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**“IMMIGRATING TO ECUADOR”**

January 2010

              As one of the last legal Jewish emigrants from Berlin, my parents Dr. Alfred and Anna Karger, my grandmother Betty, my younger brother Wolfgang Alberto and I left there on October 16, 1941. Tragically my sister Lilli Guggenheim, daughter of my mother’s first husband who died for Germany in WW l, was barred on October 1 from traveling with us because she was between 18 and 45 years old; 13 months later, with many colleagues, was grabbed from the offices of the Association of Jews in Germany and deported to Auschwitz.

              We traveled with a group of maybe some 80 others in a closed passenger car through occupied France to Spain, from Barcelona in the converted cargo spaces of a Spanish freighter to Cuba, where we were interned in the detention camp Tiscornia above Havana for some weeks until Jewish organizations like the HIAS/Hicem or the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee arranged for our trip continuation. The planned travel through the Panama Canal was barred to us because the U.S. had prohibited our transit as "enemy aliens.” So we went by a small ship to Barranquilla, flew from there to Ipiales and then crossed on foot over the border bridge to Tulcan. There the Quito Jewish community awaited us with a number of taxis (including the physician Dr.  Rosenthal), who then drove us to Quito.

              Having received a visa as "industrial,” my father joined another immigrant in a venture to finance (advance money to) charcoal burners in the area of Santo Domingo and then truck the sacks with charcoal to the market in Quito. The enterprise failed, but my father got permission to work as a legal consultant. He partnered with an Ecuadorian lawyer (and journalist), but they did not have the right connections and he could not make a living from it. He then on credit acquired a shoe and gift store from other immigrants who left for the U.S. (the Zangers), which eventually became the Cia. Hamilton (dropping the shoes).

              My brother entered the Espejo primary school, while I had to pass exams in Ecuadorean and (Latin) American history and geography and four years of Spanish language to enter the quinto curso of the Instituto Nacional Mejia. Just before graduating in 1944 my brother died of polio at a time when iron lungs were not yet known in Quito. I got a job as translator/secretary at the medical supply store Omnia Pro Medico of Waldemar Strauss while studying civil engineering at the Universidad Central, then located on the Garcia Moreno next to the president’s palace.

              After a while, Benno Weiser, columnist for El Comercio (and El Telegrafo de Guayaquil), Zionist leader and editor of La Revista de Dos Mundos, later La Revista Sionista, offered me a job on his weekly. At the same time he procured for me a job as English-Spanish translator for two hours in the evening at El Comercio and another hour before noon at Ultimas Noticias, where my immediate superior was Miguel Angel Schwind, later law professor and lawyer in New York. Eventually this also led to my becoming secretary of the Zionist organization, Keren Kayemeth (under Dita Ginsberg’s father) and Keren Hayesod. I even got help - Bella Peisach as secretary and Victor Turkel as collector of donations and other functions. The Revista had to fold after it lost its paying readership in Colombia after the "bogotazo” uprising that destroyed many businesses. Benno Weiser was called to the Jewish Agency for Palestine’s Latin American department in New York and could offer me a job there. Thus I left Ecuador after seven years in January 1949 and was active at the Agency while studying engineering at night at New York University. My studies were interrupted part of the time while I was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War. (However I was assigned in New York and for some months continued some courses at NYU.) After my discharge, with help from the GI Bill of Rights, I got a Master’s in Mechanical Engineering at Purdue in Indiana and worked in that field for several companies.

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