it with water and a teaspoon of sugar and then a cake of yeast. And every day, you drink one glass of water, one

glass of this concoction, and replenish with one teaspoon of sugar. The idea was that yeast were very good carriers of Vitamin B, one of high shortage, I mean, in our diet. That was really one of the real problems. And also some other vitamins that were produced by these yeasts, and minimum amount of protein, I suppose. But these yeasts would procreate on the basis of that sugar that you kept adding, so it was a self-perpetuating one a day vitamin. And it really seemed to play a very important role and was inexpensive. It didn't taste too good, but it was inexpensive. Of course, if you kept it on too long and didn't drink it, it turned, fermented, and busted the bottle.

And so we had, also, as foreigners in Shanghai, it was a privileged life. There was no question about that there was a fantastic dichotomy between the Chinese and the foreigners living in the same city, in the same environment, in the same neighborhoods, even. There were many places where Chinese were not allowed to use the front stairs. They had to go the back way. Mind you, that's in China. There were places where the Chinese were excluded. And I mentioned earlier that there was a park right close by where the sign said, "Dogs and Chinese not admitted." I

mean, that kind of set the stage.

There was also a very different manner in which the authorities would handle the Chinese or would handle a foreigner. The police system in Shanghai was really at three different levels. There were the Chinese policemen. Most of those came from North China, because North Chinese, by and large, are better soldiers, I think, than South Chinese, as are most northern Europeans better soldiers than southern Europeans. I think there is sort of a generalization that holds true around the world.

The next level up were Indian police, or they were Sikh police. Now, the Sikh, which is spelled S-i-k-h, was a warrior class in the Egyptian society, within the Indian society. There, from northern India, men are very tall, very handsome, so six feet is a short guy, many of them weighing 300 pounds. And they played a very important role as traffic cops in Shanghai. The Chinese were deathly afraid of them. And whenever there was any difficulty, traffic congestion someplace, and a Sikh policeman would go in there with his long wooden stick and he would crack heads and settle any arguments way beyond what any Chinese soldier could do. And remember that the Chinese probably were, by and large, half the size of the Indian Sikh policemen. Most of

those had their own, most of those Sikh policemen had their own -- they were living in what was, what would be apartment buildings owned by the municipal government. And they lived by themselves. They had their families with them, the women in their flowing saris, which were very colorful, and they all had lots and lots of children. And they were extremely pleasant as far as a foreigner was concerned. They were hell when the Chinese came by. But as far as we, as a foreigner, were concerned -- especially, they love children and young people. And I remember many times having long conversations with one of those fellows on one of the street corners that I passed every day. And they spoke a reasonably good English, whereas many of the Chinese could not speak English. So they played an important go-between role.

And of course, the administrative offices and the ones they were the real bosses were the British, and the foreigners that were either in the, well, that were in the international settlement, in the French concession. As I said earlier, there were also these three levels: The Chinese, who were local Chinese as I recall; and then the enemies, which were from Vietnam, what's today Vietnam; and then the French and some former white Russian immigrants who were hired by the

police force.

There were two main universities in Shanghai. One was in the French concession, and one was in the international settlement. And they were private schools, as I recall, one run by the Jesuits, I believe, the French one, and St. John's University, I think was the one in the international settlement, and it was a very good school. And a number of immigrants who had the money enrolled at least for some of the course work at the St. John's University.

The Japanese sector of the international settlement was a totally different ball game. In the area that we first lived in, that I mentioned, (Honqu), and then the area we were later moved into, after Pearl Harbor, was administered by the Japanese. The Japanese had -- and then, within the Japanese sectors, there was the municipal police in addition to the Japanese (Jondomerie). And I believe that Jondomerie is a police force that is somewhere attached to the Consular Corps. And so these people were not the regular military, but they were kind of a separate unit within, within the military. And they would very rigorously administer those areas.

And there were people, by the way, the second minority -- I mean, the Japanese, obviously, were there

a minority too, a large number of them, but they were a minority. The second foreign minority in that Japanese sector were Koreans, that were, that played kind of a role somewhere in between the Japanese and the Chinese. There were not given the status of the Japanese. Japanese looked down on the Koreans. The Chinese looked down on the Koreans. So the Koreans were somewhere between really two very strong forces there. And they were relatively a small group of people, but played an important role in that they did much of the service work that the Japanese companies had instituted.

For instance, they had their own bus system, and all the bus drivers and the bus conductors were Korean. As a matter of fact, the conductors were women. They used the Koreans because the Koreans spoke Japanese, and I guess the Korean language is closer to Chinese and had less difficulty in picking up the Chinese language. So they performed an important role there.

We, as immigrants, had relatively little to do with the Koreans, other than when we took buses. But we had a lot to do with the Japanese, also the civilian population, the Japanese civilian population that lived there.

Now, keep in mind that there were really very

large contingents of Japanese sailors and Japanese soldiers stationed in Shanghai, and they wanted their entertainment too, and they looked for their entertainment in the Japanese sector, where there were innumerable bars catering to them, many run by the Koreans. And some areas really looked like they were Little Tokyo. The bars where the typical Japanese bars, sushi bars, or the, you know, where you came in and there was a, one of those, almost like a flag hanging over the entrance. And all the furniture was Japanese, the food served was Japanese, the beer served was Japanese, beautiful beer, although beautiful beer was brewed in Shanghai. And it was a self-contained, almost a self-contained part of the, you know, segment of the population.

So when we left off last time, we talked about the changes that took place all of a sudden with the beginning of the Pearl Harbor phase.

Q. BEFORE WE MOVE ON TO THAT, I JUST HAVE A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS ABOUT --

A. Sure.

Q. -- WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT NOW. YOU SAID, AS A YOUNGSTER, YOU GREW UP FAST IN THIS KIND OF ATMOSPHERE. WHAT WAS, YOU KNOW, YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH ALL OF THIS --

A. Goings-on?

Q. -- WITH PROSTITUTES?

A. Well, my personal experience was somewhere between a lot of fantasizing and dreaming. I took mentally an awful lot of those girls home. In reality, I didn't take any one of them home. A bunch of us -- and really, my first exposure to sex was when a bunch of us, on a day, went to a bordello. And that was really a pretty bad experience, all told, but something that I would have never experienced in Germany.

And I think the ambience is something that you kind of pick up when you see how people deal with other people, and it kind of shapes attitudes, to a certain extent. I'm sure it did us. So that the value system with which I grew up didn't change, but I think beyond question, the way to handle situations, the -- you stood on your own two feet much earlier than you would have, even though I still lived at home, but I was much more independent than I would have been, I think, in Berlin. As a kid of 16, 17, 18 in Berlin, you were still a very dependent individual, and a much more sheltered individual, especially the background that I came out of.

Whereas, the friends I had, that I developed, were people who, in the very beginning, the first few

years, was kind of a blend between the foreign, foreigners that I mentioned earlier, the Greek fellow, and the immigrants from, well, that were not immigrants really, who had come in the early '30s. And we were a group of about ten, fifteen kids, and about half of us were immigrants of different backgrounds, but all of us coming with different backgrounds, meaning some came from Austria, and some came from Germany, different parts of Germany, but all of us were pretty much middle class, middle and upper middle class, I would say. All of us pretty much were the same kind of attitudes, grew up with the same kind of outlook on life, at least the immigrants.

And we were exposed now to a different, a different environment than we had ever thought we would experience. And we acted differently. Some became more enterprising than others, and that's logical. Probably they would have been more enterprising in Germany or wherever they came from as well.

Our facilities with English were also not identical, although kids at that age learn a language very quickly. But as I had mentioned, I was better prepared because of the training that I had received in high school, better prepared than others. And so my experience was, I think, somewhat more unique than most

of the kids. And my experience in Shanghai for the first, let's say three years, or even four years, probably was quite different from probably 90 percent of the people that were immigrants, even kids my age.

Now, there were a number of people who -- well, for one thing, those that stayed in the area that we first arrived in, in (Honqu) area, became much more close-knit because the proximity to each other meant that people could visit with each other and they grew up together. And throughout the life in Shanghai later on, and really in many instances to this day, these people are close because they grew up together.

As I said, I never finished high school. I flunked out of high school, but I never went back to school in Shanghai. I was too old there, as I mentioned. But people that were one year younger than I was went to a school there, as little as one year younger than I was. And many of the people -- well, people that were, kids that were ten, eleven, twelve, all went to school together, in a Jewish school, in the district, in that area of Honqu, and so they grew up together. And again, these people all still to this day have very close contacts among each other. It's almost like a, you know, a country by havarah. So I was kind of an outsider of that group as I moved into the area

later on, after the, when the ghetto was created. The  
-- oh, you had another question there?

Q. I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU WHETHER YOU AND/OR ANY  
OF YOUR FAMILY WERE AFFECTED BY ANY OF THESE DISEASES,  
OR WHAT KIND OF MEDICAL CARE WAS THERE?

A. That's a good question. Almost everybody that  
came to Shanghai at one point or another had a bout with  
the intestinal flus that were very prevalent. And they  
lasted anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. Our  
health was, by and large, pretty good, even in later  
years, when things became really quite bad. And none of  
us, from a nutritional standpoint, had adequate  
nutrition. Even at that time, we were not really very  
much affected by it. All of us had some problems, but  
nothing life-threatening. And I'll get into that  
perhaps later on.

The medical service that we got was that,  
there were a lot of refugee doctors, and so the service  
we had was very good medical service then. And they  
were affordable because they realized as to, you know,  
what people had to spend. Those that had no money at  
all got public health from, in the (heimer), which had a  
hospital and staff doctors. So that was really not much  
of a problem for us in the beginning.

Q. SO WHY DON'T WE TALK ABOUT LIFE AFTER THE

## ATTACK OF PEARL HARBOR?

A. Well, there were really, as I see it, probably three phases of how the Japanese reacted to the Pearl Harbor situation, and reacted to us, toward us, and all foreigners. The first phase was at the very beginning. They rounded up -- and I may have talked about that. They rounded up people who were political leaders, like, for instance, Charlie Arnold that I mentioned, I believe, who was rounded up. And there was a relatively small number of people, mostly men, I think all men, who were rounded up and put into detention centers. And then the next phase involved the registration of everyone that was an enemy alien.

Now, backtracking just a little bit before that, in Europe, you had the war going on. And France, with the establishment of the Vichy government, the French concession in which we lived, was then the, had, administration had to make the decision as to whether or not they will align themselves with the Vichy government, or whether or not there would be the free French under the deGaulle government in exile. They chose the Vichy government, which was the fascist government in France.

And the first thing that I recall we had to do was to register with the French police that we existed,

and who we were, and we had a guarantee bond, mutual guarantee, mutually guaranteed that we wouldn't do anything that would be illegal, or whatever. And I have a copy of that bond. And I'll include it in this video interview.

So then, with Pearl Harbor, the Japanese did the same thing with the foreigners, but so far left us pretty much alone. That was a period during which the Japanese occupation was relatively benevolent. They were winning. They had, the successes were Singapore, and Hong Kong. They expanded into Southeast Asia at a fantastic clip, and were threatening Australia, as you may recall. So their spirit was very high and they had other issues than to worry about us immigrants, or even worry about the foreigners more than just registering them.

And then, and I don't know the dates, but it must have been somewhere around the middle of 1942, early '42, middle of '42, they started to talk about the need to put the foreigners, enemy aliens into detention centers. And then finally, the edict came out that there would be a deadline at which all foreigners will, all enemy aliens, I should say, not all foreigners, all enemy aliens would have to report for assignment to one of the detention centers. And that involved all men,

women, children.

Now, the company that I worked for was Swiss, as you may recall. And we had very good contacts. My boss, the owner of the company, a man by the name of (Shetelich), had very good contacts throughout the Far Eastern business world. So it wasn't very surprising to me that the management of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, which was a British bank, came to him with the proposal that they would leave, they would transfer into a Swiss account, in Switzerland, a large sum of money for the purpose of which would have been to be able to, for Mr. Shetelich to draw on an ongoing basis, so that all the employees who had to go into these detention camps would receive packages of food packages, support packages from him through the Red Cross throughout the duration of this, the hostilities.

Q. HOW DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY REACT WHEN YOU HEARD THESE RUMORS THAT WE WERE GOING TO HAVE TO --

A. No, we were not involved as yet. That was still the phase -- that was the third phase, in which -- I should have said that. The third phase was when we were then also required to move into the, into a ghetto, in a designated area, which was different from the detention centers. No. We're not at that point yet. We're still at a point where we were pretty much left

alone, and only the foreigners, enemy alien foreigners were assigned to these detention centers.

So our company -- business, of course, was pretty poor. But our company then became involved in really a kind of an interesting side business, which was to buy the necessary materials that were to be shipped into these camps under the Red Cross packages, which I think weighed ten pounds. And each individual man, woman and child was allowed to receive one of those a month. And the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, I think, had somewhere around 80 to 100 people. So that was a, quite an undertaking, from our standpoint.

And my boss put me in charge of this whole thing. Actually, that's exaggerating it a little bit. I didn't do any of the purchasing. All I was in charge of was to operate the warehouse in which all these foodstuffs and medicines, and whatever, would be, and pharmaceuticals, would be stored, and then pack the packages. And I was the chef, cook and bottle washer. I did the whole thing, which was a fantastic job for me to have at a time when scarcity started to come about just about -- you could see the handwriting on the wall. And gradually, less and less of the, I'm not even talking fancy foods, just ordinary foods were available.

But on the black market, everything was

available, almost, almost to the end. The kinds of foods that we were shipping into the camp were things that were nonperishable, not requiring refrigeration, as you would expect. Canned goods, sardines and tomato sauce, were a big item, because they were safe, even after they were opened. Sausages that were like salamis, that were smoked and didn't require refrigeration, were another item. Those we bought from the immigrants. And that was an important part of the package. And some, by the way, some of the Britishers told me after the war that they developed a taste for salami in the camps. They would have never been exposed to those kind of central European foods if it wouldn't have been for that experience, an experience they could have done without, I'm sure.

There was a, almost a family relationship that evolved between the people in the camps and those of us who were involved in supplying these monthly packages to them. They would write a note as to what they would like to have, receive, that went through the Red Cross and took some time. And we purchased dried fruits, high energy foods, cheeses, when we could get them. And getting things was really the big problem, as you can imagine.

Shanghai was the port city for supplying, at

that time, 450 million people, because it was the port. Hong Kong was relatively unimportant by comparison. And Hong Kong dealt with really the southern Chinese area. Shanghai handled the entire interior area of China and beyond, really, what's today Manchuria, a very large territory. And innumerable warehouses stored these goods that came in.

And so when all of a sudden the war broke out and the trade to the interior stopped, warehouses were full and there really wasn't much of an outlet, so that for a while, there was considerable merchandise available on the black market, or the free market. There wasn't really a black, or at that time it wasn't really much -- it was a free market system. The way this worked was very interesting. A warehouse having, for instance, sardines and tomato sauce, as an example, cases of that on inventory, would issue a warehouse warrant. And that became a piece of trading paper. It would -- and of course, there was an inflation going on, and as I talked about earlier, you know, people were making -- speculators were rampant. Speculation and the such was rampant.

So these were traded almost like stock on the stock exchange. And whenever it changed hands, the last owner of that certificate would have to sign and release

it. So by the time we bought some of these warehouse receipts, in order to actually take delivery and use the merchandise, there may have been 15, 20 names signed on the back of this.

And I recall one instance which was sort of amusing. We took delivery, and they were all bulged, you know, they were all spoiled. And so we went back to the last owner, I mean, the last -- yes, the one that had signed before. I said, look, what you sold us is spoiled merchandise. He said, that isn't merchandise for eating. That's for trading. And that's literally what had happened.

I should talk a little bit about something that was unique to Shanghai, I think. When you, when we bought merchandise, food merchandise of this type, we had to be extremely careful as to who we bought from, and what it was that we bought, because the Chinese had found innumerable ways in which to turn the scale to their advantage, let's say. For instance, when you bought lentils from the wrong supplier, you could bet your bottom dollar there would be stones in there that would look like lentils, just to weigh down the package. When we bought tin goods, we had to examine them very closely for situations like this bulge, where they would puncture a little hole in it to relieve the pressure and

then solder it shut again and then pass it off as merchandise. There were innumerable medicines which were really in the, what looked like a good package, but once you opened it, it was really not what you thought you had bought. So I quickly learned the tricks of the trade in there, and became really an expert in detecting that which was acceptable and that that was not acceptable.

The advantage, as time went on, to having this job was that I was sort of at the trough. And as foodstuffs became scarce, I had the opportunity, you know, and it was understood that, my gosh, if you have 20 pounds of dry fruit and you send these things to camps, a quarter pound isn't going to make a difference and you wouldn't know the difference. And the same thing with flour or with sugar or with cheese or, so it was a fringe benefit, really, in having this job, and to be a purveyor and supplier to our family.

The packages were all of a standard size, for Red Cross, and were shipped by another Swiss company, picked up by them. They had, I guess, the contract with the Red Cross to distribute them to all the various camps. And the Swiss companies liked to hire German immigrants because they spoke the language, and they were good workers, and they were cheap. So a couple of

fellows that were actually independent contractors, working for the Swiss company, came by once a month, at the very minimum, and mostly, much more often, as really forwarding agents.

They had the most rudimentary forwarding agency business you could imagine. They had a bicycle and a trailer. And so they would come by. And I became good friends with them. As a matter of fact, I'm still very good friends with them now. They would not only come once a month to pick up the finished packages, but many times, also bring the goods that we bought on the, from the warehouses, and brought us the goods then. And since I was all by myself in the warehouse, this was a very welcome relief to have these guys come by and say hi every so often.

Q. DID YOU EVER VISIT ANY OF THESE CAMPS?

A. Never. Never had permission, even if we wanted to.

One of the things that we did have was contact with some of the people directly. And the way that worked was, the camps did not have dentists. There was a Japanese dentist not far from where our office was. And he had studied in, I believe, America, spoke very good English. And he would be the one that the Japanese camp authorities would send people to if they had dental

problems. And so the way that worked was that the foreigner would, that was, you know, the enemy alien, would get, would be assigned to a soldier who took him downtown to make sure that he doesn't run away. And then at the dentist's office, when the patient was in the chair, the dentist would get on the phone and call us and allow us to talk directly to this fellow that was in the dentists chair. And that was very common. That was very common.

And there were some other ways in which, similar ways, through doctors, that contact was made at times. So we knew what was going on in the camps, and we knew what some special things were that they wanted. For instance, sometimes one of the things that was quite difficult for them to get were injections of all types, liver injections for people because they became anemic, and then Vitamin B injections for people who had, I think, this sprue, which was this disease that was apparently cured by Vitamin B.

The other thing that I should mention is the economic situation that existed prior, really, to Pearl Harbor, and then post Pearl Harbor. I think it coincided with the outbreak of World War II in Europe that the Chinese currency really started going downhill. And there was really a very high rate of inflation, more

than double-digit inflation. I don't remember exactly the, you know, the percentage, and I don't remember the exact dates as to when it -- there were really two or three waves of inflation. One was after the war, and one that was, the hype of inflation, of the type Germany experienced during the '20s, but the inflation that happened before the war was also quite severe. And the American dollar became the standard currency. And that was something that, it stayed the same way after the war as well.

And it was interesting that downtown Shanghai had innumerable exchange, currency exchange shops. In these shops you could really trade any foreign currency, and most importantly, gold. Gold was something that the Chinese viewed as the ultimate security, and it was traded in little one-ounce bars. And the shops would have -- it was really a very interesting picture to go by there and see these traders with two and three telephones going. And I think they all talked to each other only, making the market, I guess.

But what always amused me was how, at one time, the American dollar always had two values. Even to this day, if you travel internationally, there are usually, one is travelers checks and one is currency. Well, what they had there was -- nobody had traveler

checks, so it was currency, large denominations, small denominations. Well, it makes sense that large denominations would be desirable, because the large denominations didn't take that much room, and so it was easy to store, easy to transport. So it should be a higher value. And it was true, at times it was a higher value. And then at other times, it was the opposite.

And nobody bothered to copy dollar bills, but they bothered to copy \$50 bills. So then \$50 bills, or larger bills, even \$10 and up became less desirable because you were taking bigger chances. It may be printed. And there was, the word was that the Germans were printing American dollars and then flooding the world market with it. I don't know whether there was any truth to that. But at other times, there was a -- and this is true for after the war, by the way. There were dollar bills that had printed on them, Hawaii. Why, I don't know. But there was a big, all across the face of the green side, it said, Hawaii. Well, sometimes Hawaii bills were the bills to have. And other times, Hawaii bills were at a discount. So it was really a crazy situation.

And again, I don't remember whether it was before the war or after the war that cash became something that was highly desirable. And the reason for

it was that the, because of high inflation, prices changed from morning to afternoon. And if you paid with a check, by the time the man got around to cashing the check, the value of what he got was that much less. So if you paid for cash, with cash, you received by far a better price than if you paid with checks.

Now, this resulted to -- and the banks, because they knew that money was in short supply and high demand, rationed money. So that you were only able to get a few thousands dollars, Chinese dollars, every day, in rationed, you know. You had to come and bring the check and get your cash. Well, the end result was that people opened bank accounts all over town in order to get money, you know, their hands on cash. And I remember, there were times we had ten or more bank accounts to keep straight, which was ridiculous, just to get the necessary cash. And who had the time to stand in line at ten different places? Well, you used a Chinese employee that would go and, for the whole office, he was busy doing nothing other than cashing checks all day.

So coming back to how things had changed with Pearl Harbor --

Q. BY THE WAY, WAS YOUR FATHER STILL MAKING HIS ALCOHOL?

A. Oh, yes, oh yes. That business continued. And he expanded it a little bit by also trading wines. And that brings up an interesting side issue that I'll get into now, and maybe I'll get into it and continue.

It's, the way I talk about things, you have to excuse me, but, I'm getting a thought, and then I like to carry it on to the end, even though, from a time standpoint, it starts to overlap into another area.

Q. GO RIGHT AHEAD.

A. You know, my father's business was essentially word of mouth. And he started to get recommendations to call on some people that were German, that he had his doubts as to what kind of Germans they were. In the beginning, as I mentioned, there were, the customers that he had were either Swiss or Germans or Danes or Dutch, who all spoke German. And the Germans, they were all businessmen. But then he had a telephone call that somebody had consumed his Schnapps someplace, and he was introduced to some people that were connected to the German Consulate. And so before long, they said, well, you know, we'd like to also buy from you some wines. We're looking for wines. And my father came home, he said, these Nazis, they were all Nazis, I'm sure they're Nazis, and they want wine. Where am I going to get wine?

Well, he asked one of those businessmen, and they told him that some of the people who went into the camps had pretty good storage, and he gave him addresses as to where he could get some of these wines. And so he established a pretty good business as a broker, essentially, of supplying people who had relatively high incomes with all types of liquor. He developed a, I would say, relatively close relationship with some of those guys, knowing full well they were Nazis, and they knew full well he was Jewish. And to the point where -- and he called on most of those almost throughout the war and after the war. Not after the war. Throughout the war.

One of them, I don't remember his name, was a fellow who was, who had told my father that he was involved with the propaganda of the Consulate, and had lived in America for quite a long time, and didn't have one good word to say about America. As far as he was concerned, the Americans were all blow-hards and no culture and the usual kind of European, central European animosity and snobbishness that existed. But toward the end of the war, when he saw things were going downhill, and he started to worry about his own future, he started talking about Jewish relatives. My father says, this is pretty obvious. This guy wants to survive somehow, and

is looking for, you know -- and I don't know whatever became of him. But the story brings me to another aspect of the German Consulate that's very important in this whole thing, something that neither my father nor I, nor any one of us had any inkling of, and something that came out after the war during the Nuremberg trials.

And the story goes that after Pearl Harbor, at the time that they started, the Japanese started rounding up enemy aliens, the Germans Consulate, I suppose, contacted the Japanese and, with a suggestion that they build gas chambers, to, you know, get rid of the 18,000 Jews that lived there. And the Japanese couldn't quite see that. And I think there were at least two, maybe three contacts made at different times with different suggestions. And I've heard this story different ways, so I can't vouch for the total accuracy of what I'm saying, but I'll tell it the way I've heard it.

That then the Germans came back, about six months later, and they knew pretty much as to the Japanese attitudes towards foreigners altogether, and Jews in particular, because there was a very important Jewish desk, Jewish desk in the Japanese foreign office. The Japanese historically were enamored and intrigued with the whole idea of who the Jews are. And it goes

back to the Russo-Japanese War. At the time the Japanese didn't have a hell of a lot of cash. And one of the American bankers -- his name escapes me. A very important banking house in America was instrumental in floating Japanese bonds internationally, allowing the Japanese to raise the money and to fight the Russo-Japanese War.

The banking houses had two interests in this. On the one hand, the interest was to make money. On the other, it was, they were anti-Russian because of the programs that were taking place in Russia. The Japanese saw that, knew that, and concluded, from that time on, that Jews, the world over, stick together. And so they had also been exposed to these protocols of Zion. And so there was a certain amount of understanding, at least of the anti-Semitic propaganda, and you know, the exposure that they had in that regard.

And so when the German Consulate came back to them with the suggestion that the Jews all over the world stick together, and here are 18,000 Jewish immigrants, you take these people and put them into an area which is in proximity, close proximity of the power company, the gas works, the whatever, then the American Jews will see to it that that area won't be bombed. And that story made sense to the Japanese.

And so in 1943, we were, by edict, instructed to move into what they called the designated area, what we called the ghetto. And it was Honqu again, a little smaller area, I believe, than what Honqu used to be originally, under the international settlement administration. And it was not exclusively a Jewish area. There were a lot of Chinese there and a few Japanese. But it was an area which was, from their standpoint, of strategic importance, and it had all of these people together.

Q. WAS IT FEARFUL TO YOU?

A. It was a traumatic experience to us, especially when we started getting bombed every other day. But that's a little later in the story. The only reason I mentioned it here, on the one hand, these people were friends and buying, and you know, with my father, the same people probably, who were figuring out as to how to kill the 18,000, of which we were one, although we didn't -- no. We, yes, we lived outside, but we were forced to move back into the area.

Q. EVEN THE PROSPECT OF MOVING INTO A GHETTO, WAS THAT --

A. Well, we had come from there, so we knew where we were going to. We had made it, so to speak, when we moved into the French concession. We lived in what was

probably the best part of town. Even though we didn't live in the fanciest building, it was a good part of town. And the quality of life that we had between 1940, say 1940, when we moved into the French concession, and 1943, when we were forced to move out of it, was really a good quality of life. Within the parameter of the diseases and the ambience that you had in Shanghai, and all the other things, it was a very tolerable life. It was by far probably better than most refugees the world over.

So when we read about the edict, heard about the edict, that we had to move into the area again, not only did we know the area, we didn't know yet what particular building we would have to move into, but we also knew that we would never experience that quality of life that we had up to now, even though, toward the tail end, it was a wartime life. But I would say it was really not any hard, great hardship at that time. So we were very happy about it. We didn't know about the bombing that would come later.

I should mention that we experienced bombing occasionally, even at that time, nothing very, really traumatic. I'm not even sure whether or not before '43 we experienced any American bombing. I don't think the Americans were close enough to bomb. That came

beginning '44.

So how do you move back into the area? That was the big question. And that's what preoccupied my parents' thoughts, and mine too, for that matter. See, we had this long-term lease that I talked about, for 30 years, which was something tradable. And what we were looking for was to trade that against a similar place within the district. Well, of course, that wasn't available, because the area had been bombed out and it was really an area that was totally run down. Even though, within the period of four years, five years, really, immigrants have done an unimaginable job in rebuilding for their own needs, shops and houses and schools, you know, you name it, factories too.

So again, the immigrant brokers started appearing on the scene, trying to line up those that lived outside with those that were living inside that area, the Chinese owners, almost always, yes, always Chinese owners. And we were fortunate in finding -- we had, I think it was a seven-room house in the French concession. And I think we had a seven-room house in the new one. It was no comparison. It had running water, but it didn't have a toilet. It didn't have -- it had running water, period. It had nothing else. And electricity, electricity it had. And of course, it was

in a, it was in a relatively good part of the lousy area, very close to the police station, the wayside police station, which was the headquarters of the Japanese administration for the immigrants. And it was so to speak, downtown, if you want to call it that, within the ghetto downtown.

So we were -- I think you had to move by April, March or April, and we got an extension to May. And then in May we moved, with heavy heart, really, very heavy heart, my parents moved. And now something new started. We were now in a designated area, which meant that we had to be there during the time that we were useful to them, which meant the bombing time. And bombing time was nighttime.

So they didn't really have much intentions of feeding any one of us. And we, as immigrants, were totally on our own as to how to make ends meet. And their primary concern and only concern was really that we were not a problem for them, and that we would be around, you know, for, you know, spend the night in that area. Those of us who had jobs, could prove that we had jobs, would be issued a pass, they call it, to leave the district, to go to the job. And there was a map there on the back of that showing the, the closest route that we were allowed to travel, in and out of the district to

work.

And working for a Swiss company made it possible for me to get out. And to also help, my father got a pass through some of the customers that he had. He got a pass. So my father had -- I had a three-month pass, which was a blue pass. My father had a one-month pass; that was a pink pass. That's very important, the difference.

These passes were issued at this police station, the wayside police station. And the man in charge was a man by the name of Goya. Mr. Goya was a very unique individual. He was all of about maybe four foot ten, five foot tall, and a megalomaniac. He had a terrible inferiority complex because he was short. And he had come out of the Japanese Consular Corps, had lived overseas at one time, spoke a reasonably good English, and wore a little mustache like Hitler. And he was put into this job of, which is essentially camp director. He was -- I mean, everybody's life was in this guy's hands. He had total control over everybody, which went to his head, of course. And some day a novel will be written about this man, because there's so many anecdotes about him, tragic and funny. Well, some of them I can talk about, because they are really humorous. Some of the tragic ones I can talk about too, perhaps.

But I didn't experience any tragic ones personally. I did experience comical ones personally, and they were, from our standpoint, at least more comical, from my standpoint, except perhaps for one.

Comical ones: And I'm not telling them in any particular order as to when they happened, but just how they happened. He had his likes and dislikes. He liked certain types of people. And he respected musicians because he played the violin. And he had, I believe, lessons in violin from one of the immigrants. He decided he knew enough and played well enough, he should give a concert. And so, mind you, some of the immigrant artists were high class artists. And there was an orchestra of sorts. And he was the featured violinist, and of course, you had to show up or else.

He spoke about, I'm the king of the Jews. And he said that, I think, meaning what he said. In a way, he wasn't wrong, because he was. You know, we were absolutely in his power. If he liked you, you would have no problems whatsoever getting a pass. If he didn't like you, there was no chance of getting it. Certain types of people that he suspected of being sharp operators or black marketeers, he would really give a bad time to. He didn't like, by and large, people wearing long beards. He didn't like people who came in

with hats, because -- and you see Orthodox Jews wearing beards and a hat. And even when they took the hat off, they had the yamalka, and you know, that was an insult to him, I think, so he didn't like Polish Jews to start with.

And one of the comical stories is that one of the immigrants worked at the University, the French University run by the Jesuits, and I don't know whether he was a professor, or what he was. And Goya asked him to bring his employer over to -- and he did that quite frequently -- to prove that he was actually employed someplace. So he had this immigrant come in, with the Jesuit. And the minute he opened the door and looks at this immigrant and the Jesuit, he jumps up from his chair and he told, he says, I told you I don't like Polish Jews. And it took him a little while to convince him this guy was a monk. The minute he understood that, he laughed. And from that day on, the rest of the day, from that minute on, the rest of the day, anybody coming in had no problem getting his pass.

And other times, when something didn't sit right with him, he would just close the door, and people were standing out there in line in all kinds of weather, and he was totally oblivious. And he would have just, you know, no interest whatsoever in helping anybody, I

mean, in issuing any passports.

He had an immigrant lady working for him as a secretary, who must have had an unbelievable job. And one of the policemen was also a, I think he came with the -- he was a Czechoslovakian by birth, so under the signatory powers that I talked about earlier in the international settlement, he was one of the foreign policemen, even though he was an immigrant. And so he was assigned to that station. And he was also in a very difficult situation, because, on the one hand, he had to humor this guy. And on the other hand, there were people like us. They knew what was going on and they knew how much we depended on having these passports, I mean, these passes.

There were many, many tragic stories, because this man had such an inferiority complex. When somebody crossed him up, and especially, when you were tall, you didn't have to cross him up, and you came in and you were tall, he could find fault with almost anything you said. And he would get himself a chair and stand on the chair to slap you, which is a comical story right there, you know, but it's tragic. I mean, the humiliation in front of all the other people, and the dejection that you saw when people came down, not being granted the pass, knowing that this would mean for them not to be

able to make a living for a period of time, and they didn't know how long it would be until they would get a pass to go. That was really the most tragic part of it. He was a crazy person, really.

And he would -- he lived in the ghetto, with his family. And in the evening, when you -- now, those people who didn't need to leave the district had really no trek with him. Their path never crossed. It was only those of us who worked outside and depended on getting that permission to leave.

Q. SO SOME WORKED IN THE DISTRICT?

A. Quite a number of people either were too poor, didn't have a job, lived in the (heimer), you know, never left the area. Others had, really, manufacturing operations there of one kind or another, butcher shops, or whatever.

But if you lived in the district, I mean, if you worked outside the district, and in evening, you walked forth and saw Mr. Goya, saw Mr. Goya, and you didn't say good evening to him, he remembered. The next time you came in for a pass, you might as well kiss it off. You have no chance of getting it. That's the type of person he was.

And he was also -- I mean, Japanese bureaucrats, I mean, Japanese are bureaucratic as a

people. Japanese bureaucrats are more bureaucratic than any bureaucrats, even the Prussian bureaucrats, and that's bad enough. We used to call them the East Prussians, but they are really much worse as bureaucrats. And here was a man who was probably the worst kind of a bureaucrat that you can be.

And unfortunately, there was another one, a colleague of his, who was, I had nothing to do with, but we were assigned, who I think reported to Goya. I'm quite sure he did. He reported to a man by the name of (Ecora). He was supposed to have a real sadistic streak. But I can't speak to that. I never dealt with the man. I suppose you were assigned one of them from the very beginning and stuck with him.

I am going to jump a little bit, because it again ties in timewise. Let me backtrack a little.

When we moved into the district, the protection, police protection was minimal. And immigrants -- actually, it started, probably, it was started by the Japanese for all of Shanghai when there was a lot of terrorist activity. Chinese, underground, would blow up a power station, or something like that, or just a transformer. And the Japanese instituted -- first of all, there was a, they instituted a puppet regime, a Chinese puppet regime. The man that was the

Premier was Wang Jingwei. And it was an organization that was a right wing Chinese group.

The Wang Jingwei regime brought into Shanghai under the Japanese a, what they called a (Pochiar) system. It goes back to Chinese history, way back in the Imperial days. The idea is that the country is divided up into neighborhoods, and the neighborhood polices itself. And this was done under the aegis of the police operation. And when we moved into the district, the immigrants also had to form a Pochiar operation. The Pochiar we had, the function of it was really two-fold. It was, on the one hand, to protect us, protect ourselves from thievery and petty crimes. There wasn't really -- although there wasn't much violent crime directed toward us. We were too poor, by and large. But there was thievery, a lot of thievery. And the second one was that the Japanese didn't want to police the, the access routes in and out of the ghetto. They did have soldiers there, but they wanted us to do our own policing.

So like the rest of the Pochiar system, it was mandatory for every male to put in a certain number of hours per month, I guess, to be assigned either to walk the streets, or there were little guard houses at certain areas, to leave a standing guard in one of those

guard houses, or to be at one of the interchanges where people went in and out of the district. And there were, the Japanese issued arm bands that identified you as a Pochiar member. When you were on duty, you got a night stick, a whistle and an arm band. And when you went from duty to next duty, then you gave them your whistle, your stick and your arm band.

But there were also officers within the Pochiar, who then were, their duty was to check up that people were in fact on duty. And somehow, I became an officer. Why, I don't know. I don't know whether it was my doing, their doing, whether it was voluntary or what it was. I have no idea. I wound up with my own arm band, with Japanese big seals on it. And my job was to run around on a bicycle to check whether people were on duty, many times in the middle of the night. It wasn't the greatest job, but it was better than standing on the corner, especially the job of having to turn people back whose passes had expired. And that was something that I wouldn't have felt too good about, and nobody did.

That Pochiar arm band got me into trouble. I don't remember exactly when it happened, but one day during the day I was on my way from the office, I think, to the post office. And all of a sudden there was a

roadblock thrown up, which happened very frequently. The Japanese would have these, they call them Spanish riders, which is really a barricade out of wood and barbed wire that were standing alongside the streets. And then when the road blocks were thrown up, they just put them across the street and block everything off. And they were searching people, and you weren't allowed to go into this area or out of this area unless you had special permission, because they wanted to investigate. They were looking for terrorists.

Well, this happened almost once a week. So my experience had been, all I needed to do was, you know, take that band-aid, I mean, that arm band that I had in my pocket, put it on, and acted like I belonged there and just walk through it, instead of standing and waiting. And it worked for months and months and I never had a problem. And I acted like I was saluting, and everybody saluted. Big deal. And I was big shot, you know, going through there.

One fine day I did that again, ran into that kind of a situation. And I'm in the middle of this area, and the Japanese comes over to me, and said, can I see your papers? And I had that, that blue pass that allowed me to come out. And he said, why are you in here? Why are you wearing the bands? I said, well, I'm

a Pochiar member and officer and I was told it's okay to do this. So I was arrested. And it turned out that this was not a terrorist thing at the time. That was in the middle of the financial district, and they were looking for black market people who were in fact trading in foreign currency, or whatever it was. And there were many Jews. And they didn't want to have people that have the passports, these passes, used for black market purposes.

So we were herded into cars and driven to the center police station. And there were, I don't know how many, but quite a large number of immigrants there together with me. I quickly took off my arm band, put it back in my pocket. And so at least that part of the story was okay. And we were interrogated, and what were you doing there? Well, I was walking through on the way to the post office. I just happened to walk through there. Well, can you prove that you're employed? Well, I said, my boss is at the office, you know. And so I called up. They allowed me to use the phone. I called my boss. And the boss was about six foot three, weighed about 250 pounds. And the Japanese interrogator was about one quarter his size.

And so my boss came over. And my boss had lived for 20 some years in Japan and spoke fluent

Japanese, which he shouldn't have. I mean, he shouldn't have used it. It would have been much easier, because he started out talking to this man in Japanese, and the Japanese was very courteous. And he says, I'm a Swiss, and so on and so forth, this man is working for me. Everything is fine, implying that he was working for the Swiss Consulate, which is partially true, as I'll explain in a minute. When the man asked him for a diplomatic passport, he said, well, I'm not a diplomat. Well, he threw him out and kept me, even though what he said was all true, because he was working for the Consulate, as a Swiss. He was a caretaker of the British Embassy compound and lived on the British Embassy compound because that was under the administration of the Swiss Embassy. And so he was in fact employed by the Consulate, but he was not a diplomat.

So I was sent back down then to the yard down there, and I couldn't figure out, you know, first of all, I never understood the conversation between the two of them. And when I was not allowed to leave and had to go back down, and they threw him out, that was obvious to me that things hadn't gone right. So I saw where there was a gate open, and a number of other people decided to just take off. And so we just decided, to

hell with it, and we took off. But of course, I didn't have my pass.

And so the next day, I had to go back and ask for my pass. And I did get it back. But it was up for renewal, and apparently, they had notified Goya that I was in that thing. So Mr. Goya wasn't too happy to see me, and gave me a bad time, and asked me to bring the boss in. And the boss came and gave him -- this time he spoke English. And I did get the pass back, but only on a 30-day basis, which meant that I was much more frequently exposed to this guy. And of course, it was also time that I wasn't able to work.

And so I've gone into the story just to show how you can get yourself in these crazy times, into situations that, you know, you didn't know anything about.

Q. WHY WEREN'T YOU ABLE TO WORK, EVEN THOUGH YOU HAD A PASS?

A. No. The point was, it was always a day off when you had to stand in line to get your pass, and you weren't sure whether or not you get it the first time around. And sometimes I didn't. And there was a whole week that I didn't get it, because you weren't allowed to come back until a week later. So here I had, you know, unpaid vacation -- maybe I was paid. I think I

was paid. I wasn't paid a hell of a lot anyway. But I didn't have permission to leave the district. And then again, there's this big question as to whether or not you'll get it the next time around.

An interesting part of the ghetto experience is something that needs to be talked about as it relates to the Jewish community as a whole, because this is something that is really something we, as American Jews, can be extremely proud of. It's a very emotional story for me. And the reason, I'll say it right up front, the reason I'm so involved in Jewish affairs today is that the -- I explained earlier, that there were a number of people who had come without any money, without any means, and without really being able to work, totally dependent on social services. Before World War II, before the outbreak of the Japanese American hostilities, there were a number of sources for funding for these heimer -- heimer meaning homes. There was the HIAS, which is the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, which is still in existence today, very much so, and the Joint Distribution Committee, which is also very much in existence today. There was also the international committee that I've talked about earlier, which was put together by local Jews. And all of them funneled money into supporting these services.

But then, with the outbreak of the Japanese American War, after Pearl Harbor, the American source of money was immediately cut off, and these people were totally dependent on that money. From what I read about it, and I don't -- what I'm talking about now is something that I read about, although I was -- I'll get into it. I was involved indirectly a little bit myself.

With the understanding and with the support, or at least the agreement of the Japanese, the delegation of long-term resident Russian Jews went, few from Switzerland, to meet with representatives of the American Joint Distribution Committee as to how to handle this. And what they came up with was a power of attorney on the part of the Joint Distribution Committee for the representatives, the East Russian representatives, to issue promissory notes in American currency, payable after the war, and with a piece of paper that came back, and started raising money from foreigners, from Chinese, from their own people in order to pay for the upkeep of these homes.

My boss, as an example, was a man who was making money during the war. And there was an inflation going on, and so, and as I had explained earlier, the American dollar was really the currency, in spite of the fact that the Japanese were really winning at that point

still. And the other aspect of it was that these promissory notes were paying a pretty good interest, rate of interest. So my boss was one of the people who bought, and I saw in our offices, a number of people buying these promissory notes, payable after the war.

And all through the war, that was really the way in which it made it possible for thousands of immigrants to survive. And of course, after the war, these promissory notes were all paid off. It's a horrendous undertaking. It was an open-ended check. These guys could have absconded with the funds, for one thing. And it really, it attests to the way we as Jews have reached out to other Jews to help, no matter where and no matter what the circumstances. And where there's a will, there's a way.

The next phase then that involved us moving into the area meant also bringing our tenants with us, into the new. And I think they all moved in with us again. We were not one big -- no, wait a minute. No. I'm sorry. One couple that -- no. One of the tenants in our building, in the French concession, was a mother, her sister and her son. The son was an artist. He was a painter, a reasonably well-known painter in Germany, who did not move with us. He was painting in Shanghai and had a Chinese clientele, also a Chinese girlfriend

for a while. And that was one couple that didn't come with us, but I think the other ones all came with us.

But life in this new location was right back to what we had started with. It was the honey pots all over again. It was the charcoal briquettes all over again. And it really now was gradually and relatively fast becoming obvious to us that our own health was going downhill pretty rapidly. We were very skinny. And there were certain foodstuffs that were -- for money, everything was available, almost everything. But we didn't have money. We had enough to make ends meet, really. But some things were not even available for money. Sugar was rationed. And I really don't remember the details of it, but what was always rationed, I think, it was also rice that was rationed.

Rationing didn't mean the kind of rationing with stamps that we're talking about, although I think sugar and some other fats were in fact rationed. But it was the availability of things. And when they were available, there were only very, very limited quantities available. And that really related to almost anything, from coal, which then hampered your ability to make charcoal briquettes, to whatever, clothing. Some of the people in the beginning used these little camp stoves as long as kerosene was available. But then there was no

more kerosene available either.

And it really became a city that was like a city under siege. I remember the Japanese started -- and this showed the desperation of the Japanese at the time -- started growing castor bean plants on vacant lots inside the city even. And the reason, apparently, was that they pressed the castor beans for the oil, and the oil was used, not for medicinal purposes, but for lubrication purposes.

One of the things that I have to talk about, because it was so unique, was how inventive people were during the war, to make do. Who it was that invented it, I don't know, but he was very successful. It must have been some Chinese chemist. He invented a means to use wood to drive cars. What they had was, really, it was primarily for trucks. And pretty soon, because gas was unavailable, pretty soon almost every truck had that contraption hanging on the side, which consisted of what probably looked like a hot water heater, the size of a hot water heater, hanging on the side of the truck. And all it was was a cylinder in which you put in wood, and there was a grating on the bottom, and a low flame going, and a little fan glowing into this. And it was incomplete combustion. And then it had some kind of a filtering system whereby it took all the tars out, and

then fed the gas that came out into the engine. And it worked beautifully. But they had to start their motors about, I mean, they had to start this cooking operation, my guess would be, an hour to two hours before they decided that they wanted to go. But it worked very well, except that a town that was already very smoggy now really became smoggy. And, but it shows that, you know, even under the worst circumstances, it's possible to keep on operating an industrial city even though you don't have the things that are necessary.

And today, when we're talking about the Persian Gulf situation, you know, something like, we can't live without oil, you can live without oil if you only try. Not that that particular approach is very desirable, but you know, need is the mother of invention here. And there were a number of things like that, that people were able to somehow manage. And Chinese are very clever people, who are very inventive, very industrious, and people who have the ability to really always come out on top.

It's amazing the -- I have a fantastic respect for the Chinese and their ability to make do. And they've shown it, you know, how they're operating now, with more than twice the number of people in the country than we have. They had famines at the time I left

there. Today they have more than twice the number of people, and there's no famines in China today.

Q. YOU KNOW, I'M THINKING THAT AT THIS POINT IT MIGHT BE WISE TO STOP AND BEGIN THE NEXT TIME WITH KIND OF JUST BASIC DAILY LIFE IN THE GHETTO.

A. Okay.

Q. SO IF I COULD ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS I HAVE, AND TANYA MAY HAVE QUESTIONS TOO.

I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT WHETHER YOU EXPERIENCED ANY ALIENATION OR ANTI-SEMITISM WHEN YOU WERE IN SHANGHAI IN THOSE DAYS BEFORE YOU NEEDED TO GO TO THE GHETTO, AMONG ANY OF THE INTERNATIONAL GROUPS?

A. Personally, I didn't, but there was -- it is difficult to differentiate between anti-Semitism and the antagonism that existed because we came in as poor foreigners in a country in which foreigners were not supposed to be poor. You know, the Russians experienced that same thing when they arrived, that, you know, we were in some ways the white man's burden there. Because the white man never got his fingers dirty. The white man, it was a colonial lifestyle before we arrived.

Now, when -- or before even the Russian immigrants arrived, they were much smaller in number. But as I told you, there were even some Russian prostitutes at that point. So they were not all very

wealthy. And they were not high up on the pecking order within the society, but many of them had integrated, and none of them were doing manual labor, none of them that I can think of.

But when the immigrants came from Germany, there were a goodly number of them that had to -- first of all, they were down and out. They were impoverished. Many of them had been laborers, and many of them now had to compete with the Chinese labor. As an example, these two fellows that I'm talking about were, the transportation fellows that were picking up the packages that went to the camps, those people were working as hard as could be on the street, and were essentially competing with them. So that was something that was seen and, by the established whites, and created a great deal of animosity. We were really some -- and created an anti-immigrant feeling, even among the Jews that were there, to the point where there was pressure put on the city government.

(End Tape 1; Begin Tape 2.)

A. Well, these people were putting pressure on the government, the municipal government, to put restrictions or even prohibit further immigration into Shanghai, even though they knew at that point that the Jews were in danger in Poland and Germany, you know.

This was before the outbreak of the American Japanese War. So yes, there was an anti-immigrant feeling, very strong anti-immigrant feeling all the way through.

Q. NOT ANTI-JEWISH, NOT PARTICULARLY ANTI-JEWISH?

A. No, not anti-Jewish.

Q. DID YOUR STATUS CHANGE WHEN YOU LEASED THE PLACE AND YOUR FATHER BECAME A BUSINESSMAN?

A. No. It didn't change us, because people we were dealing with primarily on a social level were immigrants, except my parents, at least. I, myself, as I had explained earlier, had friends across the board, and my relationship to them didn't change one way or another. I started really in the school while I was, I was still in Honqu originally. So no, they were not in any way an anti-immigrant group, nor were their parents.

Some of the members of that pack, you know, that group, were in fact immigrants, I mean, had never left the ghetto, had arrived there and lived there, not necessarily the same building, but throughout the time. So no, we didn't experience it personally.

My father, everybody knew who he was, what he was. And the very fact that they were buying from him meant that they didn't have any animosity, or if they did have animosity about, as I mentioned earlier, with the German Consulate, you know, they didn't make him

feel that way. No.

Q. THIS TENANT YOU HAD, WHERE THERE WAS THIS PAINTER, WAS HE A JEWISH PERSON TOO?

A. Yes.

Q. HOW WAS IT THAT HE WAS ALLOWED TO SIMPLY NOT GO TO THE GHETTO? WAS THAT JUST --

A. Oh, you jumped to the conclusion that he didn't have to move to the ghetto. That's not true. He just didn't move with us.

Q. I'M SORRY.

A. No. He moved someplace else, to nicer quarters. He had more money than the rest of us.

Q. OKAY.

A. And since he was renting, you see.

Q. OKAY. THESE ARE THE QUESTIONS I CAN INCLUDE IN OUR TALK OF THE DAILY LIFE. GO AHEAD.

BY MS. ZATK:

Q. WAS THERE AWARENESS OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING WITH THE JEWS IN EUROPE, AND WAS THAT TALKED ABOUT AT ALL?

A. That's a very good question. I don't really recall that we knew anything about the death camps. And yet, within the last month or so, I heard that, a tape on public radio, where one of the non-immigrant Jews from Shanghai talked about their experiences, and where she came home and her father was sitting shiva, because

he had heard that, on the, I guess, the shortwave radio, as to what was happening, and he said, they're killing my people. And so, but again, whether we knew, I don't recall that we knew. I think it was only after the war that we really knew, and anybody really knew the extent of it.

Q. BUT WERE YOU AWARE OF VERY LITTLE, OR JUST NOT AWARE OF THE DEATH CAMPS? WERE YOU AWARE --

A. Well, we knew what was going on, as far as rounding up Jews was concerned. We knew that. And you weren't here the last time. I talked about the Japanese Consulate, which was one of the righteous gentiles who actually helped some 1300 Jews from Lithuania to escape, because at that time, that's what, 1940, and because he knew what was going on. And people knew, you know, they knew they were being rounded up. And people didn't know what for.

And the story the Germans passed out all the time was that the Jews were being rounded up to be protected from whatever. You know, it was a protection service. This has been something that had never changed really. (Grebles), the administer of propaganda in China back in the '30s, shortly after the Nazis took over, and when they started rounding up some political people and brought them into concentration camps, the

fiction was always, these people are being put into concentration camp for their protection from the wrath of the German population. So the story was that these Jews were being rounded up, to protect them from the wrath of the Polish population or Lithuanian population, or you name it.

Q. SO WHEN THE JEWISH POPULATION WAS ASKED TO MOVE TO THE GHETTO IN SHANGHAI, WAS THERE A GENERAL SENSE OF FEAR AND TREPIDATION IN TERMS OF THEIR WELL-BEING? WHY DID THEY -- WHAT WAS THE UNDERSTANDING OF WHY THEY WERE BEING ASKED TO MOVE?

A. I'm speculating because I don't remember. But I think that we were accepting that move as a -- well, first of all, we didn't relate it to the Germans, as it turned out much later that was the real reason for it originally. I think we accepted it because we were surprised when -- I was. I remember being surprised not having been put into the enemy alien category from the very beginning, because they knew we hated the Germans, and the Japanese were access partners with the Germans. So it wasn't that farfetched that we should be neutralized in some fashion.

But that they should pick that particular area made sense also, because it meant the least amount of move in total. Because it only involved those that

lived outside the ghetto, which was probably no more than, out of the 16,000, my guess would be about 4, 5,000. The rest of them never moved out of the area. So it was really, the barbed wire was put around it to prevent them from leaving during the bombing raids, you know, and that was the whole -- but we didn't know that.

Q. I WAS WONDERING, HOW WAS THE TRANSITION FOR YOUR FAMILY IN MOVING TO SHANGHAI AND JUST LIVING? HOW WAS THAT TRANSITION FOR YOUR FAMILY?

A. You mean, how was, how did they take it?

Q. YES.

A. I don't remember hearing my parents ever really complain. The rationale for most of us was, we were out of Germany and we were -- you see, what you don't know, because of the previous tapes, is that Shanghai wasn't intended to be a long-term stay. It was intended to be a way place to go to America, or someplace else. And we got caught. And so we were caught in a war situation. And under those circumstances, you accept much more than you would under normal circumstances.

So we came out of a dictatorship in which you couldn't open your mouth. Not that my parents were saying that much, but at least it wasn't the oppressive kind of situation, with the fear of the unknown of

tomorrow. During the first couple of years in Shanghai, it wasn't there. Our life was relatively good. And as I said before, the living standard we experienced, it was, of all the horrible experiences you could have had, this isn't such a horrible one. It got worse and worse as time progressed, but then you rationalized that with, gee, you know, the whole world is coming. Now America is in it, and now they're even losing Singapore and Hong Kong, and they're knocking on the door in India. And yet, they're leaving us alone pretty much.

It wasn't until we really started to have to move back into the ghetto that we started to really feel the -- and the oppression then, with Goya, and the inability not to do many of the things that you normally accept as, as everyday life experiences, you know. Then all of a sudden, I think it started to really wear on my parents, and on other people too. And there's no question about it. My mother was very, very nervous, very uptight.

And yet, this ties in with our experiences during the air raids, you know. Again, this is something that came out after the war, but the Japanese -- there was, not far from where we lived, was an old jail. I don't know whether I talked about that before.

Q. DOESN'T SOUND FAMILIAR.

A. Doesn't sound familiar. The war jail was a huge complex, out of huge boulders, you know, the typical colonial building style of jails, with a basement, and I think it was four or five stories of buildings. And prisoners are, you know, behind bars, you know, looking out to the street there. And the Japanese opened the jail to us, as an air raid shelter, the basement, as an air raid shelter, which was nice of them, you know. But after a few times, you just didn't bother. You know, every time the sirens would go off, you would say to yourself, well, you know, it's going to hit, it's going to hit. What are you going to do? Can't get out, or by the time you got there, it was too late anyway. These air raids, the Japanese detection system of listening to these planes wasn't the greatest, to start with. So by the time you got there, the air raid was usually well along the way or over.

Well, after the war, it turned out that there was a subbasement that was full of bombs. Because the Japanese figured, nothing is going to go through two basements, to hit this, you know. But we were sitting on a powder keg, and we didn't know it. And probably, it would have been fine, because they never used very heavy bombs, and this was really built four or five stories of solid concrete. I don't think it would have

happened, but it was just amusing in retrospect.

So you, I'm just citing this example of the air raids, because you get used to situations. You know, it doesn't hit you from one day to the next. You gradually drift into it a little bit more, a little bit more, a little more. And all of a sudden, you begin to live in a different kind of an ambience, without really being aware that you totally live different.

(End of Tape 2.)