

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Michael Naoum Matsas
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PREFACE

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MICHAEL NAOUM MATSAS

October 4, 1999

Beginning Tape One

Question: Good morning.

Answer: Good morning. How are you?

Q: I'm just fine and how are you?

A: Thank you.

Q: Good. Can you tell me when and where you were born?

A: I was born Ioannina, Greece, in 1930.

Q: And tell me a little about your family.

A: My family are -- if we go back a few generations, they have been in Ioannina for I would say hundreds of years. And my father's family was mainly in the wine and cheese business. And my grandfather on the part of my mother, he was a merchant.

Q: And what did your father do?

A: My father was an employee of the national bank of Greece.

Q: And did your mother work as well?

A: No, at that time women were minding their own houses, and they have maids to do the work, and they were very happy that way.

Q: Were you fairly well off as a family?

A: I would say upper middle class.

Q: So did you have maids in the house?

A: My parents, yes. One. One maid.

Q: And how long did you live in --

A: In -- in Ioannina for five years, and then my father was transferred to Arta and then Preveza, and in 1940 we were in Agrini.

Q: And why -- why were you moving so many times?

A: That's -- that's probably the bank would do it with this -- their employees.

Q: And what is your earliest memories of your family?

A: I remember everything that happened from 1935 on, I have a very clear memory of everything.

Q: Were you conscious of the fact even though you were only six years old in 1936, of st -- things that were going on in Germany? Did you remember hearing things about the Nazis?

A: From -- we knew that there were Jews who were passing from Greece on their way to Palestine or other places. And I remember in 1938 a friend of my father told him that in case of need, I would like you to change your identity and you and your family go to the house of my father in a remote mountain village.

Q: Did you think that was a possibility? Did your family think that was really going to happen?

A: Well, at that time seeing what it was happening in Germany, and seeing that we had a fascist dictatorship in Greece, everything was possible, yes.

Q: Mm-hm. Did you experience anti-Semitism as a young boy? This is before the Italians came, before the Germans came.

A: No, the -- the first time I was aware that there was something different if you are a Jew, was when I was going to the Jewish school, and we went for a parade, and then, although we came to the staging point quite early, we had to wait and I didn't like that. So I told the teacher why are we waiting, and other schools have come after us and they pass. And the teacher, who happened

to be a Christian, said we are the Jewish school, that's why we have to wait. So I realized that being a Jew was not a good thing.

Q: Did that bother you?

A: Of course.

Q: Did you go home and talk to your parents about it, or --

A: I don't remember that.

Q: And did you talk with the other kids about it, or wa -- this was --

A: My -- I don't remember that either.

Q: When you moved to Agrinio in 1940, yes?

A: Yes.

Q: There were very few Jews in that town.

A: That's correct, there were only 40 Jews in Agrinio, while there were almost 2000 in Ioannina, so there was a big difference. Agrinio was called also Vrahor, or Evraiohor, which means a Jewish village. Why? Because in 1821, there were 200 Jewish families in Agrinio. And what happened to these 200 Jewish families, I think has significant meaning and it explains in my opinion why there were so few Greek righteous Gentiles in the second World War. I counted in the Yad Vashem list something like 124 names plus 40 spouses. And in my experience, I know of 12 other righteous Gentiles who should be in that list, and they are not. But still the numbers are very small. And then, in addition to that, the losses of the Greek Jews were great. 89 percent were transported outside of Greece and 87 percent were killed, or 67,000 Jews. So what happened in 1821 was a very little known historic event. The Turks killed in Istanbul the Greek patriarch of Constantinople. And they forced four Jewish porters to throw his body to the sea. When this became known to what was then Greece, and at that time Greece was much smaller

than it is now, the 5000 Jews of Greece were massacred. A few who survived were converted to Christianity. One of the leaders of the Greek nation, Kanellos Deligiannis was a great righteous Gentile of that period, and he saved 12 Jews whom he hid in his house in Tripolitsa. The anti-Jewish feelings of the population were so strong that Deligiannis was forced to keep these 12 Jews hidden in his house for three years. And only in 1824 he was able to secretly move them to the Ionian Island of Zakynthos which it was not then under Greek control. So, going back to Agrinio and the 40 Jews, these people have come mainly from Arta. There were many small merchants and one of them was a teacher who during the war became one of the five leaders of the resistance in our area. His name was Yunas Munis. I would say about Agrinio that Agrinio has the distinct honor of being possibly the only city in German occupied Europe where all the Jews did not obey any German regulations and they all survived. And I really can't think of any other city where something like that happened, but I should say that we were very fortunate that we did not have a rabbi, and we did not have any community leaders, because in Greece the rabbis and community leaders, with one or two very rare exceptions proved to be totally incapable of facing the problems that the German occupation presented.

Q: Did you -- did you move to Agrinion before the Italians attacked Greece?

A: That -- that -- that's correct, the -- we moved in Agrinion sometime in March of 1940, and yeah, Italy attacked Greece on October 28th, 1940. About this war I would like to say that the Jewish -- Greek Jewish participation was great. Out of 77,000 Jews, 12,800 were -- served in the army, and that included my father and many of my relatives. Over 500 were killed, including a cousin of my mother's. Over 3,700 were wounded, including at least two or three of our relatives. To these numbers I would like to add the 1,600 Jewish Palestinian volunteers who served with the British expeditionary force. And one of them was the father of the former Prime

Minister of Israel, Shimon Peres, and he was not able to be evacuated with the British and he became a partisan of ELAS.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: I would like also to say that the greatest Greek hero of the second World War was a Greek Jewish colonel, Mordechai Frizis, who, with his troops, stopped the Italian advance, giving the allies their first victory of the second World War. Mordechai Frizis was killed.

Q: I don't know when this happened, you joined a national youth organization that was actually a fascist organization --

A: Ah, yes, that -- that's --

Q: -- can you --

A: -- that's quite --

Q: -- talk about that some?

A: -- yes. In Agrinion we were only two Jewish boys among 1,000 students in the -- the high school. And I'm grateful to the people who were in charge, because every able bodied boy was a member of the youth -- the fascist youth organization. And I'm grateful to them for not knowing that Jews were not allowed to join that fascist organization, or knowingly they allowed us to join them. I know that I was going around giving the fascist salute f -- until the war started.

Q: And why were you glad that no one kicked you out, or --

A: Because I never liked to be discriminated against. So being a fascist suit me fine, although I did not realize that it was so bad at that time.

Q: And what were you doing in the organization? O -- th-they obviously didn't talk about Jews or do racial things, did they?

A: No, no, they -- they did not. They -- w-we would parade, we would -- we -- we had lectures about Greek nationalism. Th-There was nothing offensive as far as I know at that time, you know, about th-this organization.

Q: So you were about 10 years old?

A: Yes.

Q: And how long were you in that group?

A: Until October 1940.

Q: So when the Italians attacked?

A: Yes, then the school actually closed, and we were very glad that the classes ended, without realizing what the war meant.

Q: So school closed in October --

A: Yes.

Q: -- or November.

A: And a -- when the war started it closed, and then it started again in -- in other buildings, some warehouses, because the school buildings were used as hospitals.

Q: So did you then go back to school?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: And with the same teachers and the same kids?

A: Yes, everything the same.

Q: So the fact that there were two Jewish students in the high school, the Italians did not kick out the Jewish students?

A: The Italians? F-First of all, remember that the war started on October 28th, but the -- and the Germans attacked in April of 1941. Only after that time the Germans first, and the Italians

second, came. The Italians were excellent in Greece. While in Italy the 50,000 Jews lost their civil rights in 1938 with Mussolini's Aryan manifest -- manifesto, in Greece, thanks to the Italian commander general Carlo Geroso, we enjoyed all civil liberties. The -- we were able to -- to go to -- to the -- to school, while the Italians were not able to do that. Actually there were 94 Italian university professors who were dismissed, five Italian Jewish admirals, and five Italian Jewish generals who were dismissed. But in Greece we enjoyed all freedom and Carlo Geroso refused to cooperate with General Lohr, Alexander Lohr, the German general in the persecution of the Jews. So we were very happy with the Italians, and we -- we lived a very normal life in the Italian zone, business was as usual, we went to the movies, and my mother was making cookies which a neighbor of hers, Maria Demardi used to send to partisan hospitals, once the partisan movement became stronger.

Q: So between 1940 and 1942, life does not change very much.

A: Life was absolutely beautiful for us under the -- under the Italians. And there -- there was one moment that the Italians asked us to register, and none thought anything of it, and they registered, and I know of only one person from Preveza who did not trust the Italians, only one. And he took his parents and went into hiding. Th-That's how he survived later on the Germans. But we registered. And -- I'm ashamed to say that. And 30 years later I found out that Mussolini made a deal with the Germans that they were supposed to -- to arrest us, and move us to camps in the Ionian Islands and Italy. But of course, you know, Italy capitulated and this did not happen, but the Germans came.

Q: You know, you wrote in your book that you, at first the family, it seemed, had hoped that the Germans would occupy rather than the Italians because you thought they would be better.

Q: That's another unfortunate kind of thinking in Greece, but remember that in Greece at least 30 to 40 percent of population were pro-German. That's a significant number. And because the -- the Greeks defeated the Italians in Albania, we were afraid that the Italians might come there and be vindictive, while the -- the Germans actually did not find significant resistance because many Greek generals were pro-German.

Q: So you were surprised?

A: We were surprised that the Italians behaved in such a nice way. I have to say that the Germans behaved very well too, when they entered our area.

Q: And they entered your area in April of nin -- '43?

A: Yes. Sometime at the end of April, 40 -- '41. Only in Salonica they did not behave well, but in our area they passed through and they did not bother anybody.

Q: But your -- your area was the Italian zone?

A: I happened to be -- because my father was mobilized, we were in -- in Ioannina when the Germans came in first. And they behaved very well, they did not bother anybody, although the Jewish community of 2,000 approximately, people existed there, and they -- they ju -- simply passed. And then the Italians came, and they behaved very well.

Q: So you moved back from Agrinion to --

A: Yes, from -- from Ioannina, once my father became a civilian again, we moved to Agrini, and my father went back to his bank. In other words, the Germans passed through Ioannina --

Q: In '41?

A: In '41, and since this was the Italian zone of occupation, they did not stay.

Q: Right.

A: The Italians were in charge until September of 1943.

Q: Right.

A: Then, once Italy capitulated, the Germans came in. When they came in Agrinio and they -- they loved the fact that the Italians were so afraid of the resistance and they had their buildings fortified, and with all kinds of guns around them, and they wanted to give a good lesson to the resistance. So 120 elite German troops went on 12 trucks and they moved straight towards the headquarters of the partisans in the city of Thermi. What they did not know was that this lady I mentioned before with the cookies, Maria Demardi, who was fluent in German, had become the interpreter for the German commander of Agrini. The partisans were waiting. Out of 120 Germans, one wounded motorcyclist returned to Agrinion, and he -- even he died in -- within two days. And the Germans tried to keep it secret, and they did not even retaliate or shoot any hostages. Well, they learned their lesson and that meant that in the future they would not dare to go to the mountains unless they had a very strong force, which served us very well later on.

Q: So, how did your life change once the Italians capitulated?

A: Well, from one point of view, you didn't -- it did not change much. There were little things, like for example, the -- we had the neighbor, the director of the bank of agriculture, whose in -- in -- the Germans wanted to -- to buy one of -- one room in his house. His mother wanted somebody to go there while the Germans were in the house. She selected me. So here I am, a 15 year old Jewish boy, going there, you know, to protect the old mother. I find a very handsome, young German, very polite, and I thought we became friends because since he did not know Greek, and I did not know German, we played with the word good. And we figured out we knew it in Latin, ancient Greek, German, Fr-French, Italian, Spanish. I -- I knew it in Hebrew too, but I kept my mouth shut. And then all of a sudden I said, English, good. And the German became furious and he slapped me. The mistake that I made was that I was thinking in terms of the word

good, and he was thinking in terms of people good. And obviously he didn't like the English people. So I -- I understood that something was wrong. Another thing that happened was I was sitting in the balcony of my -- our apartment, and I saw a German chasing a young man who obviously was a -- a man of the resistance and he was shooting at him. The German entered the courtyard of the house following the resistance man. The -- the man of the resistance passed through the first floor apartments and jumped out of the window right under my balcony. The German entered the courtyard and he saw the stairs leading to our house, and the door was open. He ran through there, passed through a corridor, came right next to me in the balcony. He aimed at the resistance man down below, and he pressed the trigger. The gun jumped. The German looked at me to see whether I was happy, but I was petrified. So he looked at this guy in disgust, and he left. Another thing that -- that happened was the Germans would send German soldiers to search the houses for weapons. And I remember a very polite, middle aged German knocked at the door, my mother opened the door. He indicated he wanted to search, he opened one drawer, and my mother pretended that he was an honored guest and she treated him the way the -- a -- a guest is supposed to be treated in Greece by offering him some sweets, you know, in a little plate with a spoon and a glass of water. The German felt embarrassed. He did not search anything else. He bowed politely and he left. Another little --

Q: Were you -- were you there --

A: I was there, yes.

Q: -- at the time? Were you frightened?

A: No, I wouldn't -- I mean, with the exception of the slap, that wasn't a very strong, I -- I didn't have any bad experience. The next thing that happened was we bought a horse load of wheat. And the villager who brought the horse with the wheat told my father, in this bag there is a gun

and ammunition for your friend Christos Bokoros, who was one of the leaders of the resistance. Well, my father wanted to get rid of the gun as soon as possible. So within a few minutes I had a basket with the gun, the ammunition and some other unimportant items, and I was supposed to go to the house of Bokoros. My father thought I was going to go through the back streets. Not me. I went through the -- through the main street, through the main square of Agrinion. I even touched a German as I was passing. And I realized that what I was doing was dangerous only when I gave the gun to the sister of Bokoros, and I saw how -- how frightened she was. So basically that's how our life was until one day -- Yunas Munis that I mentioned before, the teacher, went to my father and told him, you know something, the -- one of the merchants, I think it was either Misann or Munis, went on business to Athens to buy merchandise. And he found out that all the Jewish shops were closed, and he was told that the Jews went into hiding. So he came back to us, and he told everybody, and we are all going to leave, and I'm leaving tomorrow morning. So we -- although we didn't know why the Jews went into hiding, we were not going to -- to wait. And we got ready to go, but we didn't know where to go. So we asked one neighbor who was a right wing man. He told us to go to Arta, and from Arta to go to the area of -- of Zerbes, General Zerbes who was the right wing partisans. The only problem is how -- how do you go from Agrinio to Arta, you know, it was a good idea, but it's not possible to -- there was no real transportation and up til that time, we were using mainly Italian cars for the movement to different cities. So we asked our other friend, Christos Bokoros, who was with the left wing resistance, and he said, well, come to our house, and I will provide transportation. In o - - in other words, in -- in Greece, even a f -- a f -- man like my father, who was an assimilated Jew with -- all his friends were Christians, you know, because they would not -- he didn't have that much in common with the little merchants who were there. We were friendly, but all his

friends were Christians. Still, we did not know what to do, we needed help. So we went to the house of Bokoros, and he was going to provide transportation with horses, but all the horses disappeared because a battle was taking place, and both sides used all available forces. And my father, who was a good bank employee, he wanted to give his books in good order to the director of the bank, and transfer also the money. And he was wasting time. A -- a German soldier entered the house of Bokoros to just look around. The Bokoros family became scared. So one of the Bokoros boys went to the bank and he told the director, and saw Mr. Matsas working there, if anything happens to him, I will consider you responsible. The director, knowing that the Bokoros family was with resistance told him I -- I don't keep him here, I will sign everything away. Sure enough, he signed the money -- for the money and everything without even counting it, and my father went to wait with [indecipherable] in the house. Well there, since h-he couldn't find any horses, he go, how about a taxi? Sure enough, he brought the taxi there, we loaded all our food supplies, clothing and everything else, and put it -- some more people in the taxi, and we left in style. Within minutes we were at the control point, a German soldier checked the identity cards of the people. The driver gave to the German some cookies and raisins, and that was the last German I saw. Nobody had violated any rules or regulations, and nothing was punishable, there was no crime involved. We simply went out, and that was it. Within minutes we saw the first partisan of ELAS. And I have to say I took a look at his hat, and I saw the word ELAS and I thought I discovered a spelling mistake. Ellas, which means Greece, is written with two l's, and he had ELAS with one l because this was the ethnic [indecipherable] status, meaning Greek liberation army.

Q: And what was the politics of that -- of that liberation army?

A: We knew nothing.

Q: You knew nothing.

A: We knew nothing. All we knew that these people were fighting the Germans and only actually after the war we found out that many of the leaders were communists. But they were fighting the Germans, the -- they did not know any more than we did, and all I know is that they had beautiful songs which I loved and I still sing.

Q: Would you sing one of those for us?

A: Oh boy. Yes, why not? You mean now?

Q: Sure.

A: All right. I will give you the translation first. One of them starts like that, that there's thunder in the mount of Olympus, and there is lightening in the mouth -- th-the mount of Jonah. The mountain [indecipherable] are roaring and [indecipherable] is shaking. And then it extols him, asks all the people to take up arms and fight for freedom. So, [sings in Greek here]. That's one of them.

Q: That's very nice.

A: So, with a taxi we went to the end of the road, s-some 30 miles away from Agrinio. And then we rented horses, because we wanted to be as far away from roads as possible. And we pass through really unmarked paths, there were no wheels in that village of Psilovrahos. The people there, unless they went to a city, they never saw a wheel, because it was very difficult terrain on the slopes of a mountain. But very beautiful, overlooking a river, which now became a -- a lake, thanks to a dam that they made. We went there as students. We knew that nobody would bother us because the village was very well organized in terms of the resistance. Th-There -- there was - there was active ELAS, which were the partisans, and there was reserve ELAS. So there were organizations for the men, for the women, everything was organized. So -- so it was a nice place

to be. We brought with us a lot of supplies to last us for a year. The problem was that in November, the Germans decided to go on a search and destroy mission, and the -- we were notified ahead of time -- the villagers were not afraid that anything would happen to them, but we -- and in the meantime I should say some more Jews came to -- to the village, knowing that we were there. There were two men, and another three people, a couple and a old man who did not even know Greek, he was a ship tycoon, Aaron Romano, who was speaking in French rather than Greek. And so we were --

Q: Can I -- can I interrupt for one moment?

A: Certainly.

Q: When you got to the village, how did you get a place to stay?

A: We rented. We rented a room. This -- we had with us plenty of money. My father unfortunately had only cash. He did not have any gold, that was a big mistake, because thanks to inflation, the money lost all it's value within months. So we rented a place, we acted like tourists. We didn't hide the fact that we were Jews. As a matter of fact we were going to the church every Sunday because we didn't want the -- the people to think that we were different, with the exception of the fact that we would not make the sign of the cross, or eat the wafers, or the pieces of bread that y-you know, a -- a Christian is supposed to -- to have at the end of the service. So with the exception of that, we were very friendly with the priest, who used to come to my mother's place because we were the only ones who had coffee, and he liked to have coffee. And the life was beautiful, and the -- it was li-like a vacation, until the Germans came. When they came, we -- by now we were f-four of us, and two, six, we were nine -- four, seven -- we became 10 Jews in the village. And we decided, and the people of the resistance told us that we should go higher up, and they told us that there is a house very high up in the mountain of 300 feet, and

you should go there and stay there. So there were only two little donkeys that could be used for -- for supplies. So we loaded a little donkey, but un-unfortunately we had to leave all our supplies in the room. And we went to the -- to the top of the -- of the mountain, to the house of [indecipherable] and we stayed there, and the Germans stayed in the village for -- I -- I should add that Mrs. [indecipherable] Levy, a socialite from Athens decided she had enough, she wasn't going to go any -- any further, and she stayed in the village. And she spoke fluently German and French. And she spoke with the German officers very, very well, and -- and none of them asked her how come a lady like her ends up in a village like that. And -- and it didn't take long and the Germans left, and we came back. When we came back, we found out that we lost all our supplies. Now, the owner of the house, who has a reputation as a thief claimed that it was the Germans who took it, who took everything. My mother went right into their house and searched and she found some of our items. The -- later on we found out when the villagers made the report as to how -- what things they lost, it was mainly bottles of Ouzo, bottles of wine, and they would say, with the entire bottle. Because for them the bottle was more precious than the contents of Ouzo and wine, which they could make by themselves. Therefore, I'm convinced that it was this man, [indecipherable] who was the thief, and not the Germans. But we knew that the partisans, in order to establish some sort of tranquility and -- and eliminate [indecipherable] and fear, they have killed even a partisan who stole a -- a chicken. And therefore, we decided to keep quiet, not to report him [indecipherable] the family. We wouldn't want to be responsible for an execution. And we thought, well, we have more supplies in Agrinion and we will bring them. Unfortunately we were not able to bring as many supplies as we needed, so we had some starvation later on. Now, the fact that Mrs. [indecipherable] Levy decided to stay and the Germans were very polite, turned against us the following month, because the Germans made three attempts at research -- at

search and destroy operations. In November, in December, and in the following August. So, in December there was another alarm that the Germans were approaching. This time, Mrs. [indecipherable] Levy persuaded my mother that the Germans are not dangerous they behaved so well. My mother didn't like the idea of going up to the mountain, but also, she didn't want to abandon our supplies for fear that -- that they will be stolen again, although we had to change rooms because this man not only he resented the fact that we called him a thief, especially after we found things hidden in his house, but he asked us to leave because we insulted him. He didn't realize that we saved his life. And we moved to another room that we also rented. So my mother decided to -- to help Mrs. [indecipherable] Levy in her room, since she knew German so well, and -- and stay there. But a neighbor who saw that, told the lady -- she was a -- a [indecipherable] a former policeman and his son was a partisan and he told them, what makes you believe that there will be the same Germans, or they will become -- they will be just as polite as they were before, or they might not have orders to arrest you as suspicious individuals. So she forced them to come up to the mountain lake with it, but fortunately the Germans did not come this second time in the village. Are you curious about what happened the third time, in August?

Q: Well, did anything happen in between?

A: In --

Q: Between February and August?

A: -- in between, with the exception that we faced starvation because the -- the war between the Germans and the partisans intensified, and while before it was so easy to get in and out of Agrinion, it became more difficult. So the end result was that -- that it was not easy to send a villager in the bank where my father had stored his supplies and get from a -- one his friends

there, who was -- he was -- it's -- it's hard to understand that, but the bank was trying to help the employees even with food supplies. So one of the rooms in the bank had food, and an employee would take care of food distribution to the employees of the bank. So this man also had our supplies with instructions when my father would send a man to get whatever we wanted, but this source was -- was lost. So we -- we really suffered from -- from starvation. I mean, but this is not -- this is the least that can happen to you.

Q: But what kinds of things were you able then to eat? This was true of a lot of people in Greece at this time, right, that this was very bad --

A: Well, not -- not -- not -- it was -- it was bad only in Athens, not in the provinces.

Q: Yeah.

A: The provi -- provinces had plenty of food, and people from Athens would come to the provinces to get food. In -- in Agrinion, as long as we were not [indecipherable] there was no problem, it was like peacetime. I mean, you had as much food as you wanted. Only when we lost our supplies and we were not able to get the quantities that we needed, only then -- we had basically to eat a lot of wild vegetables. I had -- that was my job. I had to go, with a knife, and get anything that was green on the ground, all over the place, that the animals would not eat because they were -- these things were bitter. And then my mother would boil these things and mix them with a little corn flour and she would put just enough oil on the -- on the big, big pot, and cook them. I found out eventually that this cellulose can be absorbed by the body. So basically, that's what kept us alive, because we could eat enormous quantities of these because I would get, you know, bi-big quantities and we would eat that. Basically, that's what th -- that's what it was. The one thing I can say is that at -- what helped us at one point was the fact that a partisan unit came to stay in the village. And we told them that we were starving. And they

offered to de -- I mean, they -- at -- at night, when they had their meetings, all the partisans voted in favor of giving us a -- a portion. And also to the family of [indecipherable] Levy. And -- and when the -- the trumpet would -- would sound, I would go in line and get a portion -- the partisans were not fed very well either, mainly th-they had a corn soup. That's -- that was -- and a few olives. But we would divide that portion that was for one man, we would divide it into four. And in this way, w -- for the duration of their s -- their stay in Psilovrahos which was maybe 20 - 25 days, we did not touch our supplies. That proved to be very, very important because ultimately we did not have anything. And on that day, one of the men of the village -- actually he was the leader of the reserve ELAS, he -- he told me to -- to go and collect berries, and by that time there were berries, as many as you wanted. And I did. We ate berries for four days and we all became sick. At that point we didn't know what to do because the [indecipherable] production was going to come within days, but not in our village, which was on the mountain. So my mother and I took the last supply that we had, which was sugar, and we went down, we crossed the river of [indecipherable] and we went to a [indecipherable] village of a [indecipherable]. And there we exchanged sugar, which nobody had, for [indecipherable], which was some cereal that had milk. And that was the turning point in -- in our food situation. Once the time came that the villages had produced -- had -- had a lot of things, i-i-in the meantime we -- we realized what we had to do, but that's a little -- it's a little -- another story, because we had -- well, where to find parachute material, but this happened accidentally. When e -- in April, or at the beg -- at the end of March, my mother decided that she sh -- would go to Agrinion and get supplies. And my father and myself -- I-I was at that time 13 going on 14, my sister was only five to six, so my father an-and myself told her not to go, but she was very str -- opinionated and she decided to go. And she walked for practically 12 hours to go to Agrinion.

And at one point she had to cross a -- a -- a bridge, and one of the guards there was a partisan -- a Jewish partisan [indecipherable] from Arta, that my mother knew him. And he told her, don't you know that the -- the -- the Jews have been arrested, and they are in Agrinion in warehouse of Papapetrou? Of course my mother did not know anything, but she -- I have to say that before that my mother was stopped by a -- a teacher of mine who recognized her, and he told her, where are you going? Don't you know that the Jews have been arrested, and in addition, don't you know that the Germans executed some 200 Christian hostages because of the war that takes place between the Germans and the partisans. And my mother said that -- of course she felt very bad, and sick about -- hearing about the Jews, but she was determined, and she said, I have to go, I have to get food. So the -- the teacher said, why don't you go until the village that is very close to -- to Agrinion, and -- and stop there at the mailbox, and th-this is a house of a godfather of mine, and he is a teacher in the village. You tell them that I sent you, and send him to Agrinion to get the food. So my mother explained to the partisan [indecipherable] that this is my plan, and I'm not going to go beyond this little village, which was in the outskirts of Agrinion, and he let her go, and that's what happened. She met the teacher. The teacher went with his horse to the bank. He happened to be a godf -- he was a godfather of the director of the bank -- this is a tremendous coincidence considering that [indecipherable] is the director of the bank, was supposed to be a descendant of the families which were converted in 1821. Svordis was a common Jewish name in Ioannina. Svordis could have been also one of the -- the convert families. And my father claims that even the intermediary between the two of them, Zambaris, that was the nickname of the Levy family of Ioannina. So, it -- it's a -- an amazing coincidence to have all these three people being godfathers to each other, and been involved in helping my mother at this point. Now, when he went to the bank with the horse in front of it, the director

became terrified. I mean th-th-th -- under these conditions, getting food on a horse that is going to go outside of the city, the whole bank can be considered guilty of doing something wrong, as far as the Germans and their collaborators, and there were plenty by that time. There were the security -- Greek security battalions active at that time. So the only thing we were able to get thanks to that expedition was some quinine and some sugar and some tea that could be placed in the pocket of -- and when the man came back, he was not satisfied to leave my mother there, it was a-approaching nighttime when neither the partisans would allow anybody to move, nor the Germans. So he proposed to my mother that they should go to sleep in a small church that his grandfather had built of prophet Elia. Even that to me is significant. And [indecipherable] went and zamp -- Zambaris -- that's name, Zambaris and my mother spent the night in that little church on top of the mountain where it was cold, and the wind was blowing. Then the following day, my mother came back to the village. When she told us what was -- what happened, o-of course she was exhausted, you know, a-after 24 hours and -- and the trauma of knowing, a-and -- because they made a mistake and they told her that the Jews of Ioannina were also there, which means that all our relatives were there. So she was really a wreck. But in spite of that, she wanted to go on another expedition in which the British mission which was in Priansa. That time we were assured that as soon as the allies would know that the Jews were arrested, they would immediately mobilize all their know-how and all their means at their disposal and the Jews would be s-set free. So again my mother -- you see, my -- my father had some problems, he had some pain with his legs, and he couldn't walk at that time. So my mother again, and myself, we embarked on an expedition of approximately a total of 14 hours of hiking in unknown territory, crossing and re-crossing two rivers. That means four times crossing rivers to go there. And we went to the village of Priansa where we had a meeting with a British major who -- his friend, a --

a prostitute who was there told us -- well, I-I should say this, passing on the way there, we had to stop in a -- i-in a controlled partisan point, which was manned by our banker from Agrini. And he told us [indecipherable] we -- we told him what was our mission, what we wanted to do. And he told us to go to this lady. There were other prostitutes there who were so-called working for the British mission. And he told us that this particular girl was the girlfriend of the British major, but evidently, she was also in contact with the resistance. And he told my mother to go to her and she will be able to talk to the -- to the major so the major will -- would be a little bit better to us. But when we went there and we found her, the first thing that she did when she saw how I was dressed, because I was -- I was wearing my short fascist uniform, a blue uniform that it was strong material, but because my legs were exposed, my mother had s -- had sewn or attached to them some woolen leggings. So I was dressed like that. Soon as she saw that, she gave me the leftover [indecipherable] khaki pair of wi -- winter khaki pants that she had cut them to make shorts out of them, and she gave us the leftover, you know, so my mother can make some -- a better pair of pants for me. And she said that she had an argument with the major and he was not in a good mood. But nevertheless, the -- the m-major saw us, and he was very nice, and he knew French so my mother spoke to him in French. And he promised to send a message to -- to the headquarters, and a -- a message to my father's sister who lived at that time in Alexandria, Egypt. But we know that the message in Alexandria, Egypt never went. But we were in that village, we realized that the village was filled with parachute material because the planes were coming at night and they were dropping weapons and ammunition for the resistance. And there was plen-plenty of parachute material. So my mother went from house to house and she begged these villagers, who didn't know what to do with this material, and we collected a lot of material, and cord, and everything else. And when we came back, my mother, who had an elementary

knowledge of sewing, she went into the business of -- of -- shall I stop? Yes. She went into the business of making shirts, and we used some material th-that we brought for mattresses, to make pants out of them. And eventually she changed these materials by going to different villages -- villages for years, you know, did not have any material. And we collected enough wheat and corn and everything else to last us for the next two or three years. And but this -- this is the story that is related to food. I -- I bet --

Q: Why don't we -- why don't we stop now, since we're close to the end of this tape.

A: Okay.

Q: And we'll continue on the next one.

A: Okay.

End of Tape One

Beginning Tape Two

Q: Mike, why were the Jews of Athens going into hiding at that time?

A: We found out about it much later. Who -- what happened was this. The Germans asked the chief rabbi of Athens, Elia Barzelai to give them a list of the Jews of Athens. The rabbi of course had -- was given sa -- some time to prepare the list and during that time the Jews of Athens, or important Jews of Athens found out or they knew about it. And one of them was a -- a Greek Jewish journalist, Baruch Schibi, who was one of the leaders of resistance in Athens. He was a man from Salonica who never intended to be in a place where the Germans were, and when the Germans were entering Greece, he attempted to leave and go to Egypt, and he reached only Crete and then you know when the Germans attacked Crete with the parachutists, h -- and he was not able to go to Egypt and he returned back to Athens. He knew what happened to Salonica. What happened in Salonica was that the leadership with Rabbi Koretz proved to be very ineffective.

And since the Jews did not know that the Germans were killing Jews outside of Greece, they did not have the incentive that a hunted animal has. And you know, when somebody is hunted, the instinct of survival of course, is you -- to either flee, hide or fight. The -- the situation was such that although the German intentions towards the Jews of Salonica proved to be bad from the beginning, only the wealthy Jews, some 3,400 of them took advantage of the fact that up til February 1942, they were able to freely and legally move from the Bulgarian and German zones of occupation and go to the Italian zone, where the Italians were living very well as I told you before. The remaining Jews in Bulgaria and Macedonia, and that's where the great majority of the Jews were, they did not know what to do. I feel they were like children who needed help, and nobody was ready to help them. So in Salonica the organization ELAS proposed to the community to help, but the leaders of the community refused this help. The communist party proposed to help, and they suggested that the Jewish children should go to trusted families of the party, and the rest of the population to be dispersed outside of Salonica as long as it was free and legal to do -- to do so. But this proposal was rejected by the leaders also. So basically, you have some over 50,000 Jews there not having any leaders, not knowing what was going on, and furthermore, not having Christian friends, most of them, as a result of anti-Semitism. The population in Macedonia and Salonica was either indifferent or hostile to the Jews, and the proof is that out of over 10,000 Jewish families in Salonica, only one family, that of Haim Pardo, of five people was offered a shelter in the house of Dr. George and Fedra Carracortso right in the center of Salonica where they stayed indoors for 18 months. There was some other 70 Jews who were saved in Salonica, but these were mainly husbands, or fiancés of Christians. The -- the university, or the other organizations of Salonica did not protest, did not do anything, but some lawyers protested to the general governor -- the general governor Simonides, he said, we are

removing the thorns from your garden, and you are protesting? The -- the one who pleaded with the Germans was the bishop of Salonica, Yanadios, who asked them to use magnanimity and clemency, especially when the time for the deportations came, and he -- he is considered as a righteous Gentile. Another protest for which Greece should be really proud was made by the archbishop of Greece, Damaskinos, and it was signed by 42 members -- leaders of Greek organizations. And in this case, what really happened was that the -- these people would meet periodically to discuss the problems of the occupation, and one day a Jewish woman from Salonica told him what was happening, and the poet [indecipherable] Yanosh wrote the appeal, it was signed immediately by all 42, and it was delivered to the Germans, and to the government of Greece. The prime minister of Greece, Logothetopoulos, instead of trying to protect the Jews of Salonica when they were deported, he confessed that he was in favor of the deportations because there would be a lot of vacant housing that was needed. So, 252 Jewish students from the University of Salonica became partisans of ELAS, over 600 Jews became partisans of ELAS. When the proposals of the communist party were rejected, the communists th -- remember that they had 150 members in their lists who were Jews. So they appealed to them to go to the mountains. Out of them, 75 decided to go, but as they were divided into three groups and they were going for the mountains, they thought, and what about our families? How are we going to let our families be by themselves in exile? And they came back and they surrendered to the Germans. Now, Baruch Schibi knew all that, and he was afraid that the same thing was going to be repeated in Athens. So he conceived the plan of abducting or killing Rabbi Barzelai of Athens. The other leaders of the resistance agreed with his plan, and they went to the rabbi and they told him. Rabbi was ready, he said I'm -- do anything you want with me. And they took him and his family and they moved them to the mountains. When the word went around, the Jews of

Athens disappeared. However, there were poor Jews who at the beginning they thought they would hide too, but they needed to work. And they started going into the -- into the -- th -- to the Germans, and the Germans kindly extended their deadline and allowed all of the Jews who would come slowly [indecipherable] they would come and the -- the Germans wouldn't do anything to them more, they would come -- this was noticed by none other than an American consul general who was operating from Istanbul. And in the state department where there are 500 pages of documents sent from Consul Berry, Brigadier General Tindall, and Ambassador Makvay of [indecipherable] 500 pages. In one of them this situation is noticed by a b -- a -- Burton Berry, who s -- who tells the state department that -- that we need a little financial assistance here because the poor Jews are reporting and now they tell them that they should report within a 15 minute interval, which means that the Germans want to arrest them within that 15 minute interval. All these reports were ignored, and filed in the archives, where I found them in 1975. Eventually 1,000 Jews of Athens were registered. But things became nice again. Everything was normal up til March of -- 25th of March 1944. That was the time that the Jews of Ioannina [indecipherable] that my mother was supposed to -- t-to find in Agrinion if she went there, were all arrested. And the -- a-and -- and Burton Berry in another document says, didn't I tell you that this was going to happen? And -- and he gave other warnings. Actually, the most important warning that he gave was the following. There was a -- a -- a Greek Christian merchant, Michael [indecipherable] who, a-as I said before, business was as normal as it could be in Greece. He went on business, he was a tobacco merchant, and he was going on business to Istanbul. In his train compartment -- evidently he was traveling first class, he started a conversation with three German SS officers, who told him point blank that we are going to stop here in Larisa because we are on our way to Corfu, where we will deport all the Jews of Corfu.

In other words, the Germans were so sure that nobody cared, especially a Christian merchant, that they told him a military secret. Now, this man was a good man. As soon as he went to Istanbul, he went straight to the American consul -- consulate, and he told Burton Berry what was happening. Burton Berry immediately notified the state department, and again nothing happened, although it was so easy to make a radio contact with the British military missions. British military missions had contact with the resistance, which existed in all the cities, not to mention secret American and British agents which operated in Greece. All of these people could have notified the Jews and tell them what was happening. It took -- fr -- from these reports, it took until June ninth, the Jews of Corfu were arrested. In the German archives, even the German commander of Corfu send a report to his superiors, a lengthy report in which he was trying to tell them that there is no need to do anything towards the Jews, they have never bothered us. Evidently he -- he said, we don't have any means of transportation, why don't you arrest the -- the Italian soldiers of Bertolio who are -- are dangerous? Th-The Jews never bothered us. Out of 2,000 Jews, only 187 returned from the camps. So this is the -- the -- the story with the -- the state depart -- and the American -- American government. Now, Baruch Schibi continued his activities as a -- a leader of the resistance, and he was responsible for the mili-military intelligence during certain battles in the [indecipherable] where hundreds of Germans are working.

Q: A few minutes ago you mentioned your sister for the first time. How old was your sister?

A: She was born in 1938, so at that time she was no more than five going on six.

Q: Was this a hard time for her, because she was really such a -- she was, what, four years old in f -- 1943 -- five years old?

A: Yes, well, life in the villages I told you was a beautiful life, and the life we had in the city was a beautiful life, with the exception of the -- of few months that we had this starvation. But we were not really hungry, thanks to these vegetables that we were --

Q: Right.

A: -- eating. Only in retrospect we realized how bad the situation was. Basically, with only the f -
- the four days of eating berries were difficult.

Q: What's her name?

A: Minetta, and she's a t --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: Minetta Feldman, she's married, and she's living in Bethesda and she's a teacher.

Q: And your mother -- it seems as if prior to this period of time you -- you have a -- a rather privileged life, and your mother is not necessarily doing the necessities in the home. But when you go to the village, she has to transform herself. Was this difficult for her?

A: Well, actually, in Greece, even if you had the maid, or even had a cleaning woman, still you -- you have to do -- to do things that were -- you didn't have the facilities that you have now, so she was working very hard in the house like everyone else. She was not a -- a lady of leisure.

Q: You -- you say in your -- in your book that she was teaching the village women embroidery and sewing, is that --

A: Yes, sh-she -- she did that. She had a lot of friendships with the -- with the women. And talking about my sister, she -- I don't think she understood that the situation was bad. She enrolled in the village school. I made a book for her, you know, by copying another book. I used a little basin as a boat in one of the ponds there. She -- she never complained.

Q: Were you going to school there in the village as well, or not?

A: No, no --

Q: No.

A: -- there was only an elementary school of four years, you know. I -- and I -- actually I took all the schoolbooks with me and I confess -- confess that I did not open them even once, although I consider that year as the -- the most formative and important year of my life. And -- and actually when we came back from the village -- we left on October third, 1943, I came back on October third or fourth of 1944. I wrote down all the memories of that year and I entitled it, "One Year in the Mountains," and I gave it to my teacher of literature to see it. He kept it for six months in his drawer, and he gave it back to me without making any comment. I gave it to my father. He looked at it, and he made a hiding place under the -- the heavy dining room table. Why? Because I loved the partisans, and I loved their songs. And immediately after the war, what happened in Greece is this, Greece is the only country in Europe where those who fought the Germans lost their jobs, they -- after the war, they lost their jobs, they were imprisoned, they were exiled, or they were executed. Not all of them of course, you know, but -- but -- but most of them. Maybe I shouldn't say most of them, but -- but a great number of -- of the resistance fighters suffered this -- this fate. As a matter of fact, there -- there were even some Jewish partisans who were executed, and one of them, the most important Jewish -- Greek Jewish partisans, who was an expert in agriculture, Lazarus Azarias, he was a brilliant man and a highly organized person, and he was in charge of supplies for the resistance. And he was so effective in hi -- in this job, that immediately after the war the Greek government condemned him to death in absentia because he managed to escape and go to Israel, where he became eventually, the director of Nuva, which is one conglomerate dealing with produce.

Q: And why did this happen? What -- why was this response to the partisans? Was it only ELAS that they were responding to?

A: Yes, not ELAS, ELAS was the right wing partisans, they didn't bother them. And [indecipherable] my father's first cousin was a -- a doctor who was an officer in -- in ELAS, a medical officer. What happened was that e -- that Churchill and Stalin divided parts of Europe in zones of influence. And the -- that Greece was part of the British zone of influence. So when the war ended, the -- the British w-were afraid that the -- the army of -- a -- of ELAS, which had communist leaders, they were afraid that they might take over, so what they -- what they did is they -- they landed troops in Greece but th-they needed allies who would be their natural allies. But the former German corroborators who were in the security battalions, and the provincial police which also collaborated with the Germans, and I don't know about the police in -- in -- in Athens because the leaders of the police were [indecipherable] and Evert are considered righteous Gentiles because they issued false identity cards for many Jews. But the fact is that all these groups were, including the -- especially including the German collaborators, they were the force that took over in Greece, and -- and therefore, anyone who had to do -- anything to do with the resistance became a -- a communist suspect, including me. What actually happened with me is that when I graduated from high school at the age of 17, I needed a -- a special police permit to go to Athens to -- to take the entrance exams for the school, for the university. So I went to the police to -- to take the -- the permit, and to my surprise, they refused it. So, I said I wanted to speak to the chief of the police. I went to his office, and he was sitting there with the [indecipherable] who I knew he was a German collaborator, and the leader of the paramilitary fascist organization, X. I didn't like that, but I told the chief of the police, why don't I get the -- the permit? And he reminded me of the fact that I was in the mountains. I know I was in trouble

already and there was no need to ex -- no use to explain to them that I was a Jew, most probably they knew that already. But by that time I had become streetwise, so to speak, and I remembered that my high school principal had been arrested by the partisans as soon as they moved into Agrinion because he was -- he was an eloquent speaker, and he extolled and asked the Greek youth to imitate the German youth in the fight against the evil forces of the allies. So the partisans put him in prison together with [indecipherable] and many, many others. And the British released them from prison. So, I also knew that I was one of his best students in his subjects, Latin, ancient Greek and modern Greek. And so I told the chief of the police, I understand that you don't know anything about me. The only thing -- the only one who knows me is my high school principal, because I've been a student up til now. Was, you know, 17. The two of them looked at each other and smiled, and the chief replied, if you bring us a paper from the -- from Mr. [indecipherable] who they knew very well, you have no problem. So I went straight to his house because he was sick in bed, and I told him what happened, and he became furious. He immediately dictated a -- a letter to his son who was there, and he -- but this was a serious business. This was not, you know, just a letter, he asked him to go to the high school and ask a specific professor to have this typed, and -- and have it stamped, and -- and return it to him for his signature, and then take it to the police. And I remember that he was ending his letter of recommendation by saying that I have nationalist feelings and Christian ethics, although this man knew perfectly well that I was a Jew. So this is my experience after the war as a -- as a man [indecipherable]

Q: Did your -- your father work for ELAS, the --

A: My -- my father -- in the village as I show -- I told you, everything was very well organized, it was -- it wa -- all the branches of the resistance were represented. My father, since he was a bank

employee, they asked him to be the -- in charge of ETA, which was the provisions for the partisans. Now, the village was extremely poor, and the provisions that my father collected were insignificant, but still my father officially, he was the representative of ETA in the village. When we came to Agrinion, the Germans had left enormous warehouses filled with supplies, which had not been able to take with them when they were abandoning Greece. So the partisans occupied all these tremendous warehouses of [indecipherable]. I remember they were filled to capacity with things. And they asked my father if he would like to be the director. My father was so grateful to the partisans, he -- he did. So he was the director of the warehouses until the partisan army was destroyed, which was maybe three -- three or four months later.

Q: So go -- go back to your being in the mountains in that last push by the Germans in the summer of '44.

A: In August.

Q: Yeah.

A: In August of 1944, this time the -- some -- a s -- a column of -- a column of 600 German troops, assisted by tanks and mountain artillery advanced again through this particular road that we said [indecipherable] and then at that point, the partisans this time ordered the evacuation of all the villages in the area. So this third time that was the most serious out of the all three times, I was feeling very happy, because this was the first time that it was not only we the Jews who had to leave the village and go to the top of the mountain, but everybody had to do it. So sure enough, the whole village was evacuated. We went to a plateau overlooking the river and the villages below, and --

Q: And how many -- how many people?

A: In the village? Over 300. With their animals and everything we went to this plateau and at that point the teacher of the village approached my father and he said, if a German patrol comes here, they might arrest you and me and take us as hostages. So we better go and find -- I mean, actually he found a -- a good hiding place, away from the rest of the villagers. So we went with him and we found ourselves in a sort of a balcony, which was covered with a -- the branches of a tree. A balcony with a magnificent view of the river below, and the villages of Apiscope and -- and Psilovrahos. And I was able to see from a distance the column like -- like ants, it looked, the soldiers moving. And then what happened was that the partisans attacked the Germans. And a ferocious battle took place for almost an hour. And then, when the German artillery started firing, then we knew the situation was really bad. But the partisans, when the artillery started firing, they withdrew, and it became quiet again. And that was the time that the -- the little ants that we saw before started -- starting at different houses and then smoke would be coming from these houses. They were burning the house -- the houses of the village of Apiscope. We did not see them, they did not have a chance to -- to burn our village, but we -- but they -- they left within a couple of days.

Q: And then you returned back to --

A: Then we came back to the village where we found all our supplies intact because there was -- Mr. [indecipherable] was not there to take care of us again.

Q: And then what happened, was that the -- close to the end?

A: Yeah, August, this was August sixth, and the Germans started withdrawing by the end of September, and -- and at the beginning of October we were back where we were before.

Q: In Agrinion.

A: In Agrinion.

Q: And what was that like, to return to Agrinion?

A: I had a -- I remember that I was expecting that I was going to be very happy, you know, to come into a free city. It -- it was a sort of a disappointment, I -- I was not as happy as I expected to be, especially knowing -- we didn't know what was happening to our relatives, and we were afraid that maybe my grandparents were too old to survive, you know, all this transportation, and that, but we never expected to see what really happened.

Q: And what did you see?

A: I'm sorry?

Q: What did you see?

A: We -- we saw nothing, I mean, the city was the same way like it was before, and only when I went to Ioannina and saw the -- there was none of the people that we were -- w-we used to -- to have there, that were na -- there, only then I started wondering why all this happened. I had many questions that I had in my -- my mind. Question number one would be why such a thing would happen. And the -- my -- my answer was in one word, anti-Semitism. In two words would be religious anti-Semitism. And I'm very much -- very familiar with the -- the church teachings. I know exactly what they say, especially during the -- the holy week. And if -- if you have in -- in the church, young children who are exposed to the beautiful picture of Jesus Christ and then you love this person, and then all of a sudden you find out that it was the Jews who -- who killed him, I mean, how would you feel? It's [indecipherable] like I faced that when I was in the village, and on Good Friday we were in the church, and the -- and the priest did whatever he had to do. When he came for a coffee to my parents. he apologized. And he said, I -- I'm sorry I had to say so many things -- because that's in Greek, we can understand, that's not in Latin. And, I'm sorry I had to say all these things, but you understand, that's my job. My parents, of course, they

understood. And the following day I saw a little boy, maybe no more than five, who I used to be his hero, and he used to follow me around all the time. And he looked at me with suspicion and some sort of hate. So I told him, why, what -- what's wrong? And he said, "You killed Jesus Christ." And I will never forget that. That would be my question number one. The -- the second question would be when did the allies know about all this? I was under the impression that they didn't know. That's the reason my mother and I were eating that vegetable pie. We -- we -- we walked for 14 hours. What I found out is that the British had broken the older police code of the Germans as early as 1939. And this older police was the one that was in charge of the Jews. There are documents which prove that they knew exactly when a German unit would say, arrest 100 Jews in Paris, who was the leader of the group, how many men he had under his command, where did he stop on his way to -- to Auschwitz, or there were killing grounds even in -- in Minsk. And they -- they documented all that by simply following these radio transmissions. So all this -- all this was known. The -- the Americans, up til the time that Germany declared war against the United States, they had embassies and consulates all over the place. They had secret agents every -- everywhere. The documents -- I -- I checked only the 500 documents that were related to Greece, they knew exactly everything to the point that rather than interviewing survivors when I wanted to -- to find what was going on, I preferred to read the -- the reports of Burton Berry. He was a far more eloquent writer than any of these survivors. So they knew what was going on. And then the third question is, why didn't they do anything? And again, the answer comes in these words, religious anti-Semitism. Even in the United States, there was discrimination against the Jews in terms of employment, and the -- the real historians know now that the state department not only blocked immigration, blocked information, they even tried to cover it up to the point that the -- that the -- that the secretary of the treasury sent a report saying

acqui -- acquiescence of the United States to the murder of the Jews of [indecipherable]. That's serious stuff, acquiescence. And then you have other people who, like Professor David Wyman, who says that I, as a Christian, he says he -- he's appalled that the churches did not do anything and they remained silent in the United States. Let alone the Vatican, let alone all the -- the bishops of all Germany. So this is the -- the old story. But I have to say another thing, that like I mentioned before, the Jewish contribution, the Greek je -- military Jewish contribution with Colonel Frizis. And this was very important and Greece has to be very proud of that because the action of the Greek army delayed the German attack against Russia by six crucial weeks. The Germans were forced to fight a winter war in Russia, which was -- had disastrous consequences for the Germans. So this I would say is the direct contribution of Greece, indirect contribution of -- of Colonel Frizis since he was the first one who stopped the Italians and then advanced as -- ahead of his troops, although he was killed later, but this was a great contribution. Then you have all the Jews who fought in the British forces, including I would say the son of the first president of Israel, Haim Weitzman, who was shot down over the British channel. And then there were 550,000 American Jews who served in the armed forces of the United States. In other words, when we asked, why didn't the allies help? I say, this is not a case of benevolence, or a case of -- of charity, the Jews earned and deserved the right to be assisted. Not only that, let's not forget that if America became a nuclear power, which guaranteed American supremacy, it was because of Jewish men like Einstein, Oppenheimer, Ziller, Teller, Rabbe, while the relatives of these Jewish men were dying in the gas chambers of Auschwitz and Treblinka. Personally, I believe that it was wrong, unfair, ungrateful and shameful for the United States and Great Britain to abandon the Jews and let them die the way they did.

Q: What about the Greek population during this period of time?

A: The Greek population in -- the great majority of the Jews were in Salonica, and -- in -- in northern -- northern mass -- massa -- in Macedonia and -- and [indecipherable] and northern Greece. The population there was far more anti-Semitic than the enlightened people of Athens. And as I said before, only one family out of 10,000 famil -- families was offered asylum. That tells, as far as I'm concerned, plenty. Many believed that it was not easy to -- to go to the mountains in -- in -- in Macedonia, that the resistance was very weak in 1943. But there is a story that I sent for publication to the journal of Hellenic Diaspora, and that's the story of a friend of mine, Dr. Joseph Struncis from Veria. And in this story you see how his father, who was the president of the Jewish community of Veria, he didn't know what to do, like everybody else. He contacted this -- this horrible Jewish leader, Rabbi Koretz, and he --

Q: Could you just stop for one moment? What -- are we o -- are we okay? Yeah. [indecipherable] okay.

A: He contacted Rabbi Koretz, and he tried to reassure him that everything would be alright, that the Jews of Poland -- I mean, accept the deportation, the Jews of Poland has -- have houses for us and jobs and everything will be alright, there's nothing to worry about. But -- but he was not satisfied, so he went to the chief of the police of Veria, Stavridis, and that's another righteous Gentile that I would like to add into -- into my list of -- of the 12 or 13. And -- and he told him not to listen to the rabbi, not to trust the Germans, just go to the mountains. Now, to see how easy it was to go to the mountains, my friend had a senile 85 year old grandmother, and they were not going to leave her behind. So, they ended up w-with her on a horse and they had to cross a river with a raft. The raft was very small. She was on the horse, she could not see the raft. She moved to the other side of the river, and for the rest of her life she was talking about how -- about the miracle that took place like in the time in Moses, that the waters parted, and she

passed. And it would have been done, that's -- that's exactly the point that I want -- I -- I want to say, but you had to have some Christian friends, because the Christians knew far better as to what -- what had to be done. In addition to that, it was the Christians and not the Jews who had friends and trusted relatives in the remote mountains of Greece, where there were hundreds of villages. Why they were in s-such inhospitable places, where they had to -- to cultivate things from terraces, because during 400 years of horrible Turkish occupation, that's where they had their freedom. And they would have sent -- who -- you see, when the leader of the communist party was talking about sending them, dispensing them to -- to our side, he knew what he was talking about. But the Jewish leaders wouldn't want to have anything to do with somebody like him, and all -- all ri -- so were waiting to see what their -- what -- they were waiting for whom? I me -- believe there was Koretz who was collaborating with the Germans.

Q: You would say that Koretz collaborated? You would use a strong word like that?

A: I -- well, I would say this, he was not a bad man. His wife, Gitta Koretz send me a 48 page letter in which she was trying to -- to -- to justify his actions, that he was an intellectual who knew t -- 12 languages, who -- who had a Ph.D. in oriental studies, who could have left Salonica and go with the mayor of Athens, who invited him to leave and go to Egypt, and he didn't want to do that. It's possible that he thought that it was only a deportation, I -- I can't tell. But if I were there, I -- and -- and I saw what the Germans were doing, especially when the Germans assembled in -- in July of 1943. They assembled 9,000 Jewish men age 15 to 45, and they humiliated them, they tortured them, they -- and -- and then they started forming slave battalions in -- wh-which had to work under inhumane conditions. That was the time when there was free -- I mean, it was e -- it was legal, and they were free to move, to go to the Italian zone, or go to these remote mountains, provided of course, they had the proper connections with -- with the

Greek villagers. And that's what was missing, since they did now know what was going to happen. But wh-wh-why do -- should they accept deportation? I mean, isn't it better to be free? And think of all the tons of gold and precious items and supplies which were looted by the Germans and their collaborators. Can you imagine if all this gold and supplies would have come to the resistance? And let's think of how much the -- the Jews would have contributed to that resistance, because we had thousands of men who were experienced fighters from the war against Turkey in '21 and '22, and the war, the second World War. You have experienced fighters who would never surrender, because any Jewish partisan who would be captured by the Germans would be executed. So you would have a -- a great contribution to the allied effort. What a -- a -- a waste of -- of -- of manpower, and a-as a former military officer, I can say this, I remember the -- a poem by Haim Nachman Bialik, who said -- but it was related to something else, but the words are very appropriate. Great -- great is the sorrow, and just as great is the shame. And I ask you, oh son of man, which is greater? The grandsons of the Maccabeans went to their death like lambs, wherever they were found. And to see what some of these grandsons of the Maccabeans could do, I will tell you something about the -- perhaps the greatest partisan victory of the second World War, which took place on May sixth, 1944. I said before there were thousands of Greek traitors who were not punished after the war. There was a group of five Jewish families from Larisa, who established a camp on the slopes of Mount Olympus. They were betrayed, and an s -- n-s -- SS battalion went one morning and captured them. Three Jewish men attempted to escape, and they were killed. The f -- a fourth man was able to escape and notified a nearby partisan unit of ELAS, which included Jewish fighters, like the legendary platoon leader, Marko Carasso, and even a cousin of mine who was a -- a teacher of literature, Joseph Matsas. 150 partisans ambushed the Germans. The terrain was perfect for an ambush.

The battle lasted for around six hours. German planes came to help the Germans but they were ineffective. The Jews eventually were liberated. There were 150 German dead, 78 wounded, and 14 taken prisoners, including one who was the son of the German general of the Aegean. He sent a message that he would release 200 hostages that he had for his son, but the message arrived too late. The partisans executed the 78 wounded, and the 14 prisoners for a total of 242 German dead. And the Germans never again attempted to go to the mountains to capture fugitive Jews. Partisan losses were eight dead, and 10 wounded. I have the names of the eight dead, and I believe they should be considered as righteous Gentiles, because they could very easily have said we don't want to try to save the Jews. So far, I mean, this can show you what the partisans could have done.

Q: Do you think the Jews of Greece in 1943 knew what was happening in Europe, in eastern Europe?

A: There was, until the end of the war, there was not even one Jew in Greece who knew anything about the Holocaust or about the fact that the Germans were killing Jews. Not a single thing. Why? Because the Germans had total secrecy. As a matter of fact, Professor Breitman mentions that the Germans attempted to -- to keep this secret from -- especially the Jews, but also from the outside world and the German people. They were successful in deceiving the Jews, but they were unsuccessful in keeping it secret from the outside world or the German people. In Greece not even one Jew knew anything. The first time that we understood what was going on was in the movies when we saw Eisenhower visiting the concentration camps. If we knew what was going on, there are survivors who say that under no circumstances would they have entered the trains or the trucks. Who would do that, to -- to -- to take his -- his children, his wife, his parents, in an orderly fashion to the trains that led them to -- to -- to the -- to the death camps. As a matter of

fact there have been cases like I mentioned before the -- the 75 Jewish communists who returned to follow their families and there are two cousins of my father from Ioannina who were also on business on the day of the arrest, and they returned to Ioannina to be with their families in exile, and they never came back. Nobody knew.

Q: So what was the difference between your family, who decided not to stay, not to register, to leave, and those who decided to stay? How would you distinguish between you, since you didn't know either --

A: Is this the --

Q: -- you didn't -- your family didn't know either, what was happening.

A: This is correct, but we had connections. In other words, we had the right wing friend who -- who told us where to go. We had the left wing friend who told us come to our house and we will send you out. If we didn't have these two people, we would have, if nothing else, procrastinated. Two days after we left on October third, two Germans appeared in the bank, and they asked for my father. Now, if we judge as to this visit from what happened in other cities, my assumption is that my father was going to be a hostage of the Germans, and if he were a hostage of the Germans, my mother would never have left him to -- a-and go to the mountains, even if we were allowed to do that. And -- and another thing is this, we left before the order for registration came. We did not know there was going to be any order for registration. We left only because we heard that the Jews of Athens went into hiding, we didn't know why. We simply -- we were simply determined not to obey any German orders, that was our only -- but we had friends. This is the -- the -- the problem that I -- I see with all the Jews. They did not have any friends, they didn't know what to do. If you have people around the neighborhood who -- who are glad that these things happen to you, and they are eag -- they are eagerly waiting to see what kind of looting

they are going to do, and there was extensive looting in every city where there were Jews, they are eager to see their competitors being demolished, how in the world do you expect any assistance from these people? And considering that -- that the Jews did not know that deportation meant anything but deportation, and -- and having leaders who could not really lead them, and not having any good advice by their friends, they were waiting. Now, once you are registered, the story changes. Then what you do is dangerous if you try to leave. Of course, the friend of -- of Veria, with the 85 year old mother, left while they were registered, and while they had the yellow star, and my friend said that as soon as he was in free territory, they took the star and they threw it to -- to the ground. But it took much more bravery on their part to do it. That's why the most important thing in Greece is that the -- the deportations started very late, in March of 1943. The Jews of Poland were already dead. The Warsaw ghetto uprising was taking place at the exact same moment, around March, April, 1943. Up til that time, the Jews of Greece had plenty of time to disappear and dissolve, you know, in -- into eight million Greeks in a remote -- in [indecipherable] mountains, whereas I told you, the Germans had to mount expeditions including 600 men, that -- that was not easy. And even if they did, where could they go the -- since there were no roads, and -- and there were impenetrable forests and -- and terrible mountains and -- and -- and unknown parts. Plus, there were the partisans there. So the situation in Greece was great for the Jews to -- to -- to escape. In addition to that the -- the Jews would have gone to Turkey, because the partisan organization, the naval branch of the partisan organization called ELAN had formed a -- in -- in agreement with the Jewish defense force Haganah, they transferred some 1500 Jews from Greece to Turkey and from there to Palestine. Even the prime minister of Greece, George Papandreo used this method of escape from Greece. So there was this in addition. I believe since there were so many traitors, including six Jewish traitors, and I -- I

would like to -- to mention something about them, too. I mean, we were not innocent, we had six Jewish traitors, all in collaboration with the Germans. So the -- since there were so many traitors in the city, so I would say the approximately 6,000 Jews of Greece who were saved, were saved either by going to the free partisan controlled areas, and -- or they stayed with -- in that work of resistance sympathizers in Athens who volunteered their services, and there are no cases where the [indecipherable] for example, they w -- they were appointed to go into the house for one man, but the -- the -- well, i -- this is a case where it shows how the Italians were very helpful in Salonica, where they saved hundreds of Jews by giving them Italian citizenship, and they moved them to -- to Athens. But in the case of the [indecipherable], what they did was they acted as if they were prisoners of the Italians who were going to be judged in an Italian court in Athens. So they were taken to the Italian zone, and then to Athens, but the Italian soldiers knew the address where the resistance told them to go. They di -- because these people did not know anybody in Athens. How could you go to Athens unless you know somebody? So the resistance provided a place for them. So the Italian soldiers went to the house, and they said, do you know something? We went to our commander, and we told him that we brung -- brought the prisoners here, but he said where are the prisoners and we couldn't produce you, so how about if you give us some money? So the SS were afraid of blackmail on the part of the Italian soldiers. They gave them some money and then they notified the resistance they were to leave this house. And sure enough the resistance says all right, you go to that house. Went to that house, and -- and they stayed in that house until the end of the war, reading Mr. [indecipherable] all the books that he found there, teaching French the grandchildren of the -- of the men, and the man was very proud because he saved, he said, a -- a British soldier, a communist and now a -- a j -- a -- a couple of

Jews. So it's -- it's a combination. You had to know somebody, which --what [indecipherable]
the poor Jews of Salonica, there was a lot of poverty in Salonica, they did not know anybody.

Q: We'll have to stop now.

End of Tape Two

Beginning Tape Three

Q: Mike, can you tell me about the -- the days that you were writing your memoir after you got back from the mountains and what happened to that memoir?

A: I was a -- I was only 14 at that time, and since I felt that this was like a -- writing a composition, I gave it to my --

Q: No wait, how long did it take you to write it, or how -- when did you write it?

A: As soon as we came back from the mountains, this was October fourth or fifth of 1944, and it must have taken me two or three months to -- to write it.

Q: How long was it?

A: It -- it had at least wa -- 150 pages. It was handwritten. And so I gave it to my teacher of literature, I -- I was pretty good in -- in composition at that time, and he was very glad to see that one of his students wrote something that looked like a novel. The title was, "One Year in the Mountains." So he was very glad, but I wil -- I was waiting and waiting, six months later he gave it back to me. I asked him what was his opinion. He -- he said, ju -- ju -- just take it, you know, I -- I -- I -- he did not even reply as to whether he read it or not. So I went home and I told my parents, this is my manuscript, I gave it to Mr. Papachristos and he gave it back to me. My father took a look, he -- he saw partisan songs there, at the time that the -- everything was going bad for the former partisans, so he was very handy and he made a hiding place under the -- the dining room table. It remained there, we forgot about it, from 1945 til 1963 when my parents were going to come to the United States and they were getting rid of their furniture because they were going to rent the house in Athens. At that time my father didn't know what to do with this. He was afraid that the Greek custom officials would see it, or the American custom officials would

see it, and what would they say, so he burned it without asking my permission for it. There was nothing there that would have disturbed neither the Greeks nor the Americans.

Q: And how come you didn't take it with you when you came to the United States?

A: We forgot all about it, I didn't think anything of it, it's -- this was -- I had other priorities you know, and we didn't even talk about it.

Q: So once your father put it away, no one else saw it?

A: No.

Q: Did your mother read it also?

A: I didn't think she was interested.

Q: And what did your father think of it?

A: My father th-thought that this was terrible material to write at that time.

Q: So were you angry at him for burning it?

A: Not really, because I had it all in my mind. And I kept singing these songs, so I didn't forget them.

Q: Are there any other songs other than the one that you sang earlier --

A: Oh yes, yes.

Q: -- that you'd like to share with us?

A: Sure.

Q: They're wonderful songs.

A: Once I gave a recital, my only recital, in the partisan hospital. We went to the village called Tatanna, and the -- the doctor of the hospital -- I mean, we went there because my father needed some medicine, and the doctor asked me, "Do you sing any songs?" I said, "Yes I do." He says,

would you like to come, th -- this was a monastery and in a big room they had convalescent partisans, and I sang all the songs I -- I knew.

Q: So why don't you sing one or two more for us?

A: One more. This one is talking about how tonight we're going to sleep outdoors on -- on the grass, and is -- is talking about love for the country -- for -- for Greece. And then the -- the line that is very significant is that s -- it says, let the -- the king of the underworld to come and see with what kind of men he is going to tangle with, and let him select whom he wants to take down to the earth. [sings in Greek]. That's [indecipherable]

Q: Tell me, are these songs sort of -- were they written s-specifically by the partisans, are these --

A: Yes.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Yes, by -- by mu -- musu -- partisan talented musicians.

Q: So when -- when the war was over and you were now in 1945 -- 1944 --

A: 15.

Q: -- fi -- 15 years old. And you went back and finished school --

A: Yes, high school.

Q: -- finished high school, and then did you then go on to college?

A: Well, that was -- I -- I finished one year earlier in -- in but -- at the age of 17. Then, after this episode with the permit, I went to -- to Athens and I had to study something like 15 hours a day in a preparatory kind of course. Because there they don't have pre-med or pre-dent, all these subjects, organic, inorganic chemistry, biology and anthropology and literature, you -- you have to go and take the exams. The exams were very difficult, there were 820 candidates for 30 positions, and I came 17th. And that's how I entered the university. And my 1953, I graduated as

a dentist, and then I waited for a few months, I did not know any English at that time. And I went to a private teacher who studied, tell me c - a - t, cat, d - o - g, dog, and then I took with me a method without a teacher when I went into the army. This book is -- is -- has a very interesting story, because when my father was drafted in the army, he thought that this was some sort of a picnic because he was assigned in a desk job, and so he -- he was fat and he took with him all kinds of sweets, and all kinds of underwear and all that. And this big without a teacher English method. But the Germans attacked on April sixth, and the orders changed, and every man was sent to the front on foot. So with the f-first stop my father got rid of all the sweets, emptied everything that -- because he couldn't walk that -- the -- the way se -- some other soldiers were able to. So he put everything down, including the English book. To make the long story short, on the way back he pass through the same area, everything has been cleared, with the exception of the English book, which was full of mud and its pages were broken di -- people had stepped on it. He took it with him, eventually he cleaned it, he repaired it, and that was the book that I took with me in the army, and that's how I started learning English, and now this has a -- a place of honor in my library.

Q: And you had intended to come to the United States?

A: Oh no, no. I -- if you are an officer in the Greek army in the medical corps at that time, yo-you -- you were supposed to serve for three years. And th -- during that time I was studying both French and English, and a-actually I wanted to go to France for six months after the three years, to -- to learn something and have some break, you know, after all these years. Well, my parents persuaded me that if I wanted to go for a post-graduate course I should go to America. And that's how I came here to Georgetown Dental School for a post-graduate course. This -- but when I came to the United States, within the first five days in New York, I liked it so much that I

thought I wasn't going to go back to Greece. So I realized that the un -- that the post-graduate course was of no use, the -- I had -- Greek or any European dental degree were not recognized. Georgetown University did not accept me. They told me if you want to get a Master's or Ph.D., we'll give it to you, but we are not going to give you what you need to become a -- a DDS. So I went to Howard University, and I went there as a sophomore. I finished sophomore, junior and senior year and then I became an instructor at Howard, and then I opened a private practice. And later on I went also as an assistant professor for a -- one day a week for three years. And then --

Q: So you went as an undergraduate to Howard?

A: Y-Yes, sophomore, yes.

Q: And then your degree from Greece was accepted?

A: No, no.

Q: So how -- how --

A: I got the -- I got the degree from Howard. I -- I -- I passed the boards on the basis of the DDS from Howard University. But I worked there as full time instructor for two years. And then I opened my own private practice, which -- and I be -- became a retired dentist in 1995.

Q: What -- what so attracted you when you came to New York? Why did you like it so much?

A: Why -- I liked the Fifth Avenue, Central Park. I went to a play, "Inherit the Wind," with Paul Newman. I went to all the museums, and I fell in love with America. I didn't know then what they did during the war.

Q: Uh-huh. And when did you bring your parents over?

A: My -- once I decided to stay here, that was in 1956, I -- my sister came in 1959 as a student at GW. And then when it was time that -- and I got married in 1960 -- when my sister was going to get married in 1963, then my parents came for the wedding and I also told them that we are both

here, why don't you come to stay with us? And they -- i-it was pretty nice for them because they would stay with us, they didn't have to work. It -- it was like a continuous vacation, they would be here for nine months, then in the summer they would go to Greece. They would make other trips all over Europe and Israel. And -- and here they would go to Florida and California, so it was very nice.

Q: That's nice. And you have two children?

A: I have two daughters, and now we have one three year old grandson, and two --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: -- pregnant daughters --

Q: Right.

A: -- who fortunately they're married.

Q: Right. I want to thank you very much for talking with me this morning.

A: It has been a pleasure.

Q: What we'd like to do now is take some of the photographs that you brought, and have you comment about them, okay?

A: All right.

Q: Okay, Mike, what is this photo?

A: This is in Ioannina, around 1932 to '33. I was there either two, two and a half, something like that.

Q: And this photo?

A: This is in the city of Arta with my father and mother, and I might be maybe five or five and a half years old.

Q: Could you tell -- sa -- tell us the names of your parents?

A: My mother is Esther Matsas. Her parents were Gracia and Josef Kwen of Albania and my father is Leon Matsas, who was born in Ioannina. It's interesting to know that my -- my mother's parents, my grandparents, survived in Albania, in Vergnon. Their house was the headquarters of the German army in -- in Vergnon. And they lived with the Germans for the duration of the war. Only on the last day that the Germans were leaving, they blew up and burned the house and the shops they had underneath, and they claim that this was done not because they were Jews, but because they did not have enough time to destroy their archives. Otherwise, none of the Jews of Albania were -- was arrested.

Q: And this picture?

A: This is 1945. My mother, father, my sister Minetta, and the suit that I wear is a suit that was given to me by the Joint Distribution Committee.

Q: Okay. And this?

A: This is myself in 1948 in Athens, with my cousin Sam Mayhere, who escaped from a German concentration camp in Larisa. And he was almost executed by the partisans because they thought that he was a sort of a -- a anti-ELAS German collaborator. And he was saved at the last moment when a partisan approached him and he told him, "Now you say that you are a Jew, so we Christians when we go to bed at night, we make the sign of the cross, what do you Jews do?" And Sam said, "We say Shema Yisrael," and he recited it for him, and the partisan embraced him and he told him, "Don't be afraid, nobody will execute you."

Q: And this is you?

A: Yes. I have to say something more about my cousin. After the war my cousin opened a -- a shop -- a shop where he was selling milk and cheese. A policeman owed him a lot of money. When my cousin pressed him to -- what are you going to do about what you owe me, the policeman

wrote a report saying that he was a communist. So when they drafted him in the army, they took him to an island, Makronsis, where they took all former partisans to re-educate them. Part of the re-education was to beat them up. So they -- they -- when my cousin wen -- went there, the commander of the place realized they made a mistake, that this man was not a communist, he was never a partisan. They didn't understand. Maybe my cousin explained to him what happened. So they told him, all right, you are not one of them. Take a bamboo stick and let's go to beat them up. My cousin refused, so -- so they moved him to the communications service, and that's how he was able to be on leave to -- to Athens. And that's when we got this picture.

Q: Okay, Mike what's this?

A: This is in the medical complex in [indecipherable] where we were studying physiology, pharmacology, anatomy, etcetera. And -- and this is in front of a beautiful statue of Hippocrates.

And I am there with one of my classmates.

Q: And -- and you're on the right or the left?

A: I am the handsome guy on the right. The -- the right as I see it this way, right?

Q: Yes. And here?

A: This is also in Agrinion with my father, mother and Minetta.

Q: And what year was that?

A: 1950.

Q: And where's this?

A: This is in 1951 when I decided to make my first visit to Psilovrahos, and this is right in the outskirts of the village.

Q: And this picture?

A: And this is in -- on -- i-it's a cave, a [indecipherable] cave where I went there escorted by a villager who knew the area, and a lieutenant who was very much interested in knowing why I went there, and maybe he suspected I was going to meet somebody in this cave.

Q: And these were the caves where you were hiding at the end of the war, no?

A: We -- well, no, no, not th -- in the end of the war. In -- in the -- during the first time that the Germans occupied the village, which they occupied only once, that was the time that we went to the house of -- of this man and his father. And at that point we saw a line of villagers approaching and I thought that they were the Germans and I said, the Germans are here. And when I said that, we all ran in the forest. When the -- the father of this man saw that we were so afraid of the Germans, he said, well if that's the case, you -- you'd better not stay in my house, and I will take you to the -- to a cave where you can stay during the day and come to sleep wi -- in our house at night. And that's how we were introduced to the cave.

Q: And what was the name of that family?

A: [indecipherable]. And so this is the son of the -- of the man. And this is a beautiful cave with all kinds of stalactites, stalagmites. Actually, at that time we were not so good in ecology and this was -- nobody knew about the cave, so I still have a few stalactites from -- from the cave.

Q: And this picture?

A: In this picture I'm treating in the dental office of the military hospital of Veria. I volunteered to treat some orphans, and the director of the hospital allowed that, and these were my patients.

Q: And this says 1954?

A: Yes, that was -- was when I was in -- in Veria.

Q: Who are these handsome men?

A: In this picture I'm the one on the right side with the [indecipherable]. And this is in Patras, and the other two men are physicians serving with me in the same unit.

Q: And who is this?

A: This is me in 1960. This was my graduation picture from Howard University Dental School.

Q: And this is a 1974 picture with my wife Eleanor. On the right side of her is Linda, a pediatrician now, and -- and right in front of me is Alice, who is a teacher.

Q: And this picture?

A: This is a 1985 picture from our visit to Greece. It has been taken in a balcony in Salonica in the house of the brother of Dr. Stroumcis, and in -- on the right side of it in the picture, the outline of the white tower of Salonica can be seen very vaguely.

End of Tape Three

Conclusion of Interview