

Interview with NORBERT FRIEDMANN
HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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TODAY IS OCTOBER 24, 1990. I AM EMILY SILVERMAN, AN INTERVIEWER WITH THE HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA. TODAY WE ARE TALKING WITH NORBERT FRIEDMANN. ASSISTING IN THE INTERVIEW TODAY ARE RICHARD KUSHMAN AND DORIS OBER.

GOOD AFTERNOON, MR. FRIEDMANN.

MR. FRIEDMANN: Good afternoon.

Q COULD YOU TELL ME YOUR NAME AND YOUR AGE IF YOU DON'T MIND?

A My name is Norbert Friedmann. I am 79 and a half years old.

Q AND WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

A In Vienna, Austria.

Q A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY IN VIENNA?

A I was born of Polish immigrants who came in the early 1900's to Austria. They were poor people. My mother had a brother who was quite well-to-do who wanted to adopt me, which I refused because I felt my place was with my parents and not him. And I went to school there; went to middle school and had to stop in my 14th year because I felt I had to support my family. In 1934 I married my wife, Charlotte, and

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we were living in the Second District and at this time already we had --- it was always in Austria and still exists in Austria, so there was no change there --- but I started my own business and everything seemed to go well until 1937, '38, '37, we had the, I will say, revolution in Austria, where the Social Democrats were decimated and Christian Democrats had the upper hand (Shosnick) was at this time Chancellor of Austria and there was quite some turn-around in politics in Austria. I felt that we were very close to being taken over by Hitler at this time already, and I suggested since I had at this time a possibility of going out of Austria and going to Australia, I was supposed to take a job there, but my wife didn't want to leave her parents alone so I stayed, and we got to November, '38, where the situation was that the Polish immigrants in France shot Consul ---whatever he was --- and this night, on November 9th, we listened to the underground radio from (Strasborg) where we found out that the rat, the German Consul in France, died; so I gave my wife power of attorney and I said, "I don't know what's going to happen tomorrow, but keep that." My father-in-law was an upholsterer and had permission from the Gestapo in the community there to school Jewish people who wanted to emigrate to get the trade. Up to this time I was still working around very nonchalantly. I had blond hair and blue eyes and nobody took me for a Jewish person, so I still worked at the time from my own shop, just from the back

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selling people merchandise and on this evening my father-in-law wanted me to attend that course in order to be safe. But I listened to his suggestion, went in the morning, and had notification from the Jewish community and the Gestapo that I was entitled to the lessons there and the head of SS men came in --- most probably had a bunch of us Jews together there, and made it easy for him --- and tore all the papers and put us into a police car and borne us to the first police station. On the way to the police station, the Second District, by the way, I saw already the temple burning where we were married and all hell broke loose. We were put into a cell there, jammed together for quite some hours, and towards the evening we were taken and transported to the main police station, Ninth District. There we were put again in cells and after spending all day without food, without being able to go to the bathroom or anything else, we finally were given one, how you call now --- a hot dog. But we didn't have a chance to eat that because we were called for the interrogation. I was interrogated and was asked what I did to leave Austria. And I showed them my letter from my cousin in the United. States. He was giving us every day with that so we could go to the United. States. They found it very interesting, tore up the letter, cut and took a big scissors, cut part of my hair and said you're not going anywhere. You're going to Dachau; and that day we were separated from the other ones.

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That night we were taken to the train station, and lined up to board on the train. Since I am a small fellow I was put in front of the whole line, in the front of me were a few soldiers with carbines facing the carbine toward me, and they were very much amused that my knees started shaking, and finally we boarded the train. We were sitting, I believe it was anyhow, double amount that is usually provided for sitting in those compartments. We were told to look up into the electric lamp there and then we moved. One elderly man couldn't look into the light any longer and one of those SS people shouted at me to hit him in the face to wake him up which I certainly couldn't do, so he hit me instead. Until we reached, I don't know exactly, because it was dark and I couldn't see exactly where we stopped again, and were put into cattle trains. We were pushed and handled like cattle, people shaking from fear were standing there, and we finally reached Dachau. We were brought into the Dachau camp and one of the fellows which I see standing in front of me was a nice-looking man, had black hair, and as I saw him going out of the train --- his hair was white. He lost his mind and shouted at the SS men to stop that nonsense and let us go and take a little rest and he told him to shut up and since he couldn't do it, he shot him right in front of us. Then we were put into different camps, and I can show you what block, I believe it was 22nd, or 22. It's on the card there. There we had our routine. It was to get up at 4:00 o'clock in the morning and we had in the room a supervisor or something,

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those were people who were interned there for political reasons, and, the other reason, they had charge of us there.

Morning, what happened to me when I got up in the morning, and went to the bathroom to get washed and do my duties or whatever, this fella thought I took too long, and so he took a bucket of ice water and threw it at me. So we had to march around, at this time you didn't go to work but left to march there in the minus 20 degrees or 30 degrees winter temperature, wearing the very well-known now, striped pants and jacket, and could not talk to the other ones and the SS man passed us, he just hit us over the head with something.

In the evening when we came back to that place there were some Orthodox Jews still there and they tried to make a (minium) and help them and aid them in the dark there, praying to God that nobody catches them. Then we were sleeping on bunks with straw. Some people were quite desperate. In the morning you got up, and you couldn't find your shoes, or you got the wrong shoes because the shoes the other one had didn't fit. They took it and you had to suffer with those things then; and they took all the people to the place, some of them sick. We had to hold them so they didn't fall down, because if one was sick, he was shot right away. This went on for quite some time until we were told that we should get to a bathhouse. At this time we didn't know what a bathhouse meant, so we didn't have any baths because of the length of time that we were there. We were just washing up in the cold water or

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whatever, not knowing what was ahead of us. So, thanks God, it was not early, yet we were told to come another time. So this went on for quite a few weeks. Luckily, just a short time, days before I guess, this was installed already for operation, let's say, my wife got me out of the camp. I saw quite a lot of people there not making it. We shared a piece of bread together if that was possible. Tried to help each other. That's about the life we had there.

Q HOW DID YOUR WIFE GET YOU OUT?

A My wife went to the Gestapo daily and this is what she told me. After I didn't come back she went to the Gestapo waited for hours to be able to get there to prove to them why I deserved to go to the American Counsel and just sign the paper so we would be able to leave, but since I was in Dachau they didn't take the women from Dachau --- internees --- this had been done for months and months and months and months. Finally she passed the Gestapo in the (Mar platz) in Vienna. It was Christmastime, there was a sign downstairs, "No office hours for Aryans." I don't know why but she took the chance; went into the dark building and she knew where the fellow was at his office who had my case, so she went up the staircase there, went to that office, knocked on the door and the man came out and asked her what she wanted. "Don't you know there's no office hours?" and she said, "Not for Aryans. I'm not Aryan." So he was stunned and took her in. That's the beginning of how she could get me out.

Q HOW LONG HAD YOU BEEN THERE?

A I went in there on November the 10th and I left on April 29, towards the end of April, and in May, in the first or second week of May, we left, and lost, my wife and I, lost all our family.

My parents died as far as I can know, died in concentration camp, in one of those concentration camps; I don't remember exactly which one. So my wife's parents, all our family, died there, let's say, they were put into gas chambers more likely. The only remaining are my wife, myself, and a cousin in Israel, that's about it.

Q OKAY, JUST A COUPLE OF MORE QUESTIONS. DID YOU HAVE ANY BROTHERS OR SISTERS?

A I had one brother, and he got out of Austria and over the border. He was not waiting for anything. The first thing I heard from him again was when he was interned with Jews in France after the war. He came out and he wanted to remain in Austria because he was an actor and felt he had to get German literature back again. Even so, I try to convince him it was the most foolish thing I ever heard, but he didn't believe in it and I never heard from him again.

Q WHAT WAS HIS NAME?

A Max.

Q WAS HE OLDER OR YOUNGER?

A Younger, three years younger.

Q WHAT WAS YOUR PARENT'S NAMES?

A My father was Leo and my mother was Regina.

Q WAS YOUR FAMILY ORTHODOX OR ---?

A Well, my grandparents were Orthodox. I can still see my grandfather, also a small man, taking me to synogogue Friday nights, also to school Saturday mornings, I went with him. My uncle was --- brother of my mother --- was committee member of the synogogue in the 20th District.

Q WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE SYNOGOGUE?

A It was the (Cloakigas) it was a larger synogogue, privately kept. I was bar mitzvahed in that synogogue. Uncle gave me a big party and asked me again to join him which I refused again. But that is about all I can tell you.

Q ALL RIGHT. TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS OR YOUR PARENTS' BUSINESS.

A I started, 14 years old, to look for a job. I went to a company, well, I didn't look for that kind, the main thing for me was to get some money, so there was an ad in the paper I saw, ladies garment manufacturing company, and I went there and introduced myself. There were some other boys there for the job and he came to me, the owner of the company, asked me, how come I am alone and not with my parents, so I said to him, I thought you want me to be employed, not my parents, so he asked me to bring my father in the afternoon and I got the job. Then I worked there for ten years.

Q UP UNTIL THE KRISTALLNACHT?

A No, for ten years and then I tried to go on my own.

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Q WHAT KIND OF BUSINESS WAS THAT?

A Well, I went into the same kind of business. The garment business.

Q HOW DID YOU MEET YOUR WIFE?

A Well, I was introduced to her on a Sunday on the beach.

Q AND DOES YOUR WIFE COME FROM A POLISH IMMIGRANT FAMILY?

A No, her father was Hungarian and her mother was born in Vienna.

Q DID YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN BEFORE YOU WERE SENT ---?

A No, my daughter is now 45, was born in New York.

Q OKAY. SO WHEN KRISTALLNACHT HAPPENED YOU WERE IN YOUR HOME. CAN YOU GO OVER AGAIN OF HOW EXACTLY YOU HAD GONE WITH SOME PAPERS TO VERIFY THAT YOU COULD GO TO THE UNITED STATES OR SOMETHING?

A Well, I had the letter from my American cousin, who wrote me that the affidavit was underway to the consulate in Vienna and that everything was okay so far as regulations there and they were looking forward to seeing me.

Q AND THIS WAS THE FALL OF 1938?

A Yes, in the fall of 1938, as soon as the whole thing started I went from one consulate to the other, was standing there nights to get some kind of possibility to get out of Austria, and when I got this letter I knew I had something there already and then I carried that with me but this was hoped, give them satisfaction that I try to leave.

Q SO AND THEN YOU WERE ROUNDED UP BY THE GESTAPO?

A And then I was rounded up in the upholstery shop because as I said before, it was easy for them to go to places where they had a certain amount of Jews there, instead of looking for individual people.

Q WERE YOU ROUNDED UP WITH ANY OTHER FRIENDS OR FAMILY?

A I didn't know the people, my father-in-law was also taken but he was brought into a different police station and he got free. He was a sickly man and he got free, and they didn't take him at this time.

Q WHAT WAS HIS NAME?

A Julius Feldman.

Q AND WHAT WAS HIS WIFE'S NAME?

A Emma.

Q SO ONCE YOU GOT TO DACHAU, YOU STARTED TO TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT WHAT YOUR DAYS WERE LIKE; YOU GOT UP AT 4:00 A.M. AND YOU STOOD IN LINE AND YOU MARCHED IN CIRCLES AND WHAT WAS THE REST OF YOUR DAY LIKE?

A Marching, marching, marching; until as I said to this one fellow, it was quite inhumane, I'd say. The other dupes were allowed to go into their rooms and warm up a little but we couldn't. We were standing there waiting until the evening, until we got our food, our so-called food.

Q AND WHAT WAS THAT?

A Some kind of soup. Once we got herring which the

other inmates didn't want to eat and threw it out, and I thought it was the best thing I had had for a long time. And that was about it --- what we did at the time that I was there, all the labor and everything started after I was gone.

Q DID YOU KNOW ANYBODY? DID YOU RECOGNIZE ANYBODY IN DACHAU?

A Well, I made a few friends, sure. I made a few friends; I made friends. I didn't see them afterwards anymore but the fellow I slept with, next to each other, we tried to laugh, we tried to do the best we can to help each other, we tried to stay alive. We tried to follow --- when we came to --- we had different tricks. We tried to follow, but one thing, when we came, the first thing we did, they gave us cards that we should write to people. We were alive, we were in Dachau and we wanted \$20 a month or so sent to us. I knew my wife didn't have anything there because our furnitures were taken, piano was taken, everything was taken while I was still in Vienna. So I knew she didn't have anything there, so I wrote a card and as you will see in the card there, I inserted one word, I said "up to \$20." She understood so she sent me ten marks, excuse me, not dollars, marks; and so the money was taken from us for the brooms or rags or whatever we were supposed to wash or clean our barracks with. This money was taken from us and what they tried to do was get the money from our family and keep it. They had a canteen there also where we were allowed to buy some milk or something like this later on, after a few --- two or three months.

We had a different supervisor and this fellow was in there because he was a Social Democrat, so he was quite liberal and he seemed to befriend us two fellows there and he gave us as an order to take the empty milk can in the morning and bring it to the canteen and we saw our way out and so we took that can, took the milk can there, went to the canteen, standing there a little bit warming up, took that same can back, put it back in the barrack and spent about half a day back and forth and that's the way we helped ourselves.

Q IS THERE ANY OTHER TRICKS YOU REMEMBER?

A Well, it was really interesting that Jews, even in this situation, looked for the lighter side of life. They tried to have some comedian give us some relief of our things there, so those fellows went from barrack to barrack and did their shtick there and what we tried to do was outsmart the people there because the elderly and more religious people et al, who had to be forced even to eat a piece of bread because it wasn't kosher enough maybe. It's hard to say for me, because I didn't have somebody else, when we came to Dachau, as I explained before, we came in a cattle train. The German Jews were brought in, at least they had their pajamas and had some money with them --- I mean that was not taken away from them. And I saw them eating cake and as I explained to you before, we were starved. We didn't have anything for 24 to 36 hours. We asked them to maybe give us a piece of that. They said they couldn't do that because they didn't know how long they were going to live. They had to save everything they had.

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Q HOW OFTEN WERE YOU ABLE TO WRITE TO YOUR WIFE?

A I believe it was once a month.

Q DID YOU HAVE TO ASK FOR 20 MARKS EVERY MONTH?

A I beg your pardon?

Q DID YOU HAVE TO ASK FOR 20 MARKS EVERY MONTH?

A Yeah, yeah.

Q AND WAS THERE ANY PENALTY IF YOUR FAMILY DIDN'T
SEND YOU 20 MARKS?

A Well, they didn't say anything about it to me and it was understood there was a reason for a few of the boys, varies from time to time, and one of them was a neighbor from the district that I was living, so in order that my wife should know a little bit more about getting me free so I wrote in one of the cards, please visit Uncle whatever his name was, and give him my regards. So that she knows how to go to him and find out what to do and so forth; a code.

Q DID SHE WRITE LETTERS BACK TO YOU?

A Yes, I got letters also once a month but what I got mostly was censored letters so I didn't see, I didn't see much of those letters.

MR. KUSHMAN: AND NO 20 MARKS IN THE ENVELOPE?

A No, certainly not, but she understood. The women got all the cards, went to the Jewish community and compared the cards there and she saw all of them say send me 20 marks, and she couldn't understand what the "up to" meant but then she figured all the time that ten was good enough for me.

MISS SILVERMAN: DID THE PEOPLE LEFT IN DACHAU---WOULD TRY TO HELP EACH OTHER, COMPARE NOTES?

A Yeah, yeah. They met usually in case like this, if you are bound by mishaps or so you get together and you talk about it and you try to help one another, and you try to help the other one.

Q WHAT WAS THE () PLACE THAT YOU TALKED ABOUT?

A That was a large, like a stadium, where all the barracks there were two hundred in one of those rooms and I don't know how much, I believe there were 20 or 30 barracks or whatever, and you would have marched up there in the morning to be counted so you were standing there from 5:00 o'clock to 7:00 or 8:00 o'clock and you were counted and everybody had to appear there, and that was one of the harder times because you had to hold up the people. There were people that were sick and people who had high fever, and you couldn't leave them in the barracks because otherwise they won't be there anymore, and so you tried to prop them up and hold them and so anyway, as I said, we had to march and march and we had conversations and I was looking for the SS people and kept my hands in my pockets until someone came by, and then appeared to march with everybody else.

Q SO TELL ME ABOUT THE DAY YOU WERE RELEASED FROM DACHAU?

A I was taken to the Gestapo and had to sign that I gave up my citizenship and then move, be out of Austria, I

believe in ten days, or something like that.

MR. KUSHMAN: WHERE DID YOU SIGN THAT PAPER?

A At the Gestapo.

Q AT THE CAMP?

A At the Gestapo --- no, in Vienna, the main office of the Gestapo.

Q WHEN YOU WERE RELEASED FROM THE CAMP?

A They brought me to the Gestapo.

Q THEY TOOK YOU FROM DACHAU BACK TO VIENNA?

A Took me to Vienna and then was transported in one of those police cars to the Gestapo and there I had to sign a release.

Q WAS YOUR WIFE THERE?

A No, she was not there. She didn't know exactly when I would be there at this time. We didn't have an apartment anymore. My wife was living again with her parents and I walked to our apartment.

Q AND THEN HOW DID YOU THEN --- WHAT DID YOU DO WHEN YOU GOT BACK?

A First thing I did, I went for my passport, got my passport with the visa there and we had permission from the American Consulate, any time I am released I can appear and that was also something. We went there and it was just the end of the quota at this time. You had quotas; Austria had so many people going and so forth, and we were called for our physical. Doctor came out, one of those secretaries of the Consul and said those that had the physical behind them are accepted well enough, they'll have the visa. The other ones, the quota is closed and please go

home and wait for the new quota. So that was one of the last. We went with the Aquitania from Cherbourg. We were the only two immigrants coming to the United States at this time.

Q I JUST WANT TO GO BACK A LITTLE AGAIN BEFORE KRISTALLNACHT. YOU SAID THAT YOUR WIFE HAD NO FURNITURE; WHEN WAS ALL YOUR FURNITURE TAKEN AWAY?

A When Hitler marched into Austria it was in March. We tried to get --- my business was finished; customers didn't pay anymore, the Jewish didn't pay because they wanted to keep the money. The others didn't pay because I am Jewish so there was nothing left. So we tried to get money together so we could get tickets to leave for the ship and so forth. So we advertised to sell the piano and stuff like that and one woman came up and tried the piano and she said she was coming in the afternoon to pick it up and pay for it and instead of her, two SS men came and said if you know what's good for you we'll take the piano and that's the end. We lost our furniture piece by piece.

Q AND SO EACH TIME YOU ADVERTISED YOUR FURNITURE?

A No, we advertised only once but that was enough, so they came and picked up. So there was also an incident when the flag was hoisted when Hitler marched in in March as I said. The sun had just come out and it was a rainy day and we had a balcony, and there was one of those where the water was running out from drains, it was blocked up from dirt or something, and my wife went out and opened it up and all the dirty water went on the Nazi flag there underneath us. So two SS men came right up, why

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did we do that? So I was put right away into a room and a friend of ours were put in a room, and the women who were always the stronger ones in things like this, said, do you really hold me so stupid that I, as a Jewess, would purposely put dirty water on your flag? And she took him out and showed him and got away with it.

Q AND THIS IS IN MARCH, 1938?

A '38, yeah.

Q WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER, THAT YOU TOLD YOUR WIFE YOU HAD A FEELING THAT HITLER WAS GOING TO COME INTO POWER?

A No, what I said was I felt after this incident Austria would be taken over completely because there was supposed to be an election, what Austria wanted --- if they wanted Hitler or the government they had there, (Shosnick) and when they came out I felt there wouldn't be any election or anything else. He would be here and he will take over and that's it. So I don't know what's going to happen. He will take the power that is needed.

Q SO THIS WAS IN 1938?

A 1938 in April.

Q APRIL.

A Yeah.

Q SO RIGHT AFTER ---?

A Eight or ninth, when we heard it on the underground, on the radio.

Q WERE YOU ACTIVE IN ANY JEWISH GROUPS OR ANYTHING?

A As a student I was in the Social Democrats movement, not in the Jewish movement.

Q AND WHEN YOU HAD YOUR OWN BUSINESS DID YOU BELONG TO ANY SYNOGOGUE OR ANYTHING?

A Yeah, sure. I belonged to the synogogue and kept my holidays and so on, no question about that, but I was not a religious Jew, let's put it this way.

Q HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR PARENTS AND YOUR FAMILY BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM THIS? BEFORE YOU LEFT GERMANY WERE YOUR PARENTS STILL THERE BEFORE YOU LEFT VIENNA?

A They were there when I left yes. When we left all our parents were there --- through the Red Cross we found out.

Q AFTER THE WAR?

A After the war. In fact, what we did when we came to the United States, there was my wife and the cousin who picked us up from the pier, I think he was one of the finest men, he realized young people, when we got off the ship, he said, "We rented a room for you, you will have an icebox there. We filled it up with food. When do you want to work?" I said, "Tomorrow." When we came in it was Declaration Day, Memorial Day; the next day was free. He said, "You want to work tomorrow?" I said, "Fine," and there was a lady also, Viennese woman, who came here --- what do you call those visas? --- she had enough money to cover herself so she didn't have to work or anything. She's going to pick you up and bring you to my office, and his mother was there also. We had our own little home, midtown New York. She picked us up, the lady and brought us over there. We

were introduced, it was a factory which manufactured cameras. This time those little cameras, one of those what they manufactured, sold retail for a dollar. I couldn't speak very much English, as a matter of fact, I didn't speak English at all, even my wife couldn't. We came to that office there, they gave me the job but I started as a floor boy. What is a floor boy --- somebody who brings the merchandise to the people that work on piece rate. There were 30 girls working there and I had to supply them with material. I didn't know where the material are, I didn't know anything about it. My wife worked in the stockroom, so when they asked me for something I took a part of it, went to the stockroom and showed it to them. My wife said give up, give up, you can't make it. You have --- because there was so much to carry and so much to do and just coming out of the concentration camp, and it was absolutely almost impossible but we made --- I made -- \$15 a week, my wife made \$13 a week. So that cousin of ours spoke to us and said there is only one big thing we still have, our parents, and try to get some money over there. So this lady who brought us to the office that first day, she had acquaintance in Vienna, an Aryan doctor, who wanted to collect some money in the United States. So we took from those \$28 what we had, we took \$5 a week and sent it to this doctor and he, in turn, gave the money to our parents there. Until after the war we got a letter from this doctor in New York, he has to tell us up to this point because we kept on giving that money, because we didn't know

what goes on, but we felt as long as he takes it they will have something there is good enough for us, afterwards we got a letter from him that he has to tell us to this date, I don't remember exactly what the date was, he could supply them with money, but after this they were transported to some of those camps there and it was the worst money we ever got returned. Any more questions?

Q I JUST WANTED TO GO BACK TO DACHAU FOR A MINUTE. WHEN YOU WERE IN DACHAU, YOU TOLD US AN INTERESTING STORY ABOUT THE GERMAN JEWS.

A It was more or less self --- they fear for themselves, so they didn't understand to, I even said to him, look if anything happens to us, all of us are going to be killed so what do you need that for, for at least the last few minutes you can help somebody, but he does nothing.

Q SO DID THE GERMAN JEWS STICK TOGETHER AND THE VIENNESE JEWS STICK TOGETHER?

A Well, I could not say they stuck together or not, because you didn't have, ever have a contact. You had only contact with your next neighbor and as I said before, in a situation like this, it's all the same, every man for himself. You watch out for yourself. You try to do the best you can to stay alive so today maybe I can't say they did it out of spite or anything, it was certainly self-preservation that's all I can say but at the time it wasn't very pleasant to us. I'm very good friends with Germans today.

Q HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT GERMAN UNIFICATION TODAY?

A Very badly, because as far as I am concerned as long as there is a Germany there will always be the military power in Germany --- what I foresee is Germany, in a very short time, will be the richest and largest country in Europe and they will link arms again and the whole thing will start over again. Maybe I am not going to see it anymore but our youth will see it. I was very much against it.

Q DO YOU THINK IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN?

A In my opinion, yes. You can see it even now, that Israel today is again a scapegoat, first they were so-called "in the background," then when the incident with the stone-throwing about even the Jews today, well, why did the Israelites do that? Nobody lives there, nobody saw when the stones fell, praying at the Wall, if they were hurt or not, hurt, nobody sees that. And what did Bush say, Bush said, well, as soon as the Iraqi thing is over, we're going to have some way out, we have to -- of the Israel and Palestine, what does it mean? The PLO, they --- we get all the passports. They wanted the passports, that's what I see. I don't see very good future for us.

Q MR. KUSHMAN, DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

MR. KUSHMAN: YES, I DO.

Q DO YOU REMEMBER THE NAME OF THE DOCTOR IN AUSTRIA?

A No, no, I don't. As a matter of fact, I never knew his name. I only know the doctor's name here in the United States. I never saw him. I never knew him. All that I

know was that he really supplied our parents with the money, because he increased the medications every time he comes to us, so I really knew he gave them all this money.

Q AND HE WAS NOT JEWISH?

A No.

Q YOUR PARENTS' BUSINESS IN VIENNA, WAS THAT ALSO IN THE GARMENT BUSINESS?

A My parents?

Q DID THEY HAVE A FAMILY BUSINESS?

A My parents didn't have a business at all. We were poor people.

Q YOU HAD TO WORK WHEN YOU WERE 15 OR 14?

A Right. To support my parents.

Q YOU MENTIONED HAVING SEEN A TEMPLE BURN BEFORE YOU, THE TIME THAT YOU WENT?

A On the way to the police, it was already on the 10th of November, it was on Kristallnacht.

Q AND YOU WERE SEPARATED FROM THE GROUP THAT WAS MEETING AT THE UPHOLSTERY?

A I was not separated. The whole group was taken.

Q AND THEY WERE ALL TAKEN TO DACHAU?

A I don't know this. I don't know.

Q YOU WERE SEPARATED OUT OF THAT GROUP?

A Yes, I was separated out of this group. I never saw the people again, as I said. I didn't know the people because it was the first time I went into this group because, until this

(time, I was able --- I had customers who usually talked, who who said if every Jew had been like you. As a matter of fact, I had a certain amount of left-over from my business, I went to one of the stores and I knew he was a Nazi at the time, an illegal Nazi --- look, I have this left, you take it and give me the weigh of the stuff, whatever, you decide. He said, "From you anytime." He took it and paid me for it, so I went in and out of stores at the time and Hitler was in Austria already and nobody asked me questions or anything because as I said before, I was blond, I was blue-eyed. I was young, my face was not different as one of the German faces, you know, so I had no complaints. I was not taken to wash the streets or taken to any of those things.

(Q WHEN YOU WERE SENT TO DACHAU, HOW DID YOUR FAMILY KNOW YOU WERE THERE?

A When they got my card.

Q WHEN YOU WROTE?

A Yeah. They didn't know for two weeks even if I was alive or they didn't know where I was or what happened to me.

Q YOUR WIFE'S ABILITY TO WALK INTO THE OFFICES OF THE GESTAPO AND TO HAVE YOU RELEASED IS QUITE REMARKABLE.

A I think it was most remarkable ever; I think she had the strength, the love for me, to do anything to get me out.

(Q AND IT WAS QUITE REMARKABLE THAT THEY LET YOU OUT?

A Absolutely. There's no question about it. They say it was remarkable, they say it was coincidental, maybe, on the account of the man seeing--- the Gestapo man seeing --- the strength of the woman going on the day where it's forbidden to come in as an Aryan, to find her way up there and to have the courage to come into the office, maybe show --- as a matter of fact, when he gave her the visa for me he said, "What are you youngsters going to do?" and she didn't know what to say because she's afraid he's going to tear the whole thing apart and everything, and she said, "Well, we're going to the United States," and he said to her, "You know, that is the best thing you can do."

Q AND HOW OLD WERE YOU AT THE TIME?

A I was 28.

Q AND WHEN YOU CAME BACK FROM DACHAU, HOW LONG WAS IT BEFORE YOU LEFT VIENNA?

A Maybe ten days, not even ten days.

Q AND HOW DID YOU TRAVEL FROM VIENNA TO CHERBOURG?

A We went first --- a sister-in-law who fled to Yugoslavia sent somebody from Yugoslavia to find out what happened to me and so forth, and he was in Vienna for a short while, for a month or so, and as his guests we went to Switzerland. We were spending a week in Switzerland, then we went to France, to Paris, and stayed there until we got onto the ship and in Paris we walked there. All of a sudden, we meet a friend from Vienna also emigrated to France. He took us around Paris and everything and showed us everything there and we had a good time there but ---

Q DID YOU SAY YOUR BROTHER WAS MAX?

A Yeah.

Q WHEN DID YOU SAY HE WENT BACK TO VIENAA?

A After the war.

Q AFTER THE WAR, AND YOU LOST CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER?

A Well, he wrote me a few times and the last time he wrote to me he was in France and in Vienna, you know, he still worked as an artist, I suppose, and the last time he wrote to me I had one daughter and she was just through with college and we gave her --- she asked him if she could go --- and we gave her trip to Europe for two weeks. It's also interesting we bought her one of those train --- what you call those tickets ---

Q EUROPASS?

A Yeah, Europass tickets, but because we spoke so much about our past, did not go to Germany and did not go to Austria.

Q HAVE YOU BEEN BACK?

A No, no. I might even be able to go back but my wife won't be able to go back.

MISS SILVERMAN: WHEN YOU WERE TRAVELING FROM VIENNA TO CHERBOURG TO GET TO AMERICA, WHAT TYPE OF PAPERS WERE YOU TRAVELING ON BECAUSE YOU WERE STATELESS AT THAT TIME?

A I still had my passport, but the passport was limited. I had "Jade" or "Jew" in there, but it was limited up to a certain time. I was given a week or two weeks to leave Austria and the passport --- then the passport was for one or two months, some limited time.

MR. KUSHMAN: AN AUSTRIAN PASSPORT?

A Yeah.

Q WITH A U.S. VISA IN IT?

A Yeah. Absolutely.

Q DO YOU STILL HAVE THAT?

A I don't know. I don't know. I have to look for it. I might have that.

MISS SILVERMAN: JUST ONE QUESTION ABOUT YOUR DAUGHTER, WHEN DID YOU START TALKING TO HER ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES?

A When she was very little my daughter and I have a very good relationship, when my daughter grew up every Saturday afternoon was hers, what I try to do because she was an only child. I try to have always children with her so she shouldn't be an only child, so I took a whole group of children from the house we were living in, and we went all kinds of places, ice-skating in the wintertime, theater, opera, and everything else.

Q SO SHE UNDERSTOOD.

A Oh, yes.

Q FROM THE BEGINNING?

A Oh, yes. Oh, yes, oh, yes.

Q AND HOW DID YOU COME TO SAN FRANCISCO FROM NEW YORK?

A Because she married a San Francisco fellow, so we had friends in San Francisco, we were corresponding with, corresponding with all the time with them. They came to New York once and visited with us and we visited with them and they had a daughter also. As a matter of fact, this friend, lady friend

of my wife, went with her to kindergarten in Vienna. When this daughter was married my daughter was invited to the wedding. We were invited to the wedding. Well, I couldn't come; so she came to the wedding and met her husband at this wedding and she came here with two or four months --- she married.

Q DID I HEAR YOU SAY THAT YOUR DAUGHTER'S HUSBAND IS ALSO A SURVIVOR?

A Yeah, yeah. As a matter of fact, I think he was interviewed by you people; his father died in one of the French concentration camps.

Q DO YOU HAVE ANY FRIENDS, ANYBODY YOU KEPT UP FROM YOUR DACHAU EXPERIENCE?

A No, no.

Q DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO SAY?

A I'd absolutely like to go. (Laughs.)

Q CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT YOUR EARLIEST MEMORY OF ANTI-SEMITISM IS --- YOUR EARLIEST POINT?

A From the day I was born, I was taught by my parents where we lived --- when I went to school --- when I went to visit my uncle was living in the neighborhood, my mother used to tell me, don't go to this street, go to the other street, because there they're going to throw stones at you, be careful, don't say anything. From the day I was born I was introduced to Semitism.

Q COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR EARLIEST SCHOOL YEARS BEFORE YOU QUIT SCHOOL, WHAT KIND OF SCHOOL SITUATION YOU WERE IN AND ---

A Well, I went to public school and I was a good student. I went to the middle school, to the gymnasium over there, gymnasium here is an acrobatic school, but it's not in Austria; and I went four years there, and I was quite a very good student. As I said before my uncle wanted to pay for everything and adopt me, but I felt it was not my place, and I said I'm going to do it on my own.

Q WAS THIS A MIXED SCHOOL?

A The schools were mixed and you had to get in a public school at this time. I would say we were maybe 20 percent were Jewish children, the others were not and we kept to each other, the Jewish boys. We were always told "Jew" and so forth, and teachers, most of them, were not Jewish and some of them were liberal, some of them were not.

Q DID YOUR PARENTS EMIGRATE FROM POLAND TO VIENNA BECAUSE OF ANTI-SEMITISM OR BECAUSE OF A COMBINATION OR JOB OPPORTUNITIES?

A Well, as far as I know, my father went for a combination of reasons, my mother came also. It was before 1914, so she must have been --- well, there was always this anti-Semitism situation between Poland and Austria. There were pogroms and everything against the Jews in Poland. My parents had all their fields in Poland but the life in Poland at this time already was

quite anti-Semitic and they started to get out of Poland.

Q WHERE IN POLAND DID YOUR GRANDPARENTS LIVE?

A The fields were in (Poslav) my mother lived in Stanislaus and my father in Cracow.

Q HOW DO YOU THINK THAT THE HOLOCAUST CHANGED YOUR LIFE IN TWO WAYS: EXTERNAL WAY, YOUR WORK CAREER, AND THE OTHER, YOUR CHARACTER?

A Made me a much, much stronger person. I always said I went through all this, I lost all my family. But it made me personally a much, much stronger person. I see things differently, I have different interests in life than I had before and it made me much stronger.

Q YOU SAY YOU HAVE DIFFERENT INTERESTS BECAUSE OF THE HOLOCAUST?

A Most probably.

Q UH-HUH. COULD YOU BE A LITTLE MORE SPECIFIC, WHAT DIFFERENT INTERESTS WERE GENERATED BY THAT?

A Made me more humane. For instance, when I came to San Francisco, I was 62 years of age, not a very good age to get a new job or something, and I had occasion to get a job with the Jewish Family and Children Services, and I was the director-manager of the Utility Work Shop which is a sheltered work shop for the seniors and disabled people and I had fifty people there which I had to supply with work, make sure that they have their salaries and everything. We paid more than minimum wages. I arranged for them to have two weeks vacation, I arranged for them

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to have medical services, there are things that they never had before and I tried to do the best for the next human being.

Q AND YOU FEEL YOUR HOLOCAUST EXPERIENCE HAS MADE YOU MORE COMPASSIONATE FOR OTHER PEOPLE?

A I believe it did. Even so, maybe I was too young to understand it better now, but I believe it made a better person out of me.

Q DID IT AFFECT YOUR FATE AT ALL?

A Let's say this, I am not a religious Jew but God help anybody to say anything against the Jewish religion in front of me, that's all I can tell you.

MR. KUSHMAN: YOU MAY HAVE TALKED ABOUT THIS EARLIER. WHAT SORT OF BUSINESS WERE YOU IN WHEN YOU CAME TO THE UNITED STATES?

A United States --- I just started as a floor boy. Somebody on the lowest level, all right; and within six months I was called to the office and was told I was going to take over a department as a supervisor. They sent me to a factory to learn special things for that and I was at this time in six months from \$15 I was raised to \$30.

Q AND WHAT SORT OF BUSINESS WAS THIS?

A That was a manufacturer of cameras, and during the war we manufactured binoculars for the American and English Armed Forces.

Q AND YOUR PARENTS, YOU WERE SENDING MONEY TO YOUR PARENTS, DID YOU GET ANY LETTERS OR ANY POSTCARDS OR ANYTHING FROM YOUR PARENTS AT THAT TIME?

A I just said they wrote to us that the doctor prescribed more medications to them every time they see him.

Q SO THEY WERE GETTING THE MONEY?

A Yeah. This we knew; we didn't know the person who gave that money; they might have known him, but we didn't. But we took the chance; that's it. Any other questions?

Q IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SAY THAT WE HAVEN'T GIVEN YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT?

A Well, I think you do a very good job and I hope that it remains this way because the youth has to be instructed what happened. They never should forget what happened.

MISS SILVERMAN: WELL, WE WANT TO THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

MR. FRIEDMANN: Thank you. And I'm off.