Interview with Joseph Fabry
Holocaust Oral History Project
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Q WILL YOU SPELL YOUR NAME FOR US, JOE? BOTH NAMES?

A F-a-b-r-y.

Q AND THE FIRST NAME?

A Joseph.

Q DID YOU HAVE A PREVIOUS NAME IN EUROPE?

A Yes. Mine was Epstein.

Q AND THAT'S JOSEPH?

A Joseph with a p-h.

Q AS I MENTIONED TO YOU BEFORE, WE'RE INTERESTED IN FOUR PERIODS IN YOUR LIFE; WHAT LIFE WAS LIKE IN YOUR COMMUNITY BEFORE THE WAR, WHEN LIFE BEGAN TO CHANGE, WHAT OCCURRED TO YOU DURING THE WAR, AND THEN HOW YOUR EXPERIENCES AFFECTED YOU AFTER THE WAR.

LET'S START WITH YOU DESCRIBING FOR US THE COMMUNITY YOU GREW UP IN. WHEN WERE YOU BORN? WHAT IS YOUR BIRTH DATE?

A November 6, 1909. My parents waited for my arrival for about seven years, so it was very common I was spoiled. So I was born in 1909. It was a middle-class family. Both my parents came from the Sudetenland, but they met in Vienna. I guess they migrated to Vienna as many Jews did in the 70's, perhaps 80's. They met and they married in 1902. What they didn't know, it was Pearl Harbor Day much later. December 7th.

Our family was not very large in the sense that there were not many children, but I had lots of cousins and uncles and second cousins. The thing that was very important in my life, there were 20 -- 25 people within commuting distance by state car. Sometimes within walking distance. We met once or twice a week. It was a very close family relationship. We met in private homes. We visited each other pretty much unannounced. And every birthday we celebrated together. 25 people. And holidays.

The big event was a New Year's Eve party. We met in our homes and we arranged sort of a play where we wrote and sang texts about the family and made humorous skits up. My mother made the costumes. There were quite a number of people who played the piano. That is something I still miss. I still am looking for a New Year's celebration here in America, because the whole atmosphere is gone.

So my father was the director of the warehouses of Vienna. The community warehouses. The city warehouses. I don't think he finished high school. I think he started out in a very low capacity and worked his way up to the director.

My mother, I think, was a little better educated, which was rare for women. I think she at least finished high school. And when we made crossword puzzles, she always knew Greek nymphs and gods. These things that you learn in school. And she was also more interested in the arts and

the theater and music.

I remember that they had, both of them, a woman who came to teach them English. One day I was asked in, and the English teacher asked me to say, "I am a little boy." That was my first English lesson I had when I was about five -- six years old.

You probably would like to know a little bit about our religious background. One would say we were assimilated Jews. We were quite aware of our Jewishness. We went to the synagogue to the higher holidays. We went to say the celebrations, first in my motherly grandfather's home, and when he died, then in my father's sister and sister-in-law's home. Again, it was an awkward unity for the family to meet, but it was sort of a gay event rather than a religious event. It was a nice way of having dinner together.

I was not too aware of anti-Semitism, although it was, in retrospect, that in my high school. For instance, we had a class of 22 people. In high school in Europe, as you probably know, there are small classes. There were seven Jews and seven Protestants and seven Catholics and one without religion. So it was very reasonably divided. I noticed that after the war I was never invited privately by any of the non-Jewish friends. We were pretty much separated. When we go to Vienna, there are a few people left. Especially with two or three of them we have quite

good contact and are invited, and our friendship is on a more intimate basis than it was in high school. So this kind of thing, I've realized now, how separated it was. It was sort of a spiritual ghetto. A society ghetto. And the non-Jews we affiliated with mostly handicraft, plumbers, and carpenters and tailors and so on. So there was a split.

And then I graduated from high school in 1928. It was a time when Hitler was on a rise in Germany. I really didn't realize that Hitler was a problem to us. But a lot of my friends, including Max Schneid whom you interviewed before, he was quite aware of it. And he tried to make me aware of it. But I was more interested in writing and art and the theater. I remember there was this man who had no religion, and he was active in the Social Democratic Youth Movement. He probably thought that I was a likely convert, so he asked me to join this youth movement. I remember something only in significance much later. There was this little conversation we had. He asked me to join the Socialist Youth Movement, and I said, "I'm not interested." He said, "Why aren't you interested?" I said, "I am not interested. Politics have nothing to do with my life." He said, "How can you imagine your life without politics?" It was completely incomprehensible what that meant. In 1938 and from then on, I knew how important politics was in one's life. So I grew up pretty naive -- politically naive.

I was interested in writing all along, and my parents

wanted me to be an attorney. They wanted me to take over a law firm. My uncle was not an attorney, but he was a doctor-of-law working in the Ministry of Justice, a job he lost probably because he was Jewish. He was not only Jewish, he was a scientist. He was a very fervent admirer of (Japartinsky) at that time. Again, I had no understanding of what that meant. He was a tax consultant, and I was supposed to take over his office as tax consultant. I went to study law. At that time, I didn't really want to study law, but my parents expected me to, so I did. Then when I got my degree in 1934, I believe, I already had started writing short stories and was quite successful under the pen name of Peter (Fabriezios), which I shared with Max Schneid. At that time, it was just as hard to be a tax consultant. You had to go through the whole series of jobs first in the courts to be a clerk and later on have seven years of work with an attorney. My uncle was not an attorney. So I had to look for another attorney. It was just as hard to find this job as an attorney as it was probably to do short stories.

I had this one year in the Court. For some strange reason, I got a job as an attorney. I mean as a helper, an assistant to an attorney, which was the most unhappy time of my life, not counting the flight for my life in Hitler's time, but professionally it was. This attorney I worked for, he represented landlords. I, as a 22- or 23-year-old

young man, had to go out and evict people from their homes who didn't pay the rent, and I had to take away their last ring and watch and money, and it just went against anything I believed in.

At the same time, it was just as important to get a job as a writer or editor in a newspaper. But we did freelance work for short stories, and we had it in a way that Max went to papers and offered them stories and I went to some. One day, I went to show some short stories to three magazines that were published in Vienna. In fact, it was practically the only three magazines that were published in Vienna. It was called Musicade, a bi-monthly fashion magazine, and Moca, which was a monthly magazine. I never saw the man or anybody except the secretary. I left my stories with the secretary, and two weeks later, I came again and either got the stories back or some little paper that says to pick up the money and the fee was very, very low. If he was famous, Vienna was a very low paying city in a way. Of course, he was famous for paying all the newspapers who took stories. He took a lot of stories, because all three magazines had short stories.

So I went one day to the lady and left my stories, and she said Mr. Robe, who was the editor, wants to see you. The only thing I could think of is that I must have done something terrible. I offered the same story that was published before or I did something wrong. Mr. Robe

received me in a huge, big room. He said that his editor, he was a short story editor, was sick. He liked my stories, and I would become an editor, which was absolutely unheard of. Not only I didn't apply for it, I didn't chase after the job that was offered to me. He said that if the man becomes well again, he would hire him back. So it was a short-term job he was offering me. Even so, I still was the attorney's helper, very unhappy, and here was the job that was a deal for me. So I asked him what sickness, and he said he had a nervous breakdown. I didn't know at that time what that meant, but I knew it was probably not anything very fatal. So I went home to my parents. I must say my parents were very understanding about it. They let me quit my lawyer's job in order to get the temporary job and that generally was really my most unhappy job to my most happiest job. I was never professionally as happy as perhaps I am now in the United States as a professional writer.

So I took this job. It was a deal because I was not offering short stories, but deciding what story stories to take. And another thing which was strange in that job which I liked but would not be to everybody's liking, this Mr. Robe, whose real name was Roebczek, but he shortened it to Robe, he bought paintings and his whole editorial office was a picture gallery. You see, he used his paintings in his magazines, and then he sold the same paintings to people who wanted to buy paintings. And he also did the same thing

with cartoons. Since he had three different magazines, he published one cartoon, let's say in one magazine, and then two or three years later the same cartoon with a different joke in other magazine. So, from time to time he came with 20 of these cartoons with the captions cut off, and he'd say, "Here, Herr Doctor. Make new jokes of these." I thought it was the funniest thing that I did. And also he brought me some of these paintings and he'd say, "Make a little poem for these paintings," which he'd publish. So, it was a challenging job. Unfortunately for me, fortunately for him, this man recovered. And he actually took him back, and for a while I just was without a job, and then I was just writing short stories.

But, again something happened that has happened to me several times in my lifetime, according to my good luck and somebody else's bad luck. This man committed suicide after a while, so I got his job for good. Until Hitler.

All of these things are written. Max and I wrote a book which was published two or three years ago. It's called, "One and One Makes Three." In fact, everything I am saying to you now is more or less published in this book.

Well, then Hitler came, and this was overnight. March 13, 1938. The job was gone, the family was threatened, gone, my friends. I knew I would have to leave the country. What was gone also was my language. I knew as a writer wherever I would go, I could not write in German. So, my

language was gone. When I began to work with Dr. Frankl, who wrote, he had this Logo therapy, and the talks I give, I can say very frankly that I was aware of meaning only one day in my life. On March 13th. Because if you live a life that has meaning, friends, love, you're not aware you're having a meaningful life. You really begin to realize the meaning of your life when you don't have it. It's sometimes like an air you breathe. As long as you have good lungs and a good breathing system, you don't realize that there is air to breathe or the importance of air. It's only obvious when you can't breathe any more or not comfortably.

So, I knew that I had no way of making a living as a writer or as an attorney or anything in Vienna at that time. It was not only hard to get out of Vienna, but it was just as hard to get into some other countries because the borders were closed to anybody that didn't have very close connections with other countries. As far as I knew, we didn't have any connections. I did what all other Jewish people did at that time. I stood in front of the consulate and asked for a visa, and there was never any visa I was given. The American consulate didn't give a visa, and at least they gave quota numbers. We knew it was necessary for immigration to the United States to have two things: a quota number and an affidavit, guarantee by an American citizen that I would not be a burden to the American States. So, I fortunately got my quota number. The quota number had

the significance that at that time the quota number went by place of birth. The Austrian quota was 6,000 Austrians could immigrate to America every year. In normal times it was fine, because no 6,000 people would immigrate to the Unites States. But at that time, when Vienna had 200,000 Jews, tens of thousands of Jews went to the American consulate for a quota number. So, I got mine, but I didn't have anybody who I could ask for an affidavit, and there was no other way of getting to any other countries.

Then came another series of events. It's amazing, all of this. You must know that every survivor had the story of miracles, and coincidences, and things that a writer would not dare to say happened. Two things came together. One of the things my father said bought a patent for me. It saved water in the toilet. Toilets in Vienna had these tags, and you pull the chain, and then a lot of water came in. This was a little gadget that you put in the tank that regulated that you took a full tank, or maybe when you don't need that much, a little less tank. So, my father said I'm now a businessman. I went to the consulate and said, "I'm not a refugee. I'm a businessman that wants to save France and Denmark a lot of money by giving them a patent to save water." But they didn't fall for that, because they knew it was a trick. So, it didn't lead to anywhere.

At the same time, something else happened. My very first girlfriend by the name of Meara -- I met her when I

was about 21, and now I was 28 -- so that was seven years ago. We had kept touch. She had hit the skids, really. When we met, she was an operetta singer, and then she didn't lose her voice, but her voice wasn't good enough any more for operettas, so she sang in night clubs in Vienna that wrote her lyrics for her. Then, she didn't get jobs in Vienna, so she got an agent who got jobs for her in North Africa, and she really became sort of a bit of prostitute. She was hired to sing a song and then sit down at a table with a man and motivate him to drink. When he was drunk enough, he asked her to go to his room. She was expected to go with him.

We kept in correspondence all this time. She was a good friend of mine still. When she was in -- I believe it was Algeria, somewhere in North Africa, she wrote me a letter about an incident that happened. She went to bed with a man from Belgium, and when she was in bed with him, she was so disgusted with her fate, her life, that she beat him. He mistook this as a sign of great passion, and he apparently had this kind of a sex tendency, and he fell madly in love with her. He said she should come to Belgium and stay with him. That, she didn't think of doing. He kept writing and writing, and he even said he would marry her. Then when Hitler came to Austria -- she was not Jewish and was not really threatened by all this -- the situation was really unstable in Europe, so she thought she would see

what it was like to be in Brussels. She went to Brussels and lived with him just at that time when Hitler came to Vienna.

I wrote to her and said, "Couldn't your friend, who is a businessman, set his interests in my toilet gadget?" and it is what he did. He went to the consulate and said he was very interested in the gadget, and so I got a one month visa. The Belgium consul probably knew what was going on. He gave me a one-month visa to come to Belgium, which was all I needed. I had also to sign that I would never return to Austria again. On the other hand, I knew that I could stay in Belgium only for one month, but everybody went wherever he could.

I went legally to Belgium. Here was Meara at the station, and I expected her to be very jubilant about this. She was very, very unhappy, because the man had died all of a sudden and had left her nothing, which she resented very much. She was in a very bad situation herself, but I was deliriously happy just to be out of Austria.

I leave a lot of things out now for reasons. Maybe you would be interested. I was spit in the face by the Viennese. In that one magazine, the Musicade, it was a satirical weekly. Very often, it had anti-nazi jokes, and Mr. Robe was responsible for the paper. He was caught and had to pay fees quite often, not only for anti-nazi jokes, but for illustrations and cartoons that were just a little

too sexy and showed just a little too much of a bosom. He was in this situation where he said next time he was in danger of getting a prison sentence, which he didn't appreciate. He asked me would I be the responsible editor of this magazine. I very foolishly, naively said, "All right. I'll do it. It's only a matter of names." My name was there as the responsible editor of that magazine that had been full of anti-nazi jokes. I was threatened on this account, not only as a Jew, but as the editor for a magazine. So, I went and hid in the country until I got a visa.

Q YOU WERE SERIOUSLY THREATENED?

A I was. Any Jew was seriously threatened. But, I was doubly threatened. I'll tell you that story, too.

The announcements of people who were responsible in any way, Jews or non-Jews in Vienna -- I was responsible for three months or four months very recently, and they probably didn't have my name. At least not in as good order, but we had relatives and they were Orthodox Jews. We had Orthodox Jewish relatives in (Bacatine), which is a city in Austria. I went to (Marinabad) to hide out because in the provinces the nazis were not as strict as in Vienna where they could go from house to house and pick up Jews. I went there. In the meantime, a man with whom I had written plays -- he was a descent fellow. We wrote plays together because plays that were written by Jews could theoretically be performed in

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Austria before the nazis, but could not be performed in Germany, where a player has to prove unto his grandmother that he is Aryan. Now, this Mr. Frieser was Aryan-proof, and so we wrote three plays together with him. With his name and with the understanding at least for the time being it would be offered to the theater in his name only. So, he was a real descent fellow. He was able to prove his Aryanship to his, God knows, 16th century. And he went through all these obstacle races that these Jews had to go through. He had to have a paper that you didn't owe any money. That you were not of military obligations, which was ridiculous for Jews. They wouldn't take Jews anyway. That you had no previous arrests. All sorts of chicanery. You had to stand in line sometimes for days until you got that. And, of course, the exit visa. The exit permit to leave Austria after all you have proved that you didn't owe anything or do anything and you have to wait in line for that too. There were five or six of these lines that people had to wait in. Sometimes they waited all night, and in the morning when they were at the door, the nazis said, "Now you go back to the end of the line." All these things Mr. Freezer took off my hands. He apparently had connections with somebody. When he finally wrote to me and said, "I have all your papers," I left to Brussels. Of course, this was very wonderful so far. We say it was lucky that I could immigrate to Vienna, but there was a lot of unluckiness. I

didn't have a permit to stay. I didn't have a job. I lost my past. My whole family was threatened. So it was lucky that I was in Brussels. After my exit permit expired, I was promptly arrested.

Q HOW MUCH TIME?

A One month. I was held up. I got a note saying I should go to the police. I still was very naive. Most other people that got this kind of an invitation from the police, they hid. But I went to the police, because I thought -- "What?"

One other thing I didn't mention. Max Schneid, whom I cooperated with on these short stories and shared all our royalties, had gone before Hitler had come to Austria. He had gone to London and had a foot in the door, and he sold some of our short stories and sent me half of my share to Belgium. Because of the prices, from my half for a short story I could have lived in Belgium for a whole month. Belgium is very cheap. Prices are quite good, according to the prices we were used to in Europe.

So, I thought I'd go to the police. I had nothing to hide. I came there legally. My visa had expired. I had money coming in, and I had a quota number for America. I thought I was safe. Well, I wasn't safe by Belgium's standard. They put me in prison, and I have some documentation for that -- I think I have some. I stayed in prison for ten days in the single cell not knowing what

happened. We were allowed to walk around the prison courtyard once a day. There were all sorts of rumors that they would send us back to Germany. Again, in my naivete, I couldn't think that they would really send us back. But, I found that some people disappeared out of the courtyard, and some other people came. It was a considerable worry.

We were told that the Belgium government of the Jewish community had made an arrangement that the detention camp would be set up for Jewish refugees. We had a so-called choice. We could decide either to go back to Austria or be willing to volunteer to go to the detention camp. That was not much of a choice, of course. The detention camp turned out to be one of my strangest experiences, and I think I will take a little time to talk about it.

I wrote right when I came out of the detention camp. I wrote two in German, and only now I wrote it last year in English. It's going to be published this year. What I find so interesting with this -- well, I'll tell you what kind of a camp it was.

It was a social experiment the Belgium government had done since the turn of the century. They picked up the vagrants that didn't have any means of support and put them in this camp and taught them something: agriculture, weaving, carpentry. When they had a certain amount of money, they let them free again, and very often it turned out later that they came right back. They blew all the

money they saved in a week and were picked up again.

Anyway, there was this camp. I know a little about it because I did a little research about it. It had a capacity of 5,000 people. It was a little city by itself. When we were shipped there by an autobus, and when we came to that camp, it was little with big buildings of red bricks, including huge buildings like a warehouse, and a church of bricks, and hospital of bricks, and cemetery, not necessarily of bricks, but it was a little city. They had set aside two of the biggest buildings for us refugees -- for 600 people. They thought it was going to be another social experiment. So, they shipped us there.

I happened to be in the first shipment, so there were not more than 25 people. We came into a completely empty brick building. There were four dormitories for 40 people each, and then there was a second building of the same one. There was a huge room where you could stay during the day, and then there was a huge room where it was a dining room. There was a library. It was pretty much a prison kind of arrangement. We were supposed to be a little group in that 5,000. I found out later there were about 3,000 vagrants, and when we got there, we were supposed to be part of the vagrants. They told us again and again we are not vagrants. We were just a little cell in this big group.

There was a special ruling made. The director told us one of the rules was that we must not have any contact with

the vagrants. We were separated from them anyway. Even if we see them, we couldn't take part of their retraining courses. For the first day, they allowed us to pick up food from their kitchen. Later, they would have separate kitchens and all that. It was a grim situation. 25 people sat and said, "Now, what are we going to do here?" These 25 people said, "We are going to not sit here idly. We are going to prepare ourselves for the future. We want to save our lives, so we will have our own courses. There will be 600 people. There will be carpenters, electricians, and there will be somebody who can teach us English, Spanish, and French. We don't know where we are going. There might be a cook who will tell us how to cook. We will do our own life."

There were all sorts of people. The first group was full of academicians. There were three lawyers -- two lawyers at least. There was a judge, two doctors, one student -- a medical student. The doctor made suggestions which I, at that time, found absurd. See, I had written little texts of political fictions for little companies in Vienna. He suggested he would write a constitution for us, and for him it was very serious. I didn't realize it then -- here are people who take on from the fullness of their lives a judge, an attorney, and not only a doctor, he was the head of a hospital. People who had built up a whole business, and all of a sudden they had no purpose, and for

this judge to write a constitution, it was the first time he had a purpose again in life. He knew why he was living. I could tell this from my own sense, because I was the only one in that little group who had a typewriter. A little typewriter. What a great importance it was in that camp.

In the course of these ideas of what we could do, someone said, "Why don't we publish a little weekly newsletter?" I felt when they said it to me, I was so happy. A newsletter in a refugee camp? A vagabond camp? In Belgium this is absurd, but I felt good about it. I felt I was somebody again. I was useful. So, I accepted that.

We did build every week or so. A new boxload of refugees came until the whole thing was filled with 600 people.

I'm writing this, again, as I said, in this book that will be published. When I first came out of this Belgium camp, which I will tell you in a moment how this happened, I wrote a German story, and I called it, "No Room for Six Hundred." It was a bitter accusation of the world that they could not find room for 600 people, and they had to be imprisoned there in this little cell. When I read it again, not many years ago, I had gone through more than a lifetime of experiences. I saw it in a completely different angle. I saw it from an angle of what people at the bottom of their lives can do to help themselves. If they are way down with no meaning or no purpose, they can build up something which

gives them a purpose and meaning in life, which was, of course, at that time, very important to me when I studied from Dr. Frankl the meaning of life and sicknesses and disagreeable frustrations that people suffer from and no meaning in life. This book that's going to be published this year is called, "The Next Final Solution." What I really wanted to call it was, "The Vagabond State" or "The Vagrant State." Because we built a State in a vagrant camp. It's going to be published as a historical holograph. I published the title because this was a place where 600 Jews were kept just to prevent them from being shipped to Germany for the so-called "Final Solution." What I was afraid would happen is when the nazis came to Belgium, they took the whole 600 and shipped them to Auschwitz or some other place for the "Final Solution." This was really the "Next to Final Solution" in my mind.

Anyway, another set of miracles happened, and one of them was that my father remembered, or at least spoke about, a first cousin of his when he was very young had immigrated to America. I didn't know of the existence of this cousin. Nobody talked about him. He probably was a "black sheep" for going to America perhaps. It indicated there was something wrong with him for going to America. At that point, it was very good to have somebody in America, yet he had completely lost contact with him.

So, there was a man who had worked for my father in the

warehouse. He was also a non-Jew who had immigrated to the United States years ago. When Hitler came, he wrote to my father and said, "Can I do anything for you?" My father said, "Yes, you can. You can send an affidavit for my son." He wrote back and he said, "I went to the Jewish committee and they said my affiance is not strong enough. I cannot give an affidavit." So my father wrote to him and said his cousin, whose name was Charles Beck, went to America. "See if you can find him." It's absurd to expect something like that. In Vienna, everyone is registered with the police. In America, you cannot just go to the police and say, "Where can I find this person?" Now, this is miracle number 5 or 6. This man went and looked up in the telephone book -- he lived in Trenton, New Jersey. He looked in the telephone book for Beck and called one Beck after the other, and one of these Becks wasn't the man, but he knew about the man. He lived in South Orange in New Jersey. He got in touch with this man -- this Charles Beck. He had died, but his widow, she also was related to us. I think two cousins must have married. He said an affidavit arrived while I was in Belgium. I don't know if I mentioned the name of that camp. The French name is M-e-r-x-p-l-a-u-s. The Dutch put a -k-s instead of an -x. It's quite a French speaking part of Belgium.

So, I got this affidavit, and I had my quota number, so I thought now I can perhaps go to America. But I had no

record with the American consul, who was known for his nazi sympathies. Every American consulate had every right to make special conditions in addition to normal conditions. His condition was to have my sponsor deposit $6,000 in a bank in a closed account which could be taken out only $30 a month. Of course I would not even have asked this woman to give $6,000. $6,000 in 1938 was a tremendous amount of money. Nowadays, it's not too much anymore. At that time, Max and I found out if you have a hundred pounds and an affidavit and a quota number, you could go to (Norton) to wait for your quota number, and the consul in (Norton) -- I think it was the father of Kennedy. The old Mr. Joe Kennedy, and he was very descent.

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This was my miracle number 8 or so that I could leave Merxplaus on March 9, 1939. I was there only November, December, January, February -- four months. It looked to me like a lifetime. There was so much positive and negative. So much I learned from that experience, and I think it had a great impact on my life. I won't go into detail, but I will just tell you I finally got to London with Max and his parents. He was able to save his parents. My parents at that time realized that my father's ideas to stay in Vienna and live things the same wouldn't work. Because he was a man over 65, he was retired on a pension, he was politically inactive, he thought they would let me here in the beginning. That was the devious thing about the nazis. It

was so gradual that the threat because obvious. It was obvious to me because I was young and I didn't have a future there. But to him, he thought they would let him live out his life there.

Q SO HE STAYED?

spelling A He stayed. So from the time to (Norton) until Pearl Harbor, it was a constant trial to get over one obstacle to another. Unfortunately, not enough miracles happened. There were some miracles, but not enough. My parents ended up in Theresienstadt.

Q BOTH OF THEM?

A Both of them. My father had to have a prostate operation. He was operated on in a Jewish hospital that Vienna's Jews could go to. He was shipped from the hospital with his open wounds to Theresienstadt -- one of the meanest things that anybody can do. My mother just joined him. She probably would have gone with the next transport, but she volunteered to join him. I learned later that he just barely survived the trip, and he died on arrival in Theresienstadt. My mother, I think, really died of a broken heart.

Q IN THE CAMP?

A In the camp, yeah. Father died in August of '42, and my mother in November.

Q SO, FROM THE TIME YOU LEFT VIENNA, YOU NEVER SAW THEM AGAIN?

A No.

Q I DID WANT TO ASK YOU ABOUT THE CAMP WHERE YOU WERE IN BELGIUM AND WHAT A POWERFUL EXPERIENCE IT WAS. MEANWHILE, WERE THE AUTHORITIES MAKING ANY DEMANDS ON YOU OF ANY KIND? IT WASN'T A LABOR CAMP, WAS IT?

A No. It was a camp under the auspice of the Jewish Help Community in Belgium, who supervised the camp. I should really give them credit, because in this limited situation, they were very helpful. They not only gave us extra food -- the prison food was soup with a little potato floating in it with coffee -- they gave us extra food supplies that we could use. We had a really good man who was a fancy restaurateur in Vienna who was in charge of the cooking. He did the best he could. The committee sent us material for training courses. Even an old car that we could take apart and put together again. And the electrical material and carpentry workshops. I have a lot of pictures of that, if you want to photograph them I have them here of these training courses. This committee really did the best they could.

They also had a Department of Visa. They tried to get visas for us, but as long as I has there, they didn't come up with any visas. But it wasn't their fault. It's just very hard to get visas. As long as I was there, there were only two persons who got visas. One, because her daughter lived in Peru or some other place. The other one had some

really good reason. A close relative to go to. I was maybe the third or fourth to get out of 600, because I had this visa to go to London to wait for an American visa.

So of the two directors, one was the Jewish committee and one was the director who had, of course, the immediate authority to say when we go to bed and when we have to wash.

Q DID THAT DIRECTOR HAVE TO EXERCISE MUCH AUTHORITY?

A The first time everybody came, he left the list of the things we had to do, and we had to do them. He did one very nice thing to us, after a long period of struggling, of course. He had his scouts guarding us, who told us when we could get up -- an un-Godly time. We had nothing to do. 5:30 in the morning, and if we didn't get up, the guards encouraged us to get up. Quite unforcefully. And there was a timetable that we had to heat our own -- there was a big stove to heat. A library, too. We had out own little canteen to sell little things that we got also from the Jewish committee. And then we had the cook I already mentioned.

This is what I wanted to say. We wanted our own police. We wanted to police ourselves. That was a big struggle. Eventually, the director actually agreed and we had our own police force. This is a big chapter in that book. Just briefly I can tell you something which was a great teaching experience for me. We were not only professors and doctors, but there were also some sinister

elements. There was a gang of Jewish smugglers who made their living smuggling things down the Danube. Cigarettes or something. It was a very powerful group of very illegal people. Our constitution was such that we elected our own representatives. For each 40-bed dorm, there were two representatives.

Of course, this group of people elected their head gangster as a representative of their group, so he was with us sort of in the government. He tried to come in by force. He said the Jewish committee is afraid of us. We didn't think it was the right thing to use force. He was a very great troublemaker, and we had great fears. But when it came to upheavals, the guards came in to make order. There was one incident when the committee sent us big loads of potatoes and very big sacks. We were not very strong men. All these attorneys and bank directors were not very strong. So we challenged him. And he said, "We'll take care of it." And they took care of it. It was the first time that they really took care of something that was useful for the campers.

And then there was another -- when it came to selecting a Chief of Police from our own group. Somebody in our committee said, "Why don't we make him Chief of Police?" He was powerful. We didn't pay much attention to a bank director or owner of an enterprise. But there was a certain amount of respect for him. This was an amazing scene. From

that moment on -- they were so used to their power against the authority. When they were authority, they used their authority for the good of the camp. A great lesson which only occurred to me in full force quite recently.

After I left and corresponded with them, I found out they had taken the power away from them, and they reverted to very obnoxious force again. So they also wanted to be someone, and they didn't care if they were someone useful. They found their usefulness and their identity as being the Police Chief and police of this camp for the good of all of us.

I have now said really more about all of this than I wanted to. Probably because I'm so full of this because I just wrote about again.

Q HOW HOPEFUL WERE YOU DURING THAT EXPERIENCE THAT YOU WOULD GET OUT?

A I am an undying optimist. It never occurred to me that something really bad would happen to me. I always thought that something will work out. I wrote in the camp short stories -- very humorous. The same humorous short stories I wrote in Vienna before Hitler. I wrote in camp under the most trying circumstances. Trying alone because the life was -- so much noise everywhere. There was no place you could have a typewriter and even think. So, I was hopeful, and it turned out I was right. For me anyway.

So, when I came to England, we took up more of a normal

life. I lived with Max and his parents. We wrote and sold short stories and, of course, Hitler caught up with us again. On September 1, 1939 the war started, and it was a great confusion again. We were given gas masks, and we had to fill out forms, and we were shipped out of London. Max said -- at that time he was working for the Jewish Chronicle. The Jewish Chronicle was evacuated. Something in the country, so we moved to that country. We had to stay in that country until I got my announcement from the American consul that my visa was ready. I went to (Norton) and picked up my visa and could leave. That was another time when I had to separate from my friend and co-author, and I was going to America safe. Actually, these six months in England were quite safe. It was the time when Hitler conquered Europe. There was no bombing or any war activity in England.

spelling

I went to America and I was safe. I had the job to start a life here again. I didn't know the English language too well. I mean, really not at all for all practical purposes. I had an English speaking girlfriend in Norton who taught me a little bit of English, but not enough to write English short stories. The English short stories that were published in England were translated by an Oxford student for the Germans, so we didn't write in English at all. I went around to various magazines. No work. It was impossible to -- I had a bunch of translated short stories

in English. It was English, but it was not the kind of short stories Americans wanted. In England they didn't say they wanted it, but eventually -- but in America they didn't want it. It was entirely different. I found a magazine which was called "Friday." I had a short story. I didn't know why, but they accepted the short story. And they paid a fabulous amount of money for it. Then when they heard about my immigration and the trouble I had, they said they would write a story about my immigration, and I illustrated with some of the pictures I had and some of the documents I had.

When the short story came out, I was flabbergasted and really quite shocked, because they had put on another ending on my story which was very anti-British. I found the British had done a lot for me to save my life. I had said I wanted these short stories. I didn't think I could do anything about it, so the story was published with that anti-British ending. And when the second story came out, again there was a lot of anti-British in it. What I found out later, which I had kept secret for all these times, is that it was a communist magazine. At that time, the communists were very anti-British. They wanted to tell the nazis did bad things to me, but the British did bad things to me, too. So I kept this period quite quiet. I still don't have it approved, but I think I have pretty much -- it died very soon afterward. So, my first successful

publication was in this communist paper.

Q AND IT WAS THE ENDINGS?

A Yes. It was unbelievable to me. At that time, something very nice happened. I met my future wife in America, and I found out a very -- not a blood relative, but somebody I knew in Vienna had a ski binding factory. A very small ski binding factory. He gave me a job for $12 a week. Which was a job. Better than most of my friends who had no jobs or the most unbelievable jobs. To hold the chicken while it gets injected, or carry ice blocks in brothels. All sorts of jobs you wouldn't even think as a job. So I got this job and I worked and I married, and when I was ready -- we only knew each other for two months and we decided to get married in November -- I went to my boss and I said, "I'm getting married. My wife is a secretary. She earns $12. Couldn't you give me a raise?" So he said, "I'll give you $13." So at least my masculinity was saved. And on $25, we could actually live and could afford once in a while a movie.

Q THIS WAS NEW YORK CITY?

A This was New York City. In spring, the ski factory closed because the ski season closed. My wife, Judith, had some good friends in Connecticut. There I found a job as a mill boy in a cotton mill to change the spools. These huge machines and huge empty spools you would put on the machines, and the machine put the cotton on and took it

off. It was a backbreaking job and I never thought I could handle this, but if you have to, you have to. I made only $18 a week there.

And then came Max in the meantime. He had been afraid of staying in London when Hitler came closer and closer. He went to the only place he could go -- to Shanghai. He really had saved my life -- among other people -- by getting me an English permit to stay for my visa. So I had a good opportunity to get even with him and save his life by getting him an affidavit so he could come to the United States. He arrived in San Francisco from Shanghai.It was clear we had to be together again. The question arose whether I should go to San Francisco or he come to New York. Unfortunately, the decision was made that I go to San Francisco. My wife, who was born in New York, agreed to this adventure. She was a good sport. We went to San Francisco. Here's something that happened. It illustrated the close corporation that we had. We divided everything: the name, the money -- regardless of who wrote what or how much. We never said, "You wrote 80% and you wrote 20%." He had sold some stories in Shanghai to an English paper, and I had sold some stories to German papers in New York, and also these two stories to an English paper. When we finally got together he said, "Here is your share of what I sold in China." I put on an envelope, "Here is your share of what I sold in New York." It was almost the same amount. We

didn't even bother sorting out the pennies. This illustrates more that anything that "One and One Makes Three."

Q I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN.

A So now the question came: What do we do in San Francisco? He had found himself a job as a tutor of the C.S. Forester, the writer who had a house in Berkeley. He found out that there's a little garden cottage for the gardener, and he persuaded Mrs. Forester, who was an avid gardener, that she needed a helper. So they let us stay in that garden cottage, and we did some gardening of which I knew nothing. I can rake eucalyptus leaves and cut a lawn. Mrs. Forester did everything herself anyway.

Then came a break again. For the world, it was a blow. For us, it was a break. Pearl Harbor came and Kaiser opened his shipyards. They said they were looking for anybody who had two hands, and they didn't have to be citizens, and they didn't have to know anything, because they would train us. These qualifications, I had. We started to do work in the shipyard, both Max and I. There was really no training. This was another book -- my experience in the shipyard. I wrote a book at that time, and it was published maybe only five or six years ago, because now people talk more about what happened during the war. When the war was over, nobody wanted to know about shipyards and wars. I put it in the drawer and a publisher found it a few years ago. And now it

was of interest. People wanted to know "what my daddy did during the war in the shipyard." All shipyard workers were interested in getting a story about how we built a ship in four days.

Q WHAT WAS THE TITLE OF THAT BOOK?

A That was called "Swing Shift." It really is written in the form of a fiction, because there were so many stories told to me on that shipyard. They came from so many people, that I took notes and wrote the stories that they told me what happened in the shipyards. And this was really my great lesson in English. There I learned English. I mean, I learned English -- I was married to a woman who was born in the United States, and I was working in mills and places where they spoke English, so I picked up a lot of English at that time. But where I really picked it up was the shipyard. People came from New England, from Texas, from Oklahoma. They used slang of all sorts of things. I kept my ears open and kept taking notes.

By that time, that was maybe '44 perhaps -- early '44. Max found out that there was an Office of War Information in San Francisco that sent shortwave broadcasts to the Orient, to occupied China, to the Philippines, to Indonesia. He always investigates. He was a very good job finder. All my life he founds jobs for me and other people. He went to see somebody, and he got himself a job -- of all places -- of Chinese division. He said he has a friend who, when they

have an opening, is a very good writer. "He has an accent, but you don't notice it in writing. Besides, everything has to be translated in Chinese anyway." So we didn't have every spelling and pronoun in the right place. I got hired there, which was my first job in America in the English language, although it was not completely correct English language. Transcripts I have, they're not bad -- the language. So I wrote, since we knew Europe was telling the Chinese what was going on in Europe, the significance of the city that's captured either by the nazis or by us. We wrote theater and cultural events about America. I was also given the assignment of giving instructions in sabotage. I didn't tell the Chinese, "Now you go and buy yourself this and fix it up and put it on the railroad." I said, "Now I found this interesting story that the Yugoslavs did." I said, "They mixed this and put it on the railroad."

Q YOU DID IT BY INDIRECTION?

A I told them -- I picked up all the sabotage ideas I could find in the papers and told the Chinese about it. We never really knew how much they heard or much less how much they did. It was a useful place -- I was somebody.

One nice thing about this is when the United Nations was founded in 1945 in San Francisco, the Office of Information in our department sent me as a reporter to tell the Chinese what had been done. There were many former guerrillas -- resistance fighters -- among the delegates.

As it is now, who was a guerilla at one time is the president now. Like it happens in Czechoslovakia and many of the countries in the East. So many of the delegates were people about whom I had reported in my sabotage reports, and I made very nice contacts with them. I got a picture of a man who became president of France, who was a guerilla fighter. I always was an autograph collector. It was a good event in my life.

Then after that in 1945, the Office of War Information in San Francisco was dissolved, because after war in the Orient was over, everything was concentrated in New York. Most of them were fired or let go. But some of us were invited to go to New York. There was a Chinese division still, but it published or broadcasted in New York and the Philippines and all these others. So I wanted to go. I didn't have anything to do. Neither Max nor I had anything. Max didn't want to go. I wanted to go mostly because my wife was homesick. She missed New York.

I was selected. They must have given a test. There was a more important test later on. I was elected to go to New York. I was no longer in the Chinese division. I wanted they didn't put me in the German division. They put me in the English division, which was nice. They apparently thought I wrote English good enough. You can't lose an accent in speaking, but you can lose an accent in writing. So this is what I did. I wrote stories to be broadcast all

over the world -- really by that time. Not only to China.

Then there was every year a big anxiety period that the Congress had to approve the money for us, and there was a great pressure that this should be a private enterprise. The government has no role of broadcasting. Radio is private enterprise. So all this anxiety whether we will exist the next year. Actually, at that time it was in 1948. I went to New York in 1946. In 1948 the Office of War Information was renamed the Voice of America and was a government outfit that was very restricted. It was a propaganda outfit. What was supposedly less propaganda was taken over by ABS, Academy Broadcasting System, and NBS, National Broadcasting System. There was selected people -- no, that was in 1947 that this happened.

And so there was a question: Should I go back to California, or should I stay there? So I took a test and I'm very proud. There were very few people who were selected to be taken over by CBS, and I had one year writing for CBS. I later found out -- I found in the drawer the test they gave me. From the teletype. A whole batchful of what happened that day, and I have to make a 50-minute broadcast out of it. Later, I found my script with a note from somebody who had judged and he said, "He did a pretty good job of getting the meat out of a pretty dry day. He writes all sorts of good features." So that was nice. I wrote features for CBS.

Then came again a question: whether I should go back. My heart was in California really. So I decided to go back to CBS, but what will I do in California? Max was instrumental in getting me a job. Again, it repeated itself -- almost the same thing. It was a job at the University of California. It was very temporary. The editor went back to college for the summer, and in the fall he would be back. So I had the summer to do the publications write-ups, and in the fall when he comes back, I would be without a job. What happened, he decided not to come back, and I got this job and stayed there for 25 years.

Q SO THIS TEMPORARY JOB BECAME VERY PERMANENT?

A No Hitler came to disrupt it this time.

There was one little incident that was sort of amusing to me. Nobody paid attention to a temporary job. I just wrote something and it was published. Little stories about what the University of California discovered and what they did and how wonderful they are. When it became a permanent job, I was called to the Vice President of the University. Mr. Pettit. He was very nice to me. Very nicely he said, "There is just one little thing. Everybody is satisfied with what you are doing. I wonder how a professor would feel or a 60-year-old American and a man comes and interviews him and writes about him with an accent. How would this go over?"

For once I had the right idea at that moment. I usually haven't right ideas until I go home. I said, "You

know, I've been working for the State Department for two years. If the State Department lets me represent them with an accent, a university can do it, too." That convinced them. So I had this job for 25 years.

Q INTO THE 70's?

A Yeah. I retired in '72 and the reason why I retired -- I could have gone on for about five more years. I was 62 at the time. Normal time is 65, but they let people stay until 67. The reason I retired is because in the meantime, I became involved in Frankl Logo therapy.

Max and I did translations together, writings together. We founded a feature agency called Pacific Features for Europeans. I'm sure you have it in my book, so it's on paper and it's on the air.

In 1963, my daughter gave me Frankl's book, "Man's Search for Meaning," which is his interpretation of concentration camp experiences he had. He was two and a half years in concentration camps, and he had confirmed a theory of therapy he had developed in Vienna in the 30's and in the 20's. That people are not so much concerned any more as in Freud's time to repress sexual desires and drives, but a lot is repressed or ignored is the search for meaning. A lot of people find their lives meaningless. Existential dilemma which created an existential vacuum and created an existential neurosis. He had written quite a lot of books in German. There were only two books at that time

translated into English. It so happened that I wrote him to Vienna.

There is one other thing I should have told you beforehand, which I can still do. This is very important for your audiences. Let's go back a few years. When we came back from New York, which was in 1948, we had two children. The older one was only five years old and went to nursery school and came home with questions about religion that other children in the nursery school asked. "Don't you celebrate Christmas?" "Why don't you have a Christmas tree?" More disagreeable questions for me to answer. "Who is God?" I don't know who is God. I still don't know. How do you explain to a four-year-old why don't you believe in Jesus and all other questions?

At that time, another parent at the nursery school told us about the Unitarian Church in Berkeley whose minister is particularly tolerant and wise in his definition of religion. They have a church court and our daughter can go to the church court and they can answer the questions. It also happens that there was no Jewish community in Berkeley and the Jews who did meet met in the Unitarian Church on Friday night when it was not used. That was not a religion for me because I didn't really -- I was as non-Jewish or as Jewish as I was in Vienna. I was Jewish because I was Jewish. I didn't want to renounce it because I wanted to stand by my friends and relatives. But I was not Jewish in

the ceremonial sense. What I learned in school religion was a subject in school like mathematics and history. You learn it in the public school. What I learned in school was about two hours a week of religion. We learned how to read Hebrew letters, but we didn't know what they meant. We learned about the Old Testament, but they were fairy tales. We didn't know what they meant. They were about Adam and Eve and Isaac, but they were not significant to me.

So I went with great trepidation to the Unitarian Church the first day, because they were a church to me alone. It meant to me Christianity, Anti-Semites, and the whole church -- the minister in a gown, the pews, the organ, the hymns, singing. All this was very disagreeable and uncomfortable. But then the minister spoke and his sermon was an opening of a new world for me. Here was a man who talked about religion the way I instinctively, intuitively always felt religion should be. Not prayers. Not certain symbols and rituals, but a search for something which is really important which is meaningful. I was fascinated the first time. I went back and back again and we got to know him better.

He also did something to me for my Jewishness. When he heard I was Jewish -- I was always a little hesitant to admit I was Jewish -- when I said I was Jewish, his face lit up and he said, "Oh, we can use you! Oh, wonderful! You are the founder of all this. The whole Christianity has

been founded on Judaism. I am so glad you are Jewish! Can we use you? Can we talk with you?" For the first time since Hitler, my Jewishness had some positive aspects. We became quite active.

And the same happened to Judith, my wife. We was helping the church school with our children. Our little child was only two years old. So she became very active, and she also got involved in church school and the search for what is important in life on a wide basis. We both found out that the Jews way to find the meaning of life is just one way of doing it. There are many others. Not only Christian ways. Even agnostic ways. Even atheistic ways. Humanistic or gentile and Buddhist. The important thing is not the way, but the walking away toward something which is really at the center of the universe, which is the meaning of life. This is what later on made me so interested in Logo therapy.

Q SO YOU CONNECTED TO BOTH OF THESE WITH SOME OF THE SAME --

A Yes. I knew something instinctively that there was something I was looking for which was very evasive. And here was one aspect. Both Judy and I got drawn into the Unitarian Church by getting a job to do. One day the minister's wife called up and said, "Joe, the chairman of the Religious Education Committee has resigned. How would you like to take the job?" So I had no idea about religious

education. I had never been on a committee. Certainly not a chairman, and I told her this. She simply said, "Yeah. I know you can do it." So I did it, and I was very successful. From that time I got all sorts of jobs from that church, and I still belong to it after 40 years.

Judith has the same kind of experience. The director of the church gave her more and more jobs. She was in charge of the children's worship service. They built an old chapel out of an old closet, and it was her little room which was important to her. In both respects we were really drawn, and to a respect which was not understood by any of my Jewish friends, including Max.

Max was very upset about this, because he was also not Jewish in the sense of a religion. He was an atheist really. An assimilated Jew, but he was a Jew and he felt going to a church is a treason.

Q YOU WENT OVER TO THE GENTILES?

A Yes. But we never really did. My wife, Judy, wanted a special ceremony by the minister in which she accepted the wider religious concept, but she especially said she did not want to give up her Judaism. But Max was very upset when he heard Judy had a very private ceremony in which she let the minister give her a cross. Which to Max it was always the symbol of Christianity -- a crucifix. But for the Unitarians it is not. It is a symbol of suffering and how to live in a period of suffering. It also is

sometimes maybe frivolously called a plus. The cross looks like a plus. It takes a positive attitude in suffering experiences. The minister gave her the cross with this understanding and she attached to it a Mogen David. To this time, she still has something around her neck which combines a Mogen David and a cross. This is really the essence of what we believe. Judy and I always don't have the same beliefs. But they are compatible. Max is absolutely hostile about this. We agreed to disagree. But that's as far as he goes.

Q HOW ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN?

A The oldest one was very interested in Unitarianism and became very interested in oriental religion and became active in something which was called the Inner Core. Have you heard of it? She unfortunately was killed. She was murdered four years ago. I don't know how it ended. But she was searching. In her memorial service, it was mentioned by all people who spoke up. You see, Unitarians have memorial services in which friends can speak about the deceased without exception. They used the word search. She was searching all her life.

The second one is a Unitarian member in Davis -- the Unitarian Church of Davis -- and has brought her husband to the Unitarians. And strangely enough, our granddaughter, her oldest daughter, just started a University College in California. She's in Cal-Poly. And what do you know? She

joined the Jewish Club. She learned Jewish history. Unitarian does not convert you. It makes you open to whatever is meaningful to you. Perhaps to her, Judaism will be meaningful to her.

And the third one, he's the same -- about on a more artistic basis. He doesn't really believe in any kind of organized religion, but he has a favorite Jewish friend and favorite girlfriends and boyfriends. He has his inclination towards Judaism. I don't know if I'll live long enough to know the outcome of all of this.

Q HOW ABOUT YOUR GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN? HAVE THEY SHOWN INTEREST IN THE NAZI EXPERIENCE?

A Yeah.

Q HAVE THEY ASKED YOU QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS?

A Yeah. The little one who is in high school, they asked me to come to class and talk about my experiences. The kids were very interested. They read my book which describes quite a bit of it. They heard some tapes where I talked to groups. Then again, I'm jumping around quite a bit.

Last November I got an award from the Austrian government -- the Golden Cross of Honor -- because of my work for Logo Therapy. I made an Austrian psychiatrist known in the United States. Also, Max and I transcribed quite a few Austrian writers, so we did do a little Austrian propaganda in the United States. So they gave me an award,

which I had great hesitancy to accept, because it came from the President of Austria. I felt uncomfortable about this, and I thought, "Well, I'll accept it if I can say what I want to say." And when the consulate gave me the award, I made a speech about how I feel about the award and how I feel about anti-Semitism in Austria. They heard this, of course. It was a good thing for them to hear. I don't want to overwhelm them with gruesome stories. You cannot talk about this without having gruesome stories, but they have a pretty good idea.

Then I took them once on a European trip. The whole family. I showed them everything that I felt was important in my youth, and one of the things we went to was Dachau. They saw the camp. It made a great impression on them.

So, this is the detour about Unitarianism. The reason why I'm saying this, we were talking about my reading Frankl's book. At that time, I was the program chairman of the Unitarian Church. I made available speakers and discussions about all sorts of subjects, and I felt that Logo Therapy was something that the Unitarians and the Americans in general have to know, because I felt a lot of people had this emptiness.

I wrote to him to Vienna, and he wrote back and said he would be in San Francisco later in the year. Then we met. It happened to be also the Unitarian Church in San Francisco. Later on he spoke at the Berkeley campus. I

asked him if he could send me more material about this Logo Therapy. It seemed so intriguing for the Americans. He was happy to speak in German with me. His language was not that good at that time. He speaks very well now. He particularly enjoyed speaking in Viennese dialect with me. So we became friends pretty fast. He sent me 20 books perhaps -- German.

The more I read about this, the more I became convinced, first of all, that this is what the Americans needed to know because many of things that happened to the Jews in the nazi-times happened to Americans by their own free will. The families were broken up by the nazis. The families are breaking up here because of divorce, the husband gets a job in the other side of the country, the children leave home as soon as they possibly can, the old people go to old-age homes or are ostracized. The family as we know it in Europe where people meet once or twice a week doesn't exist here. What they call the one-parent family is a no-parent family. There's a 16-year-old mother bringing up a baby. This is one child living with another child. There are so many social things breaking up families. The materialistic direction towards the value in life is money. Prestige is to try to be better than somebody else. The pleasure principle. We want pleasure now. I wrote an article called The Pleasure Principle. We want immediate gratification. Later is uninteresting when we have debts or

have to go without it. There is no way of sacrificing something now in order to have something meaningful later. I generalized, of course. There are lots of other people, too. But the general tendency is gratification now. Meaning comes later, if at all.

So I read his books and we went back and forth to Vienna and Berkeley. He came here to give talks, and I went to Vienna almost every year -- that time every second year perhaps. I said, "With all these books, the American public needs a book that tells Logo Therapy. What it is and what is can do for us. There is no such book. Your books are either medical for philosophical. They are full of five syllable Greek and Roman and Latin words." I said, "Write something that they can understand." He didn't want to do that. So he eventually said, "Why don't you write this book?" I said, "Why not?"

I wrote this book which came out in 1968. It's all about the pursuit of meaning. It really made a Logo therapist out of me. The same thing happened to me that happened to the gangster in Merxplaus. All of a sudden I was in a completely different situation. Just as the gangster became a policeman, I became a Logo therapist. Once a book comes out, you are the author. You are an expert. Of course, I know something about Logo Therapy, but certainly I was not a Logo therapist.

All of a sudden, I got calls from radio programs --

call-in stations -- and I found myself answering questions. I asked myself, "What am I doing here? I'm telling people how to find meaning in their lives. What do I know about it?" And I did something instinctively that I found out later is a Logo therapeutic tool really. I acted as if I were the expert that I pretended to be. I didn't cheat or fake anything. I knew more than I knew or I thought I knew, and the more I acted as if I were an expert, I became an expert. And now I consider myself an expert. I know a lot about Logo Therapy, and I think I have helped a lot of people in this field. So I became more and more interested in Logo Therapy and more and more active.

I retired from the University a little earlier to become more active in Logo Therapy. I wrote another book. It's called "Logo Therapy in Action." I realized very soon that Logo Therapy is not only applicable by therapists, but by teachers and counselors and social workers and ministers and people who deal with alcoholism and drug addicts. So we published a book called "Logo Therapy in Action" which is a book about other people in various fields telling how they use Logo Therapy in their field.

I spoke to Frankl many times in Vienna and I told him, "Look, every therapist, every para-therapy that is surviving has some kind of organization." He didn't want an organization. He was very obstinate about this. He said the same thing as he said the first time. "Why don't you

make an organization since you had very good experiences publishing your book?" I said, "All right." So I started an organization -- I think it was in 1977 -- from a very small group in my living room, which became quite wide. The prototype of organizations now in Austria, in Finland, in South Africa. I cannot take credit for all of this, but it was the first real -- I founded the institute in 1977, and it has grown surprisingly. We have a good training program. We have an education program. We have classes.

I taught classes at the University Extension and more recently the Kennedy University in Lorinda Lafayette. Since 1978 my great desire has always been to publish a magazine. Ever since I published it in Vienna. It's called "The International Forum for Logo Therapy." It's been published twice a year since 1978. I've been teaching a lot of classes at universities. Also, down at the peninsula.

We have a training program that we train Logo therapists. All sorts of calibers of psychologists and teachers. We have had so far seven world congresses in Logo Therapy. The next one is next June. That happens to be in San Jose. We went as far as Brazil, Germany and Canada.

We have a publishing office that not only publishes the magazine, but some books. We have a wide distribution of six Logo Therapy books. This was my main job during the last 12 -- 13 years. I am now retiring from this for the second time. I'm concentrating on the publishing angle

because that was my original interest. I don't want to be burdened too much by telephone calls and administrative work. So I'm 81 now, and this is what I want to do. I have a co-editor who is scheduled to take over when I want to retire the third time. This is what I am studying now.

My life is really well documented by the book "Shipyards," "One and One Makes Three," which is really an overall book. And "Pursuit of Meaning" has the first chapter a bit of my own life in it. Now I'm writing -- it could be a book. I started it for my children. There are so many things in my life that have either bad endings or no endings at all. I thought, "How would it be if I visualized in my own head how I wish these things would have ended?" So I'm writing a book, with the help of my darling computer, "Happy Endings." I figured out about 14 things that I wish had either had ended happily instead of not at all. And I found the first few quite promising. I may look for a publisher. I really wanted it for my children to have. This is where I am now.

Do you have any areas that you are especially interested in?

Q I WANT TO GO BACK EARLIER. DO YOU HAVE DETAILS AS TO WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHER 600 AT THE REFUGEE CAMP?

A I'm glad you asked that. That's a very good opportunity for me to say something which I really wanted to say. When I finished the manuscript, I was always afraid

the nazis would overrun Belgium and they would have handed over the whole 600 and ship them to the extermination camps. I had some correspondence with the police and they said, "No, no. We let them go. When the nazis came, we let them go. We let them free. We took them to the French border and let them go." Now, that was somewhat of a relief to me, but not much of a relief, because the French border -- the nazis occupied France not much later, and then many of them probably would have been caught again.

Now, I have in all my research for this camp I have never been able to find a survivor. Not even the people I knew. I never could get in touch with them. When the book was at the publishers -- it was finished -- it was barely accepted last year -- I found out that a friend of mine in Los Angeles had a cousin in New York who was married to somebody who said he knows somebody who was in Merxplaus. I wrote to him. He had changed his name. I had changed my name. So I wrote to him under his new name. What came back was an enthusiastic letter. He not only was in Merxplaus, he was one of my closest friends there. He was the one who illustrated my newsletter that I wrote about Hitler. I have a lot of cartoons of his. He also did some serious drawings. He was over-enthusiastic when we can meet. He's a very successful interior decorator in New York. It was last year. I couldn't go to New York. I was going to Europe. He said, "Where are you going to Europe?" I said,

"I know we'll be two weeks in Italy." He said, "I will come to see you." He came to see me with his wife. We got along fabulously. We had all these exchanges.

He told me a few things about the survivors. That they were released. But the bad thing about this release is that the French people suspected anybody who speaks German to be a nazi sympathizer. So the people in Northern France couldn't distinguish between the Germans who spoke German and the Jewish who spoke German. These people were in danger from the French people, not only the nazis. So I don't now how many people survived.

I had one more call from a man who said he was in Merxplaus. But he came after I left, so I don't know. But the story of this man -- I wish you could -- I think Yale University has his story. He had a fabulous story to tell. One of the last things I did, in order to draw attention to the Belgium public, I wrote a little sketch and an opening parody. He illustrated the program. There is only one program in existence, which I have. There were exhibits of cartoons which he made. He made very wonderful cartoons of life in camp. But I forgot that he had not only cartoons exhibited, but he had serious drawings exhibited. He was only 18 years old at that time. Some minister who came saw the cartoons and invited him or got him a scholarship in the School of Arts in Anthrop. So he not only got out of Merxplaus, he got years of training at Anthrop. He is a

very gifted person.

He had scheduled a one-man exhibit scheduled for him. Here he feverishly made drawings and paintings for the exhibit. The exhibit was to open June 10, 1939. That was the day the nazis invaded Belgium. When he went there, his whole exhibit hall went up in flames. He saw all his exhibit drawings go up in flames. He had much more interesting experiences than what I told you. He went back to Vienna to rescue his parents. He pretended to be helpful to some nazi interpreter. They let him go to Vienna. He had learned the restoration of paintings, so the nazis hired him to restore paintings that they had stolen from Jewish homes. And a fascinating story of how he finally rescued his parents. At that time, they gave him a big apartment where he could stay with his parents while he restored his paintings.

Eventually, the man said, "I can't protect your parents. You can stay here, but your parents must go." He said, "No. Either all of us, or none of us." Before they could do anything, they fled to Yugoslavia and then to Romania and Russia. It's a terribly interesting and terrible story that he has to tell.

Again, we became good friends and visited in New York two years ago Christmas. The cartoons and the serious drawings -- you can see what an 18-year-old can do. He was one of the first shipment of us where we drew up our

constitution. So that's a long answer to your short question.

Q YOU RECEIVED YOUR DEGREE IN LAW ONE YEAR AFTER THEY PASSED THE NUREMBERG LAWS?

A No. In '34. Oh, the Nuremberg Law -- it's possible it was the year after the Nuremberg Law. But it wasn't founded in Austria.

Q DID YOU FEEL ANY OBSTACLES TO PASSING LAW IN AUSTRIA OTHER THAN YOU WERE NOT ABLE TO FIND WORK?

A No. In fact, most of the lawyers were Jewish, because it was one of the professions that they could make use of. That's why it was overrun, because everybody who had a Jewish Doctor of Law degree wanted to find a job. It was very hard to find. The German laws were in force in Germany, because that's the reason why we wrote this play with that German Aryan collaborator. He was collaborating with us, not the nazis.

Q REGARDING THE SHORT STORY COLLABORATIONS YOU DID WITH MAX, WHAT'S THE TECHNICAL PROCESS BY WHICH TWO PEOPLE COLLABORATE ON A SHORT STORY?

A Did you interview him, too?

Q YEAH.

A Well, I'm sure he can answer that question. I can tell you it was usually that one of us had an idea. First of all, these stories are short shorts. They are not used here in America. Shorter than O'Henry with a surprise

twist. So one of us had an idea. It could be a simple idea. We found a glove on the street. Who could have lost that glove? One of us said, "Let's have a dog who has just been to dog training and let him sniff of the glove and see how his dog training was." So it comes to the normal things that he finds a young woman who had lost a glove. That's not what we want. That's expected. So we find a man. What's the man doing? He's half-dressed. He doesn't have a woman. So it's their own pathway. That for three times all of then went to men and they were very unfriendly about this. So in the end, the dog leads him to a young girl. He said, "Yeah, yeah. This is my glove. I just delivered smokes to three gentlemen who wanted to go to a bar." So this is the kind of thing. One has the idea, then we go back and forth and say, "This is what normally would happen, and then what different can happen?" We lived around a half an hour walk around each other.

Q BUT THEN IN THE ACTUAL PROCESS OF WRITING?

A One wrote it, then gave it to the other one who made corrections or changes. But it so happens that sometimes this is the nice thing about "One and One Makes Three." Maybe one of us is in an uncreative period and doesn't have any ideas, so the other one is creative and has ideas. Some of these stories were written 80 percent by one and 20 percent by the other. It's still written under the same name and divided three ways. Sometimes I wrote a short

story in my summer vacation, and it was published, and the first time he saw it, it was in print, and he still got his percentage.

Q BUT, IN ADDITION, EACH OF YOU HAS WRITTEN INDIVIDUAL THINGS, TOO, LIKE YOUR LOGO THERAPY? MAX DIDN'T COLLABORATE ON THAT, DID HE?

A No. When we started to translate, we write in our own name. Some of them were written under both, Joseph Fabry and Max Schneid, and one of his famous translations, I helped him a little bit but not enough to have my name published. When I started "Logo Therapy," that was my baby. Except "One and One Makes Three," we still published under Peter (Fabriezios). That was our adieu.

spelling

Q HOW DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR NEW NAME WHEN YOU CAME TO AMERICA?

A Well, my name is half of Fabriezios -- the first half of (Fabriezios). That was one of the things I really wanted to break from my past. I wanted to start from scratch, and I wanted something that was to do with my name. Then I found a girl who -- not that I know -- she wrote her name, Fabry, on the telephone pad. When I saw it on the telephone pad, I said, "That's it." It felt right. At that time, Max was in Shanghai and Peter (Fabriezios) was dead. I couldn't expect him to call himself "Zios." That is how I got my name, and I feel when I see Epstein, I still feel that's me, but I feel I'm me when you see Fabry. Strange.

spelling

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But Epstein is a name that does something to me.

Q IN TERMS OF BRINGING BACK PAST MEMORIES?

A Yeah. But Epstein is a name that, if someone's Epstein -- for instance, one of our Logo therapists went to South America and married an Epstein, and I was glad.

Q YOU ALLUDED TO IT A LITTLE BIT, COULD YOU SAY IN A SUCCINCT STATEMENT, WHAT IS LOGO THERAPY AND HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM OTHER KINDS OF THERAPIES? COULD YOU GIVE IT IN A ONE MINUTE ANSWER?

A I've given that answer a thousand times, so I know it. Logo Therapy is a therapy that helps people find meaning in life. That's the shortest and simplest one. It stresses the positive. It distinguishes area of freedom when meaning in life comes from finding something meaningful. And fate -- when you have no choice of what is meaningful to you. So you have to find a meaningful attitude in a situation that itself is meaningless. It stresses choice, attitude, uniqueness, the positive. This is perhaps more than a minute. Does it give you any idea?

Q HOW IS IT DIFFERENT THAN ANYONE GOING TO A BUILDING THAT HAS PSYCHOLOGISTS AND TALKING TO SOMEONE IN A SOMEWHAT TRADITIONAL THERAPY SITUATION?

A The difference is that Logo Therapy focuses not so much with what happened to you, not how you got in a mess, but how to get out of the mess. It focuses more on the future than on the past. But the past in many cases is

necessary to explore. But it is not necessary to wallow in it. Often we use the past as an excuse for failure. For example, "I have to be that way because my mother was that way." Or, "My father did that to me, so it does that to me." We are interested in saying, "Here is where I am; here is where I want to be; how do I get from here to there?" And I must say that many therapists now go similar ways to when I see the difference between Logo Therapy, it's not as distinct at this time as it used to be.

I had a schoolmate who was a nephew of Freud. I knew Freud as an Uncle of a schoolmate and when I published this book, "Man's Search for Meaning," I sent a copy to my friend and told him, "I hope your Uncle will not see this as an attack on him." It really was not. Freud was very narrow in his field. He wrote me a letter which I treasure. He said, "If my Uncle were alive today, he would not be an orthodox Freudian." There are very few, if any -- the last who was Freudian was perhaps Anna Freud, his daughter. The psychoanalysts are quite open to new ideas. The difference between Freud and all his group, Freud got his idea for his human being from his patients. They were very sick people. He enlarged this whole thing of human beings being haunted by complexes, always suppressing sexual desires. He extended what he found in his patients to all mankind. Frankl starts out with a human being and says, "We are meaning searching. We are future oriented. We are goal

oriented. We want to help other people, and then extend it to mankind in general."

Q CAN YOU TELL US WHO THIS PICTURE IS OF AND WHEN IT WAS TAKEN?

A Yes. This is the training teacher for artificial flower making. Everybody had to take a class. I took the most innocuous training and became a flower making pupil. This was my teacher. This was in Merxplaus in the end of 1938.

Q I SEE. SO THIS WAS IN PRISON?

A All these were taken in Merxplaus. November and December '38, January and February of '39.

Q TELL ME ABOUT THIS PHOTO, PLEASE.

A We did our own laundry. We had no hot water. We could only use the cold water from 8:00 to 9:00, and we hung up our own laundry.

Q TELL WHAT THIS PHOTO IS.

A This is the beginning of our cooking our own food. Later we had a kitchen, but this was a mobile kitchen that was led to us from the vagrants. In the early days of November, 1938, when we started to cook our own food, this was the cook dishing out our soup.

Q AND THIS PICTURE?

A Here are the refugees learning how to be an electrician. The rest were bank clerks and anybody who wanted to learn about it. The material was sent to us from

the Jewish committee in Brussels, and we asked them what we needed. They usually were very kind in sending us the material we asked for.

Q ARE YOU IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH?

A No. I'm in no photograph except flower making.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS PHOTOGRAPH.

A Towards the end of my stay there, I did an opera parody. We invited people from Brussels. 200 guests came to look at it. It ended like this where the refugees finally get visas. This man from the Jewish camp -- the angel -- hands out visas from cornucopias. It's a happy ending for my story.

Q YOU DIDN'T PERFORM IN YOUR OPERA?

A No. I just wrote it.

Q NEXT PICTURE?

A These are two angels distributing visas.

Q FROM THE OPERA AGAIN; IS THAT RIGHT?

A Yes. There were only men there, of course. So one of the people dressed as a woman is a man, too. He was a dancer from the Vienna opera, and he was one of the people, I think, who later got a visa to go to Brazil to perform in operas. He was our star.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

A This was the car repair shop, and the car was -- we asked for an old car that was driven from Belgium and broke down three times but eventually arrived in Brussels.

Here is a young man trying to take it apart and put it together again.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS.

A This was the dish washing. After our meals, we had these pails of water, and this was the only day and the only opportunity we had hot water. Sometimes our medical doctor got in and got some water for his medical patients. That was the only time he could get some.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS.

A This building is one of the two major buildings that we were assigned to. Each of these buildings took 300 people, but usually the road in front of it was empty. This was the day when the opera was performed, and people from Brussels came to visit us. So you see, there was quite a crowd there. Now, this is the same building you saw in the last picture, without the visitors. This was one of the two buildings that we lived in. There were 300 people in each of them.

Q THIS PLEASE.

A This is one of the training groups and a man learning to be -- I suppose this is a carpenter shop. You see, the one in back is a man not quite as young. He also wants to become a carpenter.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS.

A These are the people who wanted to become farmers overseas. We were assigned a plot of land within the camp,

and every morning they marched off, spades over shoulders, and learned how to become farmers. Since none of the internees was a farmer, the director of the camp lent us a guard to teach us the farming matters. These are the farmers marching off in the morning with their tools over their shoulders to their assigned plot to learn something about farming.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS.

A This was the way I looked when I was there in 1938. We all had sort of a prison uniform: jeans and a jacket. And all dressed the same. There was only one person who refused to do it. He was a former actor, and he refused to be undignified in this prison outfit, and he went with a very shabby coat. But this is what I looked like.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

A This is the class for making artificial flowers. This is the one I took. I'm the one on the left. The right to me is a ballet dancer. The one closest to the camera -- I don't know who that was. I can still make artificial flowers.

Q AND THIS IS THE PRISON FACILITY IN WHAT YEAR?

A No. This was taken in 1988 when we visited Merxplaus again. We were coming out of the administration building, which was off-limits when I was there as an inmate. We had a very hearty reception from the director, who is a woman, and quite a few things are different. The

playground, which was a muddy meadow, is now a planted park almost. The brick building -- it's whitewashed. Everything is white and newly painted with flowers planted everywhere.

Q THIS PICTURE, PLEASE.

A Merxplaus. In the background is the church which was off-limits for us. The building that you see is one of the two buildings that we were in. Again, everything is painted and washed and very neat.

Q THE INTERIOR IN 1988?

A Yes. This is the dormitory. The only thing that I identify is the closeness of the beds to each other. There were 40 beds in each dormitory. It seemed to have an electric light overhead, which was unheard of. It seems to have windows, which weren't there. It has -- it doesn't show it, but there's a faucet with running water, which we would have loved to have. This is 40 years later. For us, it would have been a dream to have something like this. At that time, it was all wooden posts, and on top of it there were moral proverbs like "Father Knows Best," and "If you are honest, you will be rewarded." Something like that, which at that time, especially, it wasn't true.

END OF INTERVIEW.