

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,200

2  
00:00:01,200 --> 00:00:04,320  
This is a United States  
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3  
00:00:04,320 --> 00:00:08,530  
oral history interview with  
Martin Silver on October 16,

4  
00:00:08,530 --> 00:00:09,870  
2015.

5  
00:00:09,870 --> 00:00:13,440  
Rebecca Dillmeier is  
taking the oral history.

6  
00:00:13,440 --> 00:00:16,230  
Dear Mr. Silver, can  
you tell us your name

7  
00:00:16,230 --> 00:00:18,490  
and where you were born?

8  
00:00:18,490 --> 00:00:21,480  
My name is Martin Silver.

9  
00:00:21,480 --> 00:00:26,310  
I was born in the  
Bronx, New York City.

10  
00:00:26,310 --> 00:00:26,880  
All right.

11  
00:00:26,880 --> 00:00:29,910  
Can you tell me a little  
bit about your upbringing?

12  
00:00:29,910 --> 00:00:32,670  
What your schooling was

like, were you religious?

13  
00:00:32,670 --> 00:00:33,810  
Were you religious or not?

14  
00:00:33,810 --> 00:00:36,480  
The politics of your  
family, that sort of stuff.

15  
00:00:36,480 --> 00:00:39,030

16  
00:00:39,030 --> 00:00:43,080  
I was brought up in Brooklyn.

17  
00:00:43,080 --> 00:00:46,580  
Shared a home-- an  
apartment, actually.

18  
00:00:46,580 --> 00:00:52,590  
It was a three-flight walk-up  
tenement in a working class

19  
00:00:52,590 --> 00:00:53,790  
neighborhood.

20  
00:00:53,790 --> 00:00:59,670  
In the apartment was my brother,  
15 months older, and my mother.

21  
00:00:59,670 --> 00:01:07,110  
My mother was divorced when I  
was at two years old or perhaps

22  
00:01:07,110 --> 00:01:12,120  
younger, so my mother was one  
of the original single mothers.

23  
00:01:12,120 --> 00:01:17,200  
But it never affected my  
brother or I in any way.

24

00:01:17,200 --> 00:01:21,940  
My mother was a  
wonderful parent.

25  
00:01:21,940 --> 00:01:27,740  
My mother had her  
parents, my grandparents,

26  
00:01:27,740 --> 00:01:29,690  
living in the Bronx.

27  
00:01:29,690 --> 00:01:32,510  
And they were Orthodox.

28  
00:01:32,510 --> 00:01:36,770  
And many Fridays from  
Brooklyn after school,

29  
00:01:36,770 --> 00:01:39,110  
we went on the subway  
with our mother

30  
00:01:39,110 --> 00:01:47,120  
to the Bronx and spend  
Shabbat with my grandparents

31  
00:01:47,120 --> 00:01:51,180  
and my mother's  
younger siblings,

32  
00:01:51,180 --> 00:01:54,140  
as she was the youngest--

33  
00:01:54,140 --> 00:01:57,830  
excuse me-- she was the  
oldest of seven children.

34  
00:01:57,830 --> 00:02:00,710  
And many of the younger  
ones were not yet married,

35  
00:02:00,710 --> 00:02:02,780  
and they were still in the home.

36  
00:02:02,780 --> 00:02:07,280  
So we had-- as the first  
and only grandchildren

37  
00:02:07,280 --> 00:02:11,240  
for some time, we  
were very well treated

38  
00:02:11,240 --> 00:02:16,880  
and loved and hugged by our  
grandparents and our aunts

39  
00:02:16,880 --> 00:02:23,030  
and uncles in the warmth of  
this wonderful extended family

40  
00:02:23,030 --> 00:02:25,820  
in the Bronx.

41  
00:02:25,820 --> 00:02:30,800  
In Brooklyn, my brother and  
I were just regular kids.

42  
00:02:30,800 --> 00:02:36,530  
We played in the street, games  
like stickball or boxball.

43  
00:02:36,530 --> 00:02:38,390  
We played in the  
local schoolyard.

44  
00:02:38,390 --> 00:02:43,520  
We went to a public school  
in walking distance.

45  
00:02:43,520 --> 00:02:47,400  
It was the '30s, because  
I was born in 1927.

46  
00:02:47,400 --> 00:02:49,760  
It was the height  
of the Depression,

47

00:02:49,760 --> 00:02:54,860

but we did not know we were poor  
because we ate, we had clothes,

48

00:02:54,860 --> 00:02:58,700

we had wonderful weekends  
with our grandparents,

49

00:02:58,700 --> 00:03:02,120

and everyone else  
in the neighborhood

50

00:03:02,120 --> 00:03:06,080

was in the same  
condition, more or less.

51

00:03:06,080 --> 00:03:12,170

So we didn't have any of  
the social negative effects

52

00:03:12,170 --> 00:03:15,900

of being a child  
during the Depression.

53

00:03:15,900 --> 00:03:22,610

And when it came  
time to high school,

54

00:03:22,610 --> 00:03:27,800

I went to Brooklyn Technical  
High School, one of the three

55

00:03:27,800 --> 00:03:30,980

or four elite high schools  
in New York City, admission

56

00:03:30,980 --> 00:03:33,680

by competitive examination.

57

00:03:33,680 --> 00:03:37,100

And I liked being  
a student there.

58

00:03:37,100 --> 00:03:40,280

I had to travel to  
high school by subway,

59

00:03:40,280 --> 00:03:42,230

which cost a nickel then.

60

00:03:42,230 --> 00:03:47,180

And took a brown bag  
lunch prepared by my mom.

61

00:03:47,180 --> 00:03:52,910

And she was working then as  
a clerk in Macy's department

62

00:03:52,910 --> 00:03:55,040

store.

63

00:03:55,040 --> 00:03:58,640

Rebecca, I'm going to  
stop now, because I

64

00:03:58,640 --> 00:04:04,400

don't know how much detail or  
how much time I should take.

65

00:04:04,400 --> 00:04:07,130

So you guide me.

66

00:04:07,130 --> 00:04:07,690

Definitely.

67

00:04:07,690 --> 00:04:10,250

You were doing an excellent job.

68

00:04:10,250 --> 00:04:10,950

This is great.

69

00:04:10,950 --> 00:04:13,910

We want to establish some  
of your background and how--

70  
00:04:13,910 --> 00:04:16,040  
what were your  
motivations for becoming

71  
00:04:16,040 --> 00:04:17,640  
involved in Aliyah Bet.

72  
00:04:17,640 --> 00:04:20,720  
But before we get to that,  
can you tell me a little bit

73  
00:04:20,720 --> 00:04:23,750  
about-- so you were in high  
school when the war broke out,

74  
00:04:23,750 --> 00:04:24,320  
yes?

75  
00:04:24,320 --> 00:04:27,590  
Can you tell me about what  
that was like for you?

76  
00:04:27,590 --> 00:04:29,540  
How aware were you  
and your family

77  
00:04:29,540 --> 00:04:33,500  
of what was going on in the  
European theater in general

78  
00:04:33,500 --> 00:04:35,450  
and with the Jewish  
community in particular?

79  
00:04:35,450 --> 00:04:39,761

80  
00:04:39,761 --> 00:04:46,090  
Well, I was very  
aware of World War II,

81

00:04:46,090 --> 00:04:49,510  
but I was not  
particularly concerned.

82  
00:04:49,510 --> 00:04:52,660  
The awareness came  
from in school.

83  
00:04:52,660 --> 00:04:57,340  
We had drives to collect metal,  
drives to collect newspapers.

84  
00:04:57,340 --> 00:05:01,780  
Everything-- bond  
drives by war bonds.

85  
00:05:01,780 --> 00:05:08,350  
So there was a lot of  
input from the school

86  
00:05:08,350 --> 00:05:12,760  
to be aware that our  
country was at war

87  
00:05:12,760 --> 00:05:15,760  
and to do what we can to help.

88  
00:05:15,760 --> 00:05:21,790  
From my family's  
side, my mother had

89  
00:05:21,790 --> 00:05:25,600  
a number of first  
cousins living in Europe,

90  
00:05:25,600 --> 00:05:30,310  
and my grandparents had brothers  
and sisters living in Europe.

91  
00:05:30,310 --> 00:05:34,240  
And they were very  
concerned about their safety

92



00:05:34,240 --> 00:05:38,050  
and ultimately about  
their survival.

93  
00:05:38,050 --> 00:05:48,640  
Many did not survive, and this  
was a discussion and a worry

94  
00:05:48,640 --> 00:05:55,910  
and an area of great  
concern in our family.

95  
00:05:55,910 --> 00:06:01,450  
And even though I was 13,  
14, and 15 at the time,

96  
00:06:01,450 --> 00:06:07,450  
I was aware of that and  
had a sympathetic reaction

97  
00:06:07,450 --> 00:06:14,050  
to the death and destruction  
that Jews, including

98  
00:06:14,050 --> 00:06:20,710  
relatives I had never met, were  
suffering in war-torn Europe.

99  
00:06:20,710 --> 00:06:23,410  
Where was your-- do you  
know where your family lived

100  
00:06:23,410 --> 00:06:26,310  
in Europe?

101  
00:06:26,310 --> 00:06:33,930  
[SIGH] My mother  
was born in Vilna.

102  
00:06:33,930 --> 00:06:36,630  
OK.

103  
00:06:36,630 --> 00:06:39,170

Beyond that, I don't  
know very much,

104  
00:06:39,170 --> 00:06:41,010  
because my mother  
came to this country

105  
00:06:41,010 --> 00:06:43,710  
when she was about 12 years old.

106  
00:06:43,710 --> 00:06:49,830  
And what other areas in Europe  
beyond Vilna, I don't know.

107  
00:06:49,830 --> 00:06:51,960  
OK.

108  
00:06:51,960 --> 00:06:54,480  
So your mother and  
your grandparents

109  
00:06:54,480 --> 00:06:58,080  
were immigrants to New  
York City from Vilna.

110  
00:06:58,080 --> 00:06:58,800  
Yes.

111  
00:06:58,800 --> 00:06:59,700  
OK.

112  
00:06:59,700 --> 00:07:02,890  
As in many Jewish  
families at that time,

113  
00:07:02,890 --> 00:07:07,440  
my grandfather came first  
without his wife and three

114  
00:07:07,440 --> 00:07:10,020  
or four children that  
were born in Europe,

115

00:07:10,020 --> 00:07:17,040  
and he worked and saved money  
to pay for their passage.

116

00:07:17,040 --> 00:07:21,900  
And then when he was  
reunited with my grandmother,

117

00:07:21,900 --> 00:07:24,120  
they had three or  
four more children

118

00:07:24,120 --> 00:07:27,200  
in the United-- born  
in the United States.

119

00:07:27,200 --> 00:07:29,040  
All right.

120

00:07:29,040 --> 00:07:30,637  
You were quite young,  
so I don't know

121

00:07:30,637 --> 00:07:32,220  
if you would remember  
this, but do you

122

00:07:32,220 --> 00:07:36,030  
know how your family knew  
about what was happening

123

00:07:36,030 --> 00:07:37,500  
to their relatives in Europe?

124

00:07:37,500 --> 00:07:42,690  
Was it letters or what they  
were reading in the newspaper?

125

00:07:42,690 --> 00:07:46,890  
I know that there was  
a lot of correspondence

126

00:07:46,890 --> 00:07:51,150  
as long as correspondence  
was possible.

127  
00:07:51,150 --> 00:07:53,880  
And they wrote to  
each other in Yiddish.

128  
00:07:53,880 --> 00:07:57,090  
My mother wrote a  
beautiful Yiddish.

129  
00:07:57,090 --> 00:08:02,490  
I couldn't read it, but I  
could admire the handwriting.

130  
00:08:02,490 --> 00:08:06,840  
And there came a time  
when letters were returned

131  
00:08:06,840 --> 00:08:09,390  
or letters were not  
answered, and that

132  
00:08:09,390 --> 00:08:13,110  
was an indication that  
it was a terrible time

133  
00:08:13,110 --> 00:08:15,480  
for the European family.

134  
00:08:15,480 --> 00:08:17,775  
Mm-hmm.

135  
00:08:17,775 --> 00:08:19,650  
You mentioned that you  
couldn't read Yiddish.

136  
00:08:19,650 --> 00:08:23,040  
Did you speak it at all?

137  
00:08:23,040 --> 00:08:27,510  
My mother and grandparents--

138  
00:08:27,510 --> 00:08:30,020  
my mother in particular--

139  
00:08:30,020 --> 00:08:31,620  
I'll have to separate them.

140  
00:08:31,620 --> 00:08:35,190  
My mother spoke  
Yiddish when she wanted

141  
00:08:35,190 --> 00:08:37,689  
what she was saying to be  
a secret from her children.

142  
00:08:37,689 --> 00:08:38,690  
[LAUGHS]

143  
00:08:38,690 --> 00:08:46,020  
My grandparents spoke Yiddish  
as their first natural language,

144  
00:08:46,020 --> 00:08:50,370  
and their English was  
with a very heavy accent.

145  
00:08:50,370 --> 00:08:53,490  
But they encouraged  
their children,

146  
00:08:53,490 --> 00:08:56,940  
the ones born in Europe and the  
ones born in the United States,

147  
00:08:56,940 --> 00:09:00,450  
to learn and study English.

148  
00:09:00,450 --> 00:09:05,970  
They wanted everyone to speak  
English, even they themselves,

149  
00:09:05,970 --> 00:09:08,295

because they were brought up  
and didn't come to America

150  
00:09:08,295 --> 00:09:09,795  
until they were in  
their middle 20s.

151  
00:09:09,795 --> 00:09:12,960

152  
00:09:12,960 --> 00:09:17,370  
They wanted their  
family to speak English.

153  
00:09:17,370 --> 00:09:21,900  
But the little Yiddish I heard  
and that I still know today

154  
00:09:21,900 --> 00:09:26,730  
was the Yiddish of  
love and instruction

155  
00:09:26,730 --> 00:09:30,720  
that children received from  
parents and grandparents

156  
00:09:30,720 --> 00:09:32,700  
like [SPEAKING YIDDISH].

157  
00:09:32,700 --> 00:09:35,970

158  
00:09:35,970 --> 00:09:40,360  
And till today to a  
friend when we're leaving,

159  
00:09:40,360 --> 00:09:43,710  
I might say zay gezunt.

160  
00:09:43,710 --> 00:09:45,040  
You've heard my Yiddish.

161

00:09:45,040 --> 00:09:49,920  
[LAUGHS] Well, thank  
you for sharing.

162  
00:09:49,920 --> 00:09:52,500  
So your family was aware  
of what was going on

163  
00:09:52,500 --> 00:09:54,520  
because they were in touch--

164  
00:09:54,520 --> 00:09:57,740  
or attempted to be in touch with  
their family back in Europe.

165  
00:09:57,740 --> 00:09:58,560  
Yes.

166  
00:09:58,560 --> 00:10:02,160  
Rebecca, you have to talk  
louder or put your mouth closer

167  
00:10:02,160 --> 00:10:05,950  
to the mouthpiece of the phone.

168  
00:10:05,950 --> 00:10:06,450  
OK.

169  
00:10:06,450 --> 00:10:07,740  
Can you hear me now?

170  
00:10:07,740 --> 00:10:08,670  
That's better.

171  
00:10:08,670 --> 00:10:10,710  
All right.

172  
00:10:10,710 --> 00:10:14,310  
So your family was  
in contact and then

173  
00:10:14,310 --> 00:10:17,520

attempted to be in contact  
with their family in Europe,

174  
00:10:17,520 --> 00:10:20,670  
and this was at the  
beginning of the war.

175  
00:10:20,670 --> 00:10:22,860  
What happened through  
the rest of the war years

176  
00:10:22,860 --> 00:10:23,670  
with your family?

177  
00:10:23,670 --> 00:10:27,660  
And then what was your  
knowledge of the end of the war?

178  
00:10:27,660 --> 00:10:31,600  
How did that feel  
for your family?

179  
00:10:31,600 --> 00:10:38,070  
Well, as I said before, letters  
first started being returned

180  
00:10:38,070 --> 00:10:40,740  
and then the letters  
were not answered.

181  
00:10:40,740 --> 00:10:47,280  
And that was the indication  
that something was

182  
00:10:47,280 --> 00:10:50,790  
wrong with the European family.

183  
00:10:50,790 --> 00:10:52,500  
Mm-hmm.

184  
00:10:52,500 --> 00:10:57,960  
At the end of the war, we were  
all happy the war was over.



185  
00:10:57,960 --> 00:11:01,470  
But I don't have any  
particular recollection

186  
00:11:01,470 --> 00:11:07,350  
about at the end of the war--

187  
00:11:07,350 --> 00:11:08,430  
well, there was-- yes.

188  
00:11:08,430 --> 00:11:10,770  
There was one thing I had--

189  
00:11:10,770 --> 00:11:13,890  
my mother's younger  
brother, my uncle,

190  
00:11:13,890 --> 00:11:18,480  
was a soldier in the  
United States Army,

191  
00:11:18,480 --> 00:11:21,450  
and he fought in Europe.

192  
00:11:21,450 --> 00:11:28,800  
And as the war was ending,  
his parents, my grandparents,

193  
00:11:28,800 --> 00:11:32,060  
and others like my  
mother asked him

194  
00:11:32,060 --> 00:11:38,780  
to try to find information  
about family members, where

195  
00:11:38,780 --> 00:11:43,020  
they were, how they're doing, if  
we could help them in any way.

196  
00:11:43,020 --> 00:11:48,350

So there was that  
effort by my uncle,

197  
00:11:48,350 --> 00:11:52,400  
an American soldier  
of World War II,

198  
00:11:52,400 --> 00:11:55,299  
trying to make family contact.

199  
00:11:55,299 --> 00:11:55,799  
Mm-hmm.

200  
00:11:55,799 --> 00:11:59,930

201  
00:11:59,930 --> 00:12:02,200  
So in the-- as  
the war is ending,

202  
00:12:02,200 --> 00:12:03,760  
your family is  
trying to find out

203  
00:12:03,760 --> 00:12:06,910  
what happened to their  
family in Europe.

204  
00:12:06,910 --> 00:12:09,460  
Were they aware--  
were they becoming

205  
00:12:09,460 --> 00:12:12,580  
aware of the mass killing  
and the concentration

206  
00:12:12,580 --> 00:12:14,020  
camps in Europe?

207  
00:12:14,020 --> 00:12:15,170  
I'm sure they were.

208

00:12:15,170 --> 00:12:16,900  
OK.

209  
00:12:16,900 --> 00:12:19,240  
Do you remember reading  
about it in the paper

210  
00:12:19,240 --> 00:12:22,210  
or hearing your  
family talk about it?

211  
00:12:22,210 --> 00:12:24,730  
I remember my family  
talking about it,

212  
00:12:24,730 --> 00:12:28,750  
but they usually didn't talk  
about it in front of children.

213  
00:12:28,750 --> 00:12:36,190  
But children often hear  
more than their adult family

214  
00:12:36,190 --> 00:12:37,355  
would like them to hear.

215  
00:12:37,355 --> 00:12:37,855  
Right.

216  
00:12:37,855 --> 00:12:40,460  
So yes, I did hear about it.

217  
00:12:40,460 --> 00:12:42,400  
OK.

218  
00:12:42,400 --> 00:12:46,240  
I want to talk a little bit  
about your motivations--

219  
00:12:46,240 --> 00:12:49,900  
how you became involved in  
Aliyah Bet, when this happened,

220

00:12:49,900 --> 00:12:51,280

what your motivations were.

221

00:12:51,280 --> 00:12:56,270

222

00:12:56,270 --> 00:13:02,840

When I graduated high school in January 1946,

223

00:13:02,840 --> 00:13:06,870

I entered by competitive examination

224

00:13:06,870 --> 00:13:09,680

the New York State Maritime Academy

225

00:13:09,680 --> 00:13:17,390

to study to be an officer in the Merchant Marine

226

00:13:17,390 --> 00:13:22,280

and to graduate with an ensign commission in the United States

227

00:13:22,280 --> 00:13:23,570

Navy.

228

00:13:23,570 --> 00:13:30,200

And I completed that education.

229

00:13:30,200 --> 00:13:36,440

During the education, I would say maybe

230

00:13:36,440 --> 00:13:40,880

late 1946 or early 1947--

231

00:13:40,880 --> 00:13:45,110

I can't remember exactly when--

232

00:13:45,110 --> 00:13:48,410

a fellow cadet, a cadet  
who was a friend of mine

233

00:13:48,410 --> 00:13:50,780

because we both  
were from Brooklyn,

234

00:13:50,780 --> 00:13:54,830

we both went to Brooklyn  
Technical High School,

235

00:13:54,830 --> 00:13:59,780

he was of Italian extraction.

236

00:13:59,780 --> 00:14:01,850

His parents were immigrants.

237

00:14:01,850 --> 00:14:06,890

His father worked as a  
stonemason and a sidewalk

238

00:14:06,890 --> 00:14:08,180

maker.

239

00:14:08,180 --> 00:14:11,600

And his name-- and  
he's still alive,

240

00:14:11,600 --> 00:14:13,640

and we're still in  
touch, although he

241

00:14:13,640 --> 00:14:15,590

lives in a nursing home now.

242

00:14:15,590 --> 00:14:19,085

His name is Angelo Mille.

243

00:14:19,085 --> 00:14:23,660

And Angelo was a  
very proud Italian.

244  
00:14:23,660 --> 00:14:30,260  
Loved his heritage, the music,  
the culture, the Renaissance.

245  
00:14:30,260 --> 00:14:33,980  
And even though he was  
born in the United States,

246  
00:14:33,980 --> 00:14:35,330  
he spoke Italian.

247  
00:14:35,330 --> 00:14:39,170  
Probably was the first  
language at home.

248  
00:14:39,170 --> 00:14:41,765  
And we had a very short  
conversation as cadets.

249  
00:14:41,765 --> 00:14:44,390

250  
00:14:44,390 --> 00:14:46,550  
It went something like this.

251  
00:14:46,550 --> 00:14:49,250  
He said, hey,  
Marty, what are you

252  
00:14:49,250 --> 00:14:51,710  
going to do when you graduate?

253  
00:14:51,710 --> 00:14:55,640  
And I said, I'm going to work  
as an officer in the American

254  
00:14:55,640 --> 00:14:58,310  
Merchant Marine and  
make that big money.

255  
00:14:58,310 --> 00:14:59,570

[LAUGHS]

256  
00:14:59,570 --> 00:15:04,520  
And he said, how can  
you think of that

257  
00:15:04,520 --> 00:15:10,910  
when the blood of your  
people are staining

258  
00:15:10,910 --> 00:15:13,220  
the sands of Palestine?

259  
00:15:13,220 --> 00:15:16,460

260  
00:15:16,460 --> 00:15:24,800  
And I looked at him like he  
was some sort of a nutcase.

261  
00:15:24,800 --> 00:15:26,120  
I'm not going to--

262  
00:15:26,120 --> 00:15:28,250  
what's that got to do with me?

263  
00:15:28,250 --> 00:15:30,230  
I'm trained to be an officer.

264  
00:15:30,230 --> 00:15:33,650  
And officers got paid big  
salaries in the American

265  
00:15:33,650 --> 00:15:34,380  
Merchant Marine.

266  
00:15:34,380 --> 00:15:39,080  
We worked seven days a week,  
16 hours a week of overtime.

267  
00:15:39,080 --> 00:15:41,540  
It was big money.

268  
00:15:41,540 --> 00:15:46,190  
And that was the end of that.

269  
00:15:46,190 --> 00:15:48,650  
It probably stayed  
in my mind, but I

270  
00:15:48,650 --> 00:15:51,500  
didn't realize it at the time.

271  
00:15:51,500 --> 00:15:53,900  
About six months later--

272  
00:15:53,900 --> 00:16:00,290  
so it was definitely  
during 1947--

273  
00:16:00,290 --> 00:16:05,930  
there was a professor of physics  
at the New York State Maritime

274  
00:16:05,930 --> 00:16:11,150  
Academy whose name  
was Professor Degani.

275  
00:16:11,150 --> 00:16:16,350  
D-E-G-A-N-I. With a name like  
that, I thought he was Italian.

276  
00:16:16,350 --> 00:16:18,420  
I didn't pay attention  
to his first name.

277  
00:16:18,420 --> 00:16:22,770  
We never used first names.

278  
00:16:22,770 --> 00:16:28,670  
But his first name  
was Meir, M-E-I-R.

279  
00:16:28,670 --> 00:16:38,780



And I found out later that he  
was a Jewish Palestinian who

280  
00:16:38,780 --> 00:16:41,720  
came to work in the United  
States because he was

281  
00:16:41,720 --> 00:16:45,680  
an academic, and there were too  
many Jewish academics and not

282  
00:16:45,680 --> 00:16:51,020  
enough universities in Palestine  
or the emerging state of Israel

283  
00:16:51,020 --> 00:16:55,280  
to employ him, so he came to  
work in the United States.

284  
00:16:55,280 --> 00:17:01,520  
He took me aside in a place  
where no one can hear us talk.

285  
00:17:01,520 --> 00:17:05,060  
It was on a bench  
in an open area

286  
00:17:05,060 --> 00:17:07,579  
where there were  
no other benches.

287  
00:17:07,579 --> 00:17:12,349  
And he did this with  
each Jewish cadet.

288  
00:17:12,349 --> 00:17:16,160  
And in my class,  
there were very few

289  
00:17:16,160 --> 00:17:18,560  
because it was a  
Maritime Academy,

290

00:17:18,560 --> 00:17:22,460  
and most Jewish parents  
were sending their children

291  
00:17:22,460 --> 00:17:26,690  
for educations to be doctors,  
lawyers, accountants,

292  
00:17:26,690 --> 00:17:28,339  
businessmen, whatever.

293  
00:17:28,339 --> 00:17:31,280  
Not to be an officer  
in the Merchant Marine.

294  
00:17:31,280 --> 00:17:34,640  
So there were very  
few Jewish cadets.

295  
00:17:34,640 --> 00:17:38,975  
And he said to me what he said  
to the other few Jewish cadets.

296  
00:17:38,975 --> 00:17:43,200

297  
00:17:43,200 --> 00:17:48,600  
There are Holocaust  
survivors now

298  
00:17:48,600 --> 00:17:53,700  
living in camps in Europe  
called displaced persons camps.

299  
00:17:53,700 --> 00:17:58,320  
There are groups of Jews  
from the Jewish community

300  
00:17:58,320 --> 00:18:00,750  
in Israel, the Yishuv--

301  
00:18:00,750 --> 00:18:02,910  
he probably didn't use

the word Yishuv then

302

00:18:02,910 --> 00:18:06,270

but I, of course,  
have learned it since.

303

00:18:06,270 --> 00:18:13,410

And they're in the United  
States to buy ships, raise money

304

00:18:13,410 --> 00:18:18,240

to buy the ships, and to  
buy guns and ammunition,

305

00:18:18,240 --> 00:18:27,240

and to find crews to sail these  
ships from the United States

306

00:18:27,240 --> 00:18:34,260

to southern ports in Europe  
to take DPs, Displaced

307

00:18:34,260 --> 00:18:38,910

Persons, Holocaust survivors  
from these displaced person

308

00:18:38,910 --> 00:18:45,630

camps in southern Europe to  
the emerging state of Israel.

309

00:18:45,630 --> 00:18:58,350

And I want you to join this  
operation, to be part of this.

310

00:18:58,350 --> 00:18:59,370

We need you.

311

00:18:59,370 --> 00:19:00,540

Your people need you.

312

00:19:00,540 --> 00:19:03,600

That's how Dr. Degani spoke.

313

00:19:03,600 --> 00:19:10,720

And I said, let  
me think it over.

314

00:19:10,720 --> 00:19:14,920

What I really meant was, I  
have to talk to my mother,

315

00:19:14,920 --> 00:19:18,820

because I was very  
close to my mother

316

00:19:18,820 --> 00:19:27,010

and I didn't want to do  
anything of that nature

317

00:19:27,010 --> 00:19:32,260

without her understanding, and  
hopefully with her permission.

318

00:19:32,260 --> 00:19:37,810

So on my next leave at  
home with my mother,

319

00:19:37,810 --> 00:19:41,650

I told her about my  
conversation with Dr. Degani.

320

00:19:41,650 --> 00:19:45,610

And she said, don't go.

321

00:19:45,610 --> 00:19:48,340

You might get hurt.

322

00:19:48,340 --> 00:19:51,430

And I said, so who should go?

323

00:19:51,430 --> 00:19:54,070

Shlomo or Moishe, Yitzhak?

324

00:19:54,070 --> 00:19:56,785

Who should go?

325  
00:19:56,785 --> 00:20:03,160  
And she just blinked and hugged  
me and said, well, if you go,

326  
00:20:03,160 --> 00:20:05,920  
be careful.

327  
00:20:05,920 --> 00:20:09,250  
So when I was back  
at the Academy,

328  
00:20:09,250 --> 00:20:15,025  
I saw Dr. Degani  
privately and I said, yes.

329  
00:20:15,025 --> 00:20:18,742

330  
00:20:18,742 --> 00:20:22,300  
I will do what I can to help.

331  
00:20:22,300 --> 00:20:28,630  
And that was my beginning of  
my association with Aliyah Bet.

332  
00:20:28,630 --> 00:20:35,215  
While I was still a  
cadet on weekends in 1947

333  
00:20:35,215 --> 00:20:38,560  
and had time off,  
I went to the ship

334  
00:20:38,560 --> 00:20:41,620  
that eventually I would sail on.

335  
00:20:41,620 --> 00:20:44,950  
In Hebrew, it was called  
Mala, but originally it

336  
00:20:44,950 --> 00:20:52,150

was the SS Mayflower,  
a presidential yacht

337  
00:20:52,150 --> 00:20:59,800  
of American presidents,  
including Teddy Roosevelt,

338  
00:20:59,800 --> 00:21:01,600  
President Wilson.

339  
00:21:01,600 --> 00:21:03,190  
So it went back a long time.

340  
00:21:03,190 --> 00:21:10,210  
And I learned later that it was  
built as a yacht or a luxury

341  
00:21:10,210 --> 00:21:13,840  
yacht for probably some great  
millionaire who eventually sold

342  
00:21:13,840 --> 00:21:16,750  
it to the American government.

343  
00:21:16,750 --> 00:21:22,390  
And it was built in about 1895  
in some Scottish shipyard.

344  
00:21:22,390 --> 00:21:29,950  
Anyway, in weekends in  
1947, I went aboard the Mala

345  
00:21:29,950 --> 00:21:34,510  
in a Brooklyn  
shipyard and was part

346  
00:21:34,510 --> 00:21:41,970  
of the team who was fixing up  
the ship to make it seaworthy.

347  
00:21:41,970 --> 00:21:44,530  
An example of one  
of the jobs I did

348  
00:21:44,530 --> 00:21:49,800  
was re-bricking the  
firebox in the boilers.

349  
00:21:49,800 --> 00:21:51,760  
It's a little technical.

350  
00:21:51,760 --> 00:21:53,590  
It might be self-explanatory.

351  
00:21:53,590 --> 00:21:58,630  
But it was hard, hot work,  
and I was able to do it.

352  
00:21:58,630 --> 00:22:04,090  
And sometimes on the  
way to the ship--

353  
00:22:04,090 --> 00:22:06,880  
not every time, but sometimes--

354  
00:22:06,880 --> 00:22:11,260  
or when I was leaving  
the Academy on Friday

355  
00:22:11,260 --> 00:22:13,480  
and I went home  
to sleep on Friday

356  
00:22:13,480 --> 00:22:17,020  
and didn't go to the shipyard  
till Saturday morning,

357  
00:22:17,020 --> 00:22:22,810  
on Friday I would stop at an  
office in downtown Manhattan

358  
00:22:22,810 --> 00:22:30,190  
that was a cover for the Haganah  
people in the United States

359

00:22:30,190 --> 00:22:34,690  
who were doing the three  
operations I mentioned before.

360  
00:22:34,690 --> 00:22:37,090  
And they would have  
a name to make them

361  
00:22:37,090 --> 00:22:39,180  
appear like a ship chandler.

362  
00:22:39,180 --> 00:22:44,510  
The ship chandler was in office  
to supply food, materials,

363  
00:22:44,510 --> 00:22:47,500  
tools, et cetera to  
ships that are in port.

364  
00:22:47,500 --> 00:22:54,790  
And I would be given a sea  
bag to take aboard with me

365  
00:22:54,790 --> 00:22:59,440  
to the Mala the next day  
and give it to the Israeli,

366  
00:22:59,440 --> 00:23:05,140  
the shaliah, which is a word,  
of course, I learned later.

367  
00:23:05,140 --> 00:23:07,570  
Of course, there always  
was an Israeli on board

368  
00:23:07,570 --> 00:23:12,010  
to supervise what we were  
doing and where were working.

369  
00:23:12,010 --> 00:23:14,950  
The flag at that time flew--

370  
00:23:14,950 --> 00:23:17,440



the ship at that  
time flew a flag

371  
00:23:17,440 --> 00:23:19,870  
that was either from Honduras--

372  
00:23:19,870 --> 00:23:21,490  
somewhere down in the Caribbean.

373  
00:23:21,490 --> 00:23:23,170  
I forget which country.

374  
00:23:23,170 --> 00:23:35,660  
And they had-- they told stories  
to the owners of the shipyard

375  
00:23:35,660 --> 00:23:37,190  
what the ship was doing there.

376  
00:23:37,190 --> 00:23:41,360  
You know, it pretended to  
be an ordinary ship being

377  
00:23:41,360 --> 00:23:44,270  
converted for cargo.

378  
00:23:44,270 --> 00:23:47,690  
Well, in reality it  
was being first to be

379  
00:23:47,690 --> 00:23:54,140  
made ship worthy and the  
second to carry displaced

380  
00:23:54,140 --> 00:23:57,410  
persons to the emerging  
state of Israel.

381  
00:23:57,410 --> 00:23:59,450  
Can I ask you a quick question?

382  
00:23:59,450 --> 00:24:00,260

Yes.

383  
00:24:00,260 --> 00:24:04,550  
So it sounds like you became  
aware of the situation

384  
00:24:04,550 --> 00:24:06,800  
through your friend  
and your professor.

385  
00:24:06,800 --> 00:24:11,660  
Were you not very politically  
active prior to that?

386  
00:24:11,660 --> 00:24:13,880  
I was not politically active.

387  
00:24:13,880 --> 00:24:20,360  
But what I have to tell you  
is that in that sea bag were--

388  
00:24:20,360 --> 00:24:22,100  
and it was closed.

389  
00:24:22,100 --> 00:24:23,600  
I never opened any of them.

390  
00:24:23,600 --> 00:24:27,170  
Never could-- what  
I was told later

391  
00:24:27,170 --> 00:24:29,780  
were guns and  
ammunition, which when

392  
00:24:29,780 --> 00:24:35,840  
given to the shaliah on board  
the Mala were hidden in places

393  
00:24:35,840 --> 00:24:38,390  
aboard the ship,  
not to be seen again

394  
00:24:38,390 --> 00:24:43,010  
until if ever the ship  
ever got to the emerging

395  
00:24:43,010 --> 00:24:44,000  
state of Israel.

396  
00:24:44,000 --> 00:24:46,190  
Right.

397  
00:24:46,190 --> 00:24:46,740  
OK.

398  
00:24:46,740 --> 00:24:49,670  
So that's--

399  
00:24:49,670 --> 00:24:52,250  
Did you become-- were you--

400  
00:24:52,250 --> 00:24:55,610  
were you aware of  
the politics behind--

401  
00:24:55,610 --> 00:24:57,710  
you know, you're working  
on outfitting this boat,

402  
00:24:57,710 --> 00:24:59,390  
and you know that  
you're going to be--

403  
00:24:59,390 --> 00:25:01,880  
it's going to be taking  
displaced persons

404  
00:25:01,880 --> 00:25:04,160  
to the emerging state of Israel.

405  
00:25:04,160 --> 00:25:08,150  
Were you aware of all of  
the politics at that time?

406

00:25:08,150 --> 00:25:12,560

Politics is a very  
broad term, and I'll

407

00:25:12,560 --> 00:25:14,840

begin the answer by this way.

408

00:25:14,840 --> 00:25:17,850

I was aware of the  
American politics.

409

00:25:17,850 --> 00:25:18,770

OK.

410

00:25:18,770 --> 00:25:25,820

President Harry Truman made an  
embargo on all men and material

411

00:25:25,820 --> 00:25:28,400

to go to the emerging  
state of Israel,

412

00:25:28,400 --> 00:25:30,720

whether it was  
Palestine before May 15,

413

00:25:30,720 --> 00:25:33,980

'48 already Israel an embargo--

414

00:25:33,980 --> 00:25:37,100

actually, the embargo  
was lifted after May 15.

415

00:25:37,100 --> 00:25:40,610

The embargo was about when  
the British mandate was still

416

00:25:40,610 --> 00:25:41,300

there.

417

00:25:41,300 --> 00:25:44,330

And the embargo was on

Palestinians as well.

418  
00:25:44,330 --> 00:25:45,470  
Actually, they were Arabs.

419  
00:25:45,470 --> 00:25:48,440  
They weren't called  
Palestinians then.

420  
00:25:48,440 --> 00:25:52,025  
The Jews were the Palestinians,  
but that's a whole other story.

421  
00:25:52,025 --> 00:25:56,180

422  
00:25:56,180 --> 00:26:00,080  
And I was told by Doctor  
Degani not to tell anybody,

423  
00:26:00,080 --> 00:26:06,950  
because we could be arrested  
and put on trial for breaking

424  
00:26:06,950 --> 00:26:08,330  
the embargo.

425  
00:26:08,330 --> 00:26:11,630  
So the only one who knew  
was my mother and brother,

426  
00:26:11,630 --> 00:26:15,680  
and they didn't tell  
anybody in the family.

427  
00:26:15,680 --> 00:26:16,970  
That's what I knew about--

428  
00:26:16,970 --> 00:26:18,120  
or their friends.

429  
00:26:18,120 --> 00:26:20,130

That's what I knew  
about American politics.

430  
00:26:20,130 --> 00:26:20,630  
OK.

431  
00:26:20,630 --> 00:26:26,810  
About European or British  
or Israeli politics,

432  
00:26:26,810 --> 00:26:27,870  
I knew nothing.

433  
00:26:27,870 --> 00:26:28,370  
OK.

434  
00:26:28,370 --> 00:26:31,210

435  
00:26:31,210 --> 00:26:31,710  
All right.

436  
00:26:31,710 --> 00:26:32,670  
Sounds good.

437  
00:26:32,670 --> 00:26:39,600  
Then in early 1948 when  
the ship left Brooklyn,

438  
00:26:39,600 --> 00:26:43,980  
I was on board as  
a third engineer.

439  
00:26:43,980 --> 00:26:48,840  
And most of the crew  
were Jews, but not all.

440  
00:26:48,840 --> 00:26:52,710  
The captain was a  
paid American Italian

441  
00:26:52,710 --> 00:26:56,040

with good experience as  
a captain in the American

442  
00:26:56,040 --> 00:26:57,150  
Merchant Marine.

443  
00:26:57,150 --> 00:27:01,260  
His name was Captain Maltese.

444  
00:27:01,260 --> 00:27:05,520  
M-A-L-T-E-S-E, I think.

445  
00:27:05,520 --> 00:27:11,850  
And it took us 31 days  
to cross from Brooklyn

446  
00:27:11,850 --> 00:27:13,710  
to the port of Marseilles.

447  
00:27:13,710 --> 00:27:16,830  
That's a very long time  
for an ocean voyage.

448  
00:27:16,830 --> 00:27:19,080  
We had breakdowns at sea.

449  
00:27:19,080 --> 00:27:22,650  
It was a difficult crossing.

450  
00:27:22,650 --> 00:27:26,200  
We had on board  
a group of young,

451  
00:27:26,200 --> 00:27:32,430  
idealistic Zionists  
from Hashomer Hatzair,

452  
00:27:32,430 --> 00:27:36,600  
and they called  
themselves [NON-ENGLISH]..

453  
00:27:36,600 --> 00:27:41,610

And they became the people  
who established kibbutz

454  
00:27:41,610 --> 00:27:44,730  
Sasa in the north of Israel.

455  
00:27:44,730 --> 00:27:50,010  
And that was the trip  
across the Atlantic

456  
00:27:50,010 --> 00:27:53,310  
and into the port of  
Marseilles in France.

457  
00:27:53,310 --> 00:27:55,950  
And then in Marseilles--

458  
00:27:55,950 --> 00:27:57,240  
I forget how long we stayed.

459  
00:27:57,240 --> 00:27:58,560  
A week or two.

460  
00:27:58,560 --> 00:28:01,605  
But there were [NON-ENGLISH]  
there also from--

461  
00:28:01,605 --> 00:28:04,650

462  
00:28:04,650 --> 00:28:09,120  
could have been close  
to May 15 by then.

463  
00:28:09,120 --> 00:28:11,220  
Can you tell me a  
little bit about what

464  
00:28:11,220 --> 00:28:13,950  
the atmosphere on the boat  
was like during the crossing

465



00:28:13,950 --> 00:28:18,480  
to Europe, and the  
relationships among the Jews

466  
00:28:18,480 --> 00:28:23,280  
from Palestine, the young  
Zionists, the Americans,

467  
00:28:23,280 --> 00:28:24,840  
the Jews and the non-Jews?

468  
00:28:24,840 --> 00:28:28,410  
How did that all work?

469  
00:28:28,410 --> 00:28:30,630  
Well, I can tell  
you very little,

470  
00:28:30,630 --> 00:28:37,050  
because I worked shifts  
in the engine room.

471  
00:28:37,050 --> 00:28:43,650  
And when I was off duty, it  
was time to eat or sleep.

472  
00:28:43,650 --> 00:28:53,244  
And I personally had  
very little interaction

473  
00:28:53,244 --> 00:28:58,440  
with the other people on  
the ship except the men

474  
00:28:58,440 --> 00:29:01,800  
on my watch who worked  
for me, because I

475  
00:29:01,800 --> 00:29:06,810  
was the officer on watch, and  
my fellow engineering officers.

476  
00:29:06,810 --> 00:29:09,060

I had very little contact.

477  
00:29:09,060 --> 00:29:12,180  
So I really can't  
say anything about

478  
00:29:12,180 --> 00:29:16,380  
interpersonal relationships  
on board the Mala.

479  
00:29:16,380 --> 00:29:18,600  
All right.

480  
00:29:18,600 --> 00:29:19,260  
So-- I'm sorry.

481  
00:29:19,260 --> 00:29:21,180  
You were-- you had  
arrived in Marseilles,

482  
00:29:21,180 --> 00:29:22,850  
and then you were  
going someplace else.

483  
00:29:22,850 --> 00:29:23,350  
Yeah.

484  
00:29:23,350 --> 00:29:27,630  
So then a shaliah  
from Israel employed

485  
00:29:27,630 --> 00:29:31,890  
a lot of French carpenters,  
and they built the bunks

486  
00:29:31,890 --> 00:29:36,900  
to be able to make the  
Mala capable of carrying

487  
00:29:36,900 --> 00:29:40,440  
about 1,400 survivors.

488

00:29:40,440 --> 00:29:42,760

And then after a  
couple of weeks--

489

00:29:42,760 --> 00:29:44,580

I don't remember how long--

490

00:29:44,580 --> 00:29:47,960

we sailed the ship  
from Marseilles

491

00:29:47,960 --> 00:29:54,620

to La Ciotat, a small  
town on the Mediterranean.

492

00:29:54,620 --> 00:30:00,290

Now it's a luxury riviera  
town, but at that time

493

00:30:00,290 --> 00:30:05,130

it was a shipyard working town.

494

00:30:05,130 --> 00:30:07,790

And there was a shipyard  
there, and we went there

495

00:30:07,790 --> 00:30:12,560

for further work and  
repairs on the Mala.

496

00:30:12,560 --> 00:30:18,770

And it was in La Ciotat  
that the ship in one night

497

00:30:18,770 --> 00:30:25,100

was loaded with about  
1,400 Holocaust survivors

498

00:30:25,100 --> 00:30:30,690

for the trip to Israel.

499

00:30:30,690 --> 00:30:33,530

And at that time--

it was after May 15

500  
00:30:33,530 --> 00:30:35,240  
and the state has been declared.

501  
00:30:35,240 --> 00:30:39,020  
And we did not have to  
run a British blockade,

502  
00:30:39,020 --> 00:30:42,980  
but we could sail freely  
into the port of Haifa,

503  
00:30:42,980 --> 00:30:44,090  
which we did.

504  
00:30:44,090 --> 00:30:47,960  
And on the dock in  
the port of Haifa,

505  
00:30:47,960 --> 00:30:49,700  
there were people from the--

506  
00:30:49,700 --> 00:30:53,540  
the war was going on full  
force, the war of independence.

507  
00:30:53,540 --> 00:30:55,790  
There were soldiers  
from the Israeli army.

508  
00:30:55,790 --> 00:30:57,860  
There were people from  
the [NON-ENGLISH],,

509  
00:30:57,860 --> 00:31:01,460  
the Jewish agency, kibbutzniks.

510  
00:31:01,460 --> 00:31:11,390  
And the survivors were very well  
received, and the young were--

511

00:31:11,390 --> 00:31:13,640  
the young men were  
recruited into the army

512  
00:31:13,640 --> 00:31:15,290  
right on the dock.

513  
00:31:15,290 --> 00:31:18,290  
And other people  
went to kibbutzim

514  
00:31:18,290 --> 00:31:23,430  
and they were well received.

515  
00:31:23,430 --> 00:31:29,000  
And all of them passed  
through a big warehouse

516  
00:31:29,000 --> 00:31:37,040  
that was set up to spray  
for bugs and disease,

517  
00:31:37,040 --> 00:31:40,040  
because everyone was living  
in such close quarters

518  
00:31:40,040 --> 00:31:45,620  
and there was a lot  
of lice in the hair

519  
00:31:45,620 --> 00:31:48,800  
and clothing and skin  
of the survivors,

520  
00:31:48,800 --> 00:31:52,070  
and that was cleaned  
off in this warehouse

521  
00:31:52,070 --> 00:31:54,950  
before they went on  
buses to be taken

522  
00:31:54,950 --> 00:31:57,625

to various locations in Israel.

523

00:31:57,625 --> 00:32:00,680

Can we go back a  
minute, back to Europe

524

00:32:00,680 --> 00:32:05,360

when the refugees, the survivors  
are arriving at the boat?

525

00:32:05,360 --> 00:32:09,005

Do you know where  
they were from,

526

00:32:09,005 --> 00:32:14,430

what country they were living  
in displaced persons camps in?

527

00:32:14,430 --> 00:32:15,550

I don't know.

528

00:32:15,550 --> 00:32:16,910

OK.

529

00:32:16,910 --> 00:32:18,680

And you said that  
they were loaded

530

00:32:18,680 --> 00:32:21,740

onto the boat in a very  
short amount of time.

531

00:32:21,740 --> 00:32:23,380

Were you a part of that process?

532

00:32:23,380 --> 00:32:24,800

What was that process like?

533

00:32:24,800 --> 00:32:28,670

I was not part of that process,  
but I witnessed the process.

534

00:32:28,670 --> 00:32:33,140

I took a couple of  
photographs of the process.

535

00:32:33,140 --> 00:32:37,400

The displaced  
persons camp had been

536

00:32:37,400 --> 00:32:43,430

within an hour or two drive  
time from the port of La Ciotat.

537

00:32:43,430 --> 00:32:45,890

So it was in the  
South of France.

538

00:32:45,890 --> 00:32:56,820

And on the dock in the  
shipyard was a table with four

539

00:32:56,820 --> 00:32:59,160

or five people around the table.

540

00:32:59,160 --> 00:33:03,270

Around that table was  
the shaliah from Israel,

541

00:33:03,270 --> 00:33:09,810

the manager of the shipyard  
where the ship was,

542

00:33:09,810 --> 00:33:13,650

and the mayor of the  
town of La Ciotat.

543

00:33:13,650 --> 00:33:20,010

And I understand-- but I  
didn't see it as such--

544

00:33:20,010 --> 00:33:21,420

but I understand--

545

00:33:21,420 --> 00:33:25,740

I was told at the time  
that money passed hands

546  
00:33:25,740 --> 00:33:29,190  
from the Israeli side  
to the French side

547  
00:33:29,190 --> 00:33:36,030  
to facilitate the loading of the  
ship with undocumented people,

548  
00:33:36,030 --> 00:33:39,570  
no passports, no visas,  
many with the numbers

549  
00:33:39,570 --> 00:33:45,030  
on their arms to get  
them on board the ship.

550  
00:33:45,030 --> 00:33:52,905  
And they had very little  
baggage, no luggage.

551  
00:33:52,905 --> 00:33:56,790

552  
00:33:56,790 --> 00:33:59,760  
But there was a very  
interesting incident,

553  
00:33:59,760 --> 00:34:02,580  
and that was about  
baby carriages.

554  
00:34:02,580 --> 00:34:08,489  
The Israeli shaliah did not  
want to put the baby carriages

555  
00:34:08,489 --> 00:34:11,100  
on the ship, because they  
took up a lot of room.

556  
00:34:11,100 --> 00:34:14,679



And the mothers said,  
without the baby carriages,

557  
00:34:14,679 --> 00:34:16,290  
we're not going.

558  
00:34:16,290 --> 00:34:19,199  
And so the mothers won,  
and the baby carriages--

559  
00:34:19,199 --> 00:34:22,560  
a place was found to  
store them on deck.

560  
00:34:22,560 --> 00:34:25,310

561  
00:34:25,310 --> 00:34:29,389  
Were the survivors a  
mixed group of people?

562  
00:34:29,389 --> 00:34:32,210  
Children, elderly, families?

563  
00:34:32,210 --> 00:34:33,380  
Yes.

564  
00:34:33,380 --> 00:34:35,719  
Yes.

565  
00:34:35,719 --> 00:34:37,820  
Many children.

566  
00:34:37,820 --> 00:34:41,000  
Many elderly families.

567  
00:34:41,000 --> 00:34:43,550  
A cross-section of society, yes.

568  
00:34:43,550 --> 00:34:44,719  
Mm-hmm.

569

00:34:44,719 --> 00:34:48,889  
And once you have 1,400 people  
on this boat, what was it like?

570

00:34:48,889 --> 00:34:50,840  
I imagine it was very crowded.

571

00:34:50,840 --> 00:34:55,909  
But how did it feel to be  
on the boat at that time?

572

00:34:55,909 --> 00:35:00,230  
Well, I had my job  
in the engine room,

573

00:35:00,230 --> 00:35:04,220  
and I spent many hours there,  
way beyond the standard hours

574

00:35:04,220 --> 00:35:10,070  
because the equipment needed  
repairs and adjustments

575

00:35:10,070 --> 00:35:11,510  
all the time.

576

00:35:11,510 --> 00:35:19,540  
And the crew-- we  
had crew quarters.

577

00:35:19,540 --> 00:35:28,510  
I think I was in a room with  
the three other engineers.

578

00:35:28,510 --> 00:35:35,740  
And we had regular meals  
and access to a shower,

579

00:35:35,740 --> 00:35:43,600  
and so I had very little  
contact with the refugees

580

00:35:43,600 --> 00:35:44,620  
on board the ship.

581  
00:35:44,620 --> 00:35:46,200  
I did my work.

582  
00:35:46,200 --> 00:35:48,410  
I went to my room.

583  
00:35:48,410 --> 00:35:49,960  
I had my meals.

584  
00:35:49,960 --> 00:35:53,320  
And I had-- and  
another factor was

585  
00:35:53,320 --> 00:35:57,160  
I did not have a common  
language with the refugees.

586  
00:35:57,160 --> 00:36:04,510  
The language with the  
refugees was mostly Yiddish,

587  
00:36:04,510 --> 00:36:12,040  
so I can't really comment  
on interpersonal association

588  
00:36:12,040 --> 00:36:13,600  
with refugees.

589  
00:36:13,600 --> 00:36:15,100  
OK.

590  
00:36:15,100 --> 00:36:19,240  
Do you know anything about the  
administration of the boat?

591  
00:36:19,240 --> 00:36:25,000  
How-- where-- how the  
refugees were fed while

592

00:36:25,000 --> 00:36:27,700  
on the boat, any of that?

593  
00:36:27,700 --> 00:36:30,310  
Yes, I know a little.

594  
00:36:30,310 --> 00:36:36,860  
I believe there was flour  
on the boat to bake bread,

595  
00:36:36,860 --> 00:36:41,980  
and there were  
ingredients to make soup.

596  
00:36:41,980 --> 00:36:48,910  
And the soup was in big  
buckets, the kind of buckets

597  
00:36:48,910 --> 00:36:52,210  
that you use for  
mopping the floor.

598  
00:36:52,210 --> 00:37:00,010  
And [NON-ENGLISH] would go into  
the holes where the refugees

599  
00:37:00,010 --> 00:37:00,850  
were.

600  
00:37:00,850 --> 00:37:04,720  
Many of the young ones were  
on deck and slept on deck,

601  
00:37:04,720 --> 00:37:08,410  
but the majority of the  
1,400 were below deck.

602  
00:37:08,410 --> 00:37:11,830  
And they would go down there  
with these buckets of soup

603  
00:37:11,830 --> 00:37:19,870  
and ladle it out into the

cups that each refugee had.

604  
00:37:19,870 --> 00:37:24,350  
And that was their  
food, soup and bread.

605  
00:37:24,350 --> 00:37:25,720  
OK.

606  
00:37:25,720 --> 00:37:29,590  
How long was the journey  
from France to Palestine?

607  
00:37:29,590 --> 00:37:33,350  
I don't remember exactly, but  
between seven and nine days.

608  
00:37:33,350 --> 00:37:33,850  
OK.

609  
00:37:33,850 --> 00:37:36,838

610  
00:37:36,838 --> 00:37:38,380  
And can you tell me  
a little bit more

611  
00:37:38,380 --> 00:37:41,170  
about the arrival in Haifa?

612  
00:37:41,170 --> 00:37:43,660  
I guess, again, you said  
they were received well.

613  
00:37:43,660 --> 00:37:48,010  
So was there excitement or--

614  
00:37:48,010 --> 00:37:49,480  
what was the atmosphere like?

615  
00:37:49,480 --> 00:37:50,740  
Yes, there was excitement.

616  
00:37:50,740 --> 00:37:58,750  
In fact, from the day before  
when the refugees were

617  
00:37:58,750 --> 00:38:05,170  
told that you'll soon  
be inside of Palestine,

618  
00:38:05,170 --> 00:38:09,910  
many came up on deck  
in large numbers,

619  
00:38:09,910 --> 00:38:16,000  
and the deck was crowded with  
people along the railing,

620  
00:38:16,000 --> 00:38:21,130  
trying to get a  
glimpse of Israel.

621  
00:38:21,130 --> 00:38:25,330  
And so the excitement  
was already on the ship

622  
00:38:25,330 --> 00:38:26,740  
before we got there.

623  
00:38:26,740 --> 00:38:28,750  
And when we did get  
there, there was

624  
00:38:28,750 --> 00:38:36,370  
a lot of smiling and happiness  
and tears of joy, yes.

625  
00:38:36,370 --> 00:38:37,930  
Mm-hmm.

626  
00:38:37,930 --> 00:38:40,233  
What date did you arrive--

627

00:38:40,233 --> 00:38:40,900  
do you remember?

628  
00:38:40,900 --> 00:38:43,570  
Because if Israel was  
declared a state on May 15--

629  
00:38:43,570 --> 00:38:45,250  
I don't remember the  
date, but it was--

630  
00:38:45,250 --> 00:38:48,340

631  
00:38:48,340 --> 00:38:53,090  
could have been in June,  
the summer of 1948.

632  
00:38:53,090 --> 00:38:53,590  
OK.

633  
00:38:53,590 --> 00:38:56,570

634  
00:38:56,570 --> 00:38:59,660  
When you set sail from  
the United States,

635  
00:38:59,660 --> 00:39:02,390  
the state of Israel had  
not been declared yet.

636  
00:39:02,390 --> 00:39:05,000  
Were there preparations  
done by the crew on the boat

637  
00:39:05,000 --> 00:39:09,335  
to deal with running  
a British blockade?

638  
00:39:09,335 --> 00:39:10,230  
A little louder.

639

00:39:10,230 --> 00:39:12,380

Was there what on the boat?

640

00:39:12,380 --> 00:39:15,320

Did you-- did the crew  
prepare for having

641

00:39:15,320 --> 00:39:17,120

to run a British blockade?

642

00:39:17,120 --> 00:39:21,305

Were their practices and--

643

00:39:21,305 --> 00:39:23,130

We were prepared to--

644

00:39:23,130 --> 00:39:27,440

and this is-- we were prepared.

645

00:39:27,440 --> 00:39:31,010

We were prepared to  
run a Jewish blockade.

646

00:39:31,010 --> 00:39:32,810

This may not be  
the week we left,

647

00:39:32,810 --> 00:39:35,600

but I was on that ship  
weekends when I was still

648

00:39:35,600 --> 00:39:38,960

a cadet in late 1947.

649

00:39:38,960 --> 00:39:46,130

And then, of course, the  
blockade was very strong.

650

00:39:46,130 --> 00:39:48,440

The ship that we  
were told a lot about



651

00:39:48,440 --> 00:39:56,240  
was Exodus 47, which had  
about 4,500 refugees on it,

652

00:39:56,240 --> 00:39:58,370  
and was sent back to Germany.

653

00:39:58,370 --> 00:40:01,070  
That made a lot of  
headlines around the world.

654

00:40:01,070 --> 00:40:05,090  
And of course, we knew about  
it and were told about it

655

00:40:05,090 --> 00:40:08,090  
to prepare for  
running a blockade.

656

00:40:08,090 --> 00:40:11,450  
But fortunately,  
it was after May 15

657

00:40:11,450 --> 00:40:13,370  
and there was no blockade.

658

00:40:13,370 --> 00:40:16,460  
So you were quite young  
at this time, right?

659

00:40:16,460 --> 00:40:17,105  
Late teen--

660

00:40:17,105 --> 00:40:20,360  
I was 19 when I started  
and 20 when I finished.

661

00:40:20,360 --> 00:40:21,530  
20 when you finished.

662

00:40:21,530 --> 00:40:23,540  
Did you have a

sense of the danger

663

00:40:23,540 --> 00:40:27,920

when you began this  
project, what sort of danger

664

00:40:27,920 --> 00:40:29,090

you would be taking on?

665

00:40:29,090 --> 00:40:32,510

666

00:40:32,510 --> 00:40:36,500

I didn't hear you completely,  
but I had no sense of danger.

667

00:40:36,500 --> 00:40:37,550

For me, it was--

668

00:40:37,550 --> 00:40:40,040

for me, it was a job.

669

00:40:40,040 --> 00:40:41,070

I was a volunteer.

670

00:40:41,070 --> 00:40:42,095

I wasn't getting paid.

671

00:40:42,095 --> 00:40:42,860

[LAUGHS]

672

00:40:42,860 --> 00:40:47,500

But it was a job  
meaning something to do.

673

00:40:47,500 --> 00:40:50,660

And because of my training  
at the Maritime Academy,

674

00:40:50,660 --> 00:40:51,711

I knew how to do it.

675

00:40:51,711 --> 00:40:52,211

Mm-hmm.

676

00:40:52,211 --> 00:40:56,400

677

00:40:56,400 --> 00:40:56,900

All right.

678

00:40:56,900 --> 00:40:57,950

Great.

679

00:40:57,950 --> 00:41:00,410

Let's go back to your arrival--

680

00:41:00,410 --> 00:41:02,600

the boat's arrival in Haifa.

681

00:41:02,600 --> 00:41:06,050

What happens to the DPs and  
what happens to the crew?

682

00:41:06,050 --> 00:41:09,570

683

00:41:09,570 --> 00:41:13,530

Well, as I said before,  
the DPs, the young men

684

00:41:13,530 --> 00:41:18,150

were recruited into the  
army right on the dock.

685

00:41:18,150 --> 00:41:20,820

There were representatives  
from kibbutzim

686

00:41:20,820 --> 00:41:24,210

who took people who wanted to  
go to live in the kibbutzim.

687

00:41:24,210 --> 00:41:28,185  
And other people could  
have had friends or family.

688  
00:41:28,185 --> 00:41:35,910  
I really was not involved  
in how the refugees would

689  
00:41:35,910 --> 00:41:38,050  
begin their life in Israel.

690  
00:41:38,050 --> 00:41:43,980  
But the Israelis, [NON-ENGLISH],,  
and others were very organized

691  
00:41:43,980 --> 00:41:46,590  
about how to do it.

692  
00:41:46,590 --> 00:41:51,330  
And I personally  
had family in Haifa.

693  
00:41:51,330 --> 00:41:57,150  
I told you about  
my uncle before who

694  
00:41:57,150 --> 00:42:01,050  
in Israel was in Europe  
at the end of World War II

695  
00:42:01,050 --> 00:42:02,820  
and during World War II.

696  
00:42:02,820 --> 00:42:06,540  
He found some family  
members, and they

697  
00:42:06,540 --> 00:42:09,810  
had gone after World  
War II to Israel,

698  
00:42:09,810 --> 00:42:12,640  
and they lived in Haifa.

699  
00:42:12,640 --> 00:42:14,430  
And I contacted them.

700  
00:42:14,430 --> 00:42:19,510  
They were very glad to hear  
from an American relative.

701  
00:42:19,510 --> 00:42:24,300  
And they invited me to stay  
in their home, and I did.

702  
00:42:24,300 --> 00:42:28,240  
And I'll tell you their  
family name, Pergament.

703  
00:42:28,240 --> 00:42:30,830

704  
00:42:30,830 --> 00:42:32,690  
Can you spell that?

705  
00:42:32,690 --> 00:42:38,780  
P-E-R-G-A-M-E-N-T.

706  
00:42:38,780 --> 00:42:39,350  
Thank you.

707  
00:42:39,350 --> 00:42:46,880  
And I think Mr. Pergament was  
an official in the municipality

708  
00:42:46,880 --> 00:42:50,600  
of Haifa, but I'm not sure.

709  
00:42:50,600 --> 00:42:56,070  
How were you able to  
communicate with this family?

710  
00:42:56,070 --> 00:42:57,870  
They must have  
known some English.

711  
00:42:57,870 --> 00:42:59,190  
OK.

712  
00:42:59,190 --> 00:43:04,110  
Because I didn't know any Hebrew  
and I didn't know any Yiddish.

713  
00:43:04,110 --> 00:43:06,180  
They must have  
known some English.

714  
00:43:06,180 --> 00:43:07,380  
Yes, now I remember.

715  
00:43:07,380 --> 00:43:09,240  
Their children knew English.

716  
00:43:09,240 --> 00:43:11,670  
OK.

717  
00:43:11,670 --> 00:43:14,670  
Now I'll tell you a  
funny story about staying

718  
00:43:14,670 --> 00:43:21,810  
with the Pergaments in a high  
rise apartment, as I remember,

719  
00:43:21,810 --> 00:43:23,460  
in the Hadar.

720  
00:43:23,460 --> 00:43:26,760  
The Hadar was the  
middle level of Haifa.

721  
00:43:26,760 --> 00:43:31,860  
The Carmel at the top really  
hadn't been built up much then.

722  
00:43:31,860 --> 00:43:40,800  
Anyway, it was wartime, and

I'm exhausted from working on--

723

00:43:40,800 --> 00:43:44,460  
even though I was staying  
with them at night,

724

00:43:44,460 --> 00:43:48,390  
I went back to the ship to work  
on the ship during the day,

725

00:43:48,390 --> 00:43:54,810  
and it's nighttime,  
and alarms go off

726

00:43:54,810 --> 00:43:56,610  
that there's an air raid.

727

00:43:56,610 --> 00:44:00,450  
And they come to me where  
I'm sleeping and wake me up

728

00:44:00,450 --> 00:44:04,770  
and say, we're all going down  
to the shelter down below.

729

00:44:04,770 --> 00:44:07,770  
And I said, I'm  
staying right here.

730

00:44:07,770 --> 00:44:11,460  
I'm not going anywhere,  
because I was just too

731

00:44:11,460 --> 00:44:14,580  
tired to get up and walk down.

732

00:44:14,580 --> 00:44:19,200  
So that's just a funny  
sideline of life in Israel

733

00:44:19,200 --> 00:44:21,430  
during the war of independence.

734

00:44:21,430 --> 00:44:23,100

Yeah, so how long  
were you in Israel?

735

00:44:23,100 --> 00:44:25,800

736

00:44:25,800 --> 00:44:29,640

I don't remember exactly,  
but maybe a month.

737

00:44:29,640 --> 00:44:35,520

And we were fixing up the ship  
to bring it back to La Ciotat

738

00:44:35,520 --> 00:44:41,820

and take a second load  
of 1,400 survivors, which

739

00:44:41,820 --> 00:44:43,830

we did later that summer.

740

00:44:43,830 --> 00:44:46,410

Or by then, perhaps  
it was September.

741

00:44:46,410 --> 00:44:47,310

Mm-hmm.

742

00:44:47,310 --> 00:44:51,040

Was that a similar experience  
for you the second time?

743

00:44:51,040 --> 00:44:53,070

Very similar.

744

00:44:53,070 --> 00:44:54,450

I mean, the crowding--

745

00:44:54,450 --> 00:44:58,300

meaning it was just as crowded.



746  
00:44:58,300 --> 00:45:03,970  
But of course, I'm sure  
among the refugees,

747  
00:45:03,970 --> 00:45:05,800  
there was a different sense of--

748  
00:45:05,800 --> 00:45:09,400

749  
00:45:09,400 --> 00:45:11,590  
the British had been out  
a few months already.

750  
00:45:11,590 --> 00:45:15,040  
Israel was an established  
state recognized

751  
00:45:15,040 --> 00:45:19,270  
by the United States, Russia,  
and other major countries.

752  
00:45:19,270 --> 00:45:21,397  
So that kind of attitude--  
we among the crew

753  
00:45:21,397 --> 00:45:22,480  
had that kind of attitude.

754  
00:45:22,480 --> 00:45:26,440  
I'm sure the refugees  
had that attitude too,

755  
00:45:26,440 --> 00:45:30,010  
that it was a safer journey.

756  
00:45:30,010 --> 00:45:31,060  
Mm-hmm.

757  
00:45:31,060 --> 00:45:33,910  
Do you know if on  
the second journey--

758  
00:45:33,910 --> 00:45:35,560  
or I guess even the first--

759  
00:45:35,560 --> 00:45:39,340  
if the state of Israel  
had been established,

760  
00:45:39,340 --> 00:45:41,980  
would they have required  
papers to get into Israel?

761  
00:45:41,980 --> 00:45:45,700  
Or were they still considered  
sort of illegal immigrants?

762  
00:45:45,700 --> 00:45:47,230  
Nobody required papers.

763  
00:45:47,230 --> 00:45:48,160  
OK.

764  
00:45:48,160 --> 00:45:52,070  
Not in the first journey  
or the second journey.

765  
00:45:52,070 --> 00:45:53,795  
You only had to  
say you were a Jew.

766  
00:45:53,795 --> 00:45:54,295  
OK.

767  
00:45:54,295 --> 00:45:58,810

768  
00:45:58,810 --> 00:46:00,690  
And so you did two trips?

769  
00:46:00,690 --> 00:46:02,650  
Is that-- were there more?

770  
00:46:02,650 --> 00:46:05,180  
Only two trips.

771  
00:46:05,180 --> 00:46:09,400  
After that, I think  
the Mala was--

772  
00:46:09,400 --> 00:46:16,690  
it may have served some small  
work in the Israeli maritime

773  
00:46:16,690 --> 00:46:19,760  
economy, but not for very long.

774  
00:46:19,760 --> 00:46:27,580  
I think it was soon junked  
after its two trips in 1948.

775  
00:46:27,580 --> 00:46:31,990  
What did you do when  
the boat was junked?

776  
00:46:31,990 --> 00:46:34,600  
Well, I wasn't there.

777  
00:46:34,600 --> 00:46:44,240  
When I left the Mala, I went  
back to the United States

778  
00:46:44,240 --> 00:46:50,300  
and did what I told  
Angelo Mille a few years--

779  
00:46:50,300 --> 00:46:52,880  
two years before in 1947.

780  
00:46:52,880 --> 00:46:56,090  
I went to work on  
American merchant ships

781  
00:46:56,090 --> 00:46:59,000  
and earned a lot

of money which I

782

00:46:59,000 --> 00:47:02,036

have brought home to my mother.

783

00:47:02,036 --> 00:47:05,952

How did you get back

to the United States?

784

00:47:05,952 --> 00:47:15,480

[SIGH] I flew back.

785

00:47:15,480 --> 00:47:17,780

OK.

786

00:47:17,780 --> 00:47:20,390

I'll tell you why it took

me so long to answer.

787

00:47:20,390 --> 00:47:21,230

Mm-hmm.

788

00:47:21,230 --> 00:47:25,670

When I went on board

the Mala in Brooklyn,

789

00:47:25,670 --> 00:47:32,090

I did not have an American

passport or any papers

790

00:47:32,090 --> 00:47:35,690

identifying me as anything.

791

00:47:35,690 --> 00:47:39,350

When I wanted to go back

to the United States,

792

00:47:39,350 --> 00:47:42,120

I knew that wasn't good enough.

793

00:47:42,120 --> 00:47:48,830

So I went in Marseilles

to the American Council

794

00:47:48,830 --> 00:47:55,790  
and I told him that I'm a  
citizen of the United States.

795

00:47:55,790 --> 00:47:59,930  
I don't have a passport,  
and I want to go home.

796

00:47:59,930 --> 00:48:02,940  
And he knew exactly  
what I was doing there.

797

00:48:02,940 --> 00:48:05,670  
He told me I didn't  
have to tell him.

798

00:48:05,670 --> 00:48:10,760  
And he said, you're lucky  
the embargo was lifted.

799

00:48:10,760 --> 00:48:14,125

800

00:48:14,125 --> 00:48:20,090  
You're not going to be  
harassed in any way.

801

00:48:20,090 --> 00:48:23,480  
But I'm not giving  
you a passport.

802

00:48:23,480 --> 00:48:25,310  
I'm giving you a letter.

803

00:48:25,310 --> 00:48:30,240  
And the letter says  
in 30 days, you

804

00:48:30,240 --> 00:48:32,820  
must go back to  
the United States.

805  
00:48:32,820 --> 00:48:37,740  
It's good for no  
travel anywhere else.

806  
00:48:37,740 --> 00:48:38,760  
Good luck.

807  
00:48:38,760 --> 00:48:41,490  
And that's how I came  
back to the United States,

808  
00:48:41,490 --> 00:48:47,550  
with a letter from the  
consulate in Marseilles.

809  
00:48:47,550 --> 00:48:50,790  
How did you get from  
Palestine back to Marseilles?

810  
00:48:50,790 --> 00:48:51,420  
On a boat?

811  
00:48:51,420 --> 00:48:54,770

812  
00:48:54,770 --> 00:48:55,370  
Yes.

813  
00:48:55,370 --> 00:48:55,970  
OK.

814  
00:48:55,970 --> 00:49:01,220  
I did that on the  
second trip, before we--

815  
00:49:01,220 --> 00:49:05,290

816  
00:49:05,290 --> 00:49:06,750  
gee, you ask a  
very good question.

817  
00:49:06,750 --> 00:49:07,552  
[LAUGHS]

818  
00:49:07,552 --> 00:49:11,410

819  
00:49:11,410 --> 00:49:16,060  
I remember that discussion  
in Marseilles very clearly.

820  
00:49:16,060 --> 00:49:22,090

821  
00:49:22,090 --> 00:49:23,800  
Yes.

822  
00:49:23,800 --> 00:49:24,730  
I went as--

823  
00:49:24,730 --> 00:49:28,132

824  
00:49:28,132 --> 00:49:33,660  
I went as a  
passenger from Israel

825  
00:49:33,660 --> 00:49:36,620  
on one of the Aliyah Bet ships,  
one of the other Aliyah Bet

826  
00:49:36,620 --> 00:49:38,610  
ships that was still operating.

827  
00:49:38,610 --> 00:49:43,290  
I went as a passenger back  
to the South of France.

828  
00:49:43,290 --> 00:49:45,630  
OK.

829

00:49:45,630 --> 00:49:48,060  
And once you got back  
to the United States,

830  
00:49:48,060 --> 00:49:52,620  
you joined the Merchant  
Marines and had a career.

831  
00:49:52,620 --> 00:49:58,110  
Did you continue to stay  
involved in Israeli--

832  
00:49:58,110 --> 00:50:01,500  
interested in Israeli politics?

833  
00:50:01,500 --> 00:50:06,060  
Well, I was interested  
in Israel as a country,

834  
00:50:06,060 --> 00:50:12,390  
as a place I felt connected  
with, and never the politics.

835  
00:50:12,390 --> 00:50:14,100  
I don't know what  
you mean by politics.

836  
00:50:14,100 --> 00:50:15,210  
You mean the Likud?

837  
00:50:15,210 --> 00:50:17,370  
You mean the Labor Party?

838  
00:50:17,370 --> 00:50:21,840  
I mean, I guess I  
mean, did you stay

839  
00:50:21,840 --> 00:50:25,680  
involved in keeping  
interest in it, right?

840  
00:50:25,680 --> 00:50:28,230  
So follow it in



the newspaper or--

841  
00:50:28,230 --> 00:50:32,580  
Yes, I read the  
news about Israel.

842  
00:50:32,580 --> 00:50:38,580  
I maintained an interest  
in Israel to such an extent

843  
00:50:38,580 --> 00:50:43,590  
that in 1972, I  
became an ole hadash

844  
00:50:43,590 --> 00:50:50,690  
and moved to Israel with my wife  
and two children at the time.

845  
00:50:50,690 --> 00:50:51,480  
Oh, wow.

846  
00:50:51,480 --> 00:50:53,560  
How long did you live there?

847  
00:50:53,560 --> 00:50:55,890  
Four years.

848  
00:50:55,890 --> 00:50:58,860  
And what did you  
do while in Israel?

849  
00:50:58,860 --> 00:51:02,040  
[SPEAKING HEBREW],,  
which means, would

850  
00:51:02,040 --> 00:51:03,690  
you like to continue in Hebrew?

851  
00:51:03,690 --> 00:51:06,450  
[LAUGHTER]

852  
00:51:06,450 --> 00:51:08,020

I wish, but I can't.

853  
00:51:08,020 --> 00:51:08,520  
OK.

854  
00:51:08,520 --> 00:51:09,933  
[LAUGHS]

855  
00:51:09,933 --> 00:51:13,290

856  
00:51:13,290 --> 00:51:15,580  
I told you we lived  
in Israel four years.

857  
00:51:15,580 --> 00:51:16,140  
Yeah.

858  
00:51:16,140 --> 00:51:20,910  
And I was an economic  
success in Israel.

859  
00:51:20,910 --> 00:51:24,720  
But I took my children  
when they were too late.

860  
00:51:24,720 --> 00:51:26,880  
They were too Americanized.

861  
00:51:26,880 --> 00:51:31,500  
And the three of them  
all wanted to go back.

862  
00:51:31,500 --> 00:51:37,870  
So to preserve the  
family in 1976,

863  
00:51:37,870 --> 00:51:42,510  
we came back to  
the United States.

864  
00:51:42,510 --> 00:51:43,920

All right.

865

00:51:43,920 --> 00:51:46,740

Now I'll tell you  
something else,

866

00:51:46,740 --> 00:51:48,660

because it answers  
your earlier question

867

00:51:48,660 --> 00:51:50,430

about my interest in Israel.

868

00:51:50,430 --> 00:51:52,470

After living there  
for four years

869

00:51:52,470 --> 00:51:55,260

and working in  
marketing, in Israel

870

00:51:55,260 --> 00:52:01,080

in 1972 when I was there, it  
is not the Israel of today.

871

00:52:01,080 --> 00:52:04,320

Then they were weak in  
international marketing,

872

00:52:04,320 --> 00:52:08,430

and I had had a short career  
at International Telephone

873

00:52:08,430 --> 00:52:12,150

and Telegraph where my work  
was in international marketing,

874

00:52:12,150 --> 00:52:14,070

so I knew something about it.

875

00:52:14,070 --> 00:52:19,200

And therefore, I had  
good work at a high level

876  
00:52:19,200 --> 00:52:20,850  
when I was in Israel.

877  
00:52:20,850 --> 00:52:23,520  
And when I came back  
to the United States,

878  
00:52:23,520 --> 00:52:29,670  
I continued for 30 years to  
be an American representative

879  
00:52:29,670 --> 00:52:33,780  
of Israeli manufacturers  
in the American market.

880  
00:52:33,780 --> 00:52:39,450  
So I went back and forth  
to Israel every year

881  
00:52:39,450 --> 00:52:43,170  
that I was working to  
talk to the factories I

882  
00:52:43,170 --> 00:52:44,860  
was representing.

883  
00:52:44,860 --> 00:52:51,426  
And so I stayed connected  
with Israel in a very--

884  
00:52:51,426 --> 00:52:57,390  
in a career way and being  
there once a year for 30 years

885  
00:52:57,390 --> 00:52:59,880  
besides after living  
there four years.

886  
00:52:59,880 --> 00:53:01,320  
Right.

887

00:53:01,320 --> 00:53:02,520  
Did you maintain contact--

888  
00:53:02,520 --> 00:53:05,300  
So I'll give you another  
sentence in Hebrew.

889  
00:53:05,300 --> 00:53:08,880  
[SPEAKING HEBREW],,  
which means I have

890  
00:53:08,880 --> 00:53:10,890  
a lot of friends in Israel.

891  
00:53:10,890 --> 00:53:13,050  
And I'm going in  
about 10 days' time

892  
00:53:13,050 --> 00:53:16,260  
as a volunteer, which I've  
been doing the last 10 years.

893  
00:53:16,260 --> 00:53:18,390  
And I don't go to  
help Israel anymore.

894  
00:53:18,390 --> 00:53:21,230  
I go to see my  
friends, to have fun,

895  
00:53:21,230 --> 00:53:24,560  
to enjoy a visit to a  
country I know pretty well.

896  
00:53:24,560 --> 00:53:27,420  
Mm-hmm.

897  
00:53:27,420 --> 00:53:31,140  
Did you also maintain contact  
with your mother's family

898  
00:53:31,140 --> 00:53:31,965  
in Israel?

899  
00:53:31,965 --> 00:53:36,400

900  
00:53:36,400 --> 00:53:37,160  
No.

901  
00:53:37,160 --> 00:53:40,000  
OK.

902  
00:53:40,000 --> 00:53:42,190  
To my regret.

903  
00:53:42,190 --> 00:53:46,150  
I have other family in Israel  
that were [NON-ENGLISH] from

904  
00:53:46,150 --> 00:53:51,100  
the United States, and  
they're religious Jews.

905  
00:53:51,100 --> 00:53:54,280  
They live in Har  
Nof in Yerushalayim,

906  
00:53:54,280 --> 00:53:59,860  
which is very English-speaking  
neighborhood in Jerusalem.

907  
00:53:59,860 --> 00:54:04,040  
And when I visit, I usually  
see them for Shabbat.

908  
00:54:04,040 --> 00:54:04,540  
All right.

909  
00:54:04,540 --> 00:54:05,980  
Good.

910  
00:54:05,980 --> 00:54:08,710  
When I'm in Israel, I usually  
spend one Shabbat with them.

911  
00:54:08,710 --> 00:54:12,500

912  
00:54:12,500 --> 00:54:14,930  
Can I ask you, does  
the name Mala mean

913  
00:54:14,930 --> 00:54:17,660  
anything, the name of the boat?

914  
00:54:17,660 --> 00:54:19,635  
Yes, I think it means going up.

915  
00:54:19,635 --> 00:54:20,135  
OK.

916  
00:54:20,135 --> 00:54:22,940

917  
00:54:22,940 --> 00:54:25,850  
Is there anything else  
about this experience

918  
00:54:25,850 --> 00:54:28,040  
that you feel we  
haven't touched on yet

919  
00:54:28,040 --> 00:54:29,730  
that you'd like to share?

920  
00:54:29,730 --> 00:54:32,570  
No, your interview  
has been very good.

921  
00:54:32,570 --> 00:54:36,050  
But I want to-- now I have a  
couple of questions for you.

922  
00:54:36,050 --> 00:54:37,100  
Sure.

923

00:54:37,100 --> 00:54:39,290

What is the purpose  
of this interview?

924

00:54:39,290 --> 00:54:42,890

What are you going to do  
with all this information?

925

00:54:42,890 --> 00:54:46,180

Let me wrap this up and then  
we'll have that conversation.

926

00:54:46,180 --> 00:54:47,190

Is that OK?

927

00:54:47,190 --> 00:54:47,690

Yes.

928

00:54:47,690 --> 00:54:48,190

All right.

929

00:54:48,190 --> 00:54:51,500

This is the end  
of our interview.

930

00:54:51,500 --> 00:54:52,000