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Kalman, Egon oral history interview

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EGON KALMAN

OTTAWA

AUGUST 12, 1989

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Steve Hochstadt: . . . saying your name, and where you were born and when.

Egon Kalman: Yeah. No, like I mentioned before, it's a little late, maybe hundred percent, I can't recall . . .

Hochstadt: I understand.

Kalman: . . . but fifty percent more or less. Okay.

Hochstadt: That's good enough.

Kalman: I was born in Austria, in a small village with three thousand people in, Türnitz, Lower Austria, *Niederösterreich*. My parents had a store, we lived very well. I was working hard in my father's place 'till Hitler came. I was with my father together.¹

When Hitler came they closed up the store, *Arisieren* they called it. And I had to go to Dachau with my father on the 10th of November, 1938. Close to our place where I was born, the name is Türnitz, they took my father and me in police custody. They put us two days in jail in Lilienfeld, and they brought us later on to Sankt Pölten, which is around 30 miles away from Vienna. There we have been in Sankt Pölten, with around two, three hundred Jewish people, men, they also took on the 10th November. As a matter of fact, the police in Türnitz took us before the 10th November. They knew already what was coming, so they cannot say spontaneous, everybody was in police custody on the 10th November, it was on the 7th or 8th already.

So on the 10th November, when we was with the few hundred other Jewish people, Jewish men, from Sankt Pölten, in a, in a place where they have, in a school where the exercise is, in the basement, I heard the first time that the synagogue is burning. Before we hadn't got a chance to hear on the radio or something. So we didn't know what's going on inside. All of a sudden from Vienna came a *Grüne Heinrich*, the German call it in Austria, they call it the police van, *Grüne Heinrich*. And eight or ten people, as many as there had room there, they brought us with the police van to Vienna, in the, where the Gestapo is and the SS. When we came there to the door, big door opens, there was a few hundred Viennese women with the golden heart, with the golden Viennese heart. They said, "Put them in the Danube, in the river. Don't bring them here. Put them in the Danube." We was lucky, the SS didn't do it, and the Gestapo.

So we went in, it was a big, big building, and I have seen something in a movie, a horror movie, what I saw there. There was steps going upstairs, maybe twenty steps, and steps downstairs. And from the steps, which we had to go up, I saw men sitting on the steps and, how you call it in English? *Sie haben sich heruntergeschleppt von Stiege zu Stiege*. You speak German?

¹ His parents were Siegmund Kalman (1880-c.1942) and Ida Führer Kalman (1887-c.1942).

Hochstadt: Yes.

Kalman: They have, they sliding down from step to step, and I didn't know what, what it's all about. Later on I found out, the SS made them, in the big hall upstairs, the [unclear] hall, make them spread their legs, and with their shoes they had on, their, their, how do you call these shoes, these *Soldaten* shoes, they, they . . .

Hochstadt: Boots.

Kalman: Boots! They puts the boots between their legs and they broke their genital, how you call it?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Kalman: And they couldn't walk any more. They was in pain. So they slide down from step to step to the basement, where they shoot them after. And my father and me, with the other people from Sankt Pölten, we had to go upstairs in a big, big hall. For what the reason there was the hall I don't know, maybe banquet or something like that for the dignitaries from Vienna. It was that time, it was, I don't know what it was from the, for what purpose this big building was. *Elisabeth Promenade*, they call it, the street.

So we was there, maybe hundred, two hundred people inside. In winter it was, 10th November, and cold out there. And they let us make gymnastic, because with so many people in this room, few hundred people in one room, we was very, very hot, everybody, from gymnastic. And one of the young SS men, maybe he was old, 20, 25 years old, told me to come out.

Hochstadt: How old were you then?

Kalman: 24 years. And I, probably I had good-looking eyes, better than today [unclear] . Anyway, he told me to come out, and stay on the side. That time I didn't know much about the homosexual experience, I hadn't got, so I figured, "Oh, maybe something like that." But somehow he liked me, it seems me. So the other had to make their exercise, and I had to stay and watch them [unclear] . After, they put maybe ten, they took out, by the ten, ten, ten, ten, and put them in a small room where, where there was benches, in a small room where maybe for ten people they put twenty, thirty people in. And they had exercise. And after they put all these people down in the *Hof*, in the yard, in the courtyard, in the cold winter, *ja*, so they should get some sickness. Somehow, I didn't have to do this.

When they came back, and I was standing with a few hundred people close to the door, the door opens, and the SS man came in. "We need 10 people." So I was one with them, because I was so close to the door. He brought us to the toilet. There was maybe ten toilets, no wall between. And he say, "You clean the toilets!" It was all blocked. I don't know what that was in there. But we didn't have anything, just with the hand we had to

clean out the toilet. We couldn't repair it anyway, because it was [laughs] broke all the way. But with this hand, with the right hand, I didn't eat for maybe two weeks. I mean, we didn't have to eat anyway, but whatever I touched, I didn't touch my right hand for two weeks. I was so disgusted with my hand. The first time in my life I'd, I put my hand in.

After, I came out, and we had to go down in the basement, the few hundred people again. And there, there was one doctor from the vicinity of Sankt Pölten is Harland, there was a big factory of [unclear]. And there was a very famous doctor, a Jewish doctor in Harland. From people that didn't have money, he was very, very conscious of poor people. He helped them when they sick. So some of the women, girls came and say, "I have to kill myself. I cannot stand it any more. I get the baby. I cannot show it to my parents," or "I have a husband who hasn't got work," and so. So he, he helped them to get rid of the baby. When Hitler came and they took him in, they, not molested him, but they did things to him that as a doctor, as a grown-up doctor, he kneeled down in front of these boys, 20 years old, in SS uniforms, and he said, "Please shoot me, kill me, I cannot stand it any more," what they did to him. I don't know if he survived that time or not. I didn't see him again.

After, we had to go all upstairs, in the second, third floor. On the, in the hallway, there was maybe thousand people, five hundred, thousand, I don't know. And we had to stay there for a few days. After, they said, "Okay," oh yeah, when we came in we had to, in the row, we had to stand in line. And my father said, he was in the First Army, in the flying corps as a translator in the air. And they let him go.

To me they say, "When you go there, you call, "Delag Dora". That means Dachau. At that time I didn't know. So I came there, "Delag Dora." "Okay, you go here." When we stand in this corridor, with so many people, we brought, we was brought down, again 10, 15 people in this *Grüne Heinrich*, and we was brought to the *Westbahnhof*, which was the, going west to Dachau, *ja*, to Munich. When we was there, we had to run from the truck, from the *Grüne Heinrich*, to the train. And this was on both sides watched by SS with clubs and with bayonets and with the big *Gewehr*, the, the . . .

Hochstadt: Rifles?

Kalman: . . . rifles. Now I had at that time with 24 years old, I had a pants like they wear in England, this, how you call it, I forgot. [unclear] [laughs] Anyway, when I came, they, with, everyone who went past there singing, hit on the head, and on the, everywhere where they could reach us, yeah, and everybody was running fast, he should get less damage. So when I came to the train, one man in front of me was pushed down, somehow, probably with a butt from a, from a rifle on the head. He fell on me. And I pushed him back to be able to come in, and another SS man had, with the rifle, with the bayonet, he sliced my pants open. I don't know what he was looking, maybe he want to cut the, my belly or whatever with the bayonet.

So I was running in, and I had to sit, three, there was the light *Wagon*, they call it, three or four on this bench, three or four on this bench, and three on the floor. And right away we have to look in the light. They put the light on. It was in the afternoon, I think.

And all the time, from Vienna *Westbahnhof* 'till Munich we had to look on the light. Now when we were sitting there, some people couldn't stand it. They looked away. So the SS man started with, and special one old man, old Jewish man with the cylinder, this is like the, the *Fiaker heißt dann*, he couldn't look any more up, so he looked away, and one SS man came with his, the butt from the rifle. And he hits so long this man through the hat, through the hat, in the head, the brain come out, yeah. And this man started praying, "*Shema Yisrael*". And so, and 'till we came to Munich, the dead people they had been there in our *Wagon*, and in every *Wagon*, they brought to the toilet. And in the toilet the dead people was lined up, you know. I don't know today, and maybe I forgot, how many people we had, three, four, five, eight, I don't know.

And to transport from Da-, from Munich to Dachau, we had to go out from this *Wagon* in a animal *Wagon*. This is a different, where you put the merchandise or animal in. So we was already, I would say, 90% crazy. Every single man there was 90% crazy. As a matter of fact, when I came to Dachau they made a picture from me. And if I have it, or not, I forgot. This picture, *Erkennungs-*, *Erkennungsdienst*, or what it was, they make a picture from everyone, in case he dies, they know who it was and so. So I got the picture with me, I sent one to my parents with a letter, because every week or month we are supposed to write a letter. And this picture I still get. And you can see the crazy guy, the eyes and everything. You didn't sleep for, for days. And to see, and when we was in this animal *Wagon*, you will see people, ghosts, anything you see there. Because he was 90% not normal any more.

So in Dachau we came on, and they unloaded us, and we had to stay in line, two or three line, I forgot. And next to me was a man I later met in Montreal. He was working in the Jewish General Hospital, Batiste was his name. He was standing next to me, in Dachau, and he was saying, "I have to go to the telephone. I have to phone my father that I'm in the Prater," in the, Prater is the entertainment center in Schwechat. So I hold him on, on the sleeve, whatever he had, a shirt or coat or whatever, and he would always want to go, and I hold him back. And that meant, if I would have let him go, right away he would, they would have shot, because the SS boys was looking for a reason to shoot, maybe they get another medal if they shoot another few Jews. Anyway, he was lucky, I hold him so that he couldn't move away.

From there we came to the bath. At that time, the bath, 1938, it was not gas, it was a real bath. We took off everything. They gave us the striped dress, *ja*, a pants and a shirt, and that was for Bavaria the winter dress. In the beginning, we didn't have even caps to put on our head, because they took off the hair. We were standing there and they took away their, our belongings, mark it down like the German, everything correct. And we stayed in our pajamas. And we had to go in, take a bath, and everyone comes back and they get dressed again in their pajama. My number, what I had here, twenty-five seven forty, *fünfundzwanzig*, *siebenundvierzig*, with the red and yellow, so that meant I was Jewish. Other people with black and with, with lilac and so, different, have a different symbol. I guess you know by yourself already. Anyway mines was yellow and red. It was Jew. So we went to the barrack number 20, *Stube* 4, room 4. It was for, I think, for 50 people it was

regular, but that time, from the *zehnten* November transport, it was for 200. So it was, they just put straw on. And we wasn't laying on the, on the back, because it, we hadn't got the room. We had to lay sideways or, instead fifty, two hundred people. So that's when we had our first experience.

But I must say when I came to, after this transport, when I came to Dachau, and stayed there, I say, "This is paradise." After the transport from Vienna to Dachau, Dachau was paradise. So I came to room 20, *Stube* 4. No, *Stube, Baracke* 20, *Stube* 4, and there, some people went crazy already. They ran out to the fence, and they were shot. And they were 90% nor-, 10% normal people, but we was [unclear]. And we did whatever we could. We eat, we marched all day long in the, in the cold. And in the morning, for example, we went, 5 o'clock or whatever, I forgot, 5, 6 o'clock, 4 o'clock, we had to go to the kitchen for our brown water. They called it "coffee." I think it was made from this *Eichel* in German, I forg-, I don't know the English.

Hochstadt: Acorn.

Kalman: Acorn, ja. They ground, they roast it, and they ground it, and they make coffee with it. That was our coffee, and that's what we drunk. No, there was no milk und so, this is for the Germans, not for the Jewish people. As a matter of fact, in Dachau was so many Catholic and Protestant priests, and not like we, we had the normal treatment. They had the special treatment, which they, very few survived. I have been back 22 years ago in Dachau, and I was reading a paper, a booklet, which is written from a Catholic priest. And what he says was, they suffered more, the priests, sometimes, than the other people. Because it was the special, it was a fence around, around Dachau was a fence. But around their imprisonment was a fence, too. So nobody could go out, and nobody could do something for them. Anyways, very many people of these died. They was more or less together with the Gypsies, they had the special treatment. When they came in, I think a few weeks only took 'till there was no Gypsy left.

So in the morning we went for this coffee, and noontime we had again, and the evening, and after we started working in the *Kiesgrube*, this is where they put the sand and all this. And we brought the, actually it wasn't productive, what I can see. We carried stones from one point to the other, let it down, put it up again, and brought it back to the same point again, just, and heavy stones, *ja*. And after, we had also to carry snow out from the *Distrikt*, from the *Lager*, *ja*, with a wheeler, with a one-wheeler, *Schubkarren*. Now when I was 24, I was strong, so I saw, for example, and we had to run, and too the SS had a fun with us. They told us, "Now you run with the wheeler, with the one-wheeler in front. And after you run with the one-wheeler in the back, and always full with snow." And I saw one guy with a *Höcker*, a, in English you call it a *Buckel*, *ja*?

Hochstadt: Yes. You don't have to translate it. That's . . .

Kalman: *Ja*. And he was in, not in a good condition, because after all he was not normal

in the way we think, not in the head, but in the body. He was very weak. And to run with the heavy snow in this wheeler. So I took it from him, and I say, "You take the empty one." And one SS man saw it. He say, "*Schutzhaft Jude*, come here." I came here, I stand straight and I reported, "*Schutzhaft Jude fünfundzwanzig, siebenundvierzig zur Stelle.*" He must be a butcher, because with one hand he give me one on my face, I fell down. And I, he put, heaped snow on top of me, and he jumped with his boots on top of me. And when I heard "Up," somehow I was still normal. I got up, and I'm full of snow. And he's put snow in the one jacket what I had, the pants and jacket and shoes. That time I don't think we had even the caps, these to cover our head, which no, which had no hair. So I stand, and he say, "*Weitermachen!*" Again, work. And I was hot from running, and this cold snow all over, and I was running again.

When I came in the evening, when we stopped, 6, 7 o'clock, something like that, and we had some, I had one slice bread we had every day. And I was, somehow I didn't feel like normal in the head and also in body. So at night I stepped over these people, they slept with me on the floor, and I went to the toilet. There was 6, 7 of them, toilet, no wall between. And also, on the other one, on the other side, was *pissoir*, and also where you can wash your hand. Somehow I went to the *pissoir*, or I went to the toilet and sit down, I forgot. Anyway, all of a sudden I feel somebody pulls me back from the window. I wanted to go out from the window, I don't know why and how, and I was lucky, somebody was there who pulled me back. Because if I'd get out from the window, the tower was right over there on the 20 floor, they would shoot right away. So they pulled me back, and I couldn't walk any more. So they let me near the, near the stove, which was heated. They let me stay over there.

I had a very good, a real communist man from, from Munich. His name was, I forgot it now. I can't remember. And he was a human being. He wanted to run to the, with, risk his own life, he want to run to the hospital, so-called hospital, they called it *Revier*, to run there, if they, if they can take me. On the other hand, he knew that if they take me, I wouldn't come out, alive out. So he felt that maybe better I stay in the meantime there. In the morning, noon and evening we had to report on the *Appellplatz*. They, I couldn't walk, so four men took me on their shoulder, and carried me there, and carried me back. But then the, on the *Appellplatz* is the quarter, quarter of an hour, half an hour, one hour, two hours always, 'till everybody was counted. One was missing, what happened to him? He stayed as a cleaning man back, so they had to find him. Anyway, they carried me forth and back for one week, I think. Maybe more, maybe less, that they. And after, little by little, other unfortunate people would die. We had many, many people died on the *Appellplatz*. I survived. And little by little I could walk myself even, people hold me left and right, and I could use my legs again.

After I was alright again, and I could work again in the *Kiesgrube*. And during that time, people tried to escape, which was in the *Kiesgrube*. For example, when we had to go to peepee, we went to the SS, which was all around with dogs, and we had to say, "*Melde gehorsamst*, I have to go to the toilet," *und so*. So was the toilet, he'd turn around and go. And sometimes the SS would say, "Okay, run." So when somebody had to go out and

running, so he had a reason to shot, *ja*. So some of them got shot this way. But a few men tried, I think it was Christian men, not Jewish people, they tried to escape. Three, four, eight, I forgot the number. They caught them, and they brought them back. What happened, at 8 or 10, now, when we came back from work 7, 8 o'clock, we had to stay in line in the *Appellplatz*, and they was walking in, SS first, and after these men who tried to escape . . .

BREAK IN RECORDING²

Hochstadt: . . . might be easier.

Kalman: *Ja*, it's the same, if you want, I can speak German.

Hochstadt: Sure. Please go ahead.

Kalman: *So, dann bin ich gekommen mit den anderen Gefangenen, die damals entlassen worden neben mir, vielleicht den fünf or zehn or zwanzig or dreißig, was denn entlassen worden. Wir sind ins Bad geführt worden, um ein Bad zu nehmen, und der Doktor ist gekommen und hat geschaut. Viele haben Frost, Frostbeulen an den Händen. Die wurden nicht entlassen. Oder wenn sie zum Beispiel von was sie bestraft worden sind, dann jedenfalls [nicht verständlich] gesehen hat, die mußten warten bis sie wieder verheilt sind. So ich hatte nichts und und ich bin entlassen worden und hab zurück bekommen meine zerrissene Hosen und was immer, und bin geführt waren, bin geführt worden nach München.*

In München hat man mich nicht auf dem, auf dem Gehsteig von der Eisenbahn, ja, man hat mir ein Ticket gegeben nach Wien. Und hat mich nicht fahren lassen, oder nach Türnitz, Wien und dann Türnitz, hat mich nicht fahren lassen und warten lassen am Gehsteig. Und man hat mich mit anderen eingesperrt in einem Raum dort am Bahnhof, hat man mir gesagt, weil die, die Deutschen hassen uns so, daß die uns ermorden würden. So das ist protection, die protected uns. Und so war ich dort bis der Zug gekommen ist, und dann hat man mich herausgeholt und hat mich in Wagon hineingesetzt und dann bin ich nach Wien gekommen und dann nach Türnitz auch.

Hochstadt: *Und Ihr Vater, was . . .*

Kalman: *Mein Vater ist entlassen worden gleich, weil er Soldat war.*

² Due to mechanical difficulties with the tape recorder, the taping of this interview was interrupted often, and finally had to be broken off.

Hochstadt: *Zu dieser Zeit, ja, verstehe ich.*

Kalman: *Und dann hat man ihm, ja das kommt später. Dann hat man mich, also ich war in Türnitz mit meinen geschorenen Haaren, aber ich habe mich normal angezogen, Winter das Kalt war.*

Und ich habe Freund-, Jugendfreunden mit denen ich zur Schule gegangen bin in Türnitz, oder mit denen ich mit den Mädchen ausgegangen bin, Tanzen, und eine von denen, die mit mir in der Sozialdemokratischen Partei waren, [nicht verständlich] . Ich war mit ihm in der Jugendgruppe und der hat natürlich sofort übergeschwungen zum, der war illegal schon, was ich nichts wußte, und der war illegale Nazi, und der hat mich dann gesehen mit meinen geschorenen Haaren, und der geht mit einem Mädchen in Türnitz und sagte, "Der Jud war in Dachau." Da war ich schon der Jud. Da war ich nicht mehr der Freund und der Egon, da war ich schon der Jud.

Und dann bin ich mit meinen Eltern zu, ja, mit meinen Eltern zusammen, die, ein Mann, der in Türnitz gewohnt hat und von meinen Eltern viel Gutes bekommen hat, war der Führer der SS, SS Führer in Türnitz, in diesem Ort. Und der hat denn einen Brief geschrieben nach Wien zur Gestapo, "Wieso es kommt, daß der Jude mit seiner Frau und Sohn noch in Türnitz wohnt?" Meine Schwester ist schon vorher nach Holland gekommen als housemaid.³ So, und dann hat die Gestapo sofort gesagt, wir müssen weg von Türnitz und diesen Ort nach Wien.

Und dort in Wien hat man uns mit einer anderen Familie, Mann und Frau. Die hatten ein bedroom, hat man uns zusammen gegeben mit denen, und hat gesagt, so ihr muß beide Familien hier wohnen in diesen Ort im 20., im 2. Bezirk. Ich habe dann versucht hinaus zu kommen.

Meine Schwester war in Holland, da hat mein Vater und meine Schwester geschrieben, vielleicht kann ich was machen, ich bin in Dachau, damit ich herauskommen kann. Und der Grund warum ich von Dachau heraus können bin, meine Schwester hat in Holland den bolivianischen Konsul bezahlt eine gewisse Summe was sie verdient hat als housemaid, damit er ein Papier schickt zu meinen Eltern, ich kann nach Bolivien einwandern. Sonst hätte ich von Dachau nie heraus können.

So mit diesem Papier hat sich mein Vater am Abend in Wien angestellt, der hat dann schon in Wien wohnen müssen, bei der Gestapo, damit in der früh wenn die aufmachen die Tür, daß er eine die ersten ist, weil es waren so viele mit Papiere, daß man manchmal nicht reingekommen ist, wenn man den ganzen Tag gestanden. So die ganze Nacht gestanden in der früh darangekommen und hat das Papier zur Gestapo gegeben und die haben mich von Dachau aus diesem Grund entlassen.

Bin ich in Wien zurück gewesen mit meinen Eltern, bin ich gegangen zum jüdischen Organization und hab gesagt, "Was soll ich machen?" Haben die gesagt, "Gehen Sie HeHalutz" hat das geheißen, die Organization. "Gehen Sie arbeiten auf's Land," Umschulung, Hachschara hat das damals geheißen in Ivrit. Und bin ich gegangen dann

³ His sister was Vilma Kalman(1919-1973).

auf Umschulung nach Absdorf, das war ein Schloß, was von der Gestapo geschlagnahmt wurde, und dort waren circa 30, 40 Bursche, male jüdische Jungen. Und wir haben gearbeitet in der Landwirtschaft.

BREAK IN RECORDING

Kalman: *Da ist eine Familie in, in Florida, was ich Ihnen sag, ich werde sie auch vorstellen, [nicht verständlich] . . . Vater hat gehabt ein Coffee Shop nebenan auch. [sounds of television] Fritzie, kannst Du mit dies aufhören?*

Und dort habe ich Sauerkraut erzeugt, da habe ich eine Frau gehabt von Tschechien. Und es war gut, aber wir haben dann, ich soll erzeugen so viele tausend Pfund für die, was die Emigranten in Shanghai, da waren paar tausend Leute, die jeden Tag das Essen geholt haben vom Camp, was so gekocht waren, und die wollten ich soll viel Sauerkraut machen, um die mal mit Sauerkraut zu futtern, das Sauerkraut, aber ich konnte nicht, mit den kleinen Platz war zu viel für mich. So es hat sich nicht gelohnt dann für die Emigrantengeschäft Sauerkraut zu machen.

Habe ich aufgehört und habe einen Wiener Mann mit seiner Frau kennengelernt, er hat gesagt, "Margarine werden wir machen." Ich wußte nichts von Margarine. Er hat gesagt, er ist der Expert. Was war, ich habe [nicht verständlich] gekauft und Schweinefett und die Sachen, nur the flavor hat man nicht wissen, hat man eben was hinein gemischt dass er flavor hat. Und das wichtigste für ihn war, er hat sich das Fett und die Margarine und, und, und nach Haus genommen und hat's verkauft, viele, und ich bin am Anfang nicht klug geworden was da los ist, ja. Bis ich dann gesehen habe was los ist, hab ihm gesagt, "Weiß was? Bleib zu Haus." Ich habe aufgehört Margarine zu machen.

Und denn war, habe ich's vermietet einem Mann, der hat ein drug store, ein Emigranten, der hat ein drug store dort gemacht und hat man Miete bezahlt dafür. Und ich hab damals, der Krieg war zu Ende, habe ich begonnen für die American Army, zu treiben, ambulance, Jeep, ambulance, Jeep, regular Autos und trucks und alle möglichen Sachen, ja. Und ich war gut verdient, gut verdient für mich als Emigrant war es gut verdient, weil schon die Amerikaner hat gesagt, "Das mache ich in einer Stunde was der die ganze Woche macht." Aber ich war sehr zufrieden, weil die Chinesen, die angestellt waren bei der Army damals, die haben die Hälfte verdient oder zu mindest weniger wie ich, die haben damals gestreikt. Andererseits haben die Chinesen sehr viel gekostet der Army, der American Army. Wir haben pools gehabt, 300 Jeeps und 300 trucks, und 300 oder wieviele halt waren ambulance und so, und wir haben abgeholt von den office mit den Ambulancewagon, da waren Bänke drinnen, die Leute haben sie nach Haus geführt zum Essen und haben sie wieder gebracht zur Arbeit in die office und wieder zurück gebracht, oder mit der, mit der 6-by-6 trucks habe ich geführt Amerikaner hinaus, wo die Deutschen interniert waren, da war ein Camp in Shanghai wo sie interniert waren, da habe ich die hinaus geführt und wieder zurück geführt. Ich habe vorhin erwähnt, die Chinesen die viel

Geld, Geld gekostet haben den Amerikanern, die sind, wir haben unser Nummer gehabt. Die haben wir ansagen müssen, wenn wir hinaus gefahren sind von pool, unsere drei Nummer und die haben es aufgeschrieben. Aber die Chinese haben die Nummer gesagt, hinaus, und sind nicht zurück gekommen, und niemand könnte kontrollieren. Sie haben das Jeep gefahren 100 Kilometer, 50 Kilometer weg zu denen Vater, die Mutter, ne, und haben ein Jeep geholt. So sehr viele Autos sind dort verloren gegangen in dieser Weise.

Hochstadt: *Irgendwie geht das schlecht!*

Kalman: *Na, kommen Sie nach Florida.*

BREAK IN RECORDING

Hochstadt: *Wir machen es sowieso.*

Kalman: *Ja. Denn was war noch? Ich, ja, oder wollen Sie mich jetzt fragen verschiedener Sachen?*

Hochstadt: *Ja. Ich möchte bißchen mehr wissen über dieses Restaurant. Genau, wie haben Sie das genau gemacht, woher bekommen Sie das Essen?*

Kalman: *Ja.*

Hochstadt: *Und . . .*

BREAK IN RECORDING

EK: . . . store, provision store *hat man das auch genannt, das heißt, an der Seite habe ich gehabt Tee und verschiedene Sachen zu verkaufen und dann habe ich 9 oder 12 Tische gehabt, wo die Leute gegessen haben. Ich habe zum Beispiel Tee gekauft in einem Ambro store, und hab's gekauft, sagen wir, ein Paket Tee für einen Shanghai Dollar. Und hab verkauft für zwei Shanghai Dollar. Und ich habe gebraucht drei Tage später wieder Tee, dann hat es schon fünf Dollar gekostet. [nicht verständlich] ich hab Profit gemacht, aber hab ich schon verloren auch dabei. Und so war es im ganzen, ich habe zum Beispiel, nicht gekommen bin nach Shanghai und habe das Restaurant aufgemacht, hat eine Tasse Kaffee gekostet 10 Shanghai Cent. Damals waren, sagen wir mal, zwölf Shanghai Dollar ein American Dollar, hat ein Kaffee 10 Cent gekostet, Shanghai Cent, also wie billig das war. Mit einem American Dollar hat man machen können noch und noch, ja.*

In, ein Jahr später, hat der Kaffee gekostet statt 10 Cent, drei Shanghai Dollar, und ein, ein Jahr später, hat, ich weiß nicht genau, vielleicht ein Jahr, vielleicht sechs Monate, hat das schon gekostet zehn Dollar, Shanghai Dollar eine Tasse Kaffee. Und ein Jahr später hat das schon gekostet drei hundert Shanghai Dollar eine Tasse Kaffee. Das heißt die Geschäftsleute, die Chinese sind gegangen zur Bank, haben sie gehabt da aufgestapelt, die hundert Shanghai Dollarscheine gepackt mit [nicht verständlich] und zusammengeschnürt, und dann sind sie so gegangen mit der Hand [nicht verständlich]. Und dann hat die japanische Besetzung, no, das war noch nicht die japanische Be-, das war noch die chinesische Besetzung, was damals war. Die, die Konkurrenz von Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Kai-shek ist in, inland, der war outside, ich habe vergessen die Namen von den der damals regiert hat mit die, kollaboriert mit der Japaner, und der hat eine neue Währung gegründet. Jede Bank hat ihre eigene Währung herausgegeben. Und sagen wir, ich bin gegangen was einkaufen und der hundert Shanghai Dollarschein war nicht echt. Ich kann das nicht sagen, hat der das genommen und zerrissen. Denn ich sagen sollen, "Das ist mein Geld, wie kommst Du zu reißen?" Ganz einfach, zerrissen! Und es muß so auch ums Geld gekommen. Ah, Ambrosisten haben vielleicht gekannt was falsch ist und, und, und nicht falsch, das Geld.

BREAK IN RECORDING

Kalman: *Geht's? So.*

END SIDE A

END OF TAPED INTERVIEW

Egon Eliezer Kalman was born in Türrnitz, Austria, on September 24, 1914, son of Siegmund and Ida Kalman. He was arrested and sent to Dachau with his father during the *Kristallnacht* pogrom, and released a few months later. He sailed to Shanghai in the summer of 1940. He lived at 127 Haimen Lu in 1944. In 1947 he sailed to Bolivia. He returned to Vienna to marry in 1952, and then went to Canada, when he encountered delays in emigrating to the United States. He divided his time between Ottawa, Canada, and Coconut Creek, Florida.

This transcript is part of the Shanghai Jewish Community Oral History Project, an effort to collect and transcribe interviews with Jews who lived in Shanghai, directed by Steve Hochstadt at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. It was prepared with support from Bates College and the Dimmer-Bergstrom Fund.