

Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

P.O. Box 25506, San Mateo, CA 94402

RG-50.477*1052

Name of Interviewee: Adelson, Lotte

Date of Interview: 8/1/1996

Lotte Adelson was born on November 24, 1925 in Vienna, Austria. As a young girl she attended a public school, and later an all-girls institution. In 1938, Lotte's father was taken to a work camp in Germany but was released within a week. In 1939, her family managed to leave Austria by taking a train to Genoa, Italy, where they boarded a ship headed for the United States. After being separated from her father, Lotte and her mother made their way to San Francisco where they had relatives; her father arrived two months later. Lotte married an American, Marvin Adelson, and together they relocated to Israel in 1950, only to return three months later due to bad living conditions and food scarcity. Upon their return to the United States, Lotte became a nurse and she and her husband had two daughters.

Summary Version 2

Name of interviewee: Adelson, Lotte

Date of interview: 8/1/1996

Summary: Birth: Nov. 24, 1925 in Vienna, Austria
Father: Leo Frankel; worked in import-export firm
Mother: Elsa Blechner; bookkeeper
Family Killed in Holocaust: grandmother

Lotte lived with her grandparents until she and her parents moved into their own apartment. She attended a public school, and then attended an all-girls institution. After Hitler came to Vienna in 1938, Jews were not allowed in parks or other public venues; as a result, her parents had to stop attending opera and symphony.

In 1938, Lotte experienced her first overt persecution when her father was taken to a work camp in Germany, though he was released after a week. During Kristallnacht in 1938, Lotte and her family waited anxiously, fearing they would be rounded up by the Nazis. In October 1939, after nearly a year of trying to obtain affidavits, Lotte and her family left Austria. They took a train to Genoa, Italy and then boarded a ship headed for the U.S. This was the last time she saw her maternal grandmother, who died in Theresienstadt. Lotte and her mother were separated from her father in Gibraltar, when the French detained all men with German passports. He eventually arrived in the U.S. two months after Lotte and her mother. After a sickly 10-day journey to New York, Lotte and her mother took a 5-day train ride to San Francisco, where they had relatives. Lotte and her family never received the belongings they had sent from Vienna. Lotte and her parents learned English. Her mother worked as a housekeeper and cook, and

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her father worked as a warehouse attendant and then a social security administrator.

After marrying an American, Marfin Adelson, they relocated to Israel in 1950, but returned after 3 months due to bad conditions and food scarcity. They had 2 daughters, and Lotte became a nurse. She has visited Vienna several times and discovered her house had been destroyed in bombings. Lotte is ineligible for reparations from Germany, but she does receive a pension from Austria.