

# Temple Israel Archives

## Sam Cooper Interview

October 15, 1991

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INT: Mr. Cooper would you please describe how your parents got to Memphis?-

SC: My parents immigrated to New York and, ah, my father was one of eight brothers and one of the brothers lived in Memphis and was a successful tailor. A tailor in those, in those days the tailor business was entirely different than it is today. Today you go into a department store or men's clothing you, you try a suit on, but in those days you made it tailor made, they'd measure you. And, and he was part of my, my uncle was a successful in this particular field and he invited my father to come to Memphis and we came here, ah, from New York. And I was six months old when we got here and I lived here ever since.

INT: Thinking back to when you were a little boy, describe your neighborhood?

Describe what it was like?

SC: Well, I guess the best way to describe it is that it was a Jewish community and, ah, it had a grocery store. You had a delicatessen, you had a butcher shop, you had a clothing store and it was all within an area of about, oh I'd say about ten blocks that was called the Pinch. And I was raised in the Pinch. My father had, ah, his tailor shop was part of the Pinch and, ah, the area where I was raised is called Market Square, was a playground and adjacent to the playground we had the, ah, a synagogue Anshei Sphard Synagogue was right next to the playground. And we played baseball or football and so forth, but then when they had evening services and they didn't have enough for a minyan, one of the fellows, one of the men in the, ah, synagogue would call to us, we'd break up the ball game, so we'd all go up there and that, that was quite an

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experience, but that would give you an idea of the kind of closeness of the community there. And my parents who were, were very poor and we, were ah, fortunate to get our groceries, ah, and other necessities on credit and, ah, but everyone knew each other, ah, it was, ah, it was a good Jewish community. It was, and there were some prominent people with the exception of one that came out of the Pinch and some of them are still prominent here in Memphis. So, they had, ah, one corner of the Pinch, they had a bath house where you could go swimming and [STUTTERS] where they would, people would go to enjoy themselves for bathing and swimming. And then, ah, we had one business it was a tin shop, in those days tin roofs were more prominent than they are today. And then we had a grocery store and then you had, ah, a, a pie business that we lived next to a family who headed up this pie business and in those days the pies were selling for a nickel and this neighbor had two boys and we played together and every now and then we'd get treated to a pie. So, that was the, that was the closeness that, that existed in the, in the Pinch. And then in the evening, ah, a lot of them would gather, we had on, on Main Street, the Main Street they had, ah, a shoe store and, ah, grocery store and a department store all within a block or two, a drugstore and there been plenty of times I had to, I lived two blocks from Main Street on Third Street and I had to go at night to get medicine for someone who was sick in the family and so on, but it was all, we're all together and this is where we were, we were raised and that was the life that we enjoyed. And at night in the summertime you had no air conditioner or anything but we'd all gather around ..

[BACKGROUND DISCUSSION]

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SC: My father, ah, learned some English that he could get by on and in his workshop he would start early in the morning and, ah, my mother used to cook lunch for him and I'd bring lunch from the house up to his shop And he worked with three or four people, most of them were women, ah, putting these suits together. And, ah, he was pretty tough on them because we had no air conditioning in those days and, and, ah, he did a lot of pressing and in the heat and so on it was difficult for them, but nevertheless, ah, not only that, but he had to climb, his shop was on a third floor of a building and they had on the bottom a dry goods store and the second floor someone lived there and the shop was on the third floor. So, he had to navigate up and down those stairs and it wasn't very easy, I had to do it myself when I was a youngster and it was, well, well he worked hard, he really worked hard. The fact that he didn't leave his shop for his lunch hour. He had, he had his meal there which I brought every day to him and then in the afternoon I used to—part of the clothing that he made was trousers—and I would take maybe a half a dozen trousers downtown on my shoulder, take downtown to the shop that sewed, that made these clothes, put them together for their customers. In other words, they would parcel out, in those days most men used to wear vests and someone would make those and make coats and he made the trousers. And, ah, that's where he made his living and, ah, that's [STUTTERS], it was very difficult for him too because he had a large family, but he worked hard and in those days they just took for granted that work was the means of livelihood and that's how you got by.

INT: Now when you were a youngster carrying those trousers on your shoulders to the store, what did you think that you would do when you got older? What did you think about being or doing at that point in time with the profession?

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SC: What I was thinking about was getting back to the park to play baseball, to make my delivery and come back to the park where I enjoyed this, ah, park in Market Square, in those days that's what we called it, but then they changed it to Brinkley Park, the name of it, but, ah, we had, to give you an idea of the makeup which will relate itself to the Pinch, on the football team that we had there's 13 players and, ah, eight of them were Jews and four of them were, ah, Italian and then one fellow by the name of Scott who was Presbyterian, I don't know how he got in there, but he did. And this is the way we had it. We had a baseball team most of them were Jewish fellows and we had, we enjoyed ourselves. Every day except, this was mostly in the summertime and in the winter of course we all went to school, and then there's a Catholic church right next to the park that we became acquainted with the, the, [STUTTERS] the Brother there that ran the church and so forth. And it was just a close community and that's, that's the reason they called it the Pinch, we all pinched together.

INT: Could you just repeat again because I think the jet gave us trouble, could you just repeat again that story that you told about being out on the baseball field when it was time for service?

SC: Well adjacent to the park was a synagogue. Name of the synagogue is Anshei Sphard which is still in existence today. And each evening when they had services and they didn't have enough for a minyan, one of the, ah, participants, the Jewish people of, of the synagogue would, the synagogue was on the third floor of a building that people lived below it, but the synagogue was up on top and he would come out and holler that

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it's time for a minyan, and whatever it is we'd stop the baseball game [LAUGHING] and we'd go up there and those who were old enough to make a minyan and that enabled them to carry on with their services .

INT: And would you also again describe the bath house and what happened there and where it was?

SC: The what?

INT: The bath house

SC: The bath house was on Overton Street which is, ah, half a block off of Main Street and it is right in the middle of the Pinch. And, ah, people used to go there for bathing and swimming and so on. And ah, comparable to today you've got your parks and your pools and so on like the YMCA you have a pool and stuff well that's what, that's what this bath house was. But, it was right in the middle of the Pinch and a lot of, a lot of the residents went there.

INT: Mr. Cooper would you go back again and , you know, you said you just wanted to get home after your delivery and get to play baseball or something like that , when did you start thinking about what job you might have when you grew up and what did you think about that?

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SC: Well to be frank about it, in those days I didn't give it much thought because the, the....

INT: Could you say in those days you didn't give much thought to what you would do for a living?

[BACKGROUND DISCUSSION]

SC: What was primarily in my mind is to make good grades in school and, ah, it never dawned on me as long as my father was working and provided the food and the essentials for our family and so on, it never occurred to me as to, well, one time I did have a situation. My mother wanted me to be an automobile mechanic and I didn't want to be a mechanic, but she insisted so I went to a high school that taught me to repair, automobile mechanic, ah, automobiles and no charge, that was part of the school system. They had a pro, a professional that taught you how to, so one day he gave me an assignment with another fellow, ah, in those days they had the Ford. They had three pedals you probably don't remember, but they had three pedals and one of them was to go forward and the other, the middle, was to backup and the other was the brake. And the brake was loose and then I was given the assignment to tighten the screw up on this, on this particular, the, the car, this Ford belonged to the assistant principal of the high school, and to get into this place with the pedals I had to take a plate off, unscrew a plate. And removing a plate I happened to drop a screw into the magneto and to get that screw off the magneto we had to yank the motor. So we had to have, when we pulled the motor out it was on a pulley, it was hanging up. So the assistant principal when he

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came down around 3:00 o'clock to get his car we had to tell him it wasn't ready.

[LAUGHS] Well little things happen. So needless to tell you that I changed schools, I went back to where I wanted to go and I took a business course in another high school and that was the end of the automobile mechanic experience I had because, ah, it just didn't work out. But it did work out where I wanted to go because I learned how to type and to take, in those days shorthand, you didn't have the computers in those days, and ah, I in an effort to get out of, to graduate, I'd go to summer school and I got out of high school in three and a half years instead of four years because as I mentioned before, my family was poor and we all had to go to work. And when I got out of high school I was fortunate to get a job as office boy in a company called Humko. Humko was founded by two people Herbert Humphreys and S.L. Kopald and that's where we got the name Hum for Humphreys and Ko for Kopald. I was hired in a dual capacity as office boy and bookkeeper at an office boy's salary and I wasn't worth anymore because I don't know how to keep books. But every night I took my papers to night school and the professor would tell me who to debit and what to credit and so on, and the next day I'd spread the entries on a book and that went on until the end of the month and the bosses wanted to know how we did and I said, I can't tell you till I talk to the professor. And then he showed me how to make a P&L statement, a balance sheet and so on and I struggled with that for about two or three months until I got the knowledge of how to keep the books and so on. And then, that was my whole career until they had a mandatory retirement, retirement at 65. Well I was 20 years of age and was with the company all that time and then when I retired I was fortunate to be president of the company, and then after I retired I started another business primarily for my two

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sons-in-law and that was, we call that Grafco. One of my son-in-law's name is Graflund,

Graf for Graflund and Co for Cooper, so we called it Grafco.

INT: Let me stop you Mr. Cooper. I wanted to ask you how your family reacted to you going to work at Humko?

SC: They, they loved it because I was able to contribute to the welfare of the family, what little I made.

INT: Could you start again and say my family loved it that I was working at Humko....

SC: My family loved it because I was able to, ah, contribute some money or finances to take care of the family.

INT: And could you talk about how long you stayed living in the Pinch and when you moved out? When you met your wife? So let's start it with a complete sentence like I lived in the Pinch for another you know.

SC: Well I lived in the Pinch until I graduated from high school and then I, ah, after graduating from high school I started with Humko and then I happened to serve on a Federal Reserve Board in Memphis. At that time their office was at Third and Jefferson and it was an old building and they decided to put up a new building, Federal Reserve did. In the meantime, I served for five years here in Memphis on a Federal Reserve Board and then they asked me to serve on the 8th District in St. Louis which I served for

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six years as Deputy Chairman. And then when they decided, the reason I mentioned this because when they decided to build a new Federal Reserve office building the chairman in St. Louis was ill quite often and I had to substitute for him. When we dedicated the new building to the Federal Reserve it was in the Pinch where my father's tailor shop was, they tore that building down and built this, and it's still there, the Federal Reserve Building right across from the, ah, auditorium. Now came the evening of the dedication and they had the, ah, members of the Federal Reserve Board from Washington, some big people and so on, and I happened to serve as chairman of the dinner and, ah, it was a problem for me because I didn't know what I was going to talk about because it would be ridiculous for me to talk about the, ah, banking industry, the money, the exchange or interest rates and so on because they wrote the book, they knew exactly what it was and it was silly for me to talk to them about it and as I looked out the window I saw the Pinch. See there was the tailor shop that was in the Pinch, now I was in this building. I looked out and I said to myself well I'm going to try something and I don't know whether it's going to work or not, but I'm going to talk about the Pinch. So I started talking about the Pinch, about the makeup of the Pinch and who, and what businesses were there, the grocery store and so forth, and to my amazement you could hear a pin drop, they were all interested. Then they asked questions and stuff: Were there other people besides the Jewish people who were there in the Pinch and so on. And then, ah, it was easy for me to talk to them about it because the subject that I brought up was what they wanted to hear. Instead of me talking about the, giving a talk in the financial circle and so on, it would mean nothing to them they knew it all, they wrote it all and I was just a part of it But the Pinch they did not know and it worked out okay.

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INT: What would you talk about, you talked about the Pinch because that's what they wanted to hear. So just go ahead and say, when the building was dedicated....

SC: Well I guess it would be a rerun for most of it, I'll have to try to shorten it.

INT: Yeah, that's all, just shorten it.

SC: Yeah, when the dedication came for the new Federal Reserve Building, ah, I was confronted with a situation as to what might be of interest to the group that was there at the dinner and I decided to talk about the Pinch rather than banking because they were familiar with banking and it would be, it would be nothing new to them. But I thought of the Pinch to give them an idea of how people lived in the Pinch and how they got along and so on and I thought it might sit well which it did. The questions they asked about the Pinch and so on indicated that they were interested and, ah, apparently, ah, it registered with them.

INT: Could you just say the sentence, "When I described it you could hear a pin drop in the room."

SC: Well, the reason I felt comfortable about it was because it was so quiet that you could almost hear a pin drop and then when they started asking questions about it I knew that they were very much interested [LAUGHING] and it worked out real good.

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[BACKGROUND DISCUSSION]

INT: And that time when you grew up in the Pinch walking up those stairs to your dad's tailor shop until today--

SC: Well as, as time went by there were expansions in certain business for example dry goods and today one of the biggest department stores is Service Merchandise and the person who started that had a dry goods store in the Pinch. He lived in Memphis and he moved to Nashville and that's where he started Service Merchandise and today it's, it's one of the largest in its field And then they had some youngsters who became prominent lawyers out of the Pinch and doctors and, ah, it, ah, it was evident that, that the product that came out of the Pinch came to the surface and all related to the Pinch, those who succeeded in their career.

INT: What were the values of the Jewish community in the Pinch that you think created such outstanding? What were the values that you grew up with that created those outstanding people?

SC: Well to start with this, ah, you have Jack Belz, his father had a dry goods store not far from Humko where I worked and he used to sell uniforms to our employees. We had at that time about six or seven employees and he sold, sold, ah, these uniforms on credit and I would have to collect out of their pay to pay him for the uniforms because some of them weren't paying. That's when Philip, that's Jack Belz's father started in

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business and Jack of course took over and made an outstanding success. And he is one of the leading citizens in Memphis today. They bought the Peabody Hotel and now they're developing the, the Peabody Center and they have a tremendous hotel in Orlando and they just, he was just one of the outstanding Jewish citizens. Another person was Abe Plough and he made an outstanding success, he merged with Schering, they have a Schering Plough today and Abe was a great philanthropist. And being of the Jewish faith the philanthropy that he did, he didn't want any publicity and, and he would be known as anonymous. And here in Memphis the United Way, oh I can name a dozen charities that he participated in, but you never heard the name Abe Plough, it's all anonymous, but they knew who it was. But coming out of the Pinch that's who, ah, Abe and the Belz family and, ah, and Nat Buring, Buring Packing Company, a Jewish fellow, his family, we lived about a block apart and his family was poor and he was lucky to get through high school and he started a packing house, King Cotton. He called it the product as King, King Cotton, frankfurters and things, he made an outstanding success. He made a, well next to Plough, I would say that Nat was looked upon as an outstanding philanthropist from a Jewish faith.

INT: But tell me what it covers because they won't know on the camera, if I were to say, what created all these good people from the Jewish faith or something like that you know.

SC: Lucky.

INT: You think so, huh?

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SC: Lucky. In my days, my youth I used to sell newspapers and I told you my family was poor. We'd do everything we could to make a dollar and I used to sell newspapers. I used to go to the ball park and sell soda pop, peanuts, popcorn, [INAUDIBLE] anything and, ah, the, ah, until I got out of high school. And then I started working, ah, for the company Humko and the reason I got the job is not only as office boy, but I could type. And the company started and they had nobody in the office to speak of, and I had to type the orders and run their errands and so on and so forth, but it was I guess the best thing is just like a college. I got my education at Humko through the ranks and, ah, with two bosses I learned a lot from and, ah, I just went from one department to another and so on until I learned the whole business. I used to, we used to bring a train load of oil—soybean, cottonseed oil to the plant every day, they had 35 tank cars, that's how big the business grew, everyday we'd bring in and everyday we'd ship out the equivalent in a finished product. Through all this I grew up. I learned how to buy the oil, I learned how to sell it. Humphreys used to run the plant and he bought the oil and I learned from him how to buy the oil and also, ah, look after the plant and Mr. Kopald was an outstanding shortening salesman in the south. He worked for a company called Swift and Company and every now and then he'd let me go with him to call on customers and before he became a salesman he was a magician, a professional magician, he could do tricks and everything, and with cards and so on, and he'd go out and call on customers. He taught his wife, they had a system that he'd have a deck of cards and a customer would pull a card out, call his wife long distance, and say "my name is so and so I'm with so and so, and I just had a card out of a deck of cards would you tell me what it is," and she would tell you what it is. Then one day, they were at a convention and just to

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give you a little idea of he was a magician and so on, so he stopped—in those days they had fruit stands on, by the sidewalk and from the hotel where they were staying to the convention there was always a fruit stand. He was walking with some customers past, stopped at the fruit stand and he bought a lemon and he cut the lemon up and pulled out a five dollar bill with the juice on it and this poor Italian fellow looked at him and couldn't understand it. So they bought a second lemon and he pulled out a ten dollar bill, he was amazed and then after the third lemon he pulled out another , but he wouldn't sell anymore lemons. So, he said well if you don't want to then okay. So they went on to the convention, but when they went back to the hotel this poor fellow was sitting on the curb cutting lemons up [LAUGHING] and he couldn't understand why there was no, so ... .

INT: So it sounds like it was more than just luck. It was hard work and intelligence....

SC: Well that's part of salesmanship, yeah. So, Kopald says, well I guess you don't want to sell me anything. “Oh, you can buy anything you want.” So he bought a lemon and pulled out another bill, but it's a trick the way he did it.

INT: Can you tell me a little bit, because we're going to have to wrap up right

MAN No, we have a little bit more.

INT: Tell me how you see, you know, I know that you helped a lot with Temple Israel, the building of the new building and so on. Tell me something about your religious

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journey, you know, the temple that you belonged to when you were young, how things have changed?

SC: Well, my family was Orthodox. We went to Anshei Sphard as I told you and my Bar Mitzvah was Orthodox and when I married, ah, we joined Temple Israel, the reform Temple. While, ah, there I became interested on my own rather than at Anshei where I was under my father and mother, we went on the high holy days and [STUTTERS] at the Temple I was on my own. And, ah, they asked me to serve on the board which I did and two times two different presidents of Temple Israel went before the congregation to build a new temple, a new facility and the congregation turned it down twice. And when they asked me to serve as president I said I'll do it on one condition that you let me go back to the congregation and see if they won't decide to build a new temple which they agreed.

INT: How did you do it?

SC: Ah

INT: What did you say to them?

SC: Well it wasn't easy because you still had a lot of static that they didn't want, the old guard didn't want to move from the old temple, it, it was on Poplar Street. I had to cope with the questions at this meeting as to why we needed a temple because the old one was 50 years old, it was outmoded, it was outgrown and the Jewish population was growing

and so was reform Judaism, we needed a new facility. And they had a vote and so they voted to go to a new temple Well, ah, that's when I should have kept my mouth shut because then we had to raise money to pay for the temple. Well we did. We raised close to eight million dollars before the doors were opened, but the congregation stood tall and pledged close to eight million dollars. And then, ah, for one thing I got, ah, when I was serving as president, on the board was Jocelyn Rudner, Abe Plough's daughter, and I kept calling Abe Plough and he wouldn't answer my calls. I wanted to talk to get him interested because he was a prominent, wealthy member of the Temple and he never would answer his calls. So finally I said to, to Jocelyn, I said, well does your father think I have leprosy or something, he won't talk to me on the phone [LAUGHING]. The next day I got a call from Abe Plough he said, why did you sic Jocelyn on me. I said, I didn't sic, I said, I called you a dozen times but you wouldn't answer my call. He said, well can you come out here tomorrow at 11:30. I said, I'll be there at 11:30 So, I went out there at 11:30, we got him interested, and we worked together on it and we raised this money from, just from the congregation. We didn't want any outside money, ah, that is from non-Jews. Then after that he wanted to set up an endowment and, ah I said, Abe I'm sorry, he wanted me to head up the endowment. I said, I'm just tied up with St. Jude, I was on the board of St. Jude, and I was on the Board of Trustees at the University of Tennessee and one or two others, I won't go into detail with. But, when I came to his office he told me what he wanted to do. I said, Abe I just don't have time, I can't do it. He said, well you don't have time, just think about it. About a couple of weeks later he called me, can you come to his office. So I came to his office and he said, did you think about what we talked about? I said, yeah, but I still can't do it. He said, well you sure you can't? I said, I just can't do it Abe. So,

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time went by and about a month later I got a call and I said what in the world does he want now. So I went up there to his office and what really swung me over was he was reaching close to 90 years of age and one of the dearest things to him is the Temple and he wanted an endowment established to perpetuate the future of the Temple and he wanted me to head up the grant. Well when he said that, I got to thinking, if he thinks that much of it, so I said, well okay, but I don't know what we can raise but we'll try it. So, I agree to do it and we raised several million dollars, still in effect, and it's been a God-send because they've had some problems, ah, avoiding the deficit, but this endowment has helped tremendously and, ah, this congregation is just, ah, they just sit tall in both areas. And then one day they came to me and said they wanted me to become a, ah, a president for life, honorary president for life which was quite an honor. And so I'm stuck on I'm an honorary president for life at Temple Israel.

INT: Let me ask you another question Mr. Cooper.

SC: Why don't we just talk about some, about the World Series or football or something, something interesting instead of this.

INT: Well that actually brings me to my next question which is first of all, when I tell people up north that we're doing a program about the Jews of Memphis, they say, Jews in Memphis, they're so surprised. Have you been to the Museum of Southern Jewish History down in Utica? Well there's a quote over the door that says, the Jews of the south are distinct from all other Jews because they are southern, and distinct from all other southerners because they are Jews. So what could you tell me about the Jews of

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Memphis that makes them special and unusual and distinct from other Jews as far as you understand?

SC: Well, I would say in looking over the history of the early population of the Jews that migrated to Memphis and migrated to the so called Pinch is that most of them worked hard and they the degree of success they had they accomplished it through their own efforts. And, ah, well, I'll use myself as an example, is that being from a poor family we had, each of us had to contribute as best we could to the welfare of the family and, ah, I sold newspapers. I went to the ball park, baseball park. We had a southern league, ah, baseball team and sold soda pop and peanuts and so on. And, ah, and also in those days University of Tennessee had an outstanding football team that I sold, went out to the park and sold pop, soda pop and so on and I enjoyed baseball because every year a professional major league baseball team would come play an exhibition with the local team and I could name you some outstanding baseball players like John McGraw who was managing the New York Giants. I used to be bat boy for the team that came in here and I'd be at the ball park. I followed baseball and I followed football still do. I enjoy baseball and football and most of the other sports. I, I enjoy, I played all sports. I couldn't play good, but I enjoyed them. I played, I played, ah, at the, at the, the local park, Market Square and then in high school I played too and then I even loved boxing which was a good sport I enjoyed watching boxing.

INT: Do you think that, that love of sports and participation of sports is special to southern Jews and Jews in Memphis that love sports?

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SC: If you're going to be part of America yes and that's why I think, I could name you a number of outstanding Jews, Jews that are outstanding in sports like Locklin, the quarterback of the Chicago Bears and, ah, Hank Greenberg who is an outstanding baseball player for Toronto, just one after another. Also in boxing Benny Leonard, an outstanding Jewish, ah, fighter, boxer. And then when Jack Dempsey in his heyday would come to Memphis, in my younger days I got to meet him and so on. So I follow all the sports. But in so doing it, ah, gave me a broader sense of what this country is all about and sports is an ingredient that helps make this country what it is. If you follow the sports you know good and well that, ah, what America is all about.

INT: You know people are always surprised when I say that there are a lot of Jewish men who hunt and fish and they say that they can't imagine a Jewish man hunting and fishing. Will you talk about what some people come to call Jewish good old boys---

[BACKGROUND NOISE]

SC: Well, I would say that even today across the nation that percentage-wise is that the number of Jews in this country, a large percentage are very much interested in all sports and a good many of them participate in, in all sports. And to me you know it's important to want to get a good education, but you can get a real education out of sports that ties in with the life that goes on in this country. When you have a baseball game with 30, 40,000 people night after night watching the same, somebody's interested in it. It must be, not only, it couldn't be all Jews, but a good part of it was the Jewish people. Football,

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you name it, that's one of the sports, I love anything major, ah, business that does more to the economy of this country is sports.

INT: One other question, you know, we've been talking to a lot of people Mr. Cooper and some people are very concerned about the Jewish population in the country. They're very afraid that the intermarriage and other things like that, that the Jews of America are going to disappear So I wondered what your thoughts about that are and what you think is going on in Memphis around that, around the Jewish community? Is it healthy, is it ailing, where is it going in the future?

SC: I think today the recognition of the Jewish people in this country is greater today than it's ever been and you can take it in any field you want to. A lot of them say well the Jewish are outstanding in business. We have some outstanding lawyers. We have a woman who is on the Supreme Court of the Jewish faith and, one community after another you have mayors, you have governors and in the, ah, circle of, of this country I think the Jewish population have done real well. And especially under the circumstances that was difficult for them to achieve the elevation of the level that they have and it still prevails.

INT: Are you worried that Jewish people are losing their identity?

SC: I, run that question by me again

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INT: Are you concerned that the Jewish people of Memphis are losing their identity as Jews, that they're blending in and assimilating too much?

SC: I think the Jewish people in Memphis are very comfortable as far as Memphis is concerned. I think that prevails throughout the country. Let's talk about Memphis, it's common knowledge that the greatest philanthropist in the history of Memphis was a Jew. And, ah, the, ah, in the business world the Jewish people in Memphis have been very successful and are recognized, recognized for what they stand for and their success in business. In my life, in my business career I only had one situation that, ah, was negative from an outsider because I was of the Jewish faith This was in Cleveland, Ohio, I called on a customer one day and he was, ah, anti-Semitic and I didn't know he was anti-Semitic and, ah, having the name Cooper didn't sound Jewish and we did a world of business with him, but one day we got to talking about it and we had quite a session as he didn't even know that I was of the Jewish faith, but I was proud of the Jewish faith just like whatever faith, he was German by the way. The, ah, the areas that I got involved in business and in the political arena and in the, ah, situations where I was involved in certain, ah, like Rotary clubs and so on and so forth never bothered me. But that one time that I had, and we got straightened out in Cleveland and [STUTTERS] it never bothered me at all. No one ever, once in a while someone might make a remark just in wasn't in a critical way about someone being a Jew, but just that Jews got a lot, Jews got a lot of jokes thrown at him, but I, I just never encountered anything that made me feel that I had to defend myself because I was of the Jewish faith.

INT: Thank you.

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SC: Well I think I can answer that I worked hard and I put in long hours and many days, day after day I, I started at seven in the morning I get home at midnight because after the day's business I had to type letters and mail and so on and so forth that took me up to my wife before we got married, she'd come out and help me with the mail, but it was just, it was, and it was a determination to try to do the best job I could in whatever capacity I was in. And, ah, and, ah, I, ah, I, as I mentioned that my parents were poor, couldn't send me to college. As a matter of fact one day the governor called me, Lamar Alexander called me and he wanted to put me on the Board of Trustees, University of Tennessee and I said, Governor you shouldn't do that and he said, why? I said because there are a number of reasons for it and he said what are they? I said, well in the first place I didn't go to college my parents couldn't afford to send me to college much less University of Tennessee and this term is for nine years on the Board of Trustees and I'm 70 years of age and thirdly I think the President of the University of Tennessee would prefer to have someone to come on the board who had a greater degree of education than what I had to offer. And then there was a pause in the phone conversation and he said, what are your other reasons? And we both said nothing. And anyway it was a rewarding experience especially the last five years that I served on the board. I happened to be Chairman of the Health Affairs Committee for all the campuses and I'm glad I went through with it and that he didn't give up on me.

MAN: That's a great story. Your wife said you asked her what her goals were when you got married and she said her goal was to be able to have

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her own house, could you just tell us that, you asked her what she said and how you did with it?

SC: Well as an office boy and having told you what I went through and so you could imagine I didn't have any money to speak of. As time went by and I got a raise in salary and one thing and another and then we got married, she was making more where she was working than I was. And, ah, she said that, ah, her ambition as far as I was concerned all she wanted was a home and \$10,000 in cash. So, ah, we got a home, we got \$10,000 in cash. I said, now will you get off my back. So, we both struggled. As a matter of fact, we had, when we got married we had to rent a place over a restaurant and the odors we got there every night were just horrible. It only had two rooms a kitchen and a bedroom and that's where we started from and over the years we were just lucky and that's how we accomplished to the degree that we have. We were just fortunate to have a wonderful family and all my children all went to college and with the exception of one, all of them, one of them passed away, one of my daughters, lung cancer, never smoked a cigarette in her life. Never, rarely took a drink, but it hit her and she had two lovely children and she was just great, but then again we always sit down and we say we're lucky. Our kids have grown up and married wonderful sons-in-law, and children and grandchildren and, ah, we get, my daughter who is an outstanding lawyer, she went to Wellesley and she took up economics.....

[END OF TAPE 5]