

Peanut Butter Led To Marriage, Charity

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Leaning back in his executive chair, Paul Zuckerman, board chairman of the Velvet Food Products Co. in Livonia, repeated the question: "How did I get into the peanut butter business?"

As a broad smile wreathed the sun-tanned face of this self-made millionaire he answered: "Because they wouldn't let me marry the girl."

Still chuckling he continued, "I was driving a truck at the time and her father was opposed to me because he said I wasn't 'established.' I just had to accept that challenge."

In the years that followed, he not only won the hand of the girl and the plaudits of her father, but he became a millionaire and through his work with various Jewish charities gained a worldwide reputation.

The manner in which he answered the challenge is another bright chapter in the history of Americana that was highlighted recently when he and his wife, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Max Fisher, well known Detroit financier, were guests at the White House when President Nixon hosted a state dinner to Golda Meir, prime minister of Israel.

Stung by the charge that he wasn't "established," Zuckerman didn't remain a truck driver very long. He stepped down from the cab of the truck to work on the floor in a food warehouse and then moved on to the role of a purchaser for the company.

It was while working in the latter role that he was stuck with the idea of going into the peanut butter business.

"The butter I was purchasing at the time seemed to be a rather inferior brand, at least according to my taste, and I decided I could manufacture a better product myself."

"So I got hold of some used equipment and went to work on my own product. I started in a little shop on 12th Street in Detroit at the river."

As the memory of that start came rolling back he interrupted to say, "Oh, it wasn't that easy. I went broke in two years and had to go back to work in the food warehouse."

It is a matter of record now that he started in business again this time to reach the heights.

After making four moves to obtain more space for his growing business, he finally settled on Schoolcraft Road in Livonia in 1956.

"We manufacture about 15 million pounds of peanut butter each year," he explained, "and I

"My children will have a smaller estate when I die. But they will be all the richer for it."

--Paul Zuckerman



am pleased to state that our Velvet brand is the only regional product that outsells the national varieties."

Fifteen million pounds seemed like a lot of peanut butter. How many peanuts did it require?

"I can't tell you the number of peanuts," he answered, "but it was 700 carloads we had shipped in from Georgia and Alabama. It may be more, now, as our business still is growing."

Still ambitious despite this success, he acquired the O'Donnell Wine Import Co. several years ago and now has added the choicest wines from Europe to the line of peanut butter, with Bill O'Conner, of Livonia, in charge of the imports.

Along the way as a young business tycoon, he became interested in charity work, and his success there is just as fantastic as the rise in the peanut butter business.

His work, in the National Foundation, where he is a member of the board, focused attention on him until today he is general chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, and raising money for Israel has become almost a passion with him.

Never was this more poignantly demonstrated than in 1967, when, foreseeing an emergency at hand, he invited the wealthiest Jews in Detroit to his home just three days before the Six Day War and got them to pledge \$4 million to help the people of Israel through the crisis.

"I'm giving away Norbert's money," he solemnly told the guests as his son stood by his side. "My children will have a smaller estate when I die. But they will be all the richer for it."

Born in Constantinople of a Turkish mother and a Rumanian father, Zuckerman was brought to the United States when he was 2½ years old. His parents settled in Detroit, and as he looks back he quickly states:

"I guess I was just lucky."

He'll proudly tell you that he attended the University of Detroit, but dropped out after two years. Both his son and daughter have college degrees.

He'll also proudly tell you that

he is a member of three synagogues and helped to found Maryglade, a Catholic College in Mt. Clemens.

Then, aside, he'll tell you he also owns a bakery in Mt. Clemens.

Besides all of this, he is a member of the executive committee at Sinai Hospital and several years ago was paid high tribute by the City of Detroit for his charity work and was given the key to the city.

Zuckerman has a unique way about him as he goes about raising funds.

His preference is to rely on a handshake instead of a contract and, as luck would have it, he has been disappointed very seldom. He always has given honesty, trust and loyalty and usually received them in return.

So involved has he become in charity work that he seldom has time to spend in his office. Instead, the seat of most of his operations is frequently the white leather chair in the family room in his spacious home on the eighth hole at Franklin Hills Country Club.

"I only played one round of golf there last year," he tells you.

The United Jewish Appeal keeps him on the go. It is a source of great pride to him that under his leadership the 1972 national campaign, bolstered by an unprecedented total of 17 separate gifts of \$1 million or more, ran millions of dollars ahead of its record clip of 1971 when \$267 million was raised by American Jews for their co-religionists overseas.

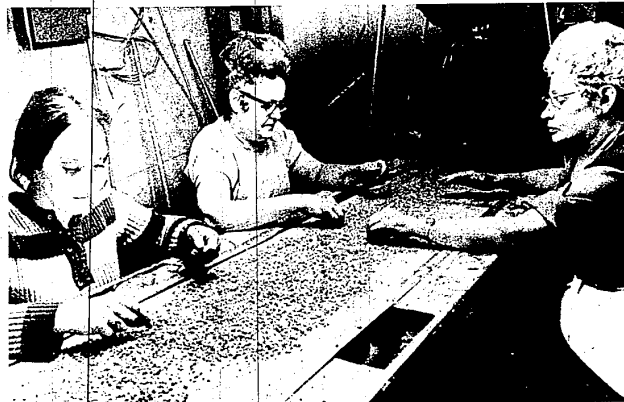
Through the years, he has continued to be identified with his birthplace by the nickname "The Turk" that has stuck with him.

However, his loyalty to Israel is absolute and unwavering. They tell a story of a time when one of his friends was to embark on his first trip to Israel, Zuckerman said, "Now you'll really be a Jew."

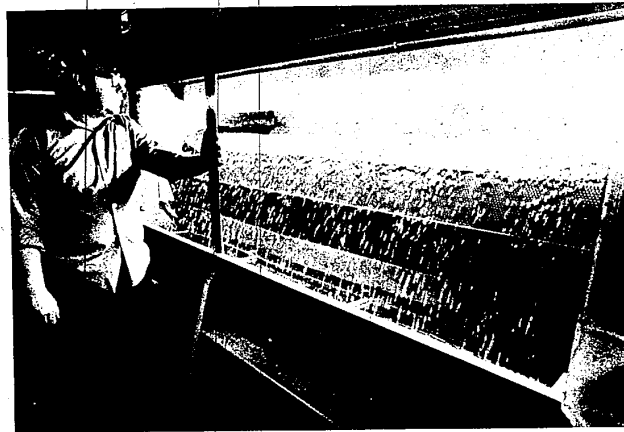
And all of this fame and fortune came about in answer to the challenge of the man who was to be his father-in-law that he wasn't "established."



JARS COMING OFF line and being packaged for market.



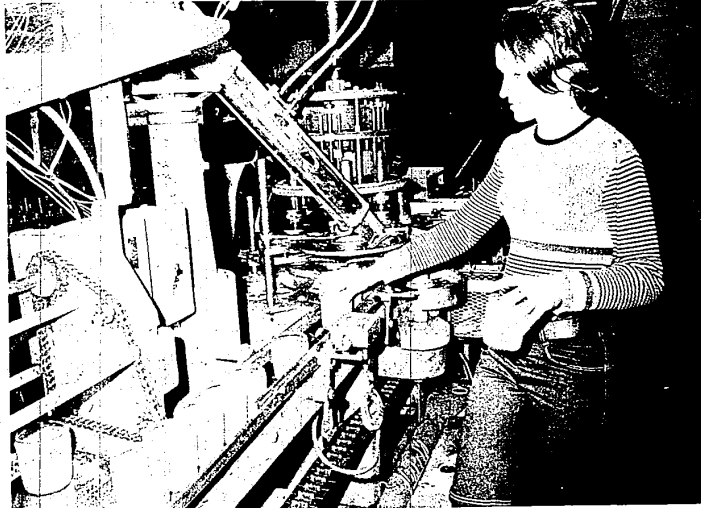
JAN CUNNINGHAM, Pearl Ajlsacker and Dorothy Papro sorting peanuts for processing.



DON DICKINSON, production manager, inspecting and timing roasting in big oven.



GOLDA MEIR AND FRIEND



AUTOMATICALLY being filled and on way to lid.

'Energies And Wisdom'

The high esteem in which Paul Zuckerman is held for his work as head of the United Jewish Appeal is best exemplified in the greeting he received from Golda Meir, prime minister of Israel, recently on the occasion of his 60th birthday:

"The age of 60 is not only the half way mark to 120, but indeed, the prime of life, where the wisdom of the past and the energies of the

present create the perfect balance.

"We know that you will need to command all your wisdom and energy in the enormous task that you are so ably performing in the marshaling Jewish solidarity and resources for the noblest causes of Jewish survival. Knowing of your unlimited dedication and devotion, I wish you many more years of health and activity with your family on behalf of our common goals."