

Final Edited Aaron Joskowitz Transcript\*



\*Note: This transcript is also the final corrected as Aaron never reviewed or made any corrections to the interview.

Tape 1/Side 1

AP: My name is Arthur Pronin. This is November 11<sup>th</sup> 2004 and I am interviewing Aaron Joskowitz for the University of Houston Oral History Project. To begin with, I know a little bit about your story and I know your mother's story. Your mother, Pepi Nichols, is a second generation Holocaust survivor and she told me some of the background of your grandparents and their experiences during the genocide. Your mother told me you heard their oral histories and stuff. What, to you, is the most important part of what happened to them?

AJ: Just the fact that it actually happened to them. The only people that we talk to or have heard about [and/or] read about on what happened in instances like that are people that have come out of war, but this wasn't a war to them, this was just real life. I guess just being at the wrong place, wrong time.

AP: Wrong place, wrong time?

AJ: I mean that is the only way I can think of it. Am I even born if they don't survive? No. Am I even born if it doesn't happen that way? No. So the best I can figure [is that] everything happened so I can be born. Cause how would my grandparents [Louise and Rubin Joskowitz] have met if that circumstance didn't happen? You know, that's why I'm the chosen child. That's why we are the chosen people. That is why I call myself the chosen child, because I was obviously chosen not to die. I was chosen by some higher power to be here, because the two of them survived. My mother survived by

coming on a boat and basically dying on her way coming over here. She survived that. My dad [Arthur Brownstein] survived Vietnam and survived being stabbed a couple of times. He survived that. The two of them got together. How does that figure in, you know what I mean? So it's pretty real. The realization I am here is pretty fun.

AP: So, I take it that it is like a miracle to you?

PJ: Absolutely. Them surviving is a miracle. That's the first miracle. We are just the family of miracles. You know the first miracle is the fact that they actually survived what they survived, and saw what they saw. I mean for a man [my grandfather] to be whooped by a man with a whip, and to have these things happen to him. You know, how do you tell that man not to be prejudiced in his country where he is at now? Somebody pulls a gun on him and he calls that person for what they are for the rest of his life, who am I to tell him you can't do that? That's not for me to tell. He [Hitler] was the epitome of bigotry. The people that tried to kill him [my grandfather] were the biggest bigots ever to walk any part of this planet.

AP: Another question I have, and it came up in my interview with your mother, deals with the fact that you have kept the last name Joskowitz. Your mother's last name is Nichols and she said you kept your grandfather's [Rubin Joskowitz] name. Why is that?

PJ: My dad wasn't around when I was a kid. He was gone pretty much from the time I was born. He wasn't really the best father, at least not to my brother [Joshua Brownstein]

and me. He was a good father to other kids of the women that he dated, but not really to me at that point.

You know I grew up, turned sixteen and realized that I wasn't a Brownstein, never really was a Brownstein. I was kind of given that name. That's not really who I was. You know, my mother came to all my baseball games; my mother came to all my school activities. My mother did everything. My grandparents came to everything. They took me to Hebrew school, they picked me up. My grandma [Louise Joskowitz] bought me my McRibbs, you know what I mean! (laughs). There was really no father in that situation so really my grandparents were my dad. They were the other single bond in my life that really brought me up. My granddad [Rubin Joskowitz] is my father, that is who he is; he is not really my grandfather.

AP: Your mom mentioned, and correct me if I'm wrong, that you had also kept the name because it was your grandfather's name. So that name would live on.

AJ: My granddad had two daughters [Pepi and Geri]. It is self-explanatory. They marry off, they take on different names and there is no other Joskowitz name left. Right. So I'm trying my damndest to have as many kids as I can. You know I've been trying for the last damned four or five years man, its been killing me. I want kids all over the world with the Joskowitz as their last name. (laughs)

AP: That's a very powerful thing you did, taking you grandfather's name.

You changed the name when you were sixteen years old. You did this yourself?

AJ: Oh yeah, nobody held my hand. I did it all myself. I walked in front of the judge by myself. I went and did the petition of name change by myself. It really wasn't all that hard.

AP: Well another question that comes to mind is how do you think your life has been affected being raised by a second-generation survivor and having grandparents who are survivors? How has that impacted you? You already indicated some of how it's impacted you.

PJ: [Well, for one thing,] growing up **knowing that the people** that are looking after you, [my grandparents,] were slaves. Like **actual slaves**. There is a lot of Jews in this world, and I'm sure a lot of Jews' ancestors **went through the Spanish Inquisition** before they knew that their ancestors [had gone] through **the Spanish Inquisition**, but this isn't the Spanish Inquisition. This is 1945, this is like 50 years ago, you know what I mean? We are not talking about all those years ago for people we don't know.

We are talking about being able to touch these people. These are people we are touching. This is somebody I talk to every single day. This is somebody [grandmother Louise Joskowitz] whose Auschwitz tattoo I'm going to get tattooed on my body. You what I mean, it will be tattooed in the same place. So that for the rest of my life when people ask me what is the significance of that number, I'm going to be like that was my grandmother's Auschwitz number. What do you think? She is going to be a number and

die? That is what they wanted. It is not what I want; it is not going to happen. I'm going to do whatever I can to prevent it.

You know what Hitler did wasn't a short-term thing. It was genocide. He could kill off every man, [and then the daughters of those men would] end up changing their names [as they married]. Well, that's killing of the Jaskowitz generation and others. The Jaskowitz name is no more. If I don't carry it on it will not exist. It is good-bye. Once my granddad passes away, which he won't because they will have found the fountain of youth by then, but God forbid the evitable will come, all I can say is he won't be dead. His name won't be dead, at all, whatsoever. Never happened. You know had I not changed my name and had I kept on with what I was doing, Hitler would have won. He would still be winning at that point.

What he [Hitler] had done that long ago is still now affecting the world today, you know what I mean? He is a lot smarter than people give him credit for. You know that is why he killed the children. That's why the children were just gunned off. If he can demolish the other people that are able to have offspring, then at that point there is no more offspring, there is no more Jews. That is just something I feel. You know we all think crazy thoughts differently at different times. That's how I feel. Doesn't make sense to everybody, but it makes sense to people with some sense.

AP: So, your mom had mentioned to me in her interview is that she has taken positives out of what happened to the family. She has taken strength from the Holocaust. She was telling me of some little quirks, about things like the potato skins issue. Your grandfather was beaten for peeling the skins too thick. He had no socks for many years in the camps,

and so ever since he insists that the household must have plenty of socks to be worn. Do you ever find yourself sometimes getting some kind of emotion when you get a potato skin or something?

AJ: I'm not a woman. I'm a man. I just get angry.

AP: You get angry?

AJ: Very simple. I get angry about [African American] reparations. I get angry about trying to get money for people who were slaves a hundred some odd years ago. I'm not saying that the world was great fifty years ago, okay, but you can't meet an old American slave. There is not one I can shake my hand with at this very point. I don't believe that I'm wrong about that. There are all these people [Jews] that were really slaves [not long ago in Europe,] you know.

This is going to get me in trouble; this is a bad thought of mine. As bad as slavery was in America, as bad as it was, as disgusting and despicable as it was, the pathetic reality of it is that white folks in the long run didn't really want to mass murder the black folks because they needed them for their purposes. [The Holocaust] was a blatant mass murder, [in which] just small amounts of [people] got to be used for a purpose. Thank God my granddad was one of those small amounts. People don't understand. The mass amounts of black folks who came to America were slaves; yes I'm not denying that. But they weren't lined up in front of ditches and shot by another black man and then buried.

You what I mean? That's not something that I walk around with every day, but that's something I've taken from my granddad.

You know I'm not getting any money from Germany. I'm not getting a penny. My mother doesn't get any money. She was born in an internment camp. She doesn't see a penny. Nobody is getting money who was whipped. Nobody is getting any money [who had] to hide in shit just to survive. You know my grandmother hid in shit. Do you know what hiding in shit is like? Go do it; you know what I'm saying? The shit ain't yours buddy; the shit is a bunch of other peoples' shit. You just got to do it. What are you going to do? Because she did that, look at me, we are having this conversation. If she doesn't do that she is dead, and **we are** not **having** this conversation. So that just makes me angry. I just get angry of the facts.

AP: You get angry? What specific?

AJ: I don't even know any more, man. (laughs).

AP: It seems like you are clearly angry about obviously what had happened.

AJ: I'm angry at the fact that people just don't take it seriously.

AP: Take the Holocaust seriously?



AJ: [We don't] take the Holocaust seriously, man. If we took the Holocaust as seriously in this country as they did slavery, my God! Do you know what I mean? [This country would be] different if we were not digging so far into the past man. We can go to Majdanek man. I've been to Majdanek, I've been to Bergen-Belsen, and I've been to Treblinka. Make up all the stories you want, I'm going. It's still there. You know when I went to Majdanek, and I was with my grandmother, and she is pointing out where they got the food and where the line was and she is telling the person who is explaining it to us that [the tour guide] is wrong. "Sorry you are wrong. That wasn't there. That was over there." I mean how does that make you feel? That is about as real as it gets.

Nobody is going to take me around to Alabama and show me where it went down. Nobody is going to take me in Texas because it's been built on. Yeah, there is still plantations here, but you know. It sucks, slavery is garbage. I'm a product of slavery just like the people in this country are products of slavery. I understand that, but let's get real.

AP: Another question. I mean you are getting into the issue of memory and the Holocaust. You are expressing to me that memory is not being treated seriously in this country.

AJ: Absolutely not. We are remembering things in this country and we are basing decisions [such as] affirmative action type of deals on something that happened hundreds of years ago. I'm not saying there wasn't a black and white water fountain. I didn't say that. I'm talking about whips and chains. I'm not talking about discrimination. Do you

feel what I'm saying? In this country if people realized how it could happen again. You know we in this country think we have beaten slavery. Bullshit. We haven't beaten slavery.

AP: How have we not?

AJ: There are slaves all over this world. Why don't Fox News and C.N.N. talk about those people? They don't. They talk about them after 300,000 have been died and two of 'em get's their message to some reporter who decided to go there to help children.

AP: So if the Holocaust was in the memories of people more then C.N.N. coverage might be different and people might have a different conversation about war?

AJ: If the Holocaust was in people's faces and being like, "Man this happened fifty years ago," the media coverage would look more at genocides taking place now. Thank God Yasir Arafat is dead, for everybody who is listening to this.

So, my being a product of the Holocaust for anybody listening to this has to understand this is where my anger comes from. My anger for everything that I've been sitting here rambling on about that probably doesn't have anything [to do with what you're asking] stems from the fact that we are not just taken seriously. Like it didn't happen. Being a survivor of Jewish grandparents who survived slavery leads me to believe that it's not over, slavery is not over, it's just not over yet and it can happen anywhere. It can happen in France. It can happen anywhere where Jews are.

AP: Well your mother had had expressed a fear that anti-Semitism is not 100 percent gone.

AJ: What about the Jesus movie? What about Mel Gibson's movie? What's up with that?

AP: Passion of the Christ.

AJ: Come on, another passion movie! Go look it up, let me not explain it to you. Let me seem even more angry. It happens again. One passion movie came out however many years ago and boom.

AP: You mean passion plays?

AJ: Synagogues are destroyed and hate stuff is put all over the place. This is 2003 and a passion movie comes out, and guess what happens? All right. Synagogues are getting burned down, and synagogues are still getting written on, and swastikas are still being [spray painted.]

AP: So the anti-Semitism is still around?

AJ: Let me give you the seriousness of the situation of being a product of grandparents who survived the Holocaust. We were at Treblinka walking around and a little punk ass garage ass German little bastard child said "Heil Hitler" while I was on a trip with Holocaust survivors! Yeah, this last year. I'm talking about in 2003 when I went with my mother and my grandparents. It's not over. My grandmother walks up to [that child's teacher] and says "is that what you are teaching that kid?" Then my grandmother [turns around to the child and says] "is that what they are teaching you in school? Is that what it is?" And what did I want to do? I wanted to grab that kid by the throat. Because not only is that type of anti-Semitism is still going on it needs to be cut off somewhere. If these children know it and say it as a **joke**, it is **not a joke**. Because that is how it started in the first place.

AP: Some historians have said recently that **Germany cannot** shake off what it did. So should Germany always be punished for the **Holocaust**?

AJ: No, I don't believe they should. But guess what? Those punk kids that still walk around saying "Heil Hitler" should be strangled and should be put on trial. Some thing should happen to them. They shouldn't be allowed to walk free because that is the problem. When enough of them were walking free and doing it enough of them were putting us in ghettos. If nobody walked around saying "Heil Hitler" and "death to the Jews" it would have never happened. It is pretty plain and simple. It's the same brainwashing as Arab kids. Why don't Arab kids for one time in their lives grab one of those guys that strap them up with a bomb and say "hey man, roll with me."

AP: That brings me to another question, and it is about Israel and the importance of Israel to the Jews and particularly to the survivors. You mother said, and I quote, "Israel is everything."

AJ: It is. Yep, that little piece of land surrounded by all them Arabs. It's everything. It's all we got. If we don't have that we will all perish. It is what we have been fighting for all these years. It is what kept us alive whether it was in Egypt or the Inquisition or the Holocaust, dude. I mean you know.

We have missed one terrorist [Arafat/PLO, Hamas], gone and taken out another terrorist [Saddam Hussein] for no reason, yet we are still funding terrorism [to the Palestinians whose] country doesn't even belong [to them.] Finally this will get heard: how many Native American Indian children it would take to blow themselves up in Starbucks coffees to say ya'll whities came and got this land from us! How many Starbucks, how many Pizza Huts, before that stopped. Two. I give you two. I'll give you two because the first one they wont know why it happened and the second they will have figured it out. I will give you two and that is about it before everyone is rounded up and stuck in a big hole. Try that with George Bush. Try that while he is president. Wow.

The problem is [we Jews] have nobody to speak for us. We have pathetic morons speaking for us, besides Netanyahu, and Netanyahu, and Netanyahu. I don't really see anybody speaking for us in a way that either anybody is going to listen or anybody is going to take us serious. The day after 9/11 who was sitting in front of Congress? On September 12<sup>th</sup>, September 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> who was sitting in front of Congress while

Congress begged for information on what they were supposed to do now? Benjamin Netanyahu. Interesting how that works.

I watched the entire thing. Interesting how that works. Interesting on how they are asking a Jew for information on terrorism. Yet it's going on in their [Israel] country and they [the Americans] are still funding the fucking people [the Palestinians] that are providing it. Hamas is still around, where is Saddam Hussein? Islamic Jihad is still around, where is Saddam Hussein? The P.L.O. is still around. The P.L.O. who blew up airplanes, who took hostages are still around. Where is Saddam Hussein?

AP: So we went after the wrong guy **you** are suggesting? We are not targeting the Palestinian terror groups?

AJ: We are not targeting what matters.

AP: We are not targeting who is targeting Jews?

AJ: Yeah, exactly. It's just crazy, and that's my point: it is not over. Go to Ramallah.

AP: What is not over? Anti-Semitism? Genocide?

AJ: Well that's [genocide] not ever over, man. There is going to be somebody in this world that's always going to believe that their people are supposed to take out the next person, and those are just sick demented people. Whether it's in Africa, or Rwanda. I

mean Arab countries, or here. But we Americans are so focused on Schwarzenegger and this guy and that guy and this movie and this rap artist and this guy and that guy. We are so overshadowed by capitalism in this country, although Benjamin Franklins are my best friend. Nobody said I wasn't a hypocrite about certain things because I love money. This country is so blinded by money and entertainment that we are not seeing about what could really happen and what is really happening: terrorism and genocide.

[I mean], here is Timothy McVeigh. He did it. He is from here. We are not paying attention to those people. There is no way he did not give a sign. Timothy Mc Veigh at some point in his life either saw a shrink, saw a counselor, saw something and gave a sign somewhere at some point in his life and we were so busy not looking and thinking that it could happen here. 9/11 happened and once again we were not paying attention.

AP: I wanted to go back to something real briefly. Again going back to your mother's words in her interview, she depicted to me very vividly visiting the camp Mauthausen in Germany, and you were there. She said it was one of the most difficult camps that she went through because other survivors were there and because Mauthausen was such a brutal, brutal concentration camp. She recalls giving you a hug and she could see all the civilian population down below in the valleys. How old were you at that time?

AJ: This was last year. I was twenty-five years old.

AP: I mean what did you think? Because your mother expressed this uneasy feeling like  
“oh look at the Jew who has come back.” Did you feel people were eyeing you?

AJ: Well, I'm a pride child, so.

AP: You're a what child?

AJ: Pride child. So getting me to look away from somebody who is looking at my eyes  
just ain't going to happen. Does that make sense? So, it doesn't really bother me that  
what it is that they are thinking. What I did take from that exact moment? I know what  
moment it is you are talking about; it is those valleys that she is talking about.

I'm looking at them while they are looking at me. I'm thinking to myself, all of ya'll can  
see all thirteen of us but you couldn't see all twenty thousand of them [Jews back during  
the war.]

AP: You feel the German civilians are guilty of negligence or not?

AJ: Yeah, they are guilty. If I had my way every one of those houses would be  
destroyed and they could go live somewhere else, and as they walk away looking at  
Mauthausen they can feel what my grandparents felt walking away from Mauthausen  
looking at those houses. That's if I had my way (laughs).



AP: Another question—there is a raging debate in Poland on what to do with Auschwitz. Your mother expressed strong feelings that it should remain for memory.

AJ: It's got to be preserved because the magnitude of the sizes of these camps doesn't hit you until your eyeballs sees the size of these camps. When you look in a book, you see an eight by ten page. When you look at the size of these camps you see thirty or forty football fields. You know in America we constitute size like, "wow the George R Brown is the size of thirteen football fields." Well, Auschwitz/Birkenau is the size of forty, fifty kilometers. I don't think people understand that. When you see those rows of barracks and the bunks. Yeah, it wasn't made to last but you know what man; you see that piece of wood right there on my door? That piece of wood doesn't cost but a dollar. Change out the piece that is rotten. Don't they owe that to us for the rest of their lives? To change out some wood so the other people can see exactly what had happened. The person fixing is getting paid, he ain't fixing it for free, so what is his problem?

AP: That brings an additional question. Your mother expressed very negative feelings about the Poles, saying they were just as guilty. Do you share her sentiment?

AJ: They were probably more guilty.

AP: Do you trust Poles to preserve these camps?

AJ: No, I don't trust the Poles for anything and I'm Polish, you know what I mean? The Polacks took such a deep-rooted stance in saying that "we are not Jews we are Polacks, that is what we are. Ya'll are on your own." Really? Okay.

AP: I need to change sides of the tape.

Tape 1/Side 2

AP: This is side two and this is November 11<sup>th</sup> 2004 and I'm interviewing Aaron Joskowitz, a third generation survivor. What is your current profession?

AJ: I own a record label, recording studio, and I perform as a hip-hop artist.

AP: Another question, how did you choose this profession? Your mother suggested that you feel like it's a miracle you're alive and that this is your calling, this is why you are here.

AJ: My mission is a whole lot bigger. This studio right here is going to bring me the finances to do what it is that I want to do.

AP: Which is?

AJ: Well, I don't really know yet. There are a lot of things. Own restaurants. Advocate for Judaism, to be honest.

AP: So this is to help further your causes?

AJ: Yeah, because when one of my records hits and I'm out there, they will be interviewing me. Then I can decide what I feel like talking about in my interviews. If they start persuading me one way, then I get to let people see exactly what the truth is on certain sides. This career really found me I should say. I went from baseball to football banging around on the tables at lunchtime and could just freestyle real well. That got me in a studio with a couple of guys and then after I did a song with them. I was leaving school one day and a guy who I knew was coming to school said they were putting a record out and really couldn't do it without me and I said "all right, come on!"

AP: So this is your gift?

AJ: Yeah. My gift is just quick thought, quick thinking, and quick answers. That is really my gift. In this game and in this business that is what it is all about. And rap is all about the quick answer. If we are doing a freestyle competition and a guy is talking about my shoes and my hair and talking about my momma, well you know I'm going to take what he said about my momma and turn it around and put it on him so bad that he is going to turn around and walk away. Because if he decides to say something else then I

will turn around and put something else on him that is really bad and then he will really probably be walking away. You know what free styling is right?

AP: You need to explain it a little bit.

AJ: Okay free styling is rapping off the top of your head. Rapping something that is not written. So, we are sitting here having a little rap and I'm talking about the glasses on your head and that you got side-burns and the watch that you are wearing and your black shirt and I'm putting it in rhyme form. The fun is that you don't take anything personal. You know my nose and my ears are **always** talked **about**, it's a great thing. But now I've learned to take it and flip it.

AP: Another question—many second **generation survivors**, according to the literature, have this need to have a good legacy of helping the community. Do you feel a need?

AJ: No, I worry about my family and not anybody else right now. I worry about my grandparents, I worry about my mother, and I worry about my brother.

AP: Your mother mentioned that fifty members of your family were murdered in the Holocaust.

AJ: That's the real part.

AP: Many second or third generation survivors feel that they owe the murdered something. That it makes your life and mission more important.

AJ: That is an understatement. That is why I want babies all over the world with the last name Joskowitz.

AP: You were Bar Mitzvahed and, according to your mother's testimony, it was important in your family that you retained the memory and legacy.

AJ: Right, because I'm not supposed to be *Bar Mitzvahed*. I'm not supposed to be born. All this *Bar Mitzvah* stuff is secondary. You know that is me living the culture that we survived.

AP: Did you talk about that in your *Bar Mitzvah* speech?

AJ: I know I mentioned Hitler and mentioned my grandparents and the Holocaust. I'm not really specific on my *Bar Mitzvah* speech. It would be a good thing to pull up though. I'm not just a regular Jew. That is what people don't get.

AP: Well, that brings me to another question. There is a raging debate about Jewish assimilation in America and elsewhere. The assimilation rate in America is fifty to sixty percent. As a third generation survivor, what is your feeling on assimilation?

AJ: I'm dating a Persian girl man, but you know what, she is not Muslim, she is not Christian, she has no denomination. She has never grown up paying attention to Christmas or Ramadan or anything. She probably is more Jewish than anything else. She knows the Kiddush [Jewish prayer]. She comes to Friday night dinner every weekend. We fell in love; the problem is that we can't get married until she converts. I'm in love. She can have five of my babies tomorrow and I would love it and that's my wish. Bottom line is my babies will have all have *Bar and Bat Mitzvahs*.

AP: Well that's interesting and is in distinction because many American Jews end up raising their children with a Christmas tree and menorah.

AJ: That's funny, her family came here before the [Iranian] revolution, so it was before all the mullahs. When the shah was still in power. So it was very Americanized, they wore bikinis. It's really Persia to them. It became Iran after the revolution. They feel that they are not Iranian. They feel they are Persian. Persians and Jews have never really had the squabbles. If you like at history Jews and Persians have almost stuck together in a couple of instances. But Arabs and Persians have gone at it and Jews and Arabs have gone at it.

AP: What would you say to these American Jews who are assimilating?

AJ: There are enough Christians in this world to make you and your children to turn Christian. Now, this statement right here is not any attempt to at all look like a Jehovah's

Witness who comes and knocks on my door. Have them convert. Bottom line—they are going to enjoy Judaism better than Christianity. [Let's say] a Jewish man wants to marry a non-Jewish girl. Have her convert [because once she sees that] Shabbat is all good, and that it isn't bad, and that we do go to heaven, and that we won't go to hell, she will see that Jews let Christians be Christians and let Muslims be Muslims. We just want to be allowed to be Jews. That's the third time I said Jew, and I usually don't say Jew----we are Hebrews. [Whenever I talk] to my grandparents they say Jew all the time, but I believe we are Hebrews. I don't believe we are Jews because Nazis called us Jews. We are not Jews, we are Hebrews. I just caught myself saying Jew for third time and it started bothering me. I don't like hearing the word Jew. My grandparents were called Jew, that's what they were called, "you are a Jew." No, I'm a Hebrew bro, I'm not sure what a Jew is. I'm Jewish, but I'm not a Jew. Do you know what I mean? I'm an Israelite, I'm a Hebrew, but I'm not a Jew. What is a Jew? I know what a Jewish person is. You don't say a black, you say a black man. You don't say, well you know what you don't say and you what you do say.

What happens is we Jews love to argue amongst ourselves and we love to say what is right amongst ourselves. You know every Jew in the world knows the Holocaust was bad. As long as we stay at the Jewish tables and talk to other Jews how bad it was the Christians ain't ever going to find out how bad it was. We are so busy arguing with ourselves that we don't tell the other people. Does that make sense? We don't like to be heard whining. Jews historically have not liked to be heard whining.

AP: The Jews were stereotyped as liberal, corrupting whiners.

AJ: Wasn't that the point of it? The point of it was that we were wrong no matter what it was. Anything that we did was wrong. The opposite of what it was we were going to do is what they were going to say. If we didn't whine about it then they would say we did whine!

Come on, they [the Nazis] had Americans come and sit in a freaking theatre before the 1936 Olympics. I have sat in [this very theatre.] It showed everything was peachy and hunky-dory. [We now] know they dressed up Jews in suits. These people masked the Holocaust for a year and got the people to literally bring the Olympics to their country, Germany. All these camps! **They never got** in a car and drive around. Why didn't they drive around?

AP: So are you saying the global community, including the Americans and organizations such as the Red Cross, failed the Jews?

AJ: Oh, F.D.R. should have been shot a long time ago [when he] turned that boat around.

AP: You mean the S.S. St. Luis? This boat full of Jews came to Cuba, and then when up the American coast and was turned away. Most them died in the Holocaust.

AJ: Thanks buddy F.D.R., you and Hitler are probably having a cigar right now.

AP: So is there equal culpability?



AJ: Why not? We [are] responsible for not helping the Kurds. They should have been helped in '90 when they were gassed. They shouldn't have been helped when it was almost over. The Kurds are being gassed with mustard gas, or whatever, nobody took Saddam then. We took him out yesterday. Well nobody is getting gassed and bombed yesterday. There are people still alive with deformities from when it happened to them. Why didn't we go and help take [Saddam] out when he was doing it. They should have taken Hitler out along time ago! We are taking out people who aren't even-affecting us. You know what I mean? If it's affecting oil we go for it, if it's affecting mankind we just let it affect mankind.

AP: Even today in the Dafur Arab militias **have pushed other** black groups into camps and they are dying by the thousands.

AJ: Who cares when there is oil in Iraq! That was sarcastic if you couldn't see my face. I don't give a shit about oil in Iraq. Send our troops over there to do something. [Instead we] go over there and hold the oil. You know what I mean? You asked me if genocide is still going on. It's happening now. It's not happening at the rate they are killing Jews. You can sure say putting them in camps and having them mass murdered by another group of people is similar to the Holocaust.

AP: Well, I have one other question.

AJ: Well, I got a question for you. You got the blacks and you got the Arabs in the Sudan, right?

AP: Yes.

AJ: And the Arabs are putting blacks in camps. Now what is it going to take for one of the Sudanese Arabs to be a Hitler to then mass murder the blacks. If you are not looking at it now wait another two years. It will happen. Somebody is going to look for power and money and rise up and take 'em out because that what history shows. That's what you do in that situation. When you got a group of people against a group of people, whether it's Israeli and Arabs, whether it's blacks and Arabs, whether it's the Sudan, or in Israel, it's the same thing.

[Speaking about Israel,] has anybody looked at a map of the Middle East? Go point Israel out. Go look at all the countries around it. Do you know how many people that are not Jewish who come to my house and have this conversation with [me about the Palestinians]? They walk away like they have seen the light.

AP: What do you mean, "they have seen the light"?

AJ: I pull a map of the Middle East and I don't have to say another word. We can have a five hour conversation and I can have an argument with this person about how Israel is wrong and how they are holding the Palestinians against their will. I pull up that map of the Middle East and golly Israel don't look so wrong anymore.

AP: Why, because its so small and surrounded by so many adversaries?

AJ: Yeah. First of all the West Bank is Jordan. All that was Transjordan. They had their chance to get a big piece of the pie. They had a chance in the '20s, they had a chance in '60, the '40s, the '70s. Now they want to go to the '67 borders. Stop crying. You know man, Art, if I came to you and punched you in the face and you turned around and whooped my ass I can't cry about it now can I?

AP: So that's basically Israel's position?

AJ: Yeah. They have been punched in **the face; they turned** around and beat the hell out of seven countries multiple times. **How many times do we** have to do it, and we are still wrong. These people [Arafat/P.L.O.] in '00 **didn't want to sign** [the treaty.]

AP: You are talking about the 2000 peace negotiations with Arafat?

AJ: Whenever [Prime Minister Ehud] Barak should have been hung for even offering these people that.

AP: So you think the Israeli Right is correct about keeping settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip? Or not?

AJ: That is a slippery slope. If we are going to give them the land then get out. If not, stay there. It's time for Israelis to stop being wishy-washy also. Nobody said it's easy, but you have to look around man. I mean we are talking about some of the biggest countries in the world [surrounding Israel] in an area with the most money in the world. It makes Bill Gates look like a toy doll, we are talking about so much money these Saudi people have. We are to fight those people?

They [the Arabs] put these cockroaches in our backyard. When they put cockroaches in your backyard and they want to infest your land and you take out a couple of cockroaches and they still keep coming and still keep coming. The cockroaches that were put there that are now for peace are not going to be heard because the majority of those cockroaches want us dead, they want us out. They want us out, there is no peace. That's what people don't get.

AP: So do you think there will never be peace?

AJ: I pray now there will. I will pray for peace with the death of Arafat. I will do that next year in Israel in prayer. Those people are people. Arabs are people. When you are in school with one bad seed your whole class doesn't get to go to recess because one guy is talking. It's time for the class to take one person and set him straight.

AP: And you are referring to?

AJ: The Arabs in Israel. If they don't want to support Hamas they won't support Hamas. Little-bitty Hamas can't affect everything and if it's going to then those people have to be held accountable for it. If they don't want to be accountable then they shouldn't be supporting Hamas right now, because that is not going to get them anywhere near peace. Do they really want peace or do they not want peace? How bad does the woman of those three children want peace when there is a war going on over there and she is allowing her three children to go out and throw rocks at big tanks? Is she really doing the job of a mother? That's the worst of it. How bad do they care for their kids, man? Why is your child outside in the gunfire?

AP: So there should be equal moral accountability? Instead of blaming it on Arafat or Sharon.

AJ: Who ever blames it on Arafat? Name me one Arab in the West Bank or Gaza that ever ever blamed it on Arafat. None, because they are dead. You know what I mean, blame it on Arafat and they are not walking anymore.

You fight fire with fire and that's okay as long as you are not Israel. Once you are Israel you can't say anything, you can't do anything, once you do it you are going to be put on public opinion. We are the chosen people and the devil all in the same person. Boy that is crazy isn't it?

AP: Chosen people and the devil?

AJ: We are the chosen people by the Christians and the devil by the Arabs.

AP: How do you reconcile the two?

AJ: You don't, you just try and live your life as a Jew, man. If only we could just be left alone. The problem is if we are just left alone we are going to flourish so that God only knows what is going to happen next. They got to keep us under control. It is a sad thought. If you want to get into conspiracy theories, man let's get into a real conspiracy theory, you know. If ya'll want to conspirasize about Bush running the airplanes into the World Trade Center lets conspirasize about the Christian world and the Arab world getting together and trying to keep us under control. For our entire lives, since we were ever put on this planet. You know, I mean let's talk about that. The realization of that last statement to end it up is that my grandparents were put in the worst of the middle of what it is that I was just saying. They were put in what I'm talking about. If I'm talking about conspiracy theories then I'm talking about the white man and the Christian man and the Arab man trying to keep us together so that we don't flourish. I'm talking about that because it happened to my grandparents.

AP: I see, because it was your grandparents who were the ones who were enslaved and so forth.

AJ: My grandparents are history. Not history as in their past, they are living history.

AP: One other quick observation, the necklace you are wearing with the prominent Star of David, do you wear that every day?

AJ: Absolutely. I'm in a game, man, where I have to look at crosses everyday with bunches of diamonds in them.

AP: Another quick question: the A.D.L. [Anti-Defamation League] has expressed great concern because of the Religious Right's sweeping victories in last week's election. Do you have a kind of a fear or not of the Christian Right as a third generation survivor?

AJ: Let me tell you something about the Right Wing, we are the chosen people to the Right Wing, don't forget that. Israel **will not go anywhere** as long as the Right Wing is around. Think about that. Things have to **happen in Israel** for the Messiah to come back for the fires and the whatever.

AP: So you say the Right will ensure Israel stays alive to fulfill the Messiah?

AJ: I'm definitely in the middle of what it is where I want to be politically. I'm extremely liberal on a lot of views, but I was extremely nervous about Kerry getting elected. [I feared] that he would have gone and had his photo op with Yasir Arafat. That got me, and for somebody who is so involved about Israel I had to do something I didn't want to do. Ask my grandparents what I said the first time George W. Bush got elected. I was ready to leave and pack up and go to Europe, but I found something in the fact that

he would not talk to Arafat. I found a little bit of nobilism in that. As much English as he doesn't know and as much as he stutters he is still a Texan, which I am. I believe that Israel is safer with George Bush as our president just today. I can only speak for today because I don't know who is president next.

AP: Well we are almost done with the tape so this is a good stopping point.

AJ: I got to put one last thing in there. You want to talk about guys who try and marry Christian women and what do we do about them? Why don't we talk about these liberal attorneys that are Jews, who are defending these Arab bastards? Why don't we do that? Why don't we talk about how every time an Arab gets put out and has a Jewish attorney defending him or every time an Arab problem comes up we have an Arab [woman appear on T.V.] without her *hijab* or without her *burka* on? [She looks western] wearing lipstick looking all nice and pretty. She is speaking for the Arab people when the Arab people don't even think she exists or should be looking like that.

AP: Hmm.

AJ: That's something for all of ya'll to go hmm. I hope I answered one part of your question.

AP: I think you did. Thanks for your time and this opportunity.



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