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A: ...the point was, we had no home and we begged till we get a job. So then the next day, they came and took my sister to school. 20 Dollars was enough, because all the groceries were in the house, and then finally a secretary came, and told me, whenever I'm ready, they will have a job for me. Now I was in Vienna during that time, I have made a *Schnellsiederkurs*...there was a pastry chef – you know *Konditoreien in Wien* – that gave lessons how to make French pastry, and I took that for about four, five, six months. And I made little recipies, how to make chocolate éclairs, how to make this and that, maybe if I come here, I can get a job to do that. So naturally, I wrote to them that I'm taking a course, and they gave this letter to a German waiter to translate the letter, and he told them that I'm a pastry chef. So when this secretary picked me up, she told me they have a job for me in the Viltmore¹ Hotel, which is one of the biggest hotels in Los Angeles that time in the kitchen. Wonderful, so I came down to the hotel, and the first thing they greeted me, because the owner of the Viltmore Hotel, a man by the name of Baron Long², was a very close friend of the Simon Lymans, and he helped them, because they had given so many affidavits to help the refugees when they came. So when they found out, that I was a pastry chef, the writing was "get him into the Viltmore Hotel". So when I came to the Viltmore Hotel, the first thing they did, they put a uniform on me. White, you know...*wie in der Konditorei, mit einem hohen Hut. Ich habe nicht einmal gewusst, wie man den Hut anzieht, nicht? Hat man mich raufgebracht in die Küche, because Baron Long told them to give me a job. So die haben mich in die Küche reingebracht, nicht? Ich habe in meinem Leben so etwas noch nie gesehen, eine Küche mit zwei- dreihundert Köchen, you know? Ich habe nicht einmal atmen können, das war Untergrund, mit Ofen und alles das, furchtbar. And there I am in the uniform und hab keine Ahnung. Ich habe gelernt, wie man sechs Napoleons macht, können sie sich vorstellen! So die haben mich reingebracht zu der Zubäckerei, Zuckerbäckerei, und da waren acht Zuckerbäcker in der Zuckerbäckerei, in der Portion von der Küche. Und die haben mich vorgestellt, und das Glück war, da waren zwei Schweizer, ein Elsaß-Lothringen, die haben alle Deutsch gesprochen, so das war ein bisschen leichter, nicht? Und die haben mich begrüßt, und ich habe sofort gesehen, da ist ein Problem. Was immer ich gesehen hab, hab ich noch nie in meinem Leben gesehen. Die Maschinen allein, können sie sich vorstellen die...da waren zwei- dreitausend Lunches und Dinners a day, und ich mein, alles war... Ich habe sofort den Schweizer, der was davor war...hören sie, da ist ein Fehler hier, ich bin kein Zuckerbäcker, aber ich könnte ihnen helfen! Da war ein Italiener, ein kleiner Italiener in einem großen sink, der was die Töpfe gewaschen hat. Habe ich gesagt, ich kann das machen. So sagt er „Also das ist sehr nett von ihnen...“, und ich habe ihm erklärt, das ist ein Fehler, ich bin kein Zuckerbäcker, ich hab ein bisschen was gelernt. Dadurch, dass ich sofort gesagt hab, wo ich steh...und ich war ja doch rekommenndiert beim Eigentümer, haben sie das zusammen gehabt. Dann haben sie mich vorgestellt beim Hauptchef über die ganze Küche, das war auch ein Schweizer. Da habe ich dem gesagt, was wir mitgemacht haben, und dass diese Leute haben unser Leben gerettet. Und die waren alle sehr nett, und ich hab angefangen dort zu arbeiten in der Küche. Ich mein, sie wissen, was ein Pie ist, nicht? Die haben 500 Pies am Tag gemacht. So man hat mir die Pie, die Schüssel, und man hat mit dem Bürstl die mit Fett ausschmieren, oder die Pfannen schmieren, es war genug Arbeit. So habe ich angefangen, dort zu arbeiten mit denen, und man hat gelernt. Und ich war viereinhalb Jahre dort, und das war unser erstes Job. Ich habe 90 Dollar verdient im Monat, wir haben die Eltern...ich habe das zuhaus gebracht, 35 Dollar Zins gezahlt, und das übrige war fürs Leben. Die Mutter ist gegangen zum grocery store, hat den gebettet, er soll diese halbverfaulten Äpfel nicht wegschmeißen, er soll sie saven, und für 5 Cent hat sie zuhause gebracht große Säcke of Obst, was sie ausgeschnitten hat und Kompott gemacht hat, nicht? So hat man gelebt, und jedes Monat hat sie fünf Dollar weggelegt, oder zehn Dollar weggelegt. Und das war die nächsten viereinhalb Jahre, nicht?*

A1: Nur ich habe schnell Englisch gelernt in der Schule.

A: Ja, in der Schule.

A1: Und ich bin dann mit meiner Mutter gegangen einkaufen...(???)³

¹ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

² Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

³ leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

A: So das war the beginning, nicht, und dann habe ich meine Frau kennengelernt. Oh, und da war ein Heim hier, das Hamburger Home⁴. Und die Leute, die was das Hamburger Home hier gestiftet haben, waren reiche Menschen, die haben Department Stores gehabt. Und die haben ein Heim gemacht für Mädeln, die was keine...keine Wohnung gehabt haben, und die Mädeln haben dort gelebt...working girls, you know? Und dort habe ich meine Frau dann kennengelernt, und dann haben wir angefangen, nach viereinhalb Jahren...meine Eltern haben, ich habe erspart 2.000 Dollar. Mit den 2.000 Dollar, was ich wirklich meinen Eltern gegeben hab, wenn wir geheiratet haben. Meine Frau hat gearbeitet in einer knitting mill, Zwitter machen. Ich hab dann aufgegeben meinen job, und die 2.000 Dollar, die ich meinen Eltern gegeben hab, habe ich zurückgeborgt. Wir haben eine kleine Gemischtwarenhandlung gekauft und haben angefangen, ein ganz kleines Geschäftl mit grocery, und haben schwer gearbeitet, von vier in der Früh bis zehn am Abend, jeden Tag, und wir zwei haben dann angefangen, das Geschäft zu haben für fünf Jahre, und dann nach fünf Jahren haben wir ein größeres gekauft, und haben dann Geschäfte gehabt für etwa zehn Jahre. Haben genug gespart, dann haben wir das Geschäft verkauft, und dann bin ich reingegangen in eine andere Sache...promotional business, vitamins and minerals. I went into that for about three years, and after three years with vitamins and minerals we didn't think that this will work. I started to talk to another Viennese fella, who was Fred Nascher from Wien, und der hat eine ganz kleine Plastikfabrik gehabt. Und der hat gesagt "Try to go with me", so I started to work with him, and I started to sell plastics, and we got into industrial plastics, and I became the Sales Manager, and then I became Vice President, and then I started to go all over the nation, and then I started to sell the industrial plastic parts for IBM and all those people, electronics and aircraft, and became quite successful, because I travelled all over the nation with it. And after doing that for about five years, we had enough money, I wanted to go into business for myself. I went into a business where we sold material handling equipment, that was handling equipment for other industries, in other words...electronics, aircraft, whenever they handle their parts, they need carts, racks und alles. So we went into that, and I bought a partnership in that, and with that I started then to manufacture certain items we made, and it became quite successful, and got into more material handling, and then I invented a special cart for the United States Post Office to handle the post office. All the packages and the letters, they needed a special cart, and I had enough employees, engineering department and everything, and we came up with ideas, and we designed a collapsable cart, which designed for the Post Office, working with the Post Office. And that particular cart, I got patents on it, and the Post Office adopted it, and we sold it to the Post Office nationwide. And I had offices also for other products, we had over 500 products, we had offices in New Jersey and in Texas, and in San Francisco, and the Headquarters were here. We had two factories, one of them in Glendale, one of them in Burbank. We had 300 employees by then, working three shifts, and became quite successful. And after doing that for about 30 years, somebody came and offered us...they wanted to represent our line, and I said, well this is hard to do...would you sell out? So I said, well, everything is for sale, you know? Then they made us an offer I couldn't refuse, and we sold out our entire business, the manufacturing, but I kept the distributing portion, because I had too many wonderful employees, which were with me for 20-25 years, and I didn't want them to lose their job. So what we did is we sold the manufacturing company to a national company, and I kept the small distributing company for our old employees, and they kept on running it, and then we kept that for another ten years or so, and then we sold out completely and I retired. And in order to pay back America for what America had done for us, we both started to work for charities. And for the last 30 years, Lisa and I are involved with the "City of Hope"⁵, have you heard of the "City of Hope"? It is a national, non-sectarian hospital for catastrophic diseases, cancer, all the major diseases, and we do raise millions and millions and millions of Dollars for the sick people. So our payback for America is, that hopefully we contribute enough to give other people a chance, and so we are now...I was on the National Board of Directors for the "City of Hope", I was among the Board of Governors, the Board of Regions, and our big item is that I had enough connections. I was quite involved with the movie industry. I had for 10 years big events in the big hotels with all the movie stars, all the major movie stars I had on the stage, performing free and raising hundreds of thousands of Dollars. I believe I am the only persons who had Frank Sinatra and Jonny Carson...

A1: They don't know those people...

A: I don't know whether you ever heard of this names, I presume...on the same stage, you know. We sold tickets for 400 Dollars just to see the stars, and we raised hundreds of thousands of Dollars. And then we had many events...the little Lady who saved our lives, Mrs. Lyman, I made her the "Woman of

⁴ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

⁵ siehe www.cityofhope.org (Anm. AP)

the Year", and we had a big event for her, and she gave me (???)⁶ two million Dollars, and then, before she passed away, she more or less...everybody passed away, except she was alive, and then to repay her, I took her under my wing, and did a lot of good things for her, because she was old and frail, and then she left in her will another three and a half million Dollars for the "City of Hope"...

A1: They were very wealthy people...

A: You know, they were very wealthy...and so I've raised many many millions, and when we go now on cruises, which we do quite a bit, we raise money on the ships. I met a gentleman on the ship going from Amsterdam to Budapest, became a friend, and Mr. Oppenheimer wanted to know what I am doing. So I told him what I am doing, so when we came back, and we took him out for dinner, he handed me an envelope for a million Dollars to the "City of Hope". Since then, he gave me another million Dollars. So, our pleasure is now to raise quite a bit of money, because as individual, you can give only so much, but by being involved, I must have raised personally maybe 25 or 30 million Dollars. People, you would never believe, who were sitting in your house for coffee. A Lady just now gave us another million Dollars, you know. So that is our payback, in the hopes that we can give something back. So that's more or less our lives' story. We have a daughter, sorry to say we lost one daughter, and our daughter has four little children, and we hope she carries on, you know. So that's the story of our life. My wife, I'm sorry to say, lost everybody in Germany, except one brother we saved. He was four years in a concentration camp, and one of my cousins, Fritz Spiegl, who was from Vienna, that's Uncle Louises son, he went in to the Army. He was younger than I am, and being that he spoke German, he was Intelligence Officer immediately for the American Army. He went back to Germany, and he found him when he got out. The Russians liberated her brother out of the concentration camp, when he was half dead, and (???)⁷ him...we could say her brother brought him back. Now, on my mother's side...they were Hungarians from Budapest. They all disappeared, my uncle, my two aunts, their children, they all disappeared...they all were...*ausgerottet*. And one cousin, who went to Israel before Hitler, he was in Israel, or he went to Palestine, and he was saved there, and he passed away, and he has a granddaughter, and her child...they are still in Israel. So, that's about the familiy. So we have been back quite a few times, while I was in business, I sold to the Army Airforce products, and the American Army asked me about a product which...our specialty was carts, and they adapted it, and could sell it to anybody but to Germans, and the English wouldn't buy it. Because we had, you know, all these commissaries over there. So they asked me "when you go to Europe, would you go and speak to them? You speak the language!" So that's when we went once over to Germany, and I went to three different places to sell them our product, which they finally then bought. And since then, we have made many trips back. We have been *in Zurndorf zweimal*, my grandparents are in Gattendorf *begraben*, and we go to the cemetery, that's were my grandparents lay and my two aunts, which died. They lay there, and some families, and when I went through Zurndorf, I had some friends there, you know, school friends who I went to school with, and there was only really one who was anti-Nazi, Paul Fischer is his name. But obviously, he had to go to war, and I met those people, and then I invited all his friends and the school guys *zum Heurigen oder im Gasthaus* there, and *wir haben kalte Aufschnitte gemacht*, you know. And we met them, I drove to Budapest with Hanni, by coming back, they were there. I just wanted to tell them how great America was to us, and how strangers saved our life, and how many dead people were, but that we finally found out that there is more good than bad, you know? And you have to learn to go over it and forget, you know? For the first ten years I was here, I had only one wish: to go back and to kill some people. But you can't live like that, you kill yourself, you know? So you have to forget, you know, and try to go on. But the important thing is, that all those recorded things, which I recorded, you know, that in 200-300 years they don't say...they say it now already, that the whole thing didn't exist, you know? But it is an unbelievable thing how people can change. Some of them, because they had no choice, some of them, because they enjoyed it, I presume. So, this the world, this is how it goes, and I believe that this should be a lesson for future generations. This time it was the Jews, now the next thing is: the Muslims say, that all non-believers must either join being Muslims, or the non-believers must be killed. It says in the Koran, I read it the other day. That is unbelievable that there is a religion which thinks that way.

A1: In the name of religion...

A: Sometimes, you know, I always said: why did I have to be Jewish? I couldn't care less what I am. We are all flesh and blood. You are because your parents were what you are, you know what I mean?

⁶ Wort leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

⁷ Wort leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

If there would be a religion, or if there would be some kind of...there is a religion in Israel, which I...a lesson to...what was the name? They believe in only good, and non-sectarian, and regardless what religion, what creed...what's the name?

A1: The Bahai?

A: The Bahai, yes, have you heard of them? And I could almost believe in that, because most basic religions, you know...I mean, we went to protestant school, I know more about Jesus than about anything else, because I went to a protestant school. We went to the protestant church, the protestant and the catholic priest brought at night to our house food and left it on the front of the forestep, under Hitler. He was scared, you know? So I mean, religion can be good, religion can be bad, but if there would be something where mankind tries to help mankind... I'll say that's one thing about the "City of Hope". It was started by a Jewish refugee 80 years ago. They had as their base: "If a person is sick, you must help, regardless of colour or religion", non-sectarian. That is written, they said, in the Thora. You have to help a human being to live. And you know, the first 30 years of "City of Hope", nobody accepted a penny, it was all done by charity. And today, they have a 400 million Dollar budget a year. 80 million is raised by volunteers for people who cannot afford it, they get complete...you know what...if you have a child with leukaemia, and it needs a bone marrow transplant for 100.000 Dollars, they don't have anybody, we will take him and save their life. That's left of insurance, except the insurance, you know? So that's to us our non-sectarian repayment, because when we go there, obviously, 95% are non-Jews, there's only a few Jews, you know? So we can help humanity to prolong life by what we are doing. That is about the best you can do. So this is more or less our story, and we are grateful, we have a great life, now all we do is pray for good health, so that we can do more good. So, and you know, when we went back to Vienna, we saw that it is a beautiful city, but you know, some of the memories are horrible, you know.

A1: You are more forgiving than I am...

A: Yeah well, obviously this is, you have to see and hear, you know...but that's how the world functions, and I just hope...what do you feel about we might have another war, you know?

A1: The young people of the world...and here we are, we got this evil going on, where they wanna just annihilate all of us...

A: But now, it is against the non-believers, which is Americans and Christians, and all non-believers included, I mean, you know, there is a few billion Muslims now, isn't it? Is there a Muslim movement over there?

Q: In Austria?

A: I'm very convinced that the majority of the Muslim...because they believe in Muslims...that the majority is not out to kill others. I can't believe that, regardless what the Koran says, so it's only the radicals, because...

A1: But the irony is that these people are not reproaching⁸ their own kind for plotting and planning what they are doing. You will never or rarely hear any of them saying anything against their own kind, even if they don't...

A: Well, that's against the religion...

A1: ...against the religion...(???)⁹...those are evildoers.

A: I believe we should now have a little coffee...

(kurze Unterbrechung)

Q: ...you answered it, and you explained it, but my last question is: you were expelled from Austria, and you said that you were born as a Hungarian?

⁸ to reproach – tadeln, vorwerfen (Anm. AP)

⁹ leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

A: No, I was born in Moson...in Hungary.

Q: In Hungary, but...

A: When we were four years old, my father, who is from Zurndorf...my father worked in...my father was a...he had a PhD in business, he was *ein Prokurist*, you know, and he worked in the Kühne¹⁰ factory, you know Kühne factory is a *landwirtschaftlich Geräte*...

A1: I think it is still there...

A: I think he worked there as the CEO, you know, and he made very good money, so mother and him were living in Mosonmagyaróvár, which is just over the *Grenze*, Hegyeshalom, you know. And they were living there, and my older sister and I were born there. But then, after the First World War, *die Banditen sind gekommen in Ungarn, haben sie von denen gehört?* And people, and the money started to devaluate, so everybody who had a few Dollars started to trade their money into gold. Mother was carrying on her body the paper money, because *die Banditen sind gekommen und haben alles gestohlen*.

Q: You mean the Communists...the short Communist period?

A: There was a revolution like, the war was over, and there was a bad situation, it was very unstable. And you couldn't trust the police, and you couldn't trust them. And there was a group like they call *hier* the...

Q: Mafia? Freischärler?

A: *Ja, ich glaub so, ja ja, Freischärler.* They called them *die Banditen*, and everybody was scared, so father and some of the other people in Hungaria...Austria was *doch, da war eine Grenze, aber die waren zusammen*...started to try to smuggle gold into Austria, so one day father was in Austria, and mother was at home with us two children and the two maids, *und die Banditen sind gekommen und die Polizei ist gekommen, den Vater zu verhaften*, because he was a bigshot. The CEO of the *Kühne Fabrik, der muss viel Geld haben!* Mother had money on her body, so father luckily wasn't there, I was four years old. My mother phoned next door, we had no phone, my mother phoned father in Zurndorf or in Vienna "*Komm nicht zurück, die sind hier, dich zu verhaften!*" And a lot of people disappeared that time, you know. So, they packed us up, and the next day *wir sind in Zurndorf angekommen*. From the villa in Moson – which was quite a nice town – as a CEO doing well, all of a sudden we come *zu einem Bauernort* with 2.000 Bauern. *Meine Mutter ist eine von Budapest, eine Dame*, you know, *wenn ein Wiener*, and the father is a highly educated guy, a CEO, and all of a sudden we are landing in Zurndorf? *Was macht man dort? Meine Mutter hat nicht gewusst was zu machen dort. Ich mein, alle die Bauernfrauen...und auf einmal hat sie kein Dienstmädel gehabt. Und unser Großvater hat ein Haus gehabt*, which we moved in, *und da war...eine Partei hat hinten gewohnt, und auf einmal hatten wir drei Zimmer-Haus gehabt. Und dort sind wir gelandet.* And from then on, from four years to vierzehn Jahre, *bis ich aus der Schule raus bin, sind wir in Zurndorf gewesen. Meine Mutter war unglücklich dort, sie hat in Wien wollen wohnen oder in Budapest wohnen, aber was macht man in einem Bauernort? Sie hat doch niemanden...so, und dann der Vater hat verstellen...was kann er machen, nicht? Wir haben wieder angefangen, und dann hat er Vertretungen gehabt, für landwirtschaftliche Geräte und dann für automatischen Wagen, und dann hat er ein Auto gehabt mit Chauffeur und ist herumgefahren, aber...wir haben nur ein Leben gemacht. Und immer von Zurndorf weggefahren, zu verkaufen in den anderen Bauernorten, but wir waren, you know...wenn man von Ungarn, von Budapest und Moson nach Zurndorf kommt...we never made it. In other words, we made a living, but miserable living, very very bad...*

A1: A hard life...

A: And in order to finish it up, Hitler came, so, you know, for our parents it was very hard.

A1: ...96, and he was 81...¹¹

¹⁰ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

¹¹ Satz nur unvollständig verstanden, Anm. AP

A: I told you too much, was there something else I told you?

Q: My last question: How would you explain me your identity? I mean, you were born in Hungary, grew up partly in Zurndorf, then you were expelled by the Nazis, and you settled down here, and you were very lucky to receive all the help here in the USA. How was your household, did you live in a very traditional Jewish way? No? My question now is, how would you define your identity to me? What does "home" mean to you?

A: Well, to me there is only one home: America. In other words, from my 18th year – I'm 83 now – I am in America. I've given all I could, I've received everything I could. I gave jobs to hundreds and hundreds of people for 40 years, good employees, good human beings. They all still are my friends. I have (???)¹², who was for 35 years with me, and we are still going out. They are all part of our lives, or secretaries, Lisa still sends cards and regards for dinner with my secretary, which was my secretary for years, so my whole life I identify for myself America as a heaven. And that's all I feel. *Zurndorf denke ich zurück...* I feel sorry for some of those people, which were our maids in Zurndorf. *In Zurndorf haben wir eine maid gehabt, wann wir rübergegangen sind, habe ich immer Geschenke zu denen gebracht.* When I gave a little party in Zurndorf, *und habe Wein gekauft und Aufschnitte*, and I gave money even to some of them, because I felt sorry for them. They were good people, you know. But I can only...the only life we have...from my 19th year of life, and from her 9th year, that's all we have. And to us, America is the only...you see, one thing about America: being that it is such a mixture of people, we have learned generally to have less classes, you know, that we are more interwoven. I don't think a Hitler could come to America, there is not enough people who would line up for one person. In mean, you see the Democrats and the Republicans, my wife is a Democrat, I am a Republican, that's how it works in America. I vote, she votes. Most likely we wipe out each other's vote, but last time she converted me to Democrat, you know what I mean...

A2¹³: You're a Democrat now?

A: Well, I'm a Democrat, but they are still sending me the literature for Republicans, but I voted for the Democrats, but this...

A1: You vote for the man, not for the party...

A: This is America, you know, to me. You vote for the person, or what is the best for the country. I liked Clinton, but now I like Bush, because I feel he is strong enough. I don't think we will have war, but he is smart enough to threaten, to make this Iraq comply, you know what I mean? So I have faith, that there is no place else in the world to go. So we are truly Americans, I'd give my life anytime. I wanted to go in the Army, they were (???)¹⁴, they rejected me, because...I found out afterwards I was lucky that they rejected me, you know? But...I had little problems, you know? But the point I'm making is...your answer: to us...

A2: But you are a Jew by religion!

A: Jew, by religion.

A2: You religion is Jewish...

A: Yeah, because my mother was Jewish. But I am not...we go along to the temple, we are reformed Jews, we paid to the temple, because my daughters went to temple. You have to go someplace, but to me, religion, true religion...I believe in God, I believe in a superior being, call it whatever you want. And I believe you get as much as you give. And to me, that the Catholic priest gave us food: to me, that I'm able to help people regardless of colour or race or whatever, is religion. In other words, I feel that if the day comes, if we would know that today is our last day, and you could say to yourself: it was a short journey, regardless...believe me, it gets shorter and shorter...and if you could look back and say: Have I done anything which made this world one lota better? Have I contributed...I mean, we are only like a *Körndl* of sand, and if this *Körndl* of sand has come and gone, have you done anything

¹² Namen nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

¹³ **A2** – weitere Frauenstimme, Ehefrau von Hr.Spiegl oder Tochter (klingt ziemlich jung)?; Anm. AP

¹⁴ Wort leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

other than fed yourself? Have you done anything to have made this world a little bit better? The very fact that I gave a sick person hope or whatever, then life was worthwhile, you know, it was worth it. So that is all there is, because believe me, that is a very short journey. When you get 83 years, my mother got 96, I'm going to try and match it.

A2: (???)¹⁵

A: Then I have a lot. But that's the answer, you know.

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¹⁵ Satz leider unverständlich, Anm. AP