HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

INTERVIEW

of

KARL GUTTMANN

May 23, 1991

by

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MR. BLUMBERG: Today is May 23, 1991.
I am Marc Blumberg, interviewing Karl Guttmann for the Holocaust Oral History Project, with the Freedman Center of Temple Beth Shalom in San Francisco.
Mr. Guttmann, could you give us your full name and spelling of your last name?
A. My name is Karl Guttmann. The name is spelled G u t t m a n n.
Q. Would you tell us when and where you were born?
A. I was born in Vienna Austria, May 11, 1919.
Q. Would you tell us what it was like growing up in Vienna when you were a child?
A. Well, I was the only son of a middle class family. My father was an engineer, like myself. He also had a law degree.
In order for him to become a civil servant, which he was during his younger years, he converted, became a Lutheran. That was necessary for him to be able to advance in that system. When he married my mother, my mother was also Jewish, and she converted, became a Lutheran. They married in the church.
My sister was born in 1911. She was baptized at birth. I was born in 1919 and baptized at birth. We were both raised as Lutherans. I was well into my teens before

I realized that I wasn't really a Lutheran in the sense that the Austrians considered it.
Of course, the rest of my family was all Jewish. It was kind of a strange situation. It produced all kinds of problems, which, as a child, one supresses, but later they become acute.
Q. What kind of problems?
A. Well, I found myself not accepted by some people and I couldn't understand why.
I didn't look particularly Jewish. I customarily wore leather shorts and all that kind of stuff and found that I was not really accepted by the Jewish community and not by the non-Jewish community either. So I was like many others. I was by no means the only one in that position. So many of my friends came from this group.
Q. That were --
A. Converted.
Q. -- that were Jewish originally at birth?
A. Yes.
Q. Before I forget your father and mother's name?
A. My father's name was on the Otto Guttmann. My mother was Frederika Guttmann.
Q. Your sister?
A. My sister was Berta.

Q. When was she born?
A. She was born, I said 1911. I take that back. It was 1909. She was born in Vienna also.
Q. Tell us more about what it was like growing up in Vienna before the Holocaust.
A. Well, what shall I say? I was a middle class child, rather protected. I think I was quite bright. I went to high school. Because of my great feeling of uneasiness about the future I really didn't think I was going to live in Austria.
I got myself accepted into an engineering program in a school called -- (German phrase)
Which is roughly comparable to a state college in America, where one could by passing an entrance exam enter at any age. I entered at age 15. I spent five years there.
At the age of 19 I graduated with a mechanical engineering degree. That was in 1938. It was just in time.
Q. Did the fact that you were Jewish have any impact on your gaining admittance to the school or the way you were treated at school?
A. No, it did not make any difference.
Q. When you were growing up --
A. In fact, I can tell you a funny story about

that. When we graduated, in March 1938 school classes ceased for several months. When they resumed they were with a new director. People were wearing swastiskas and I was recognized as not being an aryan.
We had a graduation ceremony, which was unusual. It never happened before. The new director made an address to the class, to the school, and he told us how lucky we were to graduate in the new Germany where there were jobs for everybody.
Then he said "We will now have a short ceremony honoring the top student and would the non aryans please leave".
Myself and another man packed up our bags and left and that was the end of the ceremony because we were the top students.
Q. Do you remember the anschluss?
A. Oh, yes, very vividly.
Q. Did you talk about that in your family?
A. Yes. My father denied the whole thing. He was into denial. He knew this paper hanger, this upstart, was going to disappear very shortly; and, after all, he was an officer in the Austrian Army during World War I and nothing would ever happen to him. And just let these guys come and he would tell them where they got off.
My mother, on the other hand, was very fearful and

she wanted to leave immediately. They did finally leave, but not until 1941.

Q. Tell us how it came about that you left Austria.

A. That's a long story. I tried to find some help. I had no friends or relatives outside of Austria. The Jewish community would not give me any help at all. They had their hands full with their own people.

I had a close friend who was in exactly the same predicament as I was and he discovered a Swedish mission in Vienna, Swedish Borgian church, Lutheran mission.

It so happened the pastor of that mission was also ethnically a Jew and his son was our age was in exactly the same predicament. He had come across a very improbable character in Vienna, a man who was a Turkish citizen. His name was Finesilver. He was then in his '60s. He was a small stout man with a flowing white beard and very conspicious.

Mr. Finesilver told us he had been authorized by the Archbishop of Canterbury to recruit some young people who had been in college or were presently in college and who were ethnically Jews but not of the Jewish religion and there was help available to get us to England and resume our studies. We were very excited about that.

This went on for many months. The gentleman became

a fixture in our house, he came to take baths in our house and occasionally eat a full meal. He was a very interesting man. His father had been Russian, his mother was an Arab and he was a Turkish citizen.

He had been a student of Tolstoy. He had lived in Tolstoy's commune as a young man. And found himself in Hungary during the Bela Kuhn days, after the first world war and lost all his money there and came to Vienna. I don't know what he lived on.

Well, what the true story was it turned out he had a friend who had met in Turkey, who was also a Russian Jew, who studied to be a rabbi and after a sleigh accident when he hit his head and passed out, he had a vision of Jesus and Jesus commanded him to convert all the Jews to Christianity.

He left school and traveled and finished up in Turkey, where he met Mr. Finesilver. He also met a Welsh school teacher who was there as a governess and they got married. They traveled a circuitous route to England, held up by the First World War. He was interned in Germany.

In England he became an ordained minister in the Church of England, was given a parrish, and his mission was to convert Jews to Christianity. He had a hostel for Jews who were interested.

One of them was Theodore Hertzel's son, who actually committed suicide in the house because the split was just too much for him to take. But he wasn't very successful.

Well, Mr. Finesilver conceived the idea of presenting him with some disciples. So he recruited the ten of us. Mr. Leventoff, the gentleman's name in England, applied for visas for us and nothing happened. Months went by.

Well, Mr. Leventoff, had two daughters. The older daughter Olga was a Christian communist. She was living in sin with an English man and they had several children. Mr. Leventoff was rather heart broken about that about that. I should call him Reverend Leventoff. Well Olga, when she was pregnant with the last child, found out about these ten young men from Vienna and she marched in the home office and demanded the visas and passed out.

They said "My God, get that woman out of here". They gave her the visas. We suddenly had visas. So one day we arrived in London and there was nothing prepared for us. The hostel had been converted into a furniture warehouse. It was located in the east end of London, in an old church called Holy Trinity Church. He evicted the furniture people and convert it back to a hostel. We moved in there.

One day he announced he was ready to start instructing us. I said "I am an engineer". He said "No, you are going to learn theology".

I said "No way". Soon after, I advertised in the paper for a job. The war started just about that time. I got a job in Birmingham as a draftsman and left the hostel. I beg your pardon. It was before the war started.

Q. What year was it you arrived?

A. I arrived in England in September of 1938. November was the Kristallnacht, as you may recall. During the Kristallnacht my father put on his old Austrian Oberlieutenant uniform and sat in the living room and said "Let them come".

Well, they came, but they didn't get any further than the concierge and who told them there were no Jews in the building. So they left again.

Had they found him they probably would have beaten him to death right there. But it scared him enough so he was more inclined to listen to my mother and want to immigrate.

Q. Your family at that time lived in an apartment building?

A. Yes.

Q. Were there any other Jews or Lutherans

living in the building?
A. There were some Jews in the building. I have no idea if they were of the Jewish religion or not. We had very little to do with them.
Q. How did you communicate with your family about that?
Were you in phone contact with them or did you write them?
How did you stay in contact with your family during that period?
A. Before the war we wrote letters to each other. After the war it got of course much more difficult.
Q. I wanted to ask if you remember the names of any of the other ten men?
A. Yes, it was all men. There were two Hupert brothers. One was Peter Hupert. His brother's first name I have forgotten. Peter Hupert is dead. His brother lives in New York. I was very friendly with Peter.
There was a fellow named Peter Hoffman, who was the man who found this whole thing. He also died in a car accident in Australia some many years ago. There was a fellow named Ernst Froelich, who lives in Canberra in Australia.
Q. Did you see him when you were there?

A. Yes, I did. Yes.
There was several others. A fellow named Rudy Luebert, who lives in England, retired. There was a Hungarian named Tiebor Sughr. S u g h r, who also is retired and lives in England. These two were never interned and I will come to that later. Hoffman and Hupert, both Huperts were interned with me. There were several others but my memory is beginning to fail me.
Q. I was wondering if you can tell us what it was like for you as an Austrian in England in 1938. How did the people react to you?
A. Well, it was a very strange experience. I knew a little English, not very much. People were generally friendly in a condescending kind of way. They had absolutely no understanding of the whole thing. They didn't know what this was all about.
People would invite us to dinner or afternoon tea and we were starving. They gave us watercress sandwiches and told us don't worry, everything will be fine.
When I finally got my job, I was lucky, I was one of the few people allowed to work. After all I had a degree. I got three pound ten a week as a draftsman, which was a living wage. Not very much, but it was a living wage. I was one of the people who earned a living at the age of 19 and 20. I was very proud of it.

I met many English people. Generally found them friendly, but totally lacking any understanding of the whole problem.
Q. Of the problem of Nazi Germany, vis-a-vis the rest of Europe?
A. The problem the Jews had at the time in Nazi Germany, the fears they had, the prosecution they endured. They could not understand.
Q. How were you actually living at that time? Were you in an apartment?
A. First I was in this hostel, which was nothing but a huge room which had been a room -- the history of the church, the church was built in the later part of the 19th century. This area was not Jewish. At the time we were there it was really a Jewish area. It was an area where criminals abounded.
The purpose of the mission was to get destitute people in from the street. They had a huge fireplace you could actually walk into. They had a roaring fire going. When the people came in they gave them some hot soup and got them upstairs into the church and converted them.
They took this big room and put cubicles in there, partitions and made a hostel out of it. That is where I stayed until I left the hostel.
I went to Birmingham and got a room with a family,

a private family. I paid room and board. And lived there. Then later I returned to the hostel. I will explain to you how that came about.
Q. Why don't you tell us?
A. I got this job in Birmingham just before the war started. Then the war started. The company I worked for made bottle caps for wine bottles and stuff like that. It wasn't a very glamorous thing to do in wartime. I wanted to be of help.
I found a job in the City of Maidenhead in Surrey, with an aircraft instrument factory and left them, went to Maidenhead, and found to my great dismay I was not allowed to work there. The company had hired me and failed to go through regular channels.
When I presented -- I had an identity book. I was refused the project because it was sensitive employment and I was enemy alien.
After a while I went back to London, back to the hostel. At that time I paid rent ecause I really got a job as a draftsman in a factory making bottle tops. I paid room and board and lived there when I was interned.
The internment, what happened there is during the war the British government set up a system of tribunals, who examined all of us and gave us ratings. A, B and C ratings.

An A rating meant you were to be interned. You were suspected of being a Nazi.

B rating meant they had their doubts about you but they didn't have enough on you to put you away. So they put you under restrictions.

A C rating meant you were free to do whatever you wanted to. I had a C rating. And felt quite secure, but then came Dunkirk. After Dunkirk there was a lot of agitation in England to intern the lot and they finally did. They interned everybody who was born in Austria, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy and then well the next thing came deportation.

After that the rest of them were released.

Q. Can you tell us a little more detail how you came to be interned.

A. One morning, it must have been seven-thirty or thereabouts, I was getting ready to go to work. Two gentlemen came into the hostel and asked for all of us to see him and they informed us we were interned. We could take a suitcase. We could make a phone call. I called my sister.

My sister had come to England not long after I did. I got her a job as a domestic through the help of a close friend of mine and she made it there. She had been married in Vienna to a non Jew, who had the marriage

annuled, which caused her to have a nervous breakdown. After that she came to London.

I called her and told her what was happening. I was bundled into what they call the Black Maria, which is the paddy wagon in England and taken to jail. From jail eventually we were taken to a race course. My God I can't remember. Somewhere in the south of England. We spent a few days.

From there we were taken to a camp in Liverpool. All the while we weren't given any information what was going to happen us. It was just day-to-day.

Q. Did the camp have a name in Liverpool?

A. Quite possibly, but I can't remember it. It was a half finished housing project but there wasn't enough room for everybody they interned. So we were living in tents. Sanitation was very bad. Food was awful. It rained a lot. It was kind of bad.

We hadn't there been more than a couple weeks when we were told that we were going to be shipped overseas.

Q. What happened to your sister?

A. My sister stayed in London all through the war. Women were not interned.

Q. Only women were not interned?

A. Only men. There may have been exceptions for known Nazis or spies. Generally they were not

interned.

Q. How did you become aware you were going to be taken out of England?

A. Well, it sort of came gradually. We were told we were going to be shipped overseas. I take that back. We were told we should volunteer to be shipped overseas. We were told we would be released there and we would be away from the war and things would be much better.

When we asked where we were going we were generally told we were going to Canada. Well, it happened there were actually three transports sent off. The first transport went to Canada. Was interned in Canada for the entire war and released after the war.

The second transport was a ship called the Eradora Star. The Eradora Star had close to two thousand people on it and was sunk by a torpedo. About 14 or fifteen hundred people died in that torpedo attack.

The remainder of the people were taken back to Liverpool dripping wet, put on our boat. We were put on a ship called the Dunera. The Dunera, which was built was a troop carrier. Together with the several hundred survivors of the Eradora Star we were expecting to go to Canada.

On boarding the ship it was very obvious something

was wrong because we were treated rather roughly. They took everything away from us, our suitcases, our papers, watches, fountain pens, rings, money, whatever.

Q. Who did that?

A. The soldiers, British soldiers.

Q. On the ship?

A. On the ship. We were bundled into holds, which were rooms that had benches coming out of the walls, tables with benches on each side. Above them were hammocks. There were hooks for hammocks.

We were told that was going to be our living quarters. Pretty soon the ship started out. The sea was very rough. We were all hooking up our hammocks and crawling into them. The hammocks were swaying from side to side and creaking and pretty soon people became seasick and there was no way to get out. There were only three feet clearance under the hammocks.

People were sick over the side and so was I, of course. I was on the lowest deck. The deck above us was very similar. There was a big opening in the middle with an air shaft that was covered over. People were vomiting over the side and it was running down in sheets over the side of the ship. It was quite a hellish experience.

The ship was part of a convoy. As we left Liverpool they zig zagged through the mine fields. The

ship would go this direction and go in this direction and this direction. It was incredible.

By the next morning it was a little calmer. People began cleaning up. I got rid of my soiled clothes.

The following night we were attacked. We had a torpedo attack. There are all kinds of conflicting stories about this attack. All of us were very interested and concerned about what really happened.

I have done quite some research into it. I think as close as I can come to it there was a U-Boat. It was U-56. The Captain was a gentleman called Harms, Lieutenant Harms. Naval Lieutenant Harms.

We were the slowest boat in the convoy. We were not identified as Red Cross or anything like that. They fired three torpedoes. The first one missed. The escorting vessel saw the trace and gave an alarm and they began dropping depth charges. The second one, now here the accounts differ. My opinion is it struck the ship but it did not xplode. I heard the impact.

I found later that these torpedoes were made by slave labor. There was reports the slaves having sabotaged -- A lot of them did not explode. The third one missed and the U-Boat submerged.

The following morning they came up to the surface. Now this is from a -- What I am telling you is from a

report in a book called the Dunera Internees, by Benzion Patkin, Australian journalist, who was very interested in this whole process. The book was published in Australia by Cassell in 1979. What he reports there is slightly, partly incorrect or partly correct.

If I may read this for you. It's not very long. I can't do it without my glasses.

It said eight years after World War II ended S. C. Klerk, the Commander of the German submarine. That's incorrect. S. C. Klerk was a lady author, who wrote a book called SOS (German phrase). in which she recounted -- She must have known Lieutenant Harms. She recounted his stories.

What it says, the Commander of the German submarine which fired the torpedoes at the Dunera published a book entitled SOS --(German phrase). In this book the former U-Boat Commander relates that through his periscope he thought he saw people jumping overboard and had impression a mutiny had broken out aboard the Dunera. He did not fire another torpedo but when night fell he sent a few of his sailors in rubber boats to pickup any survivors. All the sailors could find was a number of suitcases floating in the water, in which they found numerous letters written in German and mailed from Germany to civilian internees in prisoner of war camps in England.

Thereupon, the commander of the submarine radioed the message to all other U-Boats in the area informing the captains that the Dunera was carrying German prisoners of war and requesting them not to attack the ship, but to escort it from the danger zone.

Klerk was convinced the Dunera was carrying mainly German POWs and did not want a repetition of the Eradora Star affair. All the inmates were saved. This may or may not be true. I have not been able to verify it. I could not get a copy of the book. The book is out of print. Captain Harms is dead. I verified that. So it may or may not be true.

Q. I was curious and I'd like to go back a little bit and we will come back to this night about the mix of so-called enemy aliens on the ship and in the camp before you got on the ship. There must have been Jewish Germans and there must have been German Germans and I was wondering what kind of a mix there was. Were they all mixed together or what that dynamic was like?

A. They were roughly segregated. Twenty-four hundred people on the Dunera, about two thousand were Jewish refugees. About a hundred to a hundred fifty were German merchant marine sailors and the rest were Italians.

The Italians and Germans were in the forward part of the ship. The Jewish refugees in the back. Where they

met there was an interface where they mixed. There was some areas where they mixed. Those people had a terrible time. I was fortunate being far back where there were only Jewish refugees.

Q. With regard to the night of the attack, was this a night attack?

A. It was early morning if I recall rightly.

Q. I was wondering if you could just recount for us your recollections, sort of a stream of consciousness what happened when you became aware there was an attack.

A. I was still pretty seasick. I was laying in the hammock. I heard the depth charges and I heard their grating sound and impact on the ship. That is where I believe the ship was struck. I was not in the least frightened. I was so sick.

I thought Thank God, it's all over. It was a miracle basically. I just laid there. I knew I couldn't get out. There was nothing I could do about it.

After a whole we realized nothing happened. It felt pretty good.

Q. Tell us what a typical day, if there was such a thing on the ship was like for you?

A. Well, we were very much left to our devices. There was no attempt to regiment us. There was

food served. Some people with delegated to collect food from the mess hall, from the kitchen. The food was progressively worse as the journey proceeded. Then we were left to our devices. We were just left sitting around.

We were taken on deck for short periods every day. We were made to walk bare footed and soldiers amused themselves by stamping at our feet with their rifles and occasionally threw a bottle, made the bottle break on the deck and see if people would get cut and some people did. They would call us names.

It was generally an experience that was obviously not as bad as a German concentration camp, but it wasn't very pleasant.

Q. What was the food like?

A. The food was very bad in the end. I remember one day we were getting hungry. We got some meat, sort of brown stuff. You really couldn't tell what it was. I was hungry and ate it. When I finished eating, there was a doctor on our deck, he got up and said he wants to warn everybody not to eat the meat because it was tainted.

Not very long after I got really ill and went to the hospital on the ship where for the first time I saw fresh air, had a little more space, although I didn't get

a bed; I was laying on the floor. At least I was allowed to rest there.

Generally -- I was young. It was an experience. After I got over my seasickness I was never seasick again. I began to enjoy the movement of the ship. We were able to lookout the lavatory portholes, the only portholes available to us.

On deck we could see the ocean. After maybe, oh, five or six days out of Liverpool we were heading north towards Canada. At some point the ship began to reverse course and we began to realize we aren't going to Canada.

Then we found out we were going to Australia. They made a big detour. At the time there was a battle between the British Navy and Free French Navy on the East Coast of Africa. They tried to avoid that.

The ship called at several ports on the East Coast of Africa. Finally the finished down at Cape Town, where half the crew deserted with fountain pens, watches and whatever they had. Then from there to Perth in western Australia, and then down the coast to Melbourne and into Sydney.

Q. The guards on the ship were British soldiers?

A. They were British soldier. Mainly from prisoner corps.

It was my impression and I think fairly accurate, they were all put on the ship with the hope the whole thing would sink and they would get rid of not only us but the guards who were problems. They had all been disciplined at one time or another. They were uncontrolable.

The commander, Lieutenant Colonel Scott was court marshalled. He returned to England and he was court marshalled and we don't know what happened after him.

Q. Were there many accounts of theft and brutality by the guards on the ship?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you tell us what you saw happen?

A. My direct experience, one day a young lieutenant came down to our mess and said it had been reported to him there had been thefts and he would recommend we put all our remaining valuables into a big bag, with a list of who belonged to what and give it to him and he would see we got it back at the end. Of course I did and of course I never saw any of it back.

Q. You mentioned earlier when you first got on the ship a lot of the property or all of the property was taken. Was any of that returned to you, to any of the passengers?

A. What they did is take the suit cases and

threw them on the deck. That's what the article reports. They fell off the deck and into the water, which is probably true.

Eventually at one point we were told to look for our belongings. I found my suit case, which had been cut open. Miraculously hardly anything was missing. I was one of the few people that had a change of shirts and had a bath robe. So when I arrived in Sydney I carried the bundle. My bath robe made a bundle. I was an immigrant. But nothing was ever officially returned, no.

Q. How did you amuse yourself? You were basically left to your own devices you said on the ship.

A. Yeah.

Q. What did you do?

A. We were pretty letharagic. There was not much. We slept a great deal. Some people played cards. They managed to get cards. There was some entertainment going on occasionally. It was nothing, we weren't physically able to get very energetic.

There was a group of orthodox Jews who had a terrible time. They couldn't eat the food, they didn't want to eat the food. They were given whatever they had. They had raw cabbage. I remember seeing them sit there and opening up the cabbage and looking for worms, because that's meat, you know. You can't mix that. They looked

terrible. They were pale and unhealthy looking. They kept pretty much to themselves. They didn't mix with us either.

Q. Did you make friends, acquaintences on the ship?

A. Yes. Yes, a few.

Q. Do you remember the names of them?

A. Yes. Some of them I still see today.

Q. Do you remember any of them?

A. This fellow, Klaus Loewald. He is German. He is from Berlin. He became a very close friend of mine. He lives in Australia now.

Q. How do you spell that last name?

A. L o e w a l d.

There was two brothers. The name was Freeman. Of course it was Friedman in Austria. There was also an older man, whose name was Schick. S c h i c k. Sort of a streat wise man who took us young people under his wing, you know. We called him Papa Schick.

One day he was looking along the deck and he says he is a Nazi. He saw a fellow whose name was Ignatz Friedman. He called him Nazi. We all froze. We thought my God what happened here. They became close friends. They went to Australia.

Of course, we had sort of a core group. There was

Huperts, myself, Peter Hoffman, who I found at the hostel.

Q. Tell us about when you arrived in Australia.

A. Well, the trip took a little over two months. We arrived in Sydney. We got off the ship in Sydney. Of course, being on firm ground was very disconcerting because it didn't rock. It was difficult. We were put on a train and sent off to this cramp that was prepared for us in Hay, New South Wales.

Hay is a little town about fifteen hundred miles from Sydney in the eastern part of New South Wales, near the South Australian border in the desert. Town of about a thousand people where they had built a couple internment camps. Each camp held a thousand people.

There were two thousand of us. They put us on a train. The train took two days and a night I believe to get to the destination.

The guards on the train -- I remember very vividly, as the day wore on it got hot. The windows were barred. There were ventilators on top of the carriage. So I went to one of the guards, who stood there with his rifle and I said "Excuse me, would you mind opening that ventilator"?

He looked at me, and said "What did you say"?

I told him.

He said "How do you speak English"?

I said "I lived in England for two years".

He said "But aren't you Italian"?

I said "No". It was a complete mix up. The Australians expected Italian prisoners of war.

There is at this point I should mention a movie, the Dunera boys. In the early '80s, there was a movie producer in Australia, his name is Levine. I can't think of his first name. L e v i n e. Who met some people. He was a young man, much younger than me. He had never had any direct experience with this whole problem. He met some people who had been on the Dunera.

He conceived the idea of making a move I and he did. But the movie was really fictionalized. It is not a documentary. The movie was shown on television in Australia, two one hour segments. And was then shown in England. There was an uproar in England. One thing it did was show the brutality of the British soldiers in vivid detail, which of course the Australians enjoyed, but the English didn't.

The movie did capture the absurdity of the whole thing. It had scenes in it about the guards on the train, confusion. It showed the camp commander, who was completely puzzled by the whole thing. He had no clue what was going on. He didn't understand the difference between German Jews and German non-Jews. That was

completely beyond him.

These people, we immediately set up camp school and we had a orchestra, some very fine muscians. It was completely beyond him, this whole thing. They did treat us quite well. We had good food. We had clean surroundings. There was no particular brutality on the part of the Australian.

Q. Did the Australian guard open the vent in the train?

A. Yes, of course, he did. And sat down and leaned his rifle against something and began talking to us, which was curious.

Q. Did you have the impression he thought not only were you Italians, but you were soldiers?

A. Yes, they thought we were prisoners of war. But when they saw particularly orthodox Jews, and caftens and locks coming off the ship, they realized something was wrong.

Q. How long was the train trip?

A. Day and-a-half, as I remember, close to two days.

Q. What was your impression of Australia of the countryside?

A. It was exciting. I was young. I had come through this whole thing. I figured I would be all right.

We watched the countryside go by. We saw kangaroos jumping around. It was interesting. I can't really say that outside of the short, the internment, the short trip, the rest of my experience was really not in any way horrible. I was very lucky. I was one of the few people who really lucked out.

Also, I must say the episode of me getting out of England and all that, it was sort of a Mr. McGoo experience. In hindsight I could see at any moment it could have turned out some other way. But at the time I was not aware.

Q. Tell us when you actually arrived, the train arrived at the camp.

A. The train pulled into the local train station. Of course all the people were lined up watching us. They got -- There was some horse drawn carriages. They put the luggage, what little there was, the older and sicker people on top of the carts and the rest of us marched a couple miles to the camp.

Of course, then I was beginning to feel unhappy. It was in the desert. There was nothing but parched earth. Barbed wire and huts inside. We went in there. It was beginning to get very hot.

There we were. We came without any instructions also what to do, why we were there, what the future would

hold.

Q. What month was that again?

A. September, which is the beginning -- September of 1940. That's sort of spring in Australia, summer. Seasons are reversed. It got hotter. It got more and more uncomfortable. There was outbreak of encephalitis. Sanitation was barely adequate. It was not too bad. It was not great.

Q. Tell us what happened when you got to the camp. You marched into the camp. What was your first day there?

A. We were assigned huts. We were busy moving in and occupying bunks, settling in. Those camps were run like prisoner of war camps. There was discipline. There was morning roll calls. There was certain amount of military discipline. They issued us prisoner of war clothes, identified red spots or something.

We went about -- This was very interesting. There were two camps. We were first in one camp. The second camp wasn't finished. That was very uncomfortable. We were very crowded. The second camp was finished and half of us was moved.

Each camp developed a camp government. We had elected representatives. This was all not only with their permission but encouragement, with the guard's

encouragement. We issued currency. I have some pictures.

Q. Were the two camps in the same location?

A. We could see each other. There was absolutely no connection.

Q. What were the camps called?

A. Camp seven and camp eight. To this day I am not quite sure I was in camp seven or camp eight.

Q. Can we see the cover of that book, the title page? That's published in Australia?

A. Yes. That book was push accomplished last year 1990, which was the 50th anniversary of our arrival in Australia. It includes a lot of interesting things.

Among other things, there is a little piece I would like to read you, which is a report made by the Commander, English Commander of the guards to his Australian counterpart.

The last part reads as follows. I would like to give my personal views on, A, Nazi Germans, B, Italians and, C, Germans and Austrian Jews.

A, having warned this group prior to sailing of my methods should trouble arise through them their behavior has been exemplary. That's the Nazi Germans he is talking about. They are of a fine type, honest and straight-forward, and extremely well disciplined. I am quite prepared to admit, however, they are highly dangerous.

B, Italians. This group are filthy in their habits, without a vestage of discipline and are cowards to a degree.

C, now these are the German and Austria Jews, can only be described as subversive liars, demanding and arrogant and I have taken steps to bring them into my line of thought. They will quote any person from a prime minister to the President of the United States as personal references and they are definitely not to be trusted in word or deed. I attach for you further information a series of letters which I trust may be of some service.

Q. That's the Commander who was ultimately court marshalled?

A. Yeah. He was ultimately court marshalled. That expresses the view of the guards on a whole. This was their personal opinion.

Q. When you arrived at the camp were there already prisoners interned? Were you the first?

A. We were the first. There were other camps. The reason they were called camps seven and eight, they had German soldiers, merchant marines, civilians in other camps.

Q. I very much would like to hear, since you were the first people there, how it is that the camp got organized. How did people -- You said there was a camp

government started up.
A. Yes.
Q. How did that all happen?
A. It already started on the ship. Every deck on the ship. The ship had three levels of decks and two holds and some more with Nazis and Italians.
The six holds were the core of the whole organization. Each deck had a deck leader, who was elected on the deck. They were our spokesman to the guards and some of them were mistreated for that. But when we got to the camp these people were already prominent.
They kind of took it on themselves to start organizing. Some of them had some political experience. They were all well educated people. And slowly the thing got organized. It's sort of almost automatic. It's hard to describe how it happened.
Q. Was it sort of a democratic process?
A. Yes. It was quite democratic.
Q. You also indicated a pretty vibrant cultural life developed.
A. Oh, yes.
Q. Can you tell us about that?
A. Yes, that was interesting. In the camp, the problem of occupation, what do you do with your time

became acute. We were in better health, we were well fed. It was generally sunny and clear. We were outside. We had to be occupied.
The guards, of course, saw to it we had some chores to do. We had to run our own kitchen, our own kitchen stores. That occupied people. We also had to keep the place clean and maintain it. That wasn't enough for us. Pretty soon people began organizing classes in various subjects. That developed into a camp university, which was finally accredited sufficiently to allow people to pass entrance exams to the University of Melbourne and Sydney.
There were some very high powered people in the camp. There were muscians, engineers, scientists. Inspite of my short experience and youth I began teaching some classes in engineering subjects, also taking classes.
Of course, there were other things happening. Bridge, you know, groups developed playing bridge. There were muscians, an orchestra was organized. There was theatrical events. They would put on reviews. Maybe the guards would come and watch with great amazement. Mostly in English. There was all done in English.
There was a certain amount of political activity. There was a small group of communists. There were other shades of political opinion. There was some political

discussion. Not too much. We weren't really given access to information. We had no newspapers, we had no radio. We heard secondhand from the guards what was going on in the world and letters. Of course, we received letters.
Q. I wanted to ask you about that. How much time elapsed from when you last talked to your family when you were in England by mail or from wherever you were able to?
A. I talked to my sister when I was interned. The next time I saw her was when she came to Australia in 1949. So that was about ten years. Well, nine years anyway.
Q. Did you have any information about what was happening with your parents?
A. Yes. Of course through my sister I found out. My parents stayed in Vienna until the summer of 1941. At that time the American consulate in Vienna closed. Just before they closed they issued visas to anybody who had a paid passage, regardless of the quota number.
My mother had a cousin in Los Angeles, who sent her an affidavit. On the strength of that they were given visas. The Jewish community organized a train that picked up people in Vienna, went to Berlin, picked up more people and went to Free France where they were all discharged.

My parents made their way to Spain. They paid passage on the Portuguese freighter leaving for Lisbon. They couldn't get across the border to Lisbon. There was a epidemic of some kind. The border was closed.
They spent I think three months in Spain. My father was quite ill. He had a stamp collection. That's what they lived on. He sold the stamp collection piece by piece.
They were finally able to go to Lisbon and go on another Portuguese freighter, an old wooden ship called the Alle Mar, which they charged one thousand American dollars for the passage per person. It took six weeks to go from Lisbon to New York. On the return trip the ship broke up and sank in a calm sea. It was that decrepit it. They sold them drinking water on the ship. My father had diabetes, was quite ill. My mother was seasick the entire six weeks.
They got to New York about two weeks before Pearl Harbor. Then of course, they were able to correspond with me again.
Q. Were they able to correspond with you in Australia from New York?
A. Yes.
Q. When were you able to first hear from them?
A. I can't tell you exactly, but it must have

been around Christmas of 1941. I was already on my way.
What happened in the camp, after Pearl Harbor, the Australian Army was in North Africa. There were only old men at home in service. The Japanese were advancing. The Australians looked at us and said if you really don't like it, like you say, why don't you join the Army?
At the same time there was a British officer, whose name was Layton. L a y t o n. Who had come to Australia from England, in an effort to untangle this mess. It became clear after a while the whole thing was a mistake.
The British government somehow tried to get out of this mess. Colonel Layton arranged for some people to be repatriated to England. It was possible to do that. I didn't particularly fancy the idea of traveling by ship through all this mess again. I didn't do that. So I decided to stay.
Then came Pearl Harbor and the offer to join the Australian Army. So I said what am I going to do?
I joined the Australian Army. I was taken out of the camp. This must have been in early 42. Pearl Harbor was December of 41. And was sent fruit picking as civilians to fruit growing areas where there was shortage of men. We spent three weeks picking peaches.
Then went to Melbourne and were inducted into something called the Eighth Australian Employment Company.

Q. Eighth Australian?
A. Employment Company. Which was a ccompany especially set up for us. There was nobody in it but us, refugees from the Dunera. We were not given any arms. We were not trusted to carry rifles or ammunition or anything like that. We were sent down to the docks to unload ships. So I did that for a while.
One of the first things I did when I came to Melbourne is I went to a pay phone and called my mother's cousin in Australia, who was living there as a regular immigrant and said "Get me out of here. I don't want to be a soldier". On the strength of my engineering degree he managed to get me a job. So after six months in the Army I was able to get discharged and go to Sydney and assume a job, first as a machine tool operator, and then as a draftsman and finally as an engineer.
Q. I was curious, did they actually have formal recruitment activities in the camp or word of mouth?
A. Yes, they addressed us and explained the situation and told us we had this opportunity. Yes, it was quite formal.
Q. Did a lot of people take them up on that?
A. Oh, yes. I would say close to half of the internees did. To this day the majority of the survivors

live in Australia.
Some years ago one of them decided to start an organization. There is now an organization called the -- It's a newspaper called the Dunera News. We subscribe to the paper, which is published almost every month. So we hear about each other. We are all in touch with each other. This experience last year when I went back to the 50th reunion was very significant.
Q. We can come back to that. Can you tell us what it was like for the six months you were in the Australian Army? You said you were working as a steveadore?
A. Yes. Well, it helped to build up my muscles. It was healthy. We were well fed. It was healthy. Australian Army food was God awful. We use to escape through the fence every night and go to a restaurant in the city and have somereal food.
We had two shillings a day, which didn't go far. We made it serve our needs. The interesting thing is, I was one of the first to be discharged in my group at least. In fact, many had not arrived from the camp when I was already out.
I was unloading some ship on the docks and the Australians are famous for breaks. They have break very frequently. They call them smokeoes. So we had a smokeo.

I stood there smoking a cigarette.
There was an Australian guard standing there and who was beginning to talk to me. I was in uniform like he was. After a while he said "Where are you from"?
I said "Austria". He began unburdening himself. He hated the Jews. He hated the Americans. And he thought we fought this war on the wrong side.
Then he came close and whispered to me "Are you interested to help some prisoners"?
I didn't know what to say. He said "If you are willing to come and see me, and he told me, we have an underground where we help German prisoners to escape".
I immediately went back and immediately reported to my Captain, who was a very interesting man. He was half Maori and half British. He had been a captain during the first world war. He was a highly educated man, very fine person. Because of his Maori background he was passed over for advancement and given this job. But he was really a wonderful guy.
He took our side. When he heard that he was very angry. He said it must have been a provocateur. He investigated it. It turned out it was not, it was true.
A couple weeks later I was approached by a couple civilians who said they were from the intelligence, Army intelligence and would I help them track down this spy

ring or whatever you like to call it. So I did.
I was given civilian clothes and three of us, two men and myself, went to this meeting place he told me and sure enough he was there.
He told me -- There is an area in Victoria that's largely inhabited by ethnic Germans. That's where this took place. I am telling the story slightly wrong.
Q. What was his name?
A. I don't remember.
Q. Do you remember the captain's name?
A. Oh, yes. What the heck was his name?
Now would you believe I do remember his name. Broughton. B r o u g h t o n. He was a very fine man. He died, he was 90 years old when he died. He died not too long ago.
Q. You were going to tell us?
A. I posed as an escaped prisoner. We got the information from this man. The two men drove me to this little town and I went to the house he designated and told them I was an escaped prisoner.
They said they could not help me. They were very sympathetic, but there was an Army camp nearby. It was too dangerous. They told me to go somewhere else.
So we drove to this other place. That happened to be a town where everybody had been the same German name.

I had forgotten, I had not written down the first name, so I didn't know what to do. We decided I should at random call families, which I did. I talked to a women who was very reluctant to talk to me.
I was kind of insistent. She said why don't you come over. I went over there. She said she wouldn't help me and slammed the door in the face and called the police. We checked into some local hotel under assumed names. The next morning the police came and looked us over but didn't do anything. As we left town they followed us and the whole thing was discovered.
I understand at least that one family I found was finally brought to justice. But I was not asked to testify anymore. That was my role.
Shortly after I was discharged. I came to Sydney. My uncle, my mother's cousin had gotten me a job and I entered civilian life in Sydney and lived there until 1949.
Q. What was your uncle's name?
A. Liderman. The Liderman family still live in Sydney. I saw them last year. We correspond. Of course, my uncle is dead. There is another generation my age.
Q. What did you do? What job did your uncle get for you?

A. I worked as a machine tool operator in a factory making paint spray guns, which didn't last very long. While I was there I looked for another job and got a job as a draftsman, and then a toolmaker, with a larger company making food processing company. While there I worked my way into the drafting room and became a draftsman. Finally was allowed to do a little engineering.
Q. How did people in Australia treat you?
A. Even more innocent at that time, even more innocent, uninformed than the British. We were sort of curiousities. There was some problem with me not being in the Army. Why aren't you in the Army?
Q. Because you were a young man?
A. Yeah. I was suppose to be in the Army. I had some papers I carried at all times to show I had been discharged.
I was theoretically on some travel restrictions, but I told the police at the time that I wasn't accepting those because I had been a soldier. They could arrest if they wanted too but I was going anywhere I wanted to, and I did. Nobody bothered me.
There was a fairly sizable group of refugees in Sydney at the time. I knew my relatives there, they had many friends. I had other friends who had gone there

directly from Vienna. So I had an active social life in Australia. Several jobs. Became a Australian citizen in 45.
In 1947, my father had died in Cummington Massachusetts, complications of his diabetes after three or four years when I was in Sydney.
My sister was an allowed to join them in America from England just before the war ended. She still traveled during wartime.
Q. So that would have been in 44?
A. 44 probably. 45 my father died. My mother and sister moved to Los Angeles where my mother's cousin was living who had given her the affidavit.
In 47 they decided to come visit me. It seemed like I had settled down, I was an Australian citizen. They came to Sydney.
My sister had met a man in Los Angeles, who wrote her daily letters asking her to come back and marry him. She had been married in Vienna. The marriage had been annuled. She did go back after a few months. My mother stayed there, feeling very lonely and out of place and finally went back to Los Angeles.
A few months later I got a letter in the mail from the American consulate, saying my American Visa, which I applied for in Vienna in 38 had followed me to Sydney and

I had six months to make use of it. My quota number was up. I decided to come and take a look at it and I stayed.

Q. Did you ever find out how it ended up following you all the way to Australia?

A. Oh, yes. When I came to London I had been to the American consulate and had it transferred to London. In the internment camp we all tried to have the Americans issue us visas so we could leave from the internment camp.

That developed to be not possible, because the Americans insisted we show up in person at the consulate, which wasn't possible. But at least it got my Visa transferred to Sydney.

Q. How were you able to have any contact with the American consulate if you were in a camp?

A. Well, several people had visas. They actually had visas when they were interned. The visas had expired. So they were in touch with the American consulate, who were very negative, not helpful in any form or shape.

In fact, when I finally got out, when I decided to go, I went to the consulate in Sydney and said -- I had my Australian passport. He said fine. We will be glad to give you a visa if you get passage on the ship. I went to the Mattson Line. They said we will be glad to give you

passage if you have a visa. This went or for a while, until somebody told me what I had to do was buy one of the ladies at the consulate some silk stockings, nylons, which I did, and there was my visa and there was my passage. They weren't very helpful.

Q. Did you know either from correspondence with your sister at the time or subsequently what her life in England was like during the war?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Can you tell us about that?

A. My sister at the time I left was working as a domestic with an English family. My sister was a trained social worker in Vienna. At the time Anna Freud, Sigmund Freud's daughter, had established something called the Hampstead nurseries, which you know about that. She hired my sister.

My sister became a matron in one of the Hampstead nurseries. She spent the whole war there, became friendly with Anna Freud. There was a lot of correspondence. When she came to American she worked in the same field and she became a play therapist. Finally finished up at the Los Angeles at the Cedars of Lebanon Hospital as a play therapist, where she worked until in her '70s and she retired and continued to work as a volunteer and one day fell and broke her hip and died. That was in 82.

Q. Can you tell us some more of what it was like for her in England?

A. Well, this is second hand because I wasn't there. She had a very interesting job. She was very busy. They were looking after children, mainly children from London, who had been either bombed or sent there by their parents who wanted them out of the way.

Those children had imnumerable psychological problems, of course. She had many, many stories to tell. I wish I could. she tried to write. Unfortunately her writing was not good. She couldn't get anything published.

Q. You mentioned that your sister had been married to an Austrian.

A. Yes.

Q. He had had the marriage annuled?

A. Yes.

Q. I wonder if you could tell us some more about that.

A. Well, my sister was ten years older than me. I was about eleven years old at the time. She was 21. She met this young dental student. They fell in love. I don't believe he -- If he knew she was of Jewish origin, ethnically a Jew, I don't know. He may have known. He may not have known. They got married.

Q. What year would that have been probably?

A. Well, that was in 1930. He was still in college. She helped him through college. When he started his practice, she became his assistant. She worked with him. He was my dentist.

When the Nazis came he got very fearfull of the whole thing. One day decided to have the marriage annuled. I wasn't there anymore. If I had been there I would have punched him out.

Q. Did they have any children?

A. No children, fortunately. I never knew what happened to him. My sister didn't either. I think he remarried. I think that's what she found out.

Q. I think you said she a nervous breakdown?

A. Yeah, she had a nervous breakdown as a result of that and spent a couple months in a hospital. Then fortunately we got her this job in England and she was able to come and she was all right after that. . She had along productive life. She married a widow widower with two children. She never had any children of her own. He was German, born in Japan.

Q. Would you tell us what your life was like once you came to America?

A. I came to Los Angeles and immediately hated the place.

Q. What year was that?
A. 1949. I came by boat from Brisbane to Vancouver and took a bus from Vancouver to Los Angeles. I came through San Francisco, where I had old friends from Vienna and spent a few days here and really fell in love with the city. Then went on to Los Angeles. That was not for me.
I got a job there. I had to commute from Hollywood to Willington every day and back, which in those days was pretty horrendous, down Weston avenue.
Finally began looking for a job in San Francisco. I got a job here. My mother wasn't very happy about that. I got a job in San Francisco and that was in 1950.
Then began working for the U.S. Army at the Presidio as an engineer. In 53, I think it was, I married an American non-Jewish woman, very stormy short lived marriage. It lasted about a year.
Then I had my own problems here. I was close to deportation here at one point. I don't know if that interests you. It's part of the story.
When I worked for the Army, for the first time in my life I met non-white people. Before that, in Austria there weren't.
Q. You mean non-Caucasian?
A. Non-Caucasian people. It was curious. I

began to realize their problems.
There was an engineer in my group, a civil engineer, a Texan. Very short. A loud Texan voice. We instantly disliked each other. One day we had to go to afield trip together with many other people from San Francisco by bus to Huachua Arizona. There was an Army camp there. All the way the man told racial jokes. It was unbearable.
When we got off the bus, we walked into the BOQ, where we were accommodated and as we walked in he told another nigger story and a black officer came down the stairs and I had all I could take.
I took him aside and said look if you use that word once more in my presence I am going to punch you out. And I could have because he was much smaller than me. We had heavy words. He denounced me as an nigger lover. This is talking about 53, something around there. Soon thereafter I had my security clearance withdrawn and then left the Army job and went into private industry.
In 1956 opened my own consulting office. In 54, five years after arrival, I applied for citizenship and found I was being investigated. This is conjecture, please understand that. Nobody ever explained to me why. I talk a lot and I got sensitized to all these problems and found myself with a deportation hearing finally.

I got hold of the Civil Liberties Union and assigned me a lawyer and we went to the deportation hearing, which the subject did not directly come up. I was asked if I was an athesis. My lawyer objected. This is unconstitutional. I explained to the hearing officer who is both judge and injury. There was a stenographer there. If I said if you would like a theological discussion I would be happy to have, it but you couldn't answer that simply. This is a difficult, complicated question. That took him back.
So he switched to other things, like my tax returns and the fact I had been to some Rosenberg meetings, which caused me a lot of alarm. That was a dangerous thing to do in those days. The fact I had made derogatory statements about political figures. It went on and on.
Finally my lawyer, nothing happened for a long time, called him up and said he wanted a transcript of the hearing. He said if you do that that's going to hold up everything. If you don't, I will be able to tell you he's been approved and I got my citizenship. So I never got a transcript of the hearing. They were anxious days, you know.
Q. Where were they going to deport you to?
A. I have no idea. That never came up. I got my citzenship.

In 56 I started my own consulting business in San Francisco, which I am still active in. It's now grown to an office with 32 people and my son. I got married again in 58. My wife had two children. We had one son together. He is with me in the business.
Q. Is he a engineer?
A. He is an engineer.
Q. What is your business?
A. We are consulting engineers, mechanical consulting engineers. We work on hospitals and major institutional projects. We are very busy. No sign of any recession with us.
(At this time the deposition was recessed)
A. Leventoff had two daughters. Olga got us our visas. The youngest daughter was Denise Leventoff. She is about three or four years younger than me. Towards the end of the war she met an American journalist in London, whose name was Goodman. He is one of the Chicago Seven. Do you know the Humphry days?
Anyhow, the old man died very shortly after the end of the war and she and her husband and mother immigrated to Chicago, where she had a son and then came the Chicago seven affair and got famous. She became a poet. She is considered today one of the leading poets in America, poetesses, Denise Leventoff. She comes to Stanford every

year for one quarter and teaches English literature there and we became good friends.

Q. What happened to Olga?

A. Olga died not long after that. The old lady, Mrs. Leventoff, died at the age of 92 in Mexico. Goodman had an assignment to write reports about Mexico and they went to do some reports about Mexico. They went to Hauhauka, where they lived several months. When they were ready to leave the old lady decided she was going to stay there. She didn't feel like being the third wheel.

She stayed with the Mexican family, who she taught English because she couldn't speak Spanish. She lived there and corresponded with me.

I went to see her once. She knew where the hostel boys were and who they married and how many children they had. She died at the age of 92. She was quite an interesting women.

There is a museum in Oakland, Jewish museum. You know of it? Magnus. They have quite a lot of artifacts of this hostel, the Leventoffs, the Hershel affair.

Q. What happened to Mr. Finesilver?

A. I have no idea. He was in his '60s when I knew him. He must have died not too long after.

Q. I wonder if you can tell us what is it's like. Sometimes it's helpful to describe a typical day in

the hostel. Did they want you to go to religious services or eat there?

A. Yes. At first, I can't exactly remember. I arrived in London in September 1938. It must have been a month or so before the hostel was ready. I was with some very, very simple and kind old lady in the east end of London, towards Black Wall Tunnel in that area. There was a parrish there, Anglican minister.

I lived with this lady who had one room. She had one room and a tiny closest where she lived. They fed me at the rectory. When Chamberlain went to Munich and came back, he made a speech where he said the Germans had tweaked the Lion's tail and found they can't do that or something. He said to me now we have shown them what we can do and there will be peace and I felt very bad because I knew that it was an illusion.

But I went to the hostel. The hostel got going, the instructions started and I refused. For a short while I went to junior college in London, to do some engineering work but found they had nothing to teach me. I knew more than the teacher did.

So I looked for a job. But the routine in the hostel was the others who were less able to look after themselves, because none of them had a degree. I was the only one who had finished. They were taken upstairs to

Leventoff's study and given instructions and had lunch and more instructions in the afternoon. They had free time but I am really hazy about that. I was an outsider at that time. I was rather violently opposed to the whole thing.

Q. Sort of a maverick?

A. Yeah. Really I was very grateful to the Leventoffs for rescuing me. I would have done anything for them but become a clergy man.

Q. Did any of your colleagues become a clergy man?

A. No. The war interfered. But they got a heavy dose of religious instructions. They were all converted, they were all converted. They were all baptised as Anglican, as members of the Church of England. I was not. I skipped that day. There was a ceremony. Which I did not attend. I was not baptized as an Anglican.

I was a Lutheran, but this whole business, no, it was very difficult for me. As a child I had a governess. She was Lutheran. She took me to church every Sunday. I did not like the whole idea. They turned me into a rebel basically.

I was opposed to religion as a whole. I saw what it was doing, thought I saw what it was doing to people.

I had no connection with my Jewish heritage. That was withheld from me. It was a shame. I would have enjoyed knowing more about that.

Q. When you were growing up did you not have grandparents?

A. My father's parents died when I was quite young. My mother had a step mother who actually was her aunt who died just before the anschluss, about a year before. She is the only one I knew. There wasn't much intimate contact. There was a duty. One saw ones grandparents. They gave you candy. They asked you questions. There wasn't much interchange of ideas.

Q. You were about 12, 13, 14 when Hitler came to power in Germany.

A. No, I was 19.

Q. I was thinking about 1932.

A. In Germany, yes, I was 14.

Q. What I was wondering if you had any recollections about what life was like for your family and Jews generally in Vienna before Hitler-- came to power and how that changed in ten year period, seven year period of the thirties. Do you have any recollection of that?

A. Our life went on pretty well undisturbed. We had no relatives in Germany. We read about it in the paper. The Austrian papers did not report this in great

detail. We heard from friends who had friends in Germany, what was going on there.

We were pretty much aware of it. We were afraid of it. I was personally quite convinced that Austria was doomed, there was no hope there and I wanted out, which is one reason why I pushed my parents to put me into the technical school. I didn't want to go through eight years of high school and then have to go to college, you know. I was very glad I did.

My father was reluctant. Had the Nazis not taken over Austria I would have gone to the University and gotten a higher degree in engineering.

Q. Was your sense of foreboding you had about the destruction of Austria as a country or danger to the Jews?

A. Danger to the Jews. I became more and more aware of the fact I was Jewish, although I didn't know what to do with that knowledge. But I knew it.

Q. I also wanted to ask you the other night the men in the group recruited by Mr. Finesilver were you the only one who had converted to Christianity or been converted to Christianity?

A. No. They all had the same history. They were baptized from birth. They were from ethnic Jewish families. That was one of the preconditions, so to speak.

They were all university students. Yeah. Their studies were interrupted. Mine was complete.

Q. Where was Mr. Finesilver able to find these people?

A. Partly through the Swedish mission. He found some that didn't come that route. I don't know. He was an interesting man. I wish I got to know him better. He had a long history. I am sure he had interesting things to tell. We were really quite fearful.

He would take us out in public and take us down to the banks of the Danube and sit in the sun and practice English. We were extremely conspicious, this man with the Turkish badge on his lapel and flowing white beard.

And of course one day it happened, a couple guys on bicycles came over, said gestapo and said what is going on here? I was able to produce my school pass, which I had from the junior college I had, which was known as a Nazi nest. I had leather shorts and white stockings.

We explained we were practicing English with this gentleman who knew English very well. They let us go.

There was always an air of apprehension. There was no free exchange of ideas.

Q. Do you have any other recollections like that of Mr. Finesilver and your experiences with him?

A. No. Except my parents were fed up with him

because he came to take a bath. He had no bathroom. Occasionally he had to be fed. Nothing happened, you see. We began to see he was a confidence man.

It wasn't actually true. I believe after I left Vienna he still came around to my parents for awhile. While they could they would help him.

My father, right after the anschluss got an excellent job, much better than he had before. For a short while he did very well. And was quite convinced all this hullabaloo was going to pass. This man would disappear. Don't know how. It's only after the Kristallnacht he began to think things were really in bad shape.

Q. Did your family have any assets other than the stamps? Were they able to liquidate or sell?

A. They left Vienna. They took all their belongings. The furniture, carpets, silver, whatever and packed it into what is known as a lift, which is a great big box and shipped that to Italy, which was neutral.

I got a storage bill in England, which I paid with what little I had. Soon thereafter Italy entered the war and the lift disappeared. That was the end of their belongings. All they had when they left Vienna was a couple suitcases and a stamp collection.

Q. Your father got sick and died in the United

States?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he ever have employment in the United States?

A. Yes. My father was a graduate engineer, a lawyer, a law degree. He had a string of titles like most Austrians do. His English was bad. There was no way to get a job as a lawyer.

Engineering was rusty. He was already 60 at the time. He got a job as a laborer in a sawmill in Cummington Massachusetts, which didn't do his health any good. My mother worked as a cook at Woolworth and sewed gloves at home. Something she learned in Vienna. She knitted or sewed, I am not sure how one does that.

Q. Gloves?

A. Yeah, gloves. She sold those to department stores and made a little money. They managed to support themselves. When my father died she went to Los Angeles and continued making gloves and sweaters. They made sweaters and appliqued patterns out of them, and sold them to department stores. She made a precarious living with that. She managed to survive. She was 83 when she died in Los Angeles.

Q. I wanted to go back to the Austria period for a moment, if I may. You indicated that when you were

talking about the conversion of your parents to Lutheranism and your birth labeled as a Lutheran, you said this caused problems in your family. You used a phrase like that. I wonder if you could tell us one or two incidents that would be examples of what you are talking about?

A. My father was the only one. My father had a brother and four sisters. My mother had a sister and two brothers. Nobody else in either family went the same route. They were all Jewish. They were not orthodox Jews. They didn't practice very much. But there was an alienation took place. Many of them weren't happy with my father's decision.

Although there was a large family, there was really not much family life. We saw my cousins occasionally but there wasn't any close contact.

Q. Are you saying specifically that you were excluded from religious holidays?

A. Yeah.

Q. And that was part of the separation from the rest of the family?

A. Yes.

There was sort of a level of closeness that I couldn't share. They shared something that I was excluded from.

Q. Did any of your uncles or cousins ever sit you down and talk to you about this situation and what your parents had done?

A. No.

Q. Did you go through these issues at all?

A. No. In Austria, it's no accident Freud came from Viennaese society. There was nothing ever talked about. Nothing. From sex to politics to religion, nothing was talked about. Children had to find out for themselves.

Q. Do you have any memories of Nazi behavior in Austria in the twenties and thirties, rallies, street demonstrations?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Street brutalities, anything like that? Could you tell us one or two memories of the time?

A. Well, I carefully avoided directly to get involved in anything like that. There was a Nazi uprising when Dollfuss got killed. I didn't actually see a lot more than people running around and yelling and staying as far away from it as I could. I really had no direct experience. Because I didn't look very Jewish. I habitually wore leather shorts and stockings, I never was personally molested.

I saw people scrubbing floors and being jeered at

and avoiding the whole thing as much as I could.

Q. So you were never engaged in any of the street actions in anyway?

A. No.

Q. Do you recall, what is your earliest memory of an anti-semetic situation in which it was told to you or you perceived this was a phenomenon that existed?

A. I remember that vividly. I was probably 12 years old or something like that. My family had a country house in a little town called Bad Issel, in Austria. My governess and I were riding a bicycle through a little town. I almost ran over somebody or a little traffic situation developed. The person, I can't remember who it was, looked at me hatefully said and said (German phrase), which means Jewish boy. That little town, there was a lot of Jewish families there. He automatically assumed this nice little boy there with a governess must have been a (German phrase).

I said to my governess, what does he mean by that? What is this all about? She gave me some evasive answer. It got me thinking and I began looking into this. What is this?

Q. Was she a Christian?

A. Of course. She is from Sudaten Germany. She was from Czechloslovakia. She was not a nazi but was

sympathetic. She was an uneducated women.

Q. She gave evasive answers, do you remember what she said?

A. No, I don't. She may have said I should talk to my father. Of course, that's the last thing in the world I could have done.

Q. Why is that?

A. No way I could have asked him a question like that. He use to address me in the third person. He would say to me "What did he do at school today" in German. Which was sort of a refined middle class way of talking to your children but it's very bad. It does not encourage close contact. I know very little about him, which is quite a shame.

Q. This was a function of the normal family social order, as opposed to your particular family?

A. This was fairly common. There were families, especially Jewish families that tended to be closer and more communicative and I envied them. My family, nothing was discussed, nothing was talked about. We had book cases full of books, which were locked. So I stole a key and began reading books under the covers at night.

There was no attempt at communication really.

I know very little about my grandparents or history

origin of my family. My father had blue eyes and was bald. He had a blond mustache, a duling scar. He tended to wear Austrian clothes. These gray suits with horn buttons and saw himself as a middle class Austrian patrician.

Q. What sort of books were locked up?

A. Oh, nothing very exciting. I remember German translations of (inaudible), Johan Christoph. Endless stories. Some science books. I got hold of a physics book, which I devoured from cover to cover and consequently knew more about physics at school than most kids did. Nothing political.

My father was really basically, he was probably not a monarchist. I am not sure. He was not a liberal.

Q. John asked you what your earliest memory of an anti-semetic remark was and you touched on this. I am curious if you recall when you weren't just a Lutheran Austrian?

A. It was all about that same time. That's probably why that comment came to my attention. Otherwise, I may have shrugged it off and said this jerk is mistaken. But I was already aware.

I remember great laughter. I was in third or fourth grade. I had a teacher who at that time was not a Nazi but he was what you might call a pan German. We got

long lectures about the aryan race. He one day decided to take measurements. He measured our head, the proportion of your head sort of tells in his simple minded man's opinion whether you were an aryan or nonaryan. I came out on top. I was the one who came closest to the aryan proportions.

I came home very proudly and told my parents and there was great laughter. I didn't know why. Why were you laughing?

I had to think a moment what is going on here. I became aware my cousins were Jewish. How come? But I didn't ask questions about it.

Q. Do you recall what that meant to you at that time, what being Jewish meant?

A. They went to a different place for religion. They didn't go to church like I did. They went somewhere else. They had holidays which are different from my holidays. Something one shouldn't do to a child.

Q. Did you attend church every week throughout your childhood?

A. Almost. Almost every week. Well, in school. Of course, I went to a protestant grade school. Church was right next door. Every day we were at the church. When I got into high school every Sunday my governess would take me down town to one of the bigger

churches and I would listen to the interminable hell and damnation speeches.

These dreary churches. The Lutherans don't allow ornamentation. They don't allow images. There can't be pictures. So there was stained glass windows. The rest was all wood paneling, dark, grim, threatening. The sermons were usually about sin and hell and damnation.

Q. Did you stop, after you were in your teens, did you stop going to church regularly?

A. Oh, yeah. As soon as I could assert myself I stopped that.

Q. You didn't attend church during the year of the anschluss?

A. No.

Q. You don't know what was going on in church?

A. The interesting thing the Lutherans in Austria were a minority. The reason my father became a Lutheran was to become a Catholic he had to really honestly sincerely convert. There had to be some religious experience, which he wasn't prepared for.

The Lutherans wanted converts because the number -- they got some subsidies from the government. The subsidy was based on the numbers who were registered as Lutherans. They were eager to have somebody. They didn't care who it was, become a Lutheran. That later changed, of course.

The Lutherans in Germany were more closely associated with the Nazis. In Germany the Catholic church I would say was opposed to them but certainly not in the mainstream of the Nazis.

The Lutheran, reform churches were. So the Lutherans in Austria slowly became Nazis. A few of us who, there must have been a few thousand in Vienna who were in that position, became alienated. It was very difficult for me to do that. I didn't want to have any part of them anyhow. That's how it happened. That is why I became a Lutheran.

Q. Why was your religious experience so negative?

A. Well, it was totally based on fear. The whole thing seemed to be based on playing on your fears. There was no affection. There was no love. There was no compassion. There was nothing. Just strictly intimidation. If you don't do what we want you to do you are going to go to hell and fry there in great graphic detail and I didn't like that.

I was really envious of my Jewish cousins and a few other Jews I knew how much happier they seemed to be about their religion. It was a more joyous experience.

Q. When you say you went to the church when you were slightly older with your governess, does that

mean your parents never went to church?
A. They never went to church as far as I know. Never.
Q. Did you experience anti-Semitism in England?
A. While I was living in England, no. But of course, the Dunera was a horrible experience.
Q. What about in Australia?
A. No, I didn't experience any anti-Semitism. There is anti-Semitism to this day. There must have been then. People who are anti-semetic more or less knew this wasn't right. They couldn't help themselves. They tried to not talk about it, except among themselves. They discussed their ideas. There was very little militant anti-Semitism at the time. I think there is more now than there was then.
Q. The treatment the passengers, the internees of the Dunera, the treatment they suffered, do you feel that was a function of who the guards were? Was it a function of the fact you were Germans and Austrians or a function that you were Jews?
A. It's a mixture of all of these things. Most of the guards could not tell the difference between Austrian Jews or German Jews and Austrians and Germans. They did not understand that.

Those are the ones who were basically anti-semetic. They didn't understand we were persecuted by the Germans. To them we were Germans. Whatever beef we had with the German government was our problem. Then there was a group that was actively anti-Semitic and enjoyed the opportunity to mistreat German Jews. They couldn't do that to English Jews. They had rights and we didn't.
Q. Do you remember any incidents involving guards that were identified as being anti-Semitic and the way they treated them?
A. This Commander, when the deck leaders went to him with some problem often they were berated, called filthy Jews and stuff like that. Most of the guards themselves didn't talk to us. They didn't care. They took our fountain pens and things and kicked us around a little bit. They didn't see us as people. We were a load of passengers, a cargo that had certain attributes. They had things that could be stolen.
Q. You mentioned before and you mentioned again that people on the ship who became leaders were targetted by the ships administration for bad or cruel treatment. Can you tell us a little more about that?
A. Well, they were intimidated. The Commander obviously thought if he could keep them in line he had a better chance of keeping us in line. They tried to

convince him we were on his side. Didn't succeed at all. Made him angry. It was deceitfull. When they tried to complain about some particular incident he would berate them and threaten them. The rest of the guards said very little.
Q. When you were talking about the way the prisoners were housed, in the boat you said the Germans gentiles were in one area and German Jews were another area. If you were in the back it was okay.
If you were in the area where the two groups were adjacent, I think the phrase was it was a terrible time. Can you give us an example what you mean?
A. There was some fighting going on, some intimidation. The Nazis, of course, like the gentleman said being highly organized and more effective took over and organized and the Jews were mistreated. They got the poorest rations. They weren't allowed to complain. If they complained somebody was beaten. Nobody was killed.
There is a lot of material in all these books of various recollections about that. I was very lucky. Like I say, I was in the back among my own people and there were no incidents there.
Q. How would you describe your religious identity today?
A. Well, I would probably call it an agnostic.

Q. I suspect you have given a lot of thought to this issue.
A. Oh, yes.
Q. You might share some thoughts?
A. I see what it has done to people in the name of religion, all the world over. We see the rise of fundamentalism in all religions. To me the true believer is a very dangerous person. I don't see much difference between a true believer, whether it's a political true believer or religious true believer. If he is convinced he knows the truth and nobody else does, he is a danger to humanity.
On the other hand, there is a level of, especially there is a level of cultural experience, especially among Jews because of the Gasporus and long period they were in exile and still are. There is a closeness that develops, which is supportive. People who identify strongly with a group like that get a lot of support from it, which is good. That's fine.
Religion, on the level of organized religion, I see as menace to humanity. It's one of the problems we suffer from. Religion as a personal experience and cultural experience is something else.
Q. What is your son's religious identity?
A. Well, I always told the children I want to

raise them as human beings and leave it to them whether it's b e a n or b e i n g s. I think they have become -- my son is not identified. He did not practice. His wife is not Jewish. They don't practice religion of any kind. They are not athetist. They are not militantly opposed to religion. I am not either. I would not call it as an thesis. I am opposed to organized religion. That doesn't mean I am opposed to the idea of religion as such.

Q. There is a big controversy even among Jews what it means to be a Jew.

A. Of course.

Q. Ethnic orientation, is it a religious orientation. I am very curious for someone whose parents were both ethnic Jewish but converted and you were raised as a Christian, if you identify yourself as being Jewish and what it means to you?

A. That's a very good question. I would identify myself as Jewish, ethnically and culturally Jewish. A Jew deprived of his heritage. I know very little about it. It's a fact. It's nothing I can do about it. It's much to late. Even when I was in my 40s it was too late to do much about that.

Many of my friends, most of my friends are Jewish. They are foreigners, Europeans or American. My wife -- My first wife was not. My second marriage was Jewish.

That marriage lasted 32 years. I would consider myself a ethnic Jew. Religiously, no, I do not consider myself a Jew. I know nothing about the religion. I have been inside a synagogue maybe five, six times in my life. I find that a strange experience.

I have great trouble with -- I travel a lot. My friends say why don't you go to Isreal? I have a love hate relationship with that country. I can not get myself to go there. I am sort of afraid of what my reaction would be. I am very opposed to what is happening there today politically. I can well understand it. I don't like it. I don't like what I see. I don't think it's my place to be critical. I don't have that experience. I fully understand, it's easy to criticize from the outside but I still don't like it. I can't live with that. If I went there, knowing full well the country is divided, I just don't know how I would do that. I can't go there as a tourist. People go there and see the sights. I can't do that. So I never have been there.

Q. You said when you go into a temple or synagoge it's a funny feeling.

A. It's a strange experience. I can't describe it. I often get very annoyed. A very close friend of mine, American had his son's bar mitsvah and I went to that. The rabbi who presided on this occasion

made a long speech in English, at Temple Immanuel. It was an extremely sexist speech in which he confused children with boys. Girls didn't exist. I became more and more aware and got angrier and angrier. It's a strange experience. I always felt maybe there ought to be some wisdom there. I didn't find it.

I also find to my great unhappiness very many Jews, in San Francisco particularly, are prejudiced against blacks, Asians and that upsets me deeply because they don't understand anything. They learned nothing from their experiences.

I started my business in 1956. Around 1965 or 66 I became aware, together with a few other engineers. I was not the only one by a long shot. The engineering profession in San Francisco was lilly white. There were a sprinkling of Asians but no blacks. At that time the federal government ran a program of encouraging, of providing money for training disadvantaged people. It was the Urban League.

Myself and a few colleagues got together and formed a nonprofit corporation, called the Engineering Society Committee for Manpower Training and we used that money to form consortiums of small companies to train disadvantaged minority people in the engineering field and getting reimbursement from the federal government for part of

this.

This is still active today and I am still a director, although I am not very active now. I was president for a while and I enjoyed that. I enjoyed that tremendously. In away, America has been good to me and I am sort of paying it back.

Q. I wanted to ask a couple questions about the Australian camp. Maybe I am being redundant. Can you tell me what the population of the internees in the camp was and what a typical day was like for you from beginning to end?

A. There were two camps. Each approximately a thousand people in it. They were housed in huts. The huts had down the center two tiers of bunks. That was about all the hut was, a sleeping place. There was washing and sanitary facilities and dining facilities in the kitchen.

Typical day, there was roll call in the morning, fairly early. We were counted to make sure nobody escaped. Where they would go to I don't know. Then we went about our business.

Almost everybody had a job. Very few people choose to sit around. It's pretty sad. Some of the older people. There were people in the camp from 16 through 65. Some of the older people couldn't or didn't want to work.

Most of the people between 16 and 50 or 55 did something.
Q. Of course these are all men?
A. All men, yes. There were doctors. There was a small hospital, which was manned by ourselves. We treated the soldiers. They had far less medical attention there.
Q. Were there any camp industries?
A. No.
Q. Did the camp make any products?
A. No. There was a camp economy. We had our own money. We were allowed to issue money, which was backed by the Australian currency, so to speak. We got paid. People who paid got paid. There was a canteen and with the money you could buy cigarettes and candy and stuff like that.
People got money sent to them from the outside that was converted to the camp currency and you could spend it.
Q. Was it printed inside the camp?
A. No. It was printed in Hays, the little town. There was a newspaper. It's called the River Rina News. It still exists to this day. Last year I visited and they printed it.
The artist in the camp designed the plates, did the engraving, and they printed them for us. The guards did not realize how subversive these men were. We are here

because we are here. All the sheep with the names on them. They didn't understand that until somebody pointed it out and it was too late. The money was in circulation. To this day the money is collectors items.
Q. You started to talk about your experience last year at the reunion.
A. Oh, yes. That was quite a moving experience. First we went to Hay, to the place where the camp was. The town has not grown. It's about the same number of people. They put on an incredible show for us. There was streamers across the Main Street saying Welcome the Dunera boys. They called us Dunera boys from the movie which everybody had seen. The Chamber of Commerce put on a barbecue for us and dinner with speeches in which they all acknowledged freely that this was a mistake.
They then unveiled a plaque in the place where the camp had been. There is no sign of the camp left. Which says that this is in memory of the two thousand Jewish refugees who were shipped over by mistake.
There was also celebration in Melbourne, which I didn't attend. You couldn't do everything. Went to Sydney. In Sydney, at the dockside when we arrived, on the day we arrived there was a ceremony attended by five or six hundred people. The governor general came and addressed us, and spoke freely about the mistake that had

been made.
The group, the two thousand -- of the two thousand, about a thousand remained in Australia. Today there is maybe five or six hundred still alive. Many of them became very prominent in Australia. One good friend of mine, his name is Fred Gruen, a Viennese, became a Professor of Economics at the National University in Canberra and is an advisor to the governor and prime minister, economic advisor.
It was quite moving to see my friend sitting next to the governor and see him addressed by his first name.
There is a high court judge on the ship, several university professors. It was felt through Australian society. It was quite moving to see the change. At the time we arrived there was total hostility, lack of understanding what was happening and now it's quite different.
Q. When you arrived there was total hostility from whom? I thought you said the Australians were quite naive?
A. The soldiers were naive. Decent people. They didn't hate us, but didn't understand the whole thing. The civilian population, the newspapers wrote horror stories about the dangerous people shipped there from Europe. Generally there was hostility. They were

booing us when we arrived.
Q. You said earlier that the movie that was made called Dunera boys was fictionalized and there were some things wrong with it. Could you tell us how the movie was wrong?
A. Yes. Do you know Bob Hoskins the actor? He was the only -- he is a very good chap. The story was developed of a musician refugee who comes to England and meets this girl, who is the sister of Bob Hoskins who is a Cockney fishmonger.
(At this time the interview was recessed)
A. The ship itself was treated rather shortly. There was no talk about the torpedo attack, which I think would have made good cimema. There was a lot of talk about the mistreatment, which was very factual. He must have had a lot of detailed information about that. There was a lot of some rather good scenes about the trip from the ship to the camp with box lunches. I remember I opened up the box lunch and there was a banana and orange. I couldn't believe my eyes. We hadn't seen fresh fruit for months.
You see in the movie people sitting with a banana, there was language, guards trying to speak Italian to us and Cockney answers. The camp Commander, what did he have? He didn't understand what he had. He was told he

had to look after some Italian prisoners but who were these people?

To see how they relaxed and finally there wasn't much guarding being done. Where would we go anyhow? There was no place to escape to. We were perfectly happy. We were looked after. The camp was well organized. We wanted out, in a constructive way. Not running away.

There was scenes. There would be east end coffee house in the Australian desert. It was well done.

Q. Was it accurate?

A. Fairly accurate. He had stories in there about one orthodox boy who escaped from the camp and wandered into town and met this girl and she seduced him. He went back every night to the camp, and out to see her. This would have been totally impossible. A lot of drama like that, which may have made a good movie but had nothing to do with our experience.

Q. You mentioned attending some Rosenberg meetings. Could you tell us what those were like and what your orientation to that was?

A. This whole Rosenberg hullabaloo was inexplicable to me. There was no hard evidence. To me this was a witch hunt. I was curious who the people were and I wanted to help. I went to a few meetings and there was talk about injustices done to the Rosenbergs and

collected money. I gave them some money.

Q. You think someone got your name at that point and that could be related to the shakedown later on?

A. As far as I understood they took license plates. They went out to the parked car and took license plates numbers and got the name from that.

The way the question was posed to me, I was quite afraid of that. That really was the one thing that could have done me a great deal of harm. The investigator asked me if I received any literature about Rosenberg meetings. I said I get a lot of literature. I can't remember.

He did not pursue this any further. This was lucky. If he had, I would have had to lie in which they caught me. I would have had to say yes, I was there. That would have been an opening for him.

In hindsight it was quite funny. At one point he played his trump card. He leaned back in his seat. He said "Mr. Guttmann, are you now or have you ever been a member of the Mental Health Society"? Would you believe that?

I said "Yes, would you like to see my membership card"?

"What is that? What do you get out of that? Is it like insurance"?

I said "No, they have semi-monthly meetings which I

enjoy". That unsettled him completely. He expected that to be a great find.

Then he got onto my political orientation and the stenographer said "Should I take that down"?

"Damn right you take that down. I am entitled to have political opinions". That went by without much problem. At the end he said this could be used in deportation proceedings and I would be advised and that was that.

Q. So they felt you had attended the Rosenberg meetings or did you deny it?

A. I didn't have to deny it. They didn't ask point blank if I attended or not. They asked if I got literature about the Rosenbergs. I said semi-truthfully I get a lot of literature. I can't remember. But they had a question about my tax returns. Had I claimed deduction for experiences and stuff likes that. I couldn't understand what they were after.

It was very funny. When I first applied for citizenship I was examined. I was asked questions about the constitution and so forth. I think it was a judge. Complimented me on my good English and all that and nothing happened.

I went to the department to ask questions. They went to a filing cabinet and pulled out my file, with a

red tag on it and put it back. And said you have to see so and so.

I went to see the man and he told me I was being investigated. I said "Well, would you like to ask some questions now"?

He said "No no, that will be done in good time". I went home. They investigated me. The investigator went to my office. I was working for another company. He said to my secretary "What does he talk about when he doesn't talk about business"?

She said "Oh, he is brilliant".

The man said "Oh, those are the ones we have to watch".

Then he went to my neighbor, a fashion reporter for the Chronical, Christian Scientist, and he said to her "Is he an atheist"? She was very angry. He said "Sorry, Ma'am, we have to ask these questions. Because one ism leads to another: We became very close friends after that and we made up isms, like alcoholism leads to rheumatism. It wasn't funny. These are highlights which made it a lot easier.

In a way they did me a big favor. I would be now a retired civil servant. This way I have my own office.

Q. It was a catalyst for your going out on your own?

A. Oh, yes. I went to work for a consulting engineer after that and discovered this field and then went on my own. You never know. There is always some good to be had from most of these experiences.

Interesting thing, during the meeting in Australia there was a question whether we really hated the British or resented this. My feelings are mixed. I am not very happy with the British to this day. I have feelings about them, but I have no great resentment. They did me a favor. The house we lived in in London was bombed a few days after we left and I would have died.

I go to England quite frequently. Australians were very good to us. I certainly have no complaints there.

Q. Were you asked, have you returned to Vienna?

A. I started going back in the early '60s. The first time was quite an experience. I went with my wife. I felt very insecure. I held her hand most of the time, would not speak German, pretended to be an American tourist. It was a strange experience because Vienna had changed quite a bit but also had not changed.

There was one experience which I will never forget. We were walking down one of the streets in my neighborhood where I use to live and I suddenly remembered I promised to call somebody. I said to my wife I forgot to call so

and so. If you go around the corner there is a Post Office. When you come in the door to the right there is a telephone booth. By God, there it was. So I made my phone call.

Many things had not changed. Today it's a totally different city. In the '60s it was quite recognizable as the place I lived in.

I met with my colleagues from college and that was very interesting because in the beginning they were falling all over each other to tell me the wonderful things they done for Jews and they were democrats, everyone of them. Then as the years went by, I went back regularly every few years. Every time I went back we had a reunion. Gradually they got more and more, they reverted, you know. In the end in 1988 I went back for the 50th anniversary of my graduation. There was quite a ceremony. They rented a room at the United Nations building. They have this every year, sort of an annual meeting where the older, the senior alumni being honored or recognized.

They had one table for the class of 1938. The new rector came to me and said he heard I had come from America and could I tell a little bit about myself. I told him I had been in Australia, in England and he was very interested.

He said "Mr. Guttmann, why did you leave Vienna"? Can you imagine that? A man close to my age, not much younger. Obviously was there and knew it all. So I told him because I am Jewish. He said "Oh, I am so sorry".

Now was he sorry because I am Jewish or sorry because he made a faux pas.

But then of course Waldheim. That man is a real problem because it's not what he did. I don't know what he did. It's what he stands for. He allows himself to be supported by the right wing, which makes it respectable to be an ex-Nazi. You don't have to hide that. You can be free about it. In general these people are anti-German. They no longer, the pan-Germanism has disappeared. But everything else is still there the way it was, anti-Semitism, fascism.

Austria is a very repressive country today. I was in Austria in 87. 87 I went to a conference in Berlin where I gave a talk to a group of mechanical engineers. On the way I spent a week in Vienna. I found Berlin to be a western city. This is long before the wall fell. It was an open city with newspapers reporting everything that went on, from good to bad, with opinions being freely expressed. I felt much more at home there than I did in Vienna.

I wrote a letter to the newspaper in Vienna, and

got a nice short letter from the editor, but it wasn't published.

Q. The letter was about?

A. I wrote about Waldheim. I wasn't accusing him of being a Nazi. He accepts support from this group and he should repudiate that. He sets a moral tone. He has no political power. He is not like our President. He's a figurehead. He sets the moral tone of the country. Quite properly he is not received in this country. His best friend is Yassir Arafat. There is a moral tone that is very damaging to Austria.

There are many young Austrians, there are very good movies made today. There is one trilogy. I don't know if you are aware of that. There is a Jewish film festival in San Francisco every year. In 85 they showed the Dunera Boys. As one of the inmates I was asked to talk about it in the theater. It was quite interesting.

They also showed this Austrian trilogy, which was made by a film maker by the name of Corti. C o r t i. It was very, very good. It was real insightfull. It was made for television. It was shown in television in Austria. It was not well received and died there.

I believe it has been shown in this country in the movie theaters with subtitles. It was a story of a boy my age who came home one morning after the anschluss and

found his father lying dead in bed. He had been beaten to death. The land lady came in and said, there was no mother apparently. She said so sorry, he is such a nice man. And how are you going to pay the rent now.

The policeman came in and said he was so nice, he always gave me present. And whatever happened to your mother's jewelry? Maybe you should get out of the country. If you give me that maybe I can help you.

That was very, very factual. Finally in the last installment he comes back to Austria as an American soldier, with the Army of occupation. It was well done.

There are others not quite so good. There was one movie about -- I forget. In fact, that was shown at the film festival and I met the director. I didn't meet Mr. Corti. That wasn't quite so good.

There are young people in Austria who are more internationally minded and more aware of the world but very small minority.

Q. I wonder when you first found out about the atrocities, when you first heard some hint that the final solution was occurring.

A. When the anschluss came in Austria there was instant violence. I am sure you heard about the women in fur coats who had to scrub the streets because -- Hitler declared a plebescite, which he might have won at

that point because he was well organized, not because the Austrians supported him. They didn't. The Nazis recognized that. The anschluss came before the plebescite. There were political slogans. Jews were recruited, people would go to the homes and get them. The women had to put on their fur coats and go on hands and knees with caustic soda and scrub this off the sidewalks and walls. People would surround them and spit at them and jeer. People were taken away to concentration camps and some came back and we began hearing what is going on in there instantly. We knew that in 38.

Before that, between 33 and 38 you got occasionally stories, but you didn't know was it true, was it not true.

It was interesting, when I went looking for a job. My father insisted after graduation I should look for a job. So I did. I went to answer ads. They would look at my graduation papers and say when can you start? Can you start tomorrow?

I said there is one little problem. They would say we can't use you. Why don't you go to Germany, it's easier there. There was element of truth there. There was a rule of law where Jews were sort of relegated to a minor citizen status, but that was subserved. They were given certain rights. Not the same rights as non-Jewish. But it was predictable. They knew where they were. They

could live in that environment. Whereas on another level, they were just as brutal as the Austrians. They had concentration camps.

The real final solution did not start until after the anschluss. We heard about that very quickly. There was no secret about it. I can't to this day understand how a German could not have know that.

Q. Did you hear things in the camp in England and when you were in Australia did you continue to hear things that were occurring?

A. Oh, yes, sure. The British didn't believe it either. They thought they were exaggerating. The Germans are kind to their dogs and trains run on time and how could this be?

But the whole role of Austria, the Austrians to this day see themselves as victims, which is far from the truth. In fact, the birth place of Nazism was southern Germany and Austria, Bavaria.

The concentration camp commanders, very large proportion was Austrians. Even today you occasionally find one surfaces when one is found to be living under an assumed name, being accused of atrocities.

Q. On your visits to Vienna and Austria since the war do you have any sense, have you been there enough to have a sense Austria is more or less anti-Semitic than

it was at the time Hitler rose to power?

A. I think it's unchanged frankly. It's somewhat under control. Well, there is no official support for anti-Semitic atrocities. The Jewish community in Vienna publishes a magazine, monthly I believe it is. That's full of stories of people being accosted on the street car, because they have a crooked nose and are Jewish. There is an interesting phenomena happening in Vienna.

The second district, which was largely Jewish, a Jewish ghetto. Of course, Jews disappeared. They are gone. There is a new wave of immigration from Russia, particularly from Georgia, and people came through Vienna. Vienna was a resettlement camp. Instead of going to Isreal or American. They stayed. Austrians let them stay. They settled in the second district, not because it once was a Jewish Ghetto but because it's close to the Danube. The Danube is where the Russian sailors come.

They all speak German and they want to stock up on transistor radios, calculators and jeans and so forth. They open blocks and blocks of little junk shops where you can buy all these things. The Russian sailors come in there, they speak Russian to the Georgians and get their purchases. There is a new ghetto there. The children go to local school. They learn German. But they are Jews.

It's going to happen all over again.
Q. That area is called the second district?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you have anything else you would like to discuss that you haven't had an opportunity to talk about?
A. Not really. I think I have covered most of what I had in mind.
I think this is a great thing you are doing here. How many people have you interviewed to this point?
I consider myself very lucky. Outside of this dunera and the 18 months of internment, which weren't all that bad either. I had no great harrowing experiences.
My father's family, there were two brothers and four sisters. My father's brother and his wife and three of the four sisters, one of them with her husband, all went to concentration camps and disappeared. One cousin disappeared, went to concentration camp with his wife. But surprisingly one sister and husband and daughter, two daughters of my father's brother, and one sister and husband and they all escaped.
My mother's family all got out. Everybody got out. Except one cousin, who got as far as Paris. Lived through Paris all through the war. Went to see her parents in South America after the war. Went back to Paris and committed suicide. She had a lover who deserted her or

something. But everybody else got out. Very high percentage of my family. I think there are survivor families and there are families that just couldn't do it. It's something in some people, a drive to survive and others don't have it.
That's about all I have to add. I think I have pretty much exhausted the subject.