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October 18, 1988

1 INTERVIEW WITH: SIEGFRIED GOTTLIEB

2 INTERVIEWER: Howard Felson

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4 Q This is an interview with Dr. Siegfried Gottlieb at his
5 home in Mill Valley, California. Today is the 18th of October,
6 1988. The interview conducted by Howard Felson.

7 A My name is Siegfried Gottlieb. I was born in Chernovice
8 (phonetic) in Bukovina (phonetic). This belonged at this time
9 to Austria and I left with my parents in 1907. There was a
10 brother and a sister and myself and my father started a factory
11 in chemistry. He was a doctor of chemistry and he did quite
12 very well.

13 Q In which year were you born?

14 A In 1904 - the 30th of March. When I came to United --
15 when I came to Germany I have to say this in the beginning it
16 was all not too -- too bad. I got ^a good education -- the
17 education was very good at this time. I got a very good
18 education as a physician at this time in -- but from the
19 beginning on I had always the impression they were out to
20 destroy the Jewish people.

21 Q What year did you come to Germany?

22 A In 1907. I was three years old. And I had all the
23 education in Germany. When I had always the impression they
24 want^{to}~~ed~~ the destroy the Jewish people because I had one bad
25 experience in Dr. or Professor Schmidt--he was nominated as a

1 eugenic professor in Berlin and when I had to take my doctor
2 examination we have always to write doctor (?) then he came
3 and asked me question naturally started with "Heil Hitler,"
4 "Tell me how we can destroy the race?" I didn't know
5 immediately -- I said, "Well, I don't know." "Why, this is
6 easy, you x-ray them, then you destroy them." And then you
7 know, the race in Africa, for instance, if something happens
8 and there are mix there -- there's a Dutch with a colored
9 people, the white come always up on the top because this is a
10 Darwin theory. He believed in this heartily. And he was
11 always talking about destroying and how he can kill people
12 and I had to shut up, I didn't say anything. It was the only
13 examination was important - the other one didn't even ask me
14 a question. They know me all from the examination. This was
15 a starting and I had the impression it will be very, very bad
16 and I decided then very, very soon I decided in 1933 to leave
17 this country and I was always interested to be in United
18 States. It took me 21 years. I started the first of April
19 in 1933 and I came to United States the first of March I
20 started to come to United States. It took me 30 years - the
21 3rd of April I came to United States. After 21 years. And
22 this was unfortunately a quota system. I belong to the
23 Austrian quota and the^{all} (?) were talking about Austria but
24 Austria was already destroyed but the Russians didn't take
25 it, it was all divided. One part came to Russia, one part

1 came to Rumania --and one -- some people want to be Austrian.
2 They applied for the Austrian citizenship but it was denied.
3 They said you are not from - born from -- you are not the
4 race, Austrian race and you couldn't be -- and then after a
5 while when the socialistic (government)? came immediately my
6 father was naturalized as a citizen, also my brother but I
7 was then a minor and it couldn't be done with me -- and this
8 was tragic - this was going through my whole life because I
9 was promised to a woman and I want to marry her and I couldn't
10 do this because she was a German and I was then "stateless"
11 in state -- and if I would do this she would leave -- she
12 would lose all the rights, she would be not a citizen any
13 more.

14 Q You were stateless?

15 A I was stateless and I was afraid something can happens
16 but nothing happens, everything was going on in Germany and
17 then, I mean when --

18 Q Can I ask you to start from before the war and tell me
19 what your life was like before the war with your family?

20 A Before?

21 Q When you were a child.

22 A Ja. I was four years old when I came to Germany. Well
23 our life was going -- it was routine. My father worked and
24 he was quite well off. He made some money and we were in one
25 way not real unhappy. For instance I belonged to a school

1 No. 1974. It's a school. And then they told my father your
2 son he has talent, why don't you take him to gymnasium because
3 he is -- he knows more than is necessary and I took examina-
4 tion and I entered in the sexta (?) and there I studied my
5 whole life till I make the (habitu?) and this was when I was *about*
6 18 years old.

7 Q Did you have any religious training at all?

8 A Religious training? I belonged to the temple and this
9 is true, my father -- you see, the father of my father he
10 never worked in his life. He was a Talmud reader. This was
11 his profession. He didn't have any other profession. But my
12 father studied in Chernowice and he did the examination
13 that's (habitu?) and everything and give me the career. But
14 the life was going on smoothly. We had naturally a lot of
15 antiSemitism in the school already but we know we had to live
16 with this and this was going on from day to day.

17 Q What was it like? Give me an example.

18 Q Well, I mean, for instance people didn't trust each
19 other. There were some were real antiSemitic; they were -
20 came from Poland and when Poland was liberated, then suddenly
21 they were Polish and they were going to Poland but --

22 Q When was this?

23 A This was when Poland was free. After when Poland --

24 Q After the first World War?

25 A After the First World War. When Poland became Poland.

1 Q But when you were a child in school you said there was
2 antiSemitism?

3 A AntiSemitism was always there but we -- we start to live
4 with this. I mean, there was always, I mean, always called
5 you a Jew, and you are a Jew and you are this and they always
6 had something to say against the race. I mean -- I was never
7 real happy. I always had the impression I am second class
8 citizen and this was true. People in Germany were happy;
9 said "Oh, we are making money and we have a good life and
10 everything. Why are you all so pessimistic, this is not so
11 bad. I mean, antiSemitism we have in every place and we have
12 to live with this." But I couldn't live with this. But I
13 had to do it. What could I do.

14 Q In which city did you live in Germany?

15 A In Berlin. In Berlin and I started in Berlin, I did my
16 examination in Berlin, all my studies were in Berlin. In --
17 and then, I mean, the life was not too bad but then came the
18 war in 1916 my father had to go to the war as an Austrian
19 soldier and he had to go there and he was there till 1919,
20 about and when he was in Chernowice he saw a factory. He
21 said // ^{to?} if I come back from war maybe I will buy something
22 there and then if I live maybe we can have there maybe a
23 living, a factory, something. But it didn't work out this
24 way. There started again very bad antiSemitism - the ^{fighting} ??,
25 with lawyer, with everything and he fought and fought and

1 fought and then in the end he won the -- he won this but he
2 lost everything because --

3 Q In Chernowice?

4 A Ja, in Chernowice -- he lost everything because of the
5 lawyers and everything and then -- in the long run I mean he
6 was getting older, he was born in '70, then he left, he
7 didn't live in Germany. In 1926, since he had to fight for
8 this house here very severely he was going there in 1926 and
9 start to fight. And he was fighting the whole, the whole
10 time and then this brought him to the concentration camp and
11 there he was killed. This was his -- we couldn't do anything
12 - we have been in immigration, we didn't have money. My
13 brother in the mean time he lived in Israel.

14 Q When was he in a concentration camp?

15 A In there? In the concentration camp -- the only thing I
16 know he was killed in 1944 with my mother in the place in --
17 deep in Romania -- some place, I don't even know the name and
18 then --

19 Q Tell me what you were doing after World War I. The
20 first World War.

21 A World War I? I -- well, I lived, I want to leave in '36
22 but I couldn't get the visa. I tried and tried from one
23 place to the other one and I couldn't, and I couldn't do
24 anything and I don't know to do. In the meantime I started
25 to work.

1 Q Before '33?

2 A After '33.

3 Q Before Hitler came to power, what were you doing?

4 A Before Hitler came to power I was, in 1933 -- one moment.
5 1933 I was, I was then 30 years old.

6 Q After the First World War until 1933.

7 A After the First World War. There, I mean, I know my
8 father had to go to war and then he came back from war. In
9 the meantime we lived how we could. I mean, we didn't have -
10 we had a little income, but I mean, not too much and we could
11 live, I mean there was a brother and a sister and we lived,
12 no? But there was nothing special going on; the only thing I
13 was always fighting, fighting, fighting to get a visa and I
14 couldn't make it. I was running from one consulate to the
15 other one -- was impossible -- I was always, always in trouble
16 and finally I said, "What can I do?" I start to work now. I
17 didn't care about Hitler, nothing. I opened up my office.
18 Was against the law, but I didn't care. I opened up office;
19 start to work as a physician. I didn't have many patients,
20 but there were many who were very nice and they liked us and
21 special Jewish physician and I worked for a while but then
22 suddenly came the tragic=I -- it was getting worse and worse,
23 I couldn't make any more living; I didn't have money and I --
24 some friends helped me out with money; I worked in the mean-
25 time in this year in 1930-- one moment, 1933 to, I forgot to

1 say that from 1933 to -- I had the surgical training for
2 four years. For four years I worked as a surgeon.

3 Q Were you a physician before '33?

4 A In '33 when I took my examination in '30, in 1930 in
5 May. I got my approbation. And then I worked in a hospital;
6 I worked in another hospital and finally after two, three
7 years I settled down and tried to make a living and I didn't
8 -- I didn't do anything else, only thing I know, I was always
9 in mostly - people were aggressive and I was never, never
10 happy with my life but I couldn't -- I couldn't do anything
11 else and finally when everything was getting worse I couldn't
12 stand it any more. I escaped from Germany illegally. I left
13 the country ^{>0} ?? and came to Czechoslavkia and in Czechoslovakia
14 there I stood for three years.

15 Q when was this?

16 A In 1938. I escaped there. I didn't have any money.
17 Not one cent. The fee was paid for me for the trip & not the
18 fee, I mean, the fee not because I had, I had very little
19 money but this I had to spend when I was escaping and when I
20 came finally to Czechoslovakia there was starving to death
21 about for three months. I didn't have to eat. I didn't have
22 anything. I was living on -- I mean asking for handouts once
23 in a while we lived mostly from a little (cacó ?), a little
24 bread. This was going on for three months and this was the
25 worst thing what happens in my life and then I had to stand

1 it and I couldn't do anything else and suddenly something
2 happens in my life. I don't know how this came; one day I'm
3 sitting in the place where they're eating but I didn't have
4 the money and we are looking around if we can take together
5 maybe a couple of kronin to buy something

6 Q Were you by yourself?

7 A No, there were one or two other immigrants but they are
8 poorer than I am. They didn't have nothing. Nothing. And
9 we tried to talk and there suddenly there was a girl standing
10 there and looking at us and I told her, "You know, you look
11 very nice. You look like a nice little free woman; like
12 this, no?" And she opened up her mouth and said, "Are you
13 crazy" in perfect German. "I'm a Czech. My father he is
14 officer in the army and I speak German but I study in the
15 German university but have nothing to do" and he started like
16 this and when she said that "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to say
17 this. What can I do? Can I do something to repair this" and
18 she said to -- and I said to her, "Please let me do something.
19 I like to see you." She said to me, I didn't believe she
20 would come and I didn't have money but there were two friends
21 and everybody had a couple of kronin; we put it together and
22 she appeared. And I had right the money to pay what it was
23 worth it. And then suddenly I didn't tell her I'm a physician;
24 I didn't tell her immigrant; I didn't say anything. She
25 started immediately to offer me big chances and she said,

1 "What the matter, where do you eat? I have to eat." Where
2 did I eat? There was a general consul of Bolivia. He offered
3 me to live there if I leave 8:00 o'clock in the morning you
4 have to be dressed maybe, then you can stay there and live
5 there.

6 Q She brought you to the consulate of Bolivia?

7 A No. No, I was going myself. She didn't know about
8 this. By myself. I was going to the consul from Bolivia and
9 ask him could I get a visa or something, "No, it's impossible,
10 we don't have visas, but if ^{you} want to live there, okay, you can
11 live there" and she had nothing to do with this but one day
12 she started and told me "I know you are maybe in trouble; you
13 have to eat; you have to eat" - I didn't have anything to eat.
14 She want to invite me to eat; I refused because I'm not a
15 playboy. She was always around with people and I didn't
16 know; I was so dumb; I was so set in my head I didn't know
17 what I'm doing and she disappeared suddenly; sometimes she
18 was in Munich, sometimes she was in the other city in Germany;
19 sometimes she had something to do with airplanes; she came
20 back and forth; I didn't know what was going on and she met
21 people from the underground and she started, "What can I do
22 for you? I like to help you." "And what why you want to help
23 me? Don't tell me -- you, you are immigrant; you don't have
24 a visa. You want a passport? A Czech passport? You can
25 have a passport." But is my German philosophy - I was thinking

1 how can I have a passport -- I don't speak the language or
2 nothing and I refused that she wanted to give me passport,
3 everything, and then in the long run there was something
4 going on, maybe she fall in love with some -- something was
5 going on.

6 Q Did she want to help you?

7 A She want to help me. And she offered me everything was
8 necessary and I refused always - I'd have to eat, sometimes
9 she met with people and there they were invited to eat and I
10 said I have already eaten etc., etc., I was starving. Well,
11 anyhow, what happens I refused everything. She said, "I have
12 apartment -- you can live here -- can do everything what you
13 want, no?" And finally "don't tell me how you talk to me I
14 have some impression maybe of something to do with medicine."
15 "Ja, if you want to know, I have the physicum already and I
16 will be a physician" and I said, "Yes, but I'm not doing
17 nothing now, etc. etc." and what finally happens was the
18 whole thing and this was the worst experience in my life.
19 One day there was one of the last planes from the french
20 airline and I had to leave the plane but I didn't have the
21 money but the committee worked it out but they didn't have
22 money to give me; I didn't get one cent, not one dollar.

23 Q Which committee?

24 A One committee there in Prague. But this committee
25 didn't have money. They couldn't help me. They didn't have

1 - we have no money. And I said, "Okay. I didn't have money
2 anyhow." But I needed the proving of the money to get the
3 plane paid. Who came? She was going to the bank of the
4 republic there -- what the name was and she immediately in
5 five minutes she arranged everything - it was already arranged
6 and I could, I could leave with this particular plane. And
7 then, when it came to the plane, we were sitting there and I
8 told her, "Tell me her name was Elfried Becker. She lived in
9 Hodeen close to Carlsbad - this is a recreation place and she
10 came from maybe a good family and I told, ^{her} "Why you are doing
11 this if you don't know till now, what's the matter, are you
12 dumb or something" "I'm in love with you." "I tell you, what
13 you mean, love with you? I have a woman in Germany. I will
14 ~~merely~~ ^{marry. I will} have nothing to do with you and why you do this?" "I
15 tell you why I do this. I am a spy for the Czech, for the
16 Nazis there in Czechoslovakia. People who brings money from
17 Germany I give them away so they will go to the concentration
18 camps, they could be killed and you son of a bitch, what's
19 the matter with you and you offer me something like this?"
20 "Ja, this happens in life; what I cannot change it." And
21 then, "are you -- what you are doing, are you a nut, why you
22 don't go. Come with me in ^{PARAGUAY} Prague. We have million of dollars.
23 We have Nazi money and everything. You never have to work;
24 not one minute in your life and you can be rich and everything.
25 What's the matter?" I said, "No, no, I'm -- I'm engaged and

1 - - - and besides this I didn't know what to do if Hitler or
2 what can I do Hitler, I couldn't do anything. I was standing
3 there and I left and when I, Ja --

4 Q Let me understand. She was a spy for the Nazis?

5 A For the Nazis she was, she was the righthand of ^{this guy} ~~spy~~ who
6 was killed. You know, this guy who was killed, Nazi man,
7 what was his name, he was a famous man, he was killed. Then
8 the Jews - there was pogrom and everything.

9 Q Where was he killed?

10 A In Czechoslovakia, he was killed. And then --

11 Q She was in love with you and wanted to help you escape
12 to Paraguay?

13 A Wanted to help me to escape to Paraguay. Ja. And
14 wanted money and everything, etc. Suddenly ^{MITA} -?? changed her
15 mind -- but anyhow I was -- I didn't know what to say and I
16 tell you what happens I didn't have any money but she had
17 about two or three kronins, about nothing, and she said, "Let
18 forget so I think we take a coffee now" ^I and took a coffee and
19 then I left and there came the second tragic of my life.

20 When I want to leave the plane "You cannot leave. You are
21 stateless. You need a visa for ^{FRANCE} ~~funds~~ (?) This take you
22 maybe six months before you get it. And we give you advice -
23 the committe-not to leave." Then I'd say, "Okay. You want I
24 get killed or they take me back to Germany? That's okay with
25 me. I give up."

1 Q Was this before or after the Nazis invaded Czechosla-
2 vakia?

3 A Before. But ~~there~~^{the} were already -- everything has to be
4 dark; everything was controlled, it was in the last months.
5 It must have been -- not immediately but ^{the} beginning started
6 and it was when -- I didn't know what to do now, I was
7 standing there, what, what I'm doing, what, what I do? And
8 then I said to the committee you know, I don't want anything
9 from you, no money, but help me in some way. They said to
10 me, Okay, leave, but this is your own business?

11 Q This is the Jewish committee?

12 A The Jewish committee, Ja. And I left and you know what
13 I did? When I left I came to Marseilles and there expected
14 me a Jewish maybe rich family they came with car and every-
15 thing and put me at home for one, no, not ~~at home~~, afternoon
16 they gave me to eat, they gave me a couple of dollars and
17 said you have to take the plane to Marseilles. In Marseilles
18 there's a ship. And with a ship you go then to -- from
19 Marseilles you go then to Paraguay. We got a visa for you.

20 Q You met them in Prague?

21 A What do you mean?

22 Q Where did you meet this family?

23 A This family they meet me in France. In Strasburg.

24 Q You went from Prague to Strasburg.

25 A Yes. By plane. And when I came there, they meet me

1 there and they give me some money and then they said there
2 is then a ship and you have to leave in the ship to Marseilles.

3 Q How did you meet them?

4 A These people? I didn't know them.

5 Q Coincidence?

6 A Coincidence. And then they gave me a couple of dollars
7 - very little but, I didn't, I was not begging, nothing and
8 now what happens in Prague, not in Prague, in Marseilles, I
9 didn't have a visa. What happens I met a colored man. He
10 spoke with me and said, "You know, you don't -- you speak
11 German. What's a matter you don't have to eat, you look so
12 hungry? Can I invite you?" I said, "Why do you have to
13 invite me? I was eating." Well, don't be -- do me the
14 favor. He invited me and I was eating. And then it came the
15 time to go to the ship. Now the ship was waiting there and I
16 didn't want to be around with the crowded (?) I didn't any
17 money -- not one cent in my pocket. This is not true. I had
18 about, maybe one dollar left and I didn't want to meet with
19 the crowd. Everybody was first class; was paid by the commit-
20 tee and everybody could leave in the and I was not
21 very happy I was alone I was so desparate and I was thinking,
22 "well I try and to go hotel" but I was idiot, I don't know why
23 I did it. I was ^{going} to hotels, what can happen one night - it
24 couldn't be so bad maybe I can swing it - after night's present
25 me maybe ~~???~~? some four or five dollars and you know what

1 happens when I was, I was apprehended from the Gestapo

2 Q In Marseilles?

3 A In Berlin - from the gestapo here-I have to come back
4 now to this-I was apprehended by gestapo and they want to
5 kill me and I came out with talking, etc., etc. I don't know
6 myself how I did it but I could escape and then I escape from
7 Germany but I was real in danger - ^{they} could take my life and
8 this was, this was biggest trouble, but when I ^{had} get to get a
9 visa now then the whole thing started again and how I get the
10 visa? No papers. They made me a citizen from Marseilles,
11 ja, they made me all the papers etc. and I didn't speak the
12 language. They were very nice, I couldn't speak the language
13 and I got the visa for Paraguay.

14 Q In Marseille you got a visa for Paraguay?

15 A For Paraguay

16 Q From the committee?

17 A Not ^{with} the committee. This is prearranged and now - -

18 Q You had been arrested by the Gestapo before you went to
19 Czechoslovakia, in Berlin.

20 A In Berlin, ja.

21 Q And you talked your way out of it?

22 A I talked my way out of it - many things - there were
23 connection and there was a lot of other trouble - there was
24 money involved, not my money, there was -- this was, thank
25 God, I would be dead now. But this was not the biggest

1 tragic. Now I came to Marseilles. And I didn't have to pay
2 the hotel. It was my own fault. I was nuts.

3 Q You were broke. You had no money.

4 A No money. You know what I did? I remember when I was
5 apprehended by the gestapo there was a guy also apprehended
6 for couple of days but he got free, I don't know, maybe he
7 had money or something and I remember his name, he was already
8 maybe a year away, I called by phone, I found the telephone
9 number, I called to Paris and he was ⁱⁿ on the phone. I mean,
10 what miracle. I called him and he came, said the name was
11 Rosenberg. "What happens to you?" "You know, I cannot pay my
12 bill, I'm in trouble with them doing now." He said, "Don't
13 worry. I'll send you immediately the same["] day the ship is
14 leaving the next day, "you get some money today."

15 Q Where was he?

16 A In Paris.

17 Q You called him from Marseilles to Paris?

18 A To Paris. Collect. And he sent me the money to pay the
19 bill. Was a couple of dollars and I was out of this trouble
20 and when I was out of this trouble then it is to go now to
21 the ship.

22 Q This was somebody you knew from Berlin?

23 A Ja, from Berlin. Was an ^{coincidence} ~~acquaintance~~ and I got the
24 number, telephone number. Sometimes you want a telephone
25 number, you don't get information. Well, anyhow he helped me

1 out and I ^{to then} got a visa to Paraguay. When I was so nervous - I -
2 only some -- to cover myself and it was little cold - I forgot
3 it in there and I had only one ??, nothing else and I was
4 sitting first class. I couldn't eat anything. I was living
5 on ice cream. I couldn't eat this half raw food, French
6 cuisine and I had mostly ice cream and then cake or something.
7 I was living for three weeks on this and people felt sorry
8 for me. The people who worked there - the -- the waiters and
9 everything, the cooks, they invited me to Dakar in Africa and
10 invited me and paid food for me and everything because I
11 didn't have a cent and I took it and this was - and then I
12 didn't have any money in my pocket and now comes a tragic,
13 "What I do now?" I was waiting, waiting after 21 days every-
14 body's talking big, "We have \$2,000, we have \$3,000, we have
15 so much in the bank. We have money there. I have always to
16 hear this when I was poor like hell. What can I do? What
17 finally we came to Uruguay. You cannot ^{leave} ~~live~~ the ship, you
18 are in transit. You have to go to Paraguay. And somebody
19 told me immediately if you go to Paraguay you go hell. There
20 they are all swindlers, it's the worst country in the world; ^{murder,}
21 nothing else. Don't go there." What I do now? You have to
22 do something. You have to have \$300 to show that you can go
23 to the ship and there was a man ^{he} who was maybe 65 years old.
24 He was the only one who want to go to Paraguay because he had
25 a son there and this son was sick and what happens to this

1 guy? After he gives me the money - \$300 and said when you
2 come back give it back to me I give him the money back next
3 day he died of typhus fever. Just die. What coincidence.
4 He died. He never saw his son. When I give the money back I
5 was illegal in Uruguay but the committee and there the commit-
6 tee was nice. They didn't have money but there were a lot of
7 Jewish people involved and they told me you know "Never go to
8 Paraguay. Stay illegal, nobody will do something to you.
9 They don't will kill you. No? And stay." I stood and then
10 I was thinking what I'm doing now. I was running to the
11 American consulate.

12 Q Where?

13 A In Uruguay. In Montevideo. ^{with the visa} And I heard about the need
14 for physicians but they were very secretive ^{papers} - they didn't say
15 anything - they would take the needed ? for the war and if
16 they would kill me but they would take me be a physician. I
17 volunteered for the French as a physician. I want to go any
18 place but no I couldn't do anything. What happens? I didn't
19 have money. I didn't have anything. What could I do? There
20 came Jewish, Polish people and they said to me, "Gottlieb, I
21 will make you some proposition. You can live with me three
22 months. You will eat, you will sleep, everything, you pay me
23 when you make money." And this I did and he gave me food and
24 everything but we lived together six or eight people in one
25 room and the cucarachas they eat us. We had to get up at

1 night and we had to soak old tree moss (?) and we had to burn
2 and I didn't sleep, it was awful, but I was very fat - I
3 couldn't -- and then what I did, I discovered a guy and he
4 was the chief of The Sun. The Sun, it's the only English
5 paper, The Sun. And he was the owner and he was Jewish but
6 he didn't think about Jewish much but he said to me, "Gottlieb,
7 would you do me a favor. At night I come home so half dead
8 can you be six o'clock there and do massage on me? I pay you
9 one peso, ja?" Well, what can I do, I did it. I did this
10 about for three months, until I find a job by accident. The
11 job came like this. Since he was English he was talking with
12 the English colony and they offered me a job as a peon, this
13 means as a laborer. I have a book here from Leita, (?) it's
14 in German, there are stories about me what happens and I
15 worked there like in a concentration camp. In the morning
16 had to get naked up in the morning; heat 100, no water, had
17 to walk 2 miles to get water and we were eating every day the
18 same always chicken, a soup and we had to cook ourself and
19 then the mosquitoes and everything - it was hard working, we
20 had to work with four hammer with three or four tools, very
21 heavy and I was not used to this but since I was in sport-I
22 considered like a sport and it was awful. After three months
23 there happens a small stupid thing.

24 Q In Uruguay?

25 A In Uruguay. And this was about a couple of miles from

1 the city And I had to live there with two guys together. One
2 name was -- here he was merchant, he didn't have any money
3 either, there was other guy and we lived in a - in a say, how
4 you call it where you live where - in the open - you didn't
5 have real - tent, no?, tent, you lived in a tent and this was
6 all; your feet were sticking out, you fell always down, you
7 have to arrange yourself; it was awful, I couldn't sleep
8 there, well this was going on about for six months and sudden-
9 ly there was a little accident and I did a couple of -- I
10 mean professional bandages; somebody heard about it; never
11 told them I was physician, nothing; I didn't know the language
12 or nothing and then suddenly they want to take advantage
13 because they didn't pay anything. A physician made about, we
14 say \$5,000 a month. They paid me 65 pesos. And I got the
15 job as a so-called enfermero - this means like a helper, ja?
16 And I did surgery. The people were lazy, I had to do, I had
17 to remove maybe ten splinters a day from the eyes - I never
18 did so many before and I worked hard and I helped this phy-
19 sician and everything and it was very, very hard work and I
20 worked there. One day they find out where they can take
21 better advantage of a Jew and then they gave me other job. I
22 stood there for three months more and in the meantime came my
23 wife. I married her then here in ^{URUGUAY} ~~World War~~ when she came.
24 There was also tragic she couldn't come to Uruguay immediately.

25 Q Where was she from?

1 A From Berlin.

2 Q You met her before you left?

3 A Ja, we were engaged for many years. I couldn't marry
4 her and I married her then in Uruguay but here she came to
5 Uruguay. It was a tragic. Oh, so many misfits ^{till} ~~tell~~ we could
6 make it because we needed a lot of help but finally she came
7 but anyhow this was so bad and when she came finally, she
8 ~~throw me a look,~~ ^{saw me, I looked,} I mean I looked like that, ^{bad} ~~got~~ dressed and
9 everything, but she was there then and everything and then
10 life changed a little, she started to work a little and I
11 worked a little and we started to make a little living --
12 1939 and what happens, suddenly we were all discharged from
13 the job. I worked about for one year. One like a slave and
14 one like a physician. And I said, "Why do you discharge me".
15 The chief he was a Nazi. He belonged to the Nazi party.
16 His name was - he was famous because I had the big talk with
17 the ambassador in Uruguay - I had to - he spoke perfect
18 German. I was complaining, "What's the matter, why you
19 discharge us? I'm ^a refugee from Hitler - what you want? "You
20 are all Nazis. No? There is no difference, you are Nazis.
21 Why you don't --"

22 Q He called you a Nazi?

23 A Ja. He said you are all Nazis. You are from Germany.

24 Q He was a Nazi?

25 A He was a Nazi. He belonged to this right party - I

1 forget his name - he was well known then - the ambassador he
2 was a very rich man - he was one of the richest men in England
3 he was married to Lady Effie. She was --

4 Q Ambassador from Germany?

5 A Ambassador from England to Uruguay. And he tried to
6 help me. And he said to my wife, "You know, I will get you
7 maybe a job." And you know how we do this? There is an old
8 friend from Vienna I know her maybe at a (gespucio ?) some-
9 thing ^{with her} ~~was there~~ but she said "We are poor, we don't have one
10 cent. What do you want to give me a job? I don't have a job
11 to pay. It was all baloney. Nothing came out. He was
12 talking only. But he was a very nice man and then he want to
13 help but he couldn't help. I mean he didn't have any - he
14 had maybe connections but what could he do? Well, anyhow,
15 what was the matter finally my wife didn't get a job then I
16 didn't have a job either and then I was thinking - what I do
17 now. I will settle down and make a practice, ja? And I
18 settled down and make a practice and you wouldn't believe it -
19 I made money. And I made a living and I could pay my rent
20 and everything and not very little primitive but not too bad
21 - people know me from Germany - we've been all together maybe
22 eight or ten physicians and I was a surgeon and I was special^{ized}
23 ~~izing~~ in many things I could do very well - I injected a lot
24 of varicose veins etc. and they liked me and I made a good
25 living. I could live but I couldn't go on like this because

1 there were only three million people involved and what we do
2 with three million people - you cannot live on this - the
3 other one get older and these other physician and there is
4 competition and I want to leave again - start again in America
5 but always is the trouble to get the visa. It was awfully,
6 awfully, but I could -- we had to eat, I mean, this was
7 really true and I'm thankful for Uruguay, they made me a
8 citizen of Uruguay. I still have the citizenship and they
9 didn't behave badly. They had a little antiSemitism - this
10 was all done by the consul from Germany because they didn't
11 know what antiSemitism is. She didn't know this. They were
12 - they were, I mean, instructed, no? And it was awfully.
13 And I was so mad~~y~~ about this people, the English people who
14 discharged me - told me, "Would you tell about your experience
15 with Gestapo, etc., we will dictate you the text and every-
16 thing". I said, "Why, you fire me and then you want I do a
17 favor, you know, I cannot do this, no." and besides this was
18 not my, my - I don't do this and then he want to offer me
19 things and one day there was a man he worked with us together
20 as a laborer when he comes there and he, he was a self
21 streit ? spy for the German. He spied against the Germans -
22 you see - early - and what he did, he found out if the German
23 peoples wanted to sabotage against the railway to destroy the
24 railway and he said to the chief, "I have information." "Give
25 it to me." "I don't give anything to you. - -(end side 1)

1 Q Which chief?

2 A The chief of the railway -- funny, I forgot the name.

3 Q He refused to - -

4 A He refused - ja - and then he said, "I don't give the
5 information." And then he said, "Gottlieb, you have ^a Beef ~~with~~ him.
6 I give you the information and you go there and speak with
7 him.

8 Q This is talking about the spy?

9 A Does he find out the sabotage from the German people -
10 they want to sabotage the railway.

11 Q Who said - who asked you ^{said} you have a beef with him? The
12 spy told you this or the chief of the railway?

13 A The spy. He worked with me in the same railway.

14 Q He wants you to go to the chief.

15 A To go to the chief, ja. And I was going there, my wife
16 was with me and my wife was a very educated woman. She let
17 us stay there. He had two big dogs. The dogs are standing
18 there - one ready to bite you or something and he was very
19 proud and very bad man. He said, "Give the information what
20 you have you want to sabotage." "What you mean, you want to
21 give, what you give to me? You discharged me from my job.
22 What right you have to discharge me? I'm a Jew." He said,
23 "Had nothing to do. Orders or not - we discharge everybody,
24 no?" "This is not your right, we are 10,000 miles away from
25 Uruguay - from England - and how you can do this and he

1 didn't want to -- I didn't give him the information that from
2 me it doesn't matter, I don't have to give you anything --
3 you have -- what I get from you, he said, I can give you only
4 if you talk and you have what I get from you. He said, "I
5 can give you only if you talk in radio and you will do propa-
6 ganda for us, maybe can do something," but he didn't promise
7 anything.

8 Q Where was he from?

9 A From England.

10 Q He was English.

11 A He was English, ja. And you know what happens? A funny
12 thing happens. This guy who worked as a laborer together
13 with ^{the} other - he was a merchant and myself. He wrote a letter,
14 signing my name - he falsified my name - and wrote a letter
15 to Churchill and wrote a letter and said "What kind of people
16 are you, you are talking about freedom and fair play and
17 there were ~~are~~ are 10,000 miles away and here we have this anti-
18 Semitism and all this stuff. I mean is this not, is this not
19 awful(ly) what you are doing and we lost our jobs and every-
20 thing etc." Eight days later came an answer from Churchill
21 personally. He wrote a letter to the ambassador. The ambas-
22 sador called us up and we had a big hearing and they asked
23 me, "Who are you, what is your brother doing in Israel," what
24 he's doing there, my brother was chief of the railway in
25 Israel. He was a Zionist and he had a job there and he --

1 had to tell them all this and what my father did before and
2 big hearing and what came out of the hearing? Nothing. I
3 didn't get a job anyhow but, the one thing happens: the
4 English vice counsel from Africa he was going to the publicas(?|
5 department and told them, "Couldn't you have a job for Dr.
6 Gottlieb, he's a good ^{friend} blah, blah, blah". I had to pay for
7 the fee. I had to pay for the bus. What kind of people -
8 nothing came out - all talking and it was going like this and
9 then, and then I settled down and I started to make some
10 money but I forgot to tell you one story what I forgot because
11 I give it as always odd papers. I saw personally you wouldn't
12 believe it - a pogrom in first tent (?) in Germany in '23.
13 And we had already the socialistic regime and what it did
14 there - about 50 to 100 people beaten up, Jewish people, in
15 the street - there were small shoemakers, make a small living,
16 beaten up and one he took an axe out and want to cut the head
17 ~~but~~ of the men. He want to cut head off. You know he said
18 "We are used to these pogroms. We are not afraid any more.
19 I cut his head off." But I said, "Don't do these things.
20 What's the matter, you will do antiSemitism all over the
21 world, you cannot do this" and I talked him out of this and
22 he closed all the -- up and then nobody came, no police,
23 nobody. This was in 1923, who came? The so-called Jewish
24 Veteran Administration - from the veterans who fought in the
25 war- there came this motorcycle but all was over. This was a

1 real blowing pogrom in Germany. I mean, for this reason, I
2 mean, I was a second class citizen, I mean, there's no doubt.

3 Q But what happened during the pogrom? What did you see?

4 A People were beaten up half to death, I tell you, bleeding
5 -- hematoma like this, cutting and they came with knives,
6 with everything. I mean this was arranged by the Nazis,
7 maybe, no? They arranged it against Eibot (phonetic), Eibot
8 was then - he was a leader of the socialist party and this
9 was, this was all arranged but a real pogrom, a mean this was
10 awful(ly). In -- there were witnesses who saw this and every-
11 body close the door - we run out and the kids are afraid, I
12 tell you and I never saw a real pogrom in my life. For me it
13 was awful(ly), you know. A very bad experience. This is
14 about part of the time what I told you - it's not the whole
15 thing. I have a book - Fred Teller - he is a poet. He wrote
16 things also for the theatre and he wrote things about my
17 nephew, I had a nephew, he left Israel when he was 13 years
18 old. 13 years old. And he, the father died and I did the
19 bar mitzvah for him because I was then like the father and
20 when he came there together with my brother in 1933 they were
21 starving to death. There were no food. The Arabs fighting
22 each other, killing each other, it was awful(ly). And it
23 was very bad time. Later was getting better and he, you know
24 what he did, he volunteered for the English as a petty officer
25 for the English navy because he want to liberate his mother,

1 she was four years with her father in the concentration camp
2 in Italy in the Island Rhodes, four years. And they were
3 also starving to death - little to eat - and he was there and
4 he left in a moment when they came in with the ship and he
5 said he want to see his mother. "If you would try to see
6 your mother you will be court martialed, hear?" And then you
7 know what he found? He found a brigade from Jewish people.
8 There was a Jewish brigade and he found also couple other
9 ones, not Jewish people, and they said to him, "YOU want to see
10 your mother, tell the English people to go to hell, you will
11 see your mother. Your mother see only once, hear? Hop in."
12 They took him and brought him and he saw the mother. This
13 was my nephew. He is now 67 years old.

14 Q When did your brother go to Israel?

15 A Where?

16 Q When did your brother leave Germany?

17 A My brother leave Germany in '37. Immediately when the
18 whole thing started he didn't want to stay and he left for
19 Israel and I tell ^{you} what happens to me he was thrown out after
20 six months, they said you don't have a visa because English,
21 no, and I was a Zionist at this time, I -- we had a lot of
22 people -- we had the nau dau bund - we had the zionistic move-
23 ment and we invited big shots[?] to make propaganda for us and
24 then politics and everything and we had a little influence
25 and I got a visa for him, finally, he came back with a real

1 visa and he could stay and then started all this Hagannah
2 business. He was my brother, I didn't know this, I found
3 everything out when he was getting sick. He's now 88 years
4 old and he told me stories. I was thinking I lived with *the*
5 Exodus a second time. He was a leader, the commandant of
6 Haifa when this thing started. He was a commandant without
7 any weapons - very little weapon and everything - but they
8 won the war because of the Big Bertha - you know the Exodus?

9 Q The ship?

10 A Ja, the Exodus, this was --

11 Q The refugee ship from Germany. *Left after the war*

12 A Ja, but not -- this is not the story. The Jordan army, *they*.
13 started to attack - a trained army from the English - *and* in the
14 English and also the other people there they started to *???* *attace*
15 this few Jewish but suddenly they remembered they had the
16 so-called the old Bertha. Bertha is the name, it's a German
17 name, it's a cannon, ja, and it makes only noise, it couldn't
18 be done anything, so they put a lot - and this is a true
19 story - they put a lot of dynamite in and it make a noise
20 and they were running like hell - the Jewish have the atomic
21 bomb ["] and everybody was running - they won the war.

22 Q Okay, your brother worked for the Hagannah and he worked
23 with the British in Palestine but he was a member of the
24 Hagannah. He didn't have a connection with the Exodus.

25 A ^{had} No, nothing to do with Exodus. The only thing, I mean,

1 the ?? people didn't come when they have to leave legal
2 etc. no.

3 Q The Exodus was '46.

4 A Was 1946, yeah.

5 Q Your sister?

6 A My sister, my sister when she came out of the concen-
7 tration camp -

8 Q Which concentration camp?

9 A In Rhodes in Italy, Rhodes in Italy. When she came out
10 of this concentration camp she had about 70 pounds. They
11 were half dead and this was a ship - the ship was mined and
12 they came out --

13 Q Why was she in Italy? How did she get there?

14 A She want to go to -- she want to leave for a country to
15 get some visa and there was a ship, I don't know what kind of
16 ship - they got a visa, the visa was not a -- was a wrong
17 visa and then came a, came a mine and they were bombed and
18 they came all naked and they were then four years in the
19 concentration camp and when she came out then the so called
20 Faith Rabina Rabbi (?) from the rabbi he ^{did} ?? the connection
21 and brought her down to Israel, no? And then also the husbands,
22 they both died. I want to see her for years, for years, but
23 I have to work hard in my life, I couldn't. I had to work
24 because I didn't have any money and I want always to visit
25 her but I saw her grave, also her husband, I couldn't see *him alive*

1 ~~my life~~ and ja. Funny thing, I'm -- you see I'm, in my heart
2 I'm a Zionist. I would die for this country because I have a
3 big respect what this small country did for all the Jewish
4 people. They give us respect -- they killed also people, but
5 this is, this is war. Military and I am, I die for them. If-
6 I want to go, when it was '33 there was a possibility and I
7 don't know how they did it because the Gestapo know I would
8 (?) trouble ahead - the trouble with the Gestapo was in '60, (sic)
9 '66 but before I had the opportunity to go I was a hockey
10 player in Germany. I played hockey. I played in other
11 states in also other countries and I was in the first team
12 there and I could go there for the Macabiya but they couldn't
13 take me - had a stateless pass and then I couldn't go - if
14 not I would have stayed in Israel but I couldn't make it.

15 Q What do you know about your parents?

16 A My parents, my parents, I only know, only what I know,
17 one day they were shipped off to this concentration camp
18 there-I have to ask again, I forgot always the name, they
19 were shipped off and were killed.

20 Q In Germany?

21 A No. In Romania. Because they were in Austria. But
22 they lost their Austrian citizenship and everything. And
23 then they were forced to be Romania again if not, they lose
24 their house; they lost it anyhow. I mean, the whole thing -
25 I mean

1 Q They were shipped from Berlin to Romania?

2 A From Berlin voluntary. They left in '26.

3 Q They left in '26.

4 Q They left in '26, they were lucky, but they died.

5 Q They went to Austria.

6 A To Austria, but then it was already Romania or something
7 and you know - and my sister, she was maybe 18 years old and
8 very beautiful girl. If I show you the picture, she's like a
9 movie star, no? She -- it was 1933 and I don't know where it
10 took the guts, I tried to get a visa for her, you see and
11 I was ??????. And I got a visa for her. You know, she came,
12 she was very beautiful, good looking, and she said, "I do a
13 favor. I work now for the Romanian government and you will
14 learn physical therapy, this is a big thing in the ??? for
15 this."

16 Q Your sister lived with your parents in Romania?

17 A Yeah, alone. And if I wouldn't brought her in '33, she
18 lives from '26 to '33, if I wouldn't brought her to Germany
19 she would die but the Nazis told her, this was in '33, the
20 only chance they told her, 'we know you will one day', she was
21 born in Berlin, Zonni was born in Berlin, "you will one day
22 marry a German guy. This German guy will marry you and then
23 you are German and then you will go to America and you will
24 do, what everything can happens in life". She said, no, but
25 in the meantime she could work for one year, she could work

1 there as an orthopedic and there were a couple of physicians
2 who were, who still could work because they were in the war.
3 When they were in the war they could work one year - then
4 they put them out (?) also immediately, no. And then she
5 married this man and they are leaving for sure for America
6 but she died. She was 43 years old and she died of cancer of
7 the breast - 47 years old, the kids were very young. My
8 sister in Israel—she lives there, she was 70 years old, she
9 died of cancer of the same breast.

10 Q How many sisters did you have?

11 A Two sisters.

12 Q The one lived in Israel?

13 A No, one lived in New York, in White Plains, New York,
14 she was married with a German.

15 Q She left Germany --

16 A In -- she left Germany -- she was in '36, '37, about and
17 came to New York to White Plains, New York, there she married
18 the German guy. He was quite famous and he was a -- he
19 collected books all over the world and he gave instruction
20 and he did all this for the big -- in universities, etc. and
21 his name is Feebick and he is -- my sister died and then also
22 the sister in Isreal. *died.*

23 Q When did she go to Israel?

24 A My sister? When she came out of the concentration camp
25 this was four years after the war, no, ja.

Q And as far as you know, your parents were --

1 A My parents -- my parents I didn't see them -- you know,
2 there was other thing -- other thing what I forget to say.
3 In 1931 something happens, sometimes I was lucky, in 1931
4 Hitler came but they didn't arrange the very bad thing, not
5 yet, they did a little exception or something, and they
6 offered me a visa but only for once. They said but you
7 cannot come back because you are stateless. When you come
8 back and you will stay, you go in a concentration camp and
9 you are finished.

10 Q A visa to where?

11 A To see my parents. *Q In Romania?* ~~AAA~~ And you know what I did?

12 Q This was before Hitler came to power?

13 A Before Hitler came to power -- no, no. When Hitler came
14 down in '33 but they gave me the chance and said, "Okay. When
15 you come back you go to the camp. And maybe get killed."
16 And I said, "I will see my parents." You know why? I was
17 looking around if I can find something there and I was talking
18 with the Romanian government. They offered me some chances
19 but they had to study all over again and I know then came the
20 communists also was very bad so I said to agent, but I saw
21 the last time my parents alive in '31. After this I didn't
22 see them any more. But I saved my sister - for what I saved
23 her - a couple years of happiness and -- this was -- well, I
24 saw my sister, yes, too, and then I had, you know, I was four
25 times I was four times between life and death and I have to

1 ^{still} thank God that I'm alive. The first time I got in 1973 I was—
2 I think I was maybe 73 years old, I got a heart attack and my
3 cardiac infarction.

4 Q When did you come to the United States?

5 A In When I was three years old. In 1907. Oh, no, United
6 States? 1953. 1953. 20 years. When I came to the United
7 States I had my records here. I had my x-ray, everything,
8 everybody was laughing. We want only a puppy from your dog.
9 I brought a dog along. I didn't want to kill the dog, I was
10 very sentimental. And I said, "I don't kill him." "Give me
11 a puppy." He didn't see my -- my -- my -- he didn't want to
12 see anything, no papers, no nothing.

13 Q Where?

14 A In New York.

15 Q When you came to the United States.

16 A When I came to United States I was two weeks in New
17 York. There was a relative of my sister, no, my sister was
18 there, she was married and then she came then my late wife,
19 she came to this country because she had relatives, a brother
20 and then also sister-in-law here and then we came to San
21 Francisco. It was all accident. I mean some stayed there
22 some -- but I mean the whole yard - you see the first time I
23 was in danger to die but I made it. I was 11 days in hospi-
24 tal. What I did after 11 days - six months later I took a
25 car - I was going from Heidelberg to Spain, back and forth

1 by car, 1500 miles about after my heart attack. The second
2 time I was working as a so-called physician helper and there
3 was a new clinic and there was water on the clinic and I
4 touched the water some way I got a shock and I was thinking
5 "I die" and I was so stupid, I didn't, why I didn't pull it
6 away and immediately I pulled it away, nothing happens to
7 me, this was the second time I was in the danger and then
8 this was real, the first time, the second time, I was four
9 times I -- ja, one day I, now I forgot, two other incidents
10 I had with death and life and I always got saved. Maybe
11 there is somebody protects me still. In -- but -- all these
12 experience - women, no? wanting making love to me, no nazis,
13 what kind of connection is this? I didn't know -- I want
14 to kill her. I tell you, I didn't know what to do and I
15 swear God I could strangle her and then I came to, you know,
16 away from Marseilles I came to, I met a woman 50 years old
17 and she spoke Italian with me. I learned a little bit of
18 Italian. It was very nice; she was standing till 12 o'clock
19 at night and she was talking about Brazil. And I find out
20 she has in Brazil on a main street, big cabarets - they were
21 millionaires, had two daughters, not married, and I didn't
22 know what she wants - she want maybe I get married or some-
23 thing and they presented me the daughters, ja, and said to
24 me, "You want to stay in Brazil? We make you visa - you can
25 stay. You can be there blah - - -" but I mean I didn't do

1 anything. But they were very nice, invited me etc. etc. I
2 was two days together with them. I mean- but, this is my
3 life.

4 end of tape

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