

>> Interviewer: -- and you were alone, and now you found yourself in a new place. Tell us how you carried on with your life.

>> Rossinger: You know, when you go through -- Mother Nature gave me something, and I think God gave me several guardian angels all the way through this because I've been through all sorts of things. There's no way anybody could survive it. And people don't believe it, and I don't talk about it. There's no sense to talk about it unless you have an intelligent person to absorb what you are saying. It was a bitter beginning because I didn't trust anybody. I still don't trust a lot of people. I was living with my uncle who sent me to -- not speaking English much, you know, but words, a few words -- sent me to school to polish up my language, which was nice of him, and I went to Berea College, Berea, Kentucky, and the school was a self-sufficient school. You could not -- you didn't have to have money to go to school there. You could work your way through, so the first year, all they did is taught me English, built up my vocabulary. They put me in the eighth grade and the ninth grade, and finally, about a year and a half after I was there, I took the GED test and I passed into the college. But all this time, still on my own because I found out that my uncle's family wasn't exactly crazy about me. They were afraid that I was going to take something away from them, so I told them that I want to be alone. And this school helped me be alone because you didn't have to -- you had your lodging, food, and books taken care of because you worked. You can be a whole-day student. You can be a half-day student. And people who had a little extra money, they were half-day students, and I was a whole-day -- I mean, a whole day student, and I was a half-day student. I worked half day and go to school half day.

>> Interviewer: And so that's how you started.

>> Rossinger: It makes a tough person out of you. Unfortunately, the bitter -- I have -- I can't forget or can't forgive them, never. And I had a very interesting psychology teacher who helped me a lot, and I used to think in Hungarian and translate it in my mind into English, and I was stuck for words sometimes, and she asked me if I was thinking in my native tongue, and I said yes. And she says, "Try to build up your vocabulary and think in English." And I did, and, thank God, I did pretty good."

>> Interviewer: Are there any other comments that you'd like to make before we end to leave to people in the future?

>> Rossinger: Unfortunately, it is a constant fight. I found people all the way from Europe to the United States who has to hate. Anti-Semitism is a disease. It's a mental disease. And I have encountered people that didn't know I was Jewish, and they were telling me that they don't believe the Holocaust happened. And I says, just a short reply, "well, friend, I think you better change your mind because you are meeting one right now. You're talking to one." They don't know what to say, and they laugh, sort of a "I don't believe you," and walk away from you. But I think it should be taught. I think it should become history, and I don't think they should sweep it under the carpet like they do in Germany, like they do in Hungary, like they do in the small countries there now, and I'm afraid that the situation in Russia, I'm afraid for anti-Semitism reviving in all the countries, simply because they have to blame somebody. They have to have a scapegoat, and it's an easy thing to blame it on the Jews. But Israel -- I was going to Israel. I was in a kibbutz with several children -- I didn't tell you that -- while I was in Austria in the DP camp. And we were all going to Israel in '46. And when my uncle got into the picture, it was a different story. He told me, he says, "Get an education. Come over here, and then if you still want to go to Israel, you should." I didn't, but my son is there. I didn't go there. He's a dual citizen. I have a son, Michael, the oldest son, who is a

very happy Israeli citizen. He is now serving with the UN, the United Nations people, and Israeli military as a liaison officer. He's fluent in Hebrew and fluent in English. And other time, when he's not in service, which he pulled already, he is working for Lloyd's of London, one of the greatest insurance companies in the world. He's a computer analyst.

>> Interviewer: That's wonderful. One last question I'd like to ask, and that is, how did you come to South Carolina?

>> Rossinger: It's a long --

>> Interviewer: And what are you doing today?

>> Rossinger: It's a long story. I lived in Atlanta, and I met my wife, who is from here, and I think that's one of the big reason I'm here. I am semiretired. I used to be a factory rep. I had a showroom in Atlanta Merchandise Mart. I used to be a factory rep for ladies' fashion accessories, and I kind of slowed down to maybe two or three days a week, and I still wheel and deal in fashion accessories two days out of the -- I'm a self-employed person.

>> Interviewer: Lew, when you were young at home, was your family Jewishly observant?

>> Rossinger: Yes, yes, until they couldn't -- they had to sustain, and I think the Jewish rabbis will tell you that when you don't have anything else to eat, it's all right to eat the trefa.

>> Interviewer: How do you find your faith has been affected by your experience?

>> Rossinger: How do I find -- I'm sorry?

>> Interviewer: Your faith, your Jewish life today. How has your experience --

>> Rossinger: I had -- I think a lot, and I am putting my memories down, and one of these days I'll finish my book. But I am angry at God. And you might find this terrible. I believe in God because I prayed, when I was pinned down in that area where I was talking to you about. We didn't know. We didn't think we were going to make it alive. We felt like if we leave one side, they're going to either shoot us, or the other side is going to shoot us. And I prayed, and I said, "Oh, God, help me," because everybody prays when they know they're going to die, most everybody, if they have a chance. "I will fast two days." I am ashamed to tell you that --

>> Interviewer: You made a promise to God that you would fast?

>> Rossinger: I had done one day. I didn't do two days, and they tell me that it's all right. You can do it anytime between now and the end of your life.

>> Interviewer: Lew, thank you so much for sharing your story with us.

>> Rossinger: My pleasure. I want people to know.

>> Interviewer: Thank you. Okay.

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