
(Beginn Band 3 von 4)

Ja, wir waren im Ghetto für zwei Jahre, und der Grund fürs Ghetto war, dass die deutschen Partner von den Japanern, das war im Zweiten Weltkrieg, wollten die ganzen Juden zusammen haben. Und da war...das haben wir nachher erfahren...ein Colonel Meissinger ist gekommen von Deutschland, und hat die japanischen Besatzungstruppen versucht zu überreden, um uns, wie wir schon im Ghetto da alle waren...die wollten das machen mit uns, was sie gemacht haben in Deutschland mit den Konzentrations- und Vernichtungs...also death camps...uns umbringen. In Putong, das ist einer von den Vororten von Shanghai, wollten sie uns vergasen. Oder, hat er gesagt, sie können uns auch auf ein Schiff tun und rausschicken auf den Ozean und das Schiff sinken lassen, und so weiter. Also die Japaner wollten nichts davon wissen, obwohl sie Partner waren von den Deutschen und den Nazis. Das ist gegen den samurai spirit gegangen. Die Japaner, obwohl sie sehr grausam sein können und waren, und haben sehr schreckliche Sachen unternommen...aber Menschen umzubringen, ohne Grund, nur weil sie jüdisch waren, das war gegen ihr...So Colonel Meissinger hat nichts erreicht. Pau Chia¹ ist ein altes chinesisches System von watchmen, oder wie soll man sagen. Das heißt, ich bin geworden ein member, ein Mitglied der Pau Chia. Das haben die Japaner zu den Emigranten...oh, ich spreche Deutsch...Englisch! It is an old system in China, where they send watchmen around at night, to guard property. So we, the Jewish emigrants...refugees had to guard ourselves. This ghetto, that was about just a few city blocks. They gave us a white armband, a whistle and a piece of rope. I don't know what the rope was for, oh, and a nightstick, a wooden stick, and a guardhouse, a small guardhouse in case it rained. And I, being that I was the younger, I always got the worst shifts, which is three hours, from midnight to three or even worse from three in the morning to six. The older people got better shifts in the daytime. So what you had to do, the job was to make sure that no refugee would leave the ghetto without permission. Well, I never saw anybody at that time, except Japanese military patrols from time to time. Now, there was a man called "Goya", spelled something like this famous painter, a Japanese military official, who was in charge of giving permissions to the refugees. If you wanted to go outside the ghetto during those two years, say to a cemetery or due to a medical reason, he would give you a red emblem, which meant that for one day, you could go out. But he was a brutal man, who hated tall people. He was so short, and he would often hit them, or, you know, not give them permits. I, working for the Japanese military-controlled paper factory, didn't have to go under that humiliation. I had a blue emblem, which meant a permanent – not every day, but permanent – so with that, we could go to this bigger factory. We went by streetcar. Shanghai had from time to time heavy typhoons, Chinese tai-fun, meaning "big wind". The typhoons brought horrible rain, and tore roofs from the houses, it was quite something. So one day, we were at work, and such a typhoon happened, and the streetcars didn't run. So my father and I each grabbed a piece of cardboard at the paper factory to protect us from the wind and rain. The wind came this way, and going home, in a few minutes, the cardboard was torn from our hands. We just leaned this way, and it took hours and hours to get home, because it was a long way away. The typhoons also brought floods, and the floods were very dangerous. If you stepped into the Shanghai water, the Shuzai² Creek, you could die. There were bacilla and all kinds of amoeba in the water, so it was very risky. One day, when I worked for Rabinowitsch in the French town, I used a bicycle. Again, I was hit by a typhoon, and so the streets were flooded, and I couldn't see the traffic islands, you know, where you had to wait for the streetcar, there was a little raised island in the street. So with the bicycle I bumped, I had to push the bicycle up again, it took hours and hours. When the Japanese left...(???)³ Okay, I drove to work one day to the French town, French concession on my bicycle. So the inner part of the city in China was very thick and dense traffic, so I collided with a riksha, and my bicycle broke in two. It was a very cheap Japanese-made bicycle, not like the quality now. In those days, anything made by Japan was a joke, you know, those toys fell apart in two days. The bicycle was made of gas pipes, thin pipes, so the front wheel rolled over to the other side of the street. But the riksha kuli, who I collided with right away started crying and pretending to be hurt and in pain. And right away a circle of Chinese formed around, because they wanted to see this foreigner, you know, this is something to see. So it looked a little bit risky, you know, what is gonna happen to me? The crowd was very thick, and a Chinese came forward, then a Chinese policeman – this was near the French concession, so he had a French police uniform – came to see what had happened, and the other gentleman Chinese said "I'm Doctor Ru Pai Fu⁴ from the Mercy Hospital over there, here is my card, I saw the whole..." This was in Chinese, and I understood it. He said, this foreign bandit, or

¹ nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

² Wort nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

³ leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

⁴ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

criminal attacked the riksha, you can use my name as a witness, blah blah blah. So the policeman took the riksha kuli and me to the police station, where the man kept crying with pain, you know, a really big production, so... I had money fortunately with me, so I had to pay him some money for the pain that he had suffered, and they let me go. And of course, I went home, the bicycle was in two parts, so I had to go home by riksha, what else? And that's one of the adventures I remember from Shanghai. Now, towards the end of the war, in '45...the war had been over in Europe in May, but in the Far East, it still raged on, and we didn't know, what...because it was forbidden to have a short wave radio. So all we had was the news that the Axis was winning, you see. Which wasn't true, but we didn't know that at the time. And then suddenly, in August...oh yeah, and before that happened, we had air raids by the U.S. bombers. The Japanese had a radio station and some oil dumps, you know oil barrels, stashed in the middle of where we lived. And the American bombers one time missed, and a bomb fell and killed about 42 refugees and wounded hundreds and hundreds were hurt, and Chinese, too. And it was...since we had no air raid shelter, because Shanghai, which comes in Chinese "Zhong Hei", "over the water", is just above sea level, just, you know, a very small... So we had no air raid shelters, cellars, you know, they couldn't do it. So the only protection was some shallow ditches along the sides, you know, we could only hope not to be hit by shrapnels or... I watched the bombers from the roof, a stupid thing to do, but I didn't have any fear, so... And one time I watched the bombers, and the next was a jagged piece of shrapnel, a jagged piece of sharp metal a few feet away, and I could have been killed. The house where we lived...we lived on the ground floor, and above were two more floors. One room was very small, we called it "Zählerzimmer", which meant that the electric meter was in that room. And it was so small, you couldn't even open the door, because it bumped into the bed. The man living there was a *Rechtsanwalt Kiesler von Wien*. Another was a very famous actress in Austria, Hedi Kiesler, who became later Hedy Lamarr in Hollywood. And supposedly he was related or a cousin. The owner...since he lived there for nearly seven years...the ownership changed several times. At one time it was a Margit Gutfreund, who had a elegant leather goods store, I think it was the *Mariahilferstraße in Wien*. And when she was the landlady, she did something that she shouldn't have done, but she did anyway. We had no flush toilet, you know. We did our business with a bucket, for the whole house, everybody, covered bucket. In a room there was one water tap, which smelled, and in the morning a kuli would come with his cart and empty the bucket from the *Dreck*, to turn it into fertilizer. So *Frau Gutfreund* had a flush toilet installed, against the law, because the sewer system wasn't made for that. So they made for us waste water. And the next morning, when the kuli came to empty the bucket, he saw the flush toilet, and he started beating it with a stick, and yelling and screaming, so she had to pay him off some big amount. And then afterwards keep paying the same fee, even though there was no more...so that was one of the little details of the fun of which. It wasn't all horrible, you know? Young people had, we went out in the streets and made friends, and we had a pretty good time. There was a restaurant on Chusan Road⁵, which was the street, where there was an (???) called "Würstl-Tenor". They hired a young man from Vienna, a friend of mine, who ate something and died a few days later. And then for a few days, people didn't go, and then they came back again. Many people died just from mysterious meningitis, and all kinds of things. I once had what they called the "Shanghai Fever", because they put a name on it, they didn't know what to call it. High fever, I had to go to the hospital. So in addition to the (???)⁶ and this Shanghai Fever, I was in pretty good shape. Now, let's see...I got married, which I...well here is the list of my employers, what I did, about a dozen different things. I showed you my wedding picture, and my father-in-law, I don't know, did I tell you about my father-in-law, I'm not sure, maybe not. But anyway, this wedding picture: this is my father and mother, my sister and her husband Seppl, and this is the mother-in-law. And my father-in-law, Dr. Silbermann, was short and he was a hunchback. And he became *Chefarzt* at the hospital there. And this is Herald Jacobsson, who was a dentist, and they shared, you know, the *Sprechzimmer* and the building where I worked as a *Lehrbua*⁷ in the bicycle shop. Here, this is a restaurant that the grandparents owned in Zalalövö in Hungary⁸, where we spent our vacation. It was quite a large building. As I said, there was no electricity, they used kerosene lamps. They had a restaurant and two butcher shops. This is a picture in Shanghai, the four of us. That was quite a good building, a school building, made of brick, in Shanghai, so we didn't suffer as much as some the others in the other homes. (???)⁹ Let's see now, I think I'm done with Shanghai. Well, the eight years in Shanghai...let's put it this way: I live in this country for 50 years, but I remember more about the eight years in Shanghai, because so was happened. But the 50 years here run together like a haze, like in a dream, because it was a good

⁵ Straßennamen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

⁶ Wort leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

⁷ Wort nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

⁸ Ort nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

⁹ Satz nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

life, quiet and with no problems, no bombings, and no big diseases except my heart thing. But it...Shanghai was a strange, exotic, in some sense wonderful, because it was so different, so opposite to what we were used to. The climate, and then food and everything. I have some good memories, but I also remember some of the horrible things. We were supposed to have a blackout, there was a blackout enforced because the American bombers were flying over. So every house had to have black curtains, and one day there was a big pounding at the door. We lived on the ground floor, so father opened and there were two Japanese soldiers, and they smashed him in the face. Well, what happened was that apparently upstairs somebody didn't do a job with the blackout curtains, maybe some light came out. But to the Japanese soldier, it didn't...they weren't that intelligent, you know, they just hit poor father. And he just took it, what could he do, you know? In the *Altersheim*, the Jewish home, where my sister is right next to Herb, is a woman *Susi Jost*. She is about the same age as my sister, I would say, 79. she lost a husband in Shanghai to the Japanese military. He was riding a bicycle and collided with a Japanese military truck. He complained to the Japanese soldiers, they grabbed him and put him on the truck, and they put him in the Bridge House. The Bridge House was a building near the Garden Bridge, and it was said that anybody who was put there would never come out alive. The cells were infested with typhoid, and...anyway, they killed him, cause he argued. And they were driving on the wrong side of the street! And this poor Susi Jost lost her husband that way. Not the only refugee that died, but...you didn't argue with Japanese soldiers! You know, that was stupid. But the man thought that he was in the right, and they were driving on the wrong side, so he argued, and it cost him his life. Okay, well I guess, we can... *ah ja*, on our wedding in 1947 in Shanghai, it was a German...I don't know if it is also an Austrian custom...(???)¹⁰ *und Hochzeit von (???)*¹¹ *und so weiter*. And they wrote some melodies nach der Melodie "*Machen wir es den Schwalben nach*", *und so weiter und so weiter*. So they wrote those melodies they sang at our wedding. A thousand people came to the ceremony, because Dr. Silbermann was so popular. Everybody knew him, so it was a very big wedding, and the Doctor drove us in a car to a home, which at that time, when there was no gasoline, was a big thing, you know? Nobody had a car, so that was very special. Okay, I guess we are going on to Bolivia. Now, when our...it was time to think about leaving Shanghai in '47, because the Communists were only two years away. In '49, Mao Tse Tung and his Communist hordes occupied Shanghai. They had really...the had the so called "Long March". Mao Tse Teng, you know, the Chinese Reds, so we knew it was time to go. We had already made preparations to go to Bolivia. Father's uncle Dr. Greiner lived in (???)¹², the former capital. La Paz was the capital at that time. When we came to the Bolivian consul in Vienna, he has hired, he was a *Tierarzt*, because they needed one. And also, the consul liked his daughter Klari, the ballet dancer, so they sent...they lived in Bolivia, and they got a job at the Ministry of Interior in Sucre¹³. And they helped us to get into the country. And in order to get to Bolivia, we had to pass the United States, for which we needed a transit visa. So I went to the consulate in Shanghai, and the (???)¹⁴ father had a heart murmur, so they examined him, and even for a transit visa – only passing through – you had to be in good health. But finally they gave us a visa. So we boarded the ship. It was a converted troop ship, used in the war to transport soldiers. So there were no cabins, there were just big rooms with *Hängematten*...hammocks. The parents were separated from the kids, but it was nice. We landed in Hawaii, which at that time was not part of the United States, it was just a territory, and in '57 it became a state. Hawaii, it was wonderful, you know the palm trees and the pineapples, and we bought Hawaiian shirts, so that was great. And then we came back afterwards, many times on vacation. In San Francisco, the two months transit visa was marvellous. We saw sliced bread, in Shanghai there was no milk, there was only some very basic soy milk, was the best you could do. There were grocery stores, where the refugees bought half an ounce of salami, one ounce of cheese. Everything was...there were shortages, they cut off electricity, and in the war, you often had to stand in line for flour. There were just wartime shortages, and lines, so in San Francisco, in '47...milk, real cow's milk! I remember, we went to the movies, double features, everyday, cheap in the afternoon. We went to the Golden Gate Park, and walked in the streets. Seppl, who was a mechanical genius...he had a driver licence, so we rented a car, just like you did, and we drove round and looking down to Stanford University, and all this time. Then came the time – before we left, yeah – in Shanghai of course, Dr. Silbermann had a stroke, you know it was very hot. Bad climate, you know? In the summertime it was so hot, that we sank into the asphalt. Every (???)¹⁵ the carried a little towel here, you know? The women, the girls wore sometimes just a bra and shorts, you know, it was very

¹⁰ Wort leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

¹¹ Wort leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

¹² Ortsnamen nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

¹³ Ort nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

¹⁴ Wort nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

¹⁵ Wort nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

hot. In the wintertime, even though there was no show, because it wasn't far enough north, but it...the humid wet cold was so horrible, that my fingers opened – the flesh – and also the toes. The flesh – there was no cure, the only treatment was *Eigenblutinjektion*. With a friend, Dr. Altmann, who took blood from my hip and injected it into my arm, that was the only thing. Even in Bolivia, I still had that condition. That's why today, I know of a connection...in the circulation, I am always cold on my right side. So that was a souvenir from Shanghai, in addition to all the other dangers and risks. Now, in....let's see...fairly well, Dr. Silbermann had a stroke and I lifted him up. We lived in the same house, Tessy and I, when we were married, up in the attic, we had a room, 100 Dollar key money. You had to pay "key money", to find – it was hard to find a room, but we found one luckily. And the floor was so dirty, so we scraped with a tin can, we scraped the floor, and we had curtains, beautiful. And we lived there for three weeks, then the papers came and we had to say goodbye. Now, Tessy's father, he was immobilised, his one side...you know...*Schlaganfall*, he couldn't talk properly. And they said goodbye, and they probably must have known, that this was the last time they would see each other. He died in '50, my father also died in 1950 in Bolivia, so Dr. Silbermann is buried, and my wife Tessy and he embraced, it was very sad and heartbreaking, but there was no choice, we had to go. So the six of us – that is my sister Margot and her husband Seppl, my parents, my wife and I – we travelled, and we were in San Francisco, and we had a wonderful two months transit visa, and then the time had come to move on to Bolivia. So, we left at different times, because of the papers. Tessy and I were supported by the Aid Committee, that was a Jewish Committee, that gave us some clothing, which we took to Bolivia. We didn't have anything, so...in Shanghai, oh, the fashion. The clothes that we had bought in Austria were out, you know, so for instance, the overcoat I had was reversed. There were tailors, that made money. The rest of us were starving, and the people, who had a useful profession...they made some money. So my winter coat was turned inside out, and it had an interesting new colour. Then, the cuffs and the collars, you know, became shoddy and worn out, because we couldn't buy new clothes. There were no new clothes to buy. There were some second-hand shops, I bought used shoes and things. So, some very interesting fashions showed up. First, they off the sleeves, so we had sport jackets, short sport jackets with no sleeves. Then they cut off the lapels¹⁶, so we had no lapels, you know, new styles. And of course, when the U.S. Army came, the Americans repatriated from China, from Ku Ning¹⁷ to the U.S., then things changed. It was the end of the ghetto, and the soldiers were all yellow, because they took Atabrin for Malaria, which turned their faces yellow. So they spent...for months and months they were holed up in China and couldn't spend money, so they had a lot of money, which they spent. And they were very generous, and they went to the bars and get drunk. And then, these military things showed up like wristwatches we could buy, like I had this beautiful wristwatch. And I bought an Army blanket for 10 U.S. Dollars, which at that time was a lot of money. For another 10 U.S. Dollars, and had it dyed black, it was a green Army colour, and for another 65 Dollars my good friend Father Schustak¹⁸ from Vienna, made it into a beautiful black long overcoat. And I had a white silk scarf, and I looked like a movie star. But all the refugees, well some of the refugees got jobs with the military forces. I had two jobs with the... Yes, in Shanghai you never said "no" to anything. If a job was open, if somebody wanted to hire somebody...like the U.S. military, they just announced...there was a big crowd there at this building, mostly Russians. "We need a sign painter, who is a sign painter?" So I was not, but I raised up my arm, and the Russians tried to keep me from getting, but I got through, and I got a job as a sign painter, painting numbers on military vehicles by hand. It was one job. Another job I got with the military was as a nightclerk in one of those hangars at (???)¹⁹ Airfield. When military planes came through and they needed spare parts, so the hangar was open night and day. In the front was a Sikh, a tall Hindu guard, and I slept in the sleeping bag inside. So, when a plane would come at night and wanted something, I was there. Always nightshift, I slept all time, but I did learn about military, about airplane parts. You know, they were packed in Cosmaline²⁰, and that I opened up and looked what it was. So that was...and that was paid in U.S. Dollars, which before that we were paid in yuan, you know, Chinese money, but the U.S. Dollars, that was real money, so we could afford to buy...but it wasn't all that much, because the jobs didn't last that long, you see? The military just moved through, as fast as they could. After Gabi Rabinowicz, the architect, had no more work for me, I was hired by another architect, interior architect, who designed bars. Cause when all those soldiers and sailors and airmen came through, all these bars in China in Shanghai, they were empty shops or even shops that did another business, and they were converted into bars or saloons, and in the front they had a prostitute or two. They were callgirls, or bargirls, let's say "Hello sail-

¹⁶ **lapel** – (engl.) Jackenaufschlag

¹⁷ nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

¹⁸ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

¹⁹ Ortsnamen nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

²⁰ Wort nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

or, come in, I'll show you a good time!" And we designed – that was my job working for this architect – tables, restaurant tables and benches. The benches had a lid and it opened up, and inside were sheets, bed sheets. The bargirls drank coloured water, which supposedly was whiskey, but the soldiers and sailors and pilots, they paid high prices for real whiskey, and they got pretty drunk. So in the middle...in daylight, they got plastered and dizzy, the girls opened up the benches and had sex right there in the bar. That's what I designed, that was one of my many interesting jobs in Shanghai. That was...alright, and now we are in San Francisco going to Bolivia. The Aid Committee sent a lady to make sure that we would leave. They didn't want us to stick on, because it was really tempting to stay in the United States: beautiful country, you know, civilised, you could drink the water from the tap, but we had to go to Bolivia. So Tessi and I boarded a plane at San Francisco International Airport, it was a Lockheed Constellation, four-engine, before jets, and it took us 20 hours to fly – by way of Chicago – to Miami. When we landed...oh yeah, over the Rockies, after leaving San Francisco, the plane fell into an air pocket. You see, the jets fly above the weather, but at that time...this was called "CAT", "Clear Air Turbulence", or "air pocket". I had just eaten the lunch served by two attractive stewardesses, and then I realized why that little paper bag was in front of me. I...the lunch fell out of my face into the bag, and...but Tessi...the plane fell, and some were hurt, but Tessi's heel broke off, and when we arrived in Miami, cause we were dead tired. We arrived in the morning, so we went to sleep in the hotel, and then after we woke up early afternoon, I went looking for a shoemaker with her shoe, to see if he could fix it. It took about an hour or so, and he put the heel back on, and then...Miami was beautiful, we went there a few times afterwards, and hot, you know, with the palm trees, and the whole ambience was nice. And then we went on to a small plane, a DC-3 C47, which was made to the thousands during the war, a transport plane, only two engines, with bucket seats. When it was on the ground, it was not horizontal, but leaning back because (???)²¹. But then we took off and flew to Cuba – that time, that was before Castro, 1947 – we landed in Cuba, and they gave us rum, famous Cuban rum. And then we went down to other Caribbean islands, one time we looked out of the windows, and one of the propellers had stopped, so we flew with only one. The pilot noticed it, so we flew back and flew again, so it was a little bit scary. And then, let's see, before we landed in Ecuador, we landed in various...the airports got smaller and shabbier, and more miserable. And we got kind of discouraged. I thought, this is terrible after the United States, you know? So at one time, the plane landed in the jungle. It was no more...the runway was cut out, and on either side was the jungle, you know, the steaming and the hot, so went on. And then in Ecuador, in Quito, which is very high up, we met a Mr. Felsberg, a Jewish refugee. He wanted to marry Tessi to leave me alone, and he had a car, but she said no. and then we went on to Colombia and landed in (???)²², which is in the Northern part of Colombia, where we spent the night. The bathroom...I remember, the shower was right above the toilet. We went on to Medellin, and then Cali. And those were...later became drug cartels, centres of cocaine, and all that, but at that time it was peaceful. And in Cali, which means "hot" – and it was hot – Tessi and I said, we don't want to go to Bolivia, we want to go back to the United States. So, we stayed in a hotel, and I looked for a job. I got a job with a German architect, whose draftsmen were unreliable. You know, in Latin America, manana is the big word. So he was happy to find a European. So I started work as a draftsman, because I knew that. I didn't know Spanish, but...he had plus/minus, but Shanghai was flat, so I didn't have plus/minus elevation, but I caught on, so I worked for a few days. In the meantime, we tried to look for a place to live, and the only place that we would find was a stable, or a former stable, where horses used to be, with no window, and it looked discouraging. And we also thought, that to stay in Columbia illegally was risky, you know. We finally realized it's no use, so we flew on to Lima, Peru, stayed two days, beautiful city, and then over Lake Titicaca, which is at the border between Peru and Bolivia, and landed on the alli plano, that is 4000 metres...alti plano, high plains, where the Lloyd are Aero Boliviano. And then we met with relatives, who took us with car down to La Paz, which is in a basin, and we stayed in a hotel for a while. And we found a place, a room to stay, and I started to look for a job. I worked for a few days for a tailor, and then I got a job at the FANACE, Fabrica Nacional de Cedas, which means "silk factory". It was not real silk, it was artificial, viscose and acetate, you know? But it was a pretty good sized factory, owned by a Japanese, Komori, and his partner was a Polish Jew. The superintendent, or the one who ran the factory was an Austrian, an *Ingenieur Neumann*. He was a very patriotic Austrian. He once mentioned – I happened to be driving the car with him – he says "*das ist ja die schönste Sprache der Welt!*" And he became honorary consul. But I made a mistake in confiding in one of his underlings that I was a Zionist. Big mistake, I should have said I'm a patriotic Austrian. So I wasn't promoted, I couldn't get ahead. I worked in a room full of looms, *Webstühle*, old Japanese machines, that were operated by native Bolivians, Indians or cholos²³, it's a

²¹ Satzende leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

²² Ortsnamen nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

²³ Wort nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

half-indian and half-mexican. And they were loud and noisy, and working fast, and all I had to do...just make sure, that when the thread broke, it was properly done. And at the end of the day, I had to read the metres, the production of each loom, and add them up in my head. You know, we had no adding machines or...so adding up to columns the production each day. And again, I got nightshift mostly, because I was young and the newest hired, so that really messed up my (???)²⁴ You see, with the altitude, the oxygen is very rare, and people often have to get down to sea level, because they get so much heartburn and can't properly digest. So, I worked at night, and it was a 24-hour operation, and those nightshifts – even though I was young, I was 25 – but it was very hard to sleep in the daytime, with the noise, and the meals got mixed up, you know, so it was not a good time. I learned something about the silk manufacturing, which was interesting. And then I got a job in an import-export firm. In the silk factory, I had been for about a year and a half. I did learn some Spanish, even though I didn't have that much opportunity to practice, but my gift – you know – helped me to learn Spanish, (???)²⁵ with Latin, it was not hard, so by the time I was through at the FANACE, I was ready to work a secretary in three languages, you know, Spanish, English and German, even using the *Kurzschrift*. That was an interesting job, it was the firm "Linale & Weiss", and it was owned by a Czech Jew, Frederico Weiss, and two Italian brothers Linale, Pedro and Nicola Linale. My brother-in-law Seppl also worked at the same company in the auto repair shop. He was very mechanical, he was a genius when it came to autos and things. I worked for...my boss was Julius Salomon, he was the gerente²⁶, the manager. He later changed his name to Julio Salmun, which is more Spanish. And I learned a lot from him. Right at the beginning, when he hired me, he made a prediction "You will make a good secretary, and you will leave us. You will not stay" And he was right on both counts. But I did learn about office procedure, and about import-export things. The firm had a big deal going: they exported rubber, raw rubber, have you ever seen raw rubber? It's a big bowl of brown thing, comes from the trees. They used it in a barter deal with BF Goodridge of Akron/Ohio, in exchange for tyres, batteries and auto parts. They imported Packard cars, which don't exist anymore, and Federal trucks from the U.S., and Austin cars from England. And all of these vehicles had to be properly equipped for the high altitude, with the rare oxygen, the pistons have to work harder. They have to be extra large, and you know, there was a lot of extra specifications, which I had to type. You know, and I learned how to do that, and... We had nice Olivetti machines in grey. Before then, I had only seen black machines, you know, always in black. And Olivetti were very (???)²⁷ and very modern, and I enjoyed working with that. So, let's see...when was Ronald born? In '48, yeah Ronald had been born by then. The oldest son of three - Ronald, named after the movie actor Ronald Coleman. We married in February '47, and Ronald was born in March '48, and we were poor, you know? I was not very well paid, and the Boliviano didn't go very far, so I got impatient with working at that import-export firm, and I applied for a job in a tin mine. Now, Bolivia's main industry or export is tin, and many refugees worked there, mostly in office work. And so, I went to the main office in La Paz, and they were looking for a secretary, a real secretary, a good typist and shorthand. I didn't really know how to type blind system, I just used...until this day, I just use two fingers. But they didn't test me, to my good fortune. And also, my shorthand was – I never used it, actually I just sort of use it. But I got (???)²⁸, you know, I learned it in Shanghai: whatever comes up, you say you can do it. You pretend, and then hope for the best. And sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. So they accepted me, there happened to be an opening, and we packed up, my wife and son and dog. We had a German shepherd, Tommy, a big dog, and also a maid, Amma. No, Muchacha, in Shanghai was Amma. Now, before we took off, we advertised. We had some things that we didn't want to take along. A nice record player, imported from the United States. We put an ad in the paper, and somebody came while I was working, in the afternoon, knock on the door, to look at this record player. My wife wouldn't open, she just was scared, you know, she didn't trust him. So the man left and came back later, and he shot with a pistol through the window. The Bolivians...many Latinos are very high tempered. You know, Bolivia is one of the countries in Latin America, that had more revolutions than years of independence. They became independent around 1840 or so. Simon Bolivar, whose home we visited in Venezuela, he never came to Bolivia, but Boliiva is named after him. They had so many bloody revolutions, that in the five years that we were there was none, that was just a coincidence. When we arrived, they had just hung their president Villarojo²⁹ in the Plaza (???)³⁰ – another of the national heroes – they let him and some minister give speeches, he asked for Coca Cola,

²⁴ Wort nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

²⁵ leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

²⁶ Wort nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

²⁷ Wort nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

²⁸ Wort nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

²⁹ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

³⁰ Namen nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

they gave him, then they hang him up. And then after we left, there was more revolution, bloody – I mean – the Bolivians just, many Latino countries, they just had no other way of resolving problems. That's why they have so many military dictators, you know, macho. The gun and the machete is what talks, you know, talking is nonsense. So, on the mine...I had some hesitation, because there had been some news of...that was the second largest tin mine in Bolivia, it was a Hochschild³¹ mine. There were Patina and Arramayo³², that were the big names, and Hochschild was partly American-owned, but it was a large mine. Now we knew that some time before the natives, the Bolivians, the Indians had revolted. What they had done, is they lined up the foreign engineers and their wives up in row, and they hacked the men to death with their machetes, and the wives had to look on. So we kind of went with a kind of hesitancy, but I saw it as a chance to make some money, you know, because when I was leaving Linale & Weiss, they offered me Dollars for pay. (???)³³, before I come, so we went on by train to the mine. And the Bolivian trains were British-made, you know, maybe a hundred years old, you know, but they worked, they were old trains. So, when it became nightfall, the trains stopped, and there was no station, it was just called "silencio", and there was no station, it was night, and it was pitch dark. There was just a sign, maybe not even a sign. Anyway, it was dark, we couldn't see nothing. We just got our luggage and Tommy, the dog, and Ronald, our little boy, and there we stood in the pitch dark, and just waited. Now what? So we took...there was no station or light or anything, so we just waited there, and after an hour or two, we saw a little light in the distance, and then it disappeared, and then it appeared again. It was a truck that drove around, you know, the different (???)³⁴ in the mountains. It happened to be what they called a "camionetta", it was a Pick-Up. In Bolivia, "camino" is the street, "camion" is truck, and "camionetta" is a Pick-Up, very logical. So, it was the "jefe de magistranza"³⁵, it was the chief of the auto workshop, who came to pick us up. And we all came in the front, including Tommy, the big dog, and then we arrived. And then, after a lot of winding roads, suddenly, there was light, lots of lights. They never turned off their lights, because they had their own diesel plant, and they didn't have to pay for electricity. So they put us into our house at night, and it was very cold. There was an electric heater, 220 Volt, and I saw some cups. I put some coffee in them and put it on the electric heater, so that in the morning we would have some coffee. But it was a thick mess, like mud, and we couldn't drink it. And then, two or three days later, we got a better place, a nice place, and closer to where we were working. I was the secretary to the General Manager, and it was just a walk to the office. It was called...the place where we were was called "triangulo", because the homes were arranged in a triangle. This was a basketball court, I think...anyway. These were the homes along the mountainside, and I walked just a few steps to our office. There were about 2.000 Bolivian miners, and about 100 foreign engineers, geologists and office workers. This is our dog Tommy and Ronald, and let's see...I was 29, in '51, Ronald was three years old. That's when I went hunting with some of these guys. One day, Seppl and my sister came on a visit, so we went underground to see what the mine looks like inside. This is Frank Biement³⁶, the mine superintendent, this is Fred Towsley, the geologist from Canada, no, that's Seppl, my brother-in-law and myself. They gave us safety helmets and lanterns, you know, you have to use...have you ever been inside a mine? It's very scary, dark, and they just blasted, and the smell of dynamite gives you a headache, so it was kind of... Our maid Gregoria came to help us, but it turned out...everybody who takes a job in a mine, including myself, even though I didn't work underground, had to be x-rayed, so that you couldn't claim afterwards that you got "black lung" or "miner's lung" disease. This is my mother and my sister and Seppl visiting. You can see the mountains, this was higher than the alti plano, over 4000m, and the air was even more thin. And you couldn't run, you just walked slowly and couldn't breathe properly. So, when I came to start my job, they sent me to a hospital. There was a refugee doctor, Dr. Weigelt, who x-rayed me, and had to sign a release that...in case that lung disease turns up. And our maid Gregoria was found to have Syphilis, you know, what a shock! So they shipped her out, she couldn't stay. So we had another maid, and she stole all my wife's nylon stocking, and lots of her underwear, so we let her go, too. So then after that my wife did her own housekeeping. For a year only...and everything was free, the house, the electricity, our water. The food was very cheap, and we got paid in U.S. Dollars. I got paid...the first thing was a 135, from which I could save a hundred Dollars every month. You know, everything was very cheap, you know, that's how it is in a mine. So, when the...oh yeah, my wife taught ballet. She had taught in La Paz also, in the ballet school for girls. And in the mine, there were a few young girls, and she again taught ballet, and they were happy. So even though we were sur-

³¹ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

³² Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

³³ leider nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

³⁴ Wort nicht verstanden, Anm. AP

³⁵ nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

³⁶ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

rounded by just rocks and desert – no trees and nothing – it was a wonderful social life, because you were dependent on each other. So the wives of the mining engineers, and the superintendents threw balls and parties and dances. And when it came close to Christmas time, somehow the ladies thought that I would make a wonderful Santa Claus. So they put me in a red Santa Claus costume with a big pillow over here, so I would be fat, with a red hat and a white trim, and a white beard. And they put me in a closet, so that the children would not see me. So, I stood in the dark closet, and the door opens and a hand reaches in with a glass taller than that, some liquid. It was Frank Biement, the mine superintendent, and he said “here, drink this!” And I liked it, I drank more and more, and after a while I started feeling a little dizzy. I just was not used to drinking Whisky, you know, I just... I tried to get drunk before, but I just didn’t, all I got was tired and dizzy. So, after a while, the door opened, and they called me out and they led me into the general manager’s big living room. There were maybe a hundred kids, sitting along the wall, on the floor, just lots and lots of little children. In the middle of the room, there was a big bag with presents, wrapped. And each present had a name on it, so I addressed the crowd, first in Spanish, then in English, and I reached in the bag, took out a present, called a name, the child came out. A Jewish Santa Claus is something of a novelty, but the ladies thought it would be okay, so I did the job. So it just went on and on, and after a while I started to feel real tired. And all I wanted to do was just sink to the floor and go to sleep. I just couldn’t...somehow I got through it, but I don’t remember much after that. That’s my story...I wish I had a picture of that, my story as a Santa Claus. Now, when I left the mine...I got Charles room, who was an Englishman, he was my boss...who couldn’t spell, you know. I thought Englishmen all know English very well, but he couldn’t. He said “equiptment”, “equiptment”, you know, and I corrected him, because I knew spelling, I was good at that. So he wrote this...”companera minera de Aururo”³⁷ it is called “Section Colkiri”³⁸. Aururo was the name of the nearest town, and Colkiri was the name of the mine. My second son Larry was born, up on the high altitude. You know, children born on the high altitude are small, like four pounds, two kilos, but they grow up OK, I mean, my son’s are normal. But up there, well...from time to time the mines got restless, and whenever there was a rumour, they shipped the women and the children to Aururo, the next nearest town, and we men were left behind. I had a pistol, you know, in a metal box, just in case. Not that it would have done any much good, but I had it anyway. We had a small radio station, and they put me in, speaking in German with the main office in La Paz, so that...in English or Spanish, they could listen in. I was also the code clerk. We had big books of codes, and messages, you know, between the mines and the main office were done in code. Always five words, and you had to decipher...I wasn’t really busy as a secretary, it was kind of boring, but I had my own secretaries. You know, when you came up to see the General Manager, first you had to go to my secretary, and then me, and then... But the General Manager, Mr. Rule³⁹, he wasn’t very much...in the morning, he would put on his rubber boots and his mining outfit, and he would go into the mine with the superintendents to check...it was a large operation, and it was interesting to see how ore, you know, the rocks were transformed into tin. It’s quite a nice process, and I watched it, and it’s just one more thing you put in your resume. Let’s see...okay, then. We needed certificates, when the children were born, the two Bolivians, we needed certificates. Well, here is this business card of my wife in German: “Gymnastik – Akrobatik – Steppen – Ballett, für Kinder und Erwachsenen”, and our address here...

(Ende Band 3 von 4)

³⁷ nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP

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³⁹ Namen nicht sicher verstanden, Anm. AP