

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

## **William Helmreich Oral History Collection**

**Interview with Sarah Berkowitz and Morris Berkowitz**  
**September 18, 1989**  
**RG-50.165\*0004**

## PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of an audio taped interview with Sarah Berkowitz and Morris Berkowitz, conducted by William Helmreich on September 18, 1989 as research for his book *Against all odds: Holocaust survivors and the successful lives they made in America*. The interview was given to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on Oct. 30, 1992 and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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## **SARAH BERKOWITZ AND MORRIS BERKOWITZ**

### **September 18, 1989**

WH: ...the first book you wrote was written in 1965...

SB: It was published in 1965...originally I started it in the camps. It's a story behind it. Whenever I had a chance, I wrote a few lines. I really wanted the world to know what's going on with the Jews in Europe.

WH: You were writing while you were in the camps?

SB: Yes, that was in ?Unterlose? it was a concentration camp and whenever I had a little time or chance, I wrote a few lines.

WH: So you were keeping a diary. What would have happened if they would have caught you?

SB: Well, this is exactly what I'm going to tell you. I was fearful. I knew the consequences, but I always wrote a few lines, and I kept it under my mattress, we slept on straw mattresses. One day we came back from our work, and I was informed that there was a search and whoever had something that we were not allowed to have, it was discovered, was punished severely. I ran immediately to look under my mattress and I found that little note. But I said to myself, evidently it was meant for me to destroy it. And I tore it up. However I said to myself, I will have it in mind with the first opportunity I have, I will continue, and I want to write a book, so that the world will really know what was going on. What atrocities the Germans were capable of. And when I came to the States I started slowly in Sweden when I was recovering from typhoid and different ailments, however, when I came to the States, I had my grandfather here, my mother's father, they encouraged me very much to write that book. But my English was so limited, despite the fact that before the war I did learn some basics. I would say nothing more, that I wrote it in Yiddish. And I put it away. I didn't know where to go about it, how to start, what to do.

WH: Were you married then?

SB: Yes. I had two children.

WH: Were you working?

SB: No, I stayed home...my husband had two jobs. And I knew that there was nothing I can do about it. I didn't have the means, I didn't have the people, the connections. So I put it away, for a long time until one day, quite a few years later, we came here in 1947. And...in 1962 or 1963 and our accountant came and struck up a conversation...and I told him that I had the ambition to publish a book. He said, 'Did you write it?' I said, 'Yes,

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in Yiddish.' He said, 'Well translate it for me.' I said, 'Mr. Englehardt, my English is limited.' He said, 'Just the way you are talking to me, I want you to.' And that's exactly what I did. And the publisher...immediately sent me a letter...that they would really be interested in publishing it and they did.

WH: ...so when your book came out, it was one of the earliest books that dealt with the Holocaust.

SB: Yes...

WH: How do you feel about having done these two books?

SB: Well, you know, when the war ended and I found out that I'm the sole survivor, my mother perished, my father perished, I had one sister and one brother. I said, 'What's the purpose of my life? Where am I?'

WH: ...they had all perished?

SB: My father died in the ghetto, Lodz, and my mother, my sister, went to their death in Auschwitz, and my brother later on too...so I started thinking, where am I heading? What's my purpose in life? And I don't know. At the beginning, was it worth surviving to find out that there's nobody left? But evidently the fact that the Germans were defeated, and I'm here, had such an impulse in me, that I found something to say, 'it was worthwhile, and I want to live.' And I said, 'But one thing, I committed myself to tell the world about the German atrocities.' And whenever I had the chance-I speak on the Holocaust, yes, and this is why I wrote the two books. I was not looking for money, I was not looking for glory, my main purpose was, I committed myself to tell the world about the German atrocities, so I feel I accomplished what I really wanted.

WH: Do you feel that there were some things that you said, or maybe in the way in which you said them, that were different or that are different from that which is already been written on the subject? I ask you because there are many books on the camps. Do you feel that you said it in a special way, or do you feel that you just felt that you should add your own voice to what happened?

SB: No, I feel that those two books are really my own voice.

WH: But what is unusual about them, compared to other books written on the same subject.

SB: We.. it's my autobiography, it's exactly what I,-my experiences, and in both books I said, and whenever I speak on the Holocaust I say it too, that my experiences are very similar to the experiences of the Jew who was caught in Nazism in the Nazi (inaudible),

however, we were all in different places. But it boiled down to one thing. Wherever we were, we were marked for murder.

WH: So if there were 100 books on the subject, and yours was 101, since the goal of telling the world had already been accomplished by the first hundred, why do you feel you should add your own?

SB: Alright. Because each one of us, as I said, we were all marked for murder, Hitler wanted to destroy us. Annihilation was his main aim. However, each one had a different experience, tell something, add something about the German atrocity. I'm sure that I had moments where I faced atrocities, what somebody else didn't. And each group tells about them. And it's important that we should all tell.

WH: You feel that there is an accumulated weight of evidence?

SB: Absolutely, Absolutely. Yes. I think that they now, with all the books, and with all the proof, I think the evidence is so overwhelming that those who try to deny it, they have one reason, in the back of their mind. Anti-Semitic reasons to deny the Holocaust. Otherwise, the world knows that this happened and that 6 million Jews who were wiped out because they were Jews, and those who survived, survived in a way, that you see it, and the rest see them, but nobody can see their hearts.

WH: So, the first book is called, 'Where Are My Brothers, From the Ghetto to the Gas Chambers.' Sarah Bick Berkowitz. And the second one is called, 'In Search of Ashes.'...and this is published in 1984, and the first one us in 1965...were you able to get the books reviewed...?

SB: I saw it in the 'Jewish Press,' I also saw it in the 'Emunah,'...

WH: Did you get reactions from people who read the books?...whoever read it.

SB: ...not only friends, like I went to the dentist, and the secretary and the receptionist, she said, 'You know, Sarah, I was actually with you. That's how much I enjoyed that book, wherever you went, and unfortunately it was a very tragic (inaudible).' So I got some good opinions about-yes. It's a strange story. I was not trying to be dramatic.

WH: Are you happy you did it?

SB: Very.

WH: Do you have any regrets?

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SB: No...(although) if Mr. Weitzman was alive, I would definitely go with my second book to Mr. Weit-because I felt, that he was more friend than businessman. He wanted me, he knew that this is my ambition, to tell the world. And he made it very possible for me.

WH: How did your children feel?

SB: My children were very, very proud about it.

WH: And very supportive?

SB: Very supportive. As a matter of fact, you read the book, you know each one really had a deal in encouraging me...

WH: ...of the books that you read on the Holocaust...which ones do you think the most of?

SB: Well...the book that I read by Leon Uris, who was never really in Warsaw, (inaudible) left such an impact on me, that I had to be convinced that he was not a survivor. Excellent writer...and then I started reading...by Herman Wouk, 'The Winds of War,' and I just couldn't go through with it.

WH: What about Elie Wiesel's books?

SB: Not one did I read, I don't know why. I respect him as an intellectual, but I think that he monopolizes too much the Holocaust .

WH: What do you mean, 'monopolize'?

SB: You know, constantly, one person is pushed to talk about it, and he is the one who wants to do it, you know what I mean? There are so many survivors that have stories to tell, that are capable, but there's only a small bunch of people who are always in the forefront. And I resent it to a degree. I really resent it to a degree. I respect Elie Wiesel, very much as an intellectual, but why only a few? Among the survivors there are so many that educated themselves.

WH: Why do you think that happened, that so many of the survivors that educated themselves?

SB: Well...there's one...a Congressman, Tom Lantos...I spoke to him in Washington...when we had a gathering there which was in 1983. First we had the American gathering, the World gathering is in 1981, which I attended. I try to attend all these gatherings, it's part of me.

WH: Why do you attend?

SB: I identify with them.

WH: ...do you feel differently when you are with survivors than when you are with other people?

SB: I feel very comfortable with American people. Let's put it this way. I acclimate myself from the very beginning. I tried to speak the language. As a matter of fact, today, I am more comfortable with English than I am in Polish. If I have to write a Polish letter, I say to myself, I can't believe that you went to school, you went to High school-so I'm very comfortable, however, when we are among survivors, you know, we bring up the-no matter what we talk about. We can start off with a wedding, we can start off with a beautiful dress for parties, somehow, we always reach the point when we talking about our survival, about those that didn't survive, so naturally we most comfortable among this group.

WH: Is it like that there is a feeling that if you think of it as unfinished business, something being unfinished...is there a feeling that if you review it, and review it that maybe there'll be something new, that maybe you'll get an answer to something like the answer to the question of why you survived and others didn't.

SB: Well, we have one question, and the question is nagging, since I was in camp. 'God, why did you have-You forsaken us.' This is,-as much as we believe, I come from a religious home, but we couldn't help asking the question, 'God, why have you forsaken us?' Until this day, we are Sabbath observant, I believe in God, but that does not deny the fact that I question, why did He allow it? I mean, you want to punish your children, but don't go to the point of killing 6 million.

WH: Have you ever come up with the answer to that question, even partial?

SB: No. It's always bothering me. I always feel that what happened, we were punished much too severely. I know the Satmar don't feel this way, but I'm not a Satmar-they feel we deserved it because the Jews were not religious enough.

WH: Isn't it true that the irreligious Jews came to America in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most of the religious ones stayed behind. And they got it worse than the irreligious ones who came here...so if God wanted to punish people for their sins, the ones who came here were bigger sinners.

WH: Yeh, it's the right philosophy. I agree with you however, the Satmars believe differently.

WH: If you are always asking the question, can you really believe in God?

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SB: Yes, I can believe. I'll tell you why. Even if you like the father or mother, yeh? You love them. But sometimes you don't exactly agree, and you question why did they do this or why did they-I do believe. I mean, I feel that having some belief-.

WH: You just have (inaudible) timer (inaudible).

SB: Yes, I have a (illegible) (inaudible). Yes, absolutely, I said, 'Why did you punish us so severely?' Yes, I do, I will never deny it, and my children know it, but I believe our house was and is-.

WH: Were you able to be religious right after the war?

SB: No, I wasn't. It took, after the war, as I said, I questioned why is my existence, where am I heading, what am I going to do all alone in this world, so before I decided that maybe my purpose is to tell the world about the Nazi atrocities, I was very bitter. That was the-.

WH: Sure.

SB: The period of bitterness. And I said, I questioned God and I didn't. But now, I question, but I am more into religion. That time, I questioned, and I didn't want to believe in anything. I said, 'If that's what happened, maybe I shouldn't say it, where were You?'

WH: When did you come back to it?

SB: Well that's what I'm trying to tell you. But in my heart, I was raised in a Jewish family, in a-not a fanatic-but-.

WH: Orthodox.

SB: Yes. And in my heart I knew that I could never, never be completely fearless, completely Godless. And then when I came to America, my uncle has a shul, and I saw Yiddishkeit and it sort of came back to me. And when the children were born, I decided I'm raising them in a religious way. And I send them to Hebrew Schools, they went to Central, and thank God, Cecil (?) is modern, but religious, and Florence the same thing, and Shellie, is not religious. And it hurts me. (inaudible).

WH: Is she married?

SB: She's married and...she lives in Berkeley, California.

WH: What kind of guy did she marry?

SB: A guy who is born Jewish, that's all. That's the end.



WH: He's an American.

SB: Yes. And I send them my candlesticks, to light candles, and I hope she'll oblige us and-. Shellie's pregnant now...her first. Shellie is 35, she is the youngest...her husband is...a social worker, a psychologist, he has a very good position...

WH: ...did Shellie go to Hebrew school?

SB: She graduated Central...and went to Barnard...and within the four years, there was a change, a transition. I think it was something in herself. Yeh. And I tried, my husband tried, we all tried. She is a wonderful girl, don't misunderstand me, but as far as religion,-no.

WH: Not interested.

SB: Not at all. Not only not interested, but sometimes she's even against, you know what I mean? But I hope maybe now, that she'll have a child that she'll-.

WH: ...is your husband a survivor?

SB: Yes...and he comes from a family of ten...

WH: I would like to speak to him.

SB: Yah, well if you have a second chance, if you ever-but I think he'll be most comfortable in Yiddish. As a matter of fact last year they came from the Center from the Holocaust Studies, from Avenue J, and they asked for an interview for tape. At the beginning, you know, it's very painful. It's very, very painful. And some people can do it. I mastered it, but-.

WH: Well, for me, it's more after the war that I'm interested in...what does he do?

SB: He was in business as a furrier, but about ten years ago he almost lost his vision, he has cataracts, and he has two eyes, but three surgeries, cause one surgery was not successful. And he had to give up the business. He felt, like completely useless, you know? Until three years ago somebody suggested that he come into Astoria for a few hours, there's a fur shop, in which he's managing and it keeps him so happy. He feels that he's still accomplishing something. Useful, yeh.

WH: How old is he?

SB: He's in his late 70's...

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WH: What year were you born in?

SB: 1924...

WH: You're in good health?

SB: Yes. Thank God. Not my husband, not I, I mean, if you want to complain about things, there's always a little this, a little that, but the two of us don't do it.

WH: Florence is your middle child...she's 41...and she has three girls...

SB: The oldest is named after my sister, Muira, because Florence knew what my sister meant to me...and the little one is named after my husband's sister. And Cecil has...(two girls and one boy).

WH: What does Florence's husband do?

SB: He's a teacher, and he's also an assistant professor...in college...

WH: And Cecil's husband is?

SB: In business...he's a brilliant, brilliant businessman...he, and his father and his brother, they bought the (Brown's) hotel...

WH: What is your impression of the people who are involved in the gathering of the survivors...do they monopolize it?

SB: That's what I said. It's the same. It's Benjamin Meed, which I respect, it's Elie Wiesel, and-

WH: Elie Zborowski.

SB: Yes, that's right. I respect these people very much. But I'm sure that among the survivors, that there are others that cannot come up with the amount that Benjamin Meed comes up, and the others, but they are really, people that could speak for us.

WH: How do you feel when they make a...gala dinner...at the Waldorf Astoria for example. Does it seem Okay to you? Does it seem like a good thing to do?

SB: To raise money for the Museum they are going to do-absolutely!

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- WH: Some people feel that the Holocaust should not be a cause for any kind of celebration...a commemoration in the shul is one thing, but to make a 7 course dinner, that is a contradiction.
- SB: No. If they make it to raise money for the museum, and this is one way they can do it, I really have not any-.
- WH: More power to them.
- SB: Yes. I don't feel that this is not right, no. Because, after all, the survivor, as I said, we accomplished a lot, we established ourselves, we are in business, we have families,-and we go places, we live. Right? What's in our heart we know. But still, people go to bar mitzvahs, they go to weddings, they go to elaborate place, and especially if it's a place, even if it's a dinner, they raise money, that will help the cause of the Holocaust like the museum (inaudible).
- WH: You asked the question after the war...'How could you go on?' And you said that one motivation was to tell the story. Is that a key thing that helps you rebuild your life, that helps give you a purpose for living?
- SB: Well, as I said, right after the war, when I realized I'm alone, at the beginning, we were looking for names were posted. I was hoping against hope, because I knew that my brother had perished in Auschwitz, I knew that my sister and mother died in Auschwitz, and I knew that my father died in the ghetto, so I was hoping against hope, when I was reading these posters, and when I realized that I'm left alone, that I'm facing a lonely world, all alone. I was very down. That was the time I despaired, and I really didn't know whether I want to live. But then I said to myself, 'Look, the fact that you are here, and Hitler is dead, it means something to you, right?' So I found a reason to go on with life, and one of the first reasons, was maybe come here to tell the world about the German atrocities. But, later on, I realized this is one of the reasons, but I can't go my whole life with this reason. So I got married, and I had children, and I went on like any other people.
- WH: Where did you meet your husband?
- SB: In Sweden.
- WH: Did you come on the 'Gripshole'?
- SB: Yes...in 1947. At the time my husband did not have his visa. I came with Cecil, she was 7 months old...and what can I tell you? The fact that we were separated again, I can't describe, because we dread separation. Separation to us is something that we really dread and always will.

WH: ...you dreaded separation from him?

SB: Yes. So that was a moment of terrible fear.

WH: ...do you feel that as a survivor, that you...worry more, about your children than the average parent?

SB: Perhaps I, myself was not as much aware of it, until Cecil brought it out. The Emunah Organization was making a film about the survivors, and some survivors spoke up, and some children of survivors, the second generation...and then Cecil came out and she said, 'Now I realize that growing up in a house of survivors is different than in a home of the American people. My mother was always worried when we went some place, if we gonna come back, if we're not taken, my mother always tried to have food in the house, in case of shortage.'...when the children went out someplace, I worried terribly, 'Are they gonna come back? Is anybody gonna get them?' You know what I mean? That feeling. (inaudible).

WH: ...do you think that what happened in Europe could happen in America?

SB: I gave it thought, many times, and I'm not the only one who does. And, I always-you see I love Israel. And I always put out a lot of trust, and I know that as strong as Israel is, the stronger we are, and the less fear we should have that something like this will happen.

WH: Do you think Israel will prevent it from happening?

SB: Well, we have a home, and the world looks different at us...it's a small country, but, when we compare it to the time when we really went into the Holocaust, we were homeless. We had nothing, so I feel much stronger now.

WH: Were your parents Zionists?

SB: Yes. My (great) grandfather was the founder of the Mizrachi...what happened was, when he first came up with Mizrachi, and he combined religion with education, the rabbis condemned him. They said, 'How do you combine religion with education? A woman should never go to college.' And my grandfather said, 'Yes, a girl should be educated.' My mother's sister was a doctor, M.D., so many years ago. They all college graduates. My mother, who was born in 1898...she was a stenographer for (?name?). an educated woman...my mother's grandfather, and he was the first one who came out to combine religion with education...in Lithuania, Vilna...and the windows were broken, the doors were broken, my great-grandfather was beaten until the world finally accepted that the Mizrachi is a most wonderful institution to combine education with Zionism...

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WH: After the war did you think of going to Israel to live?

SB: Very much so...however, I knew I had nobody there. I didn't know that I had relatives there. I knew that I had a grandfather here. And I wanted family. I wanted family so badly that I came here.

WH: ...did he (your grandfather) send you the affidavit?

WB: Yes...

WH: ...you were in Israel in 1981, I guess you were there other times too, right?

SB: Oh, yes.

WH: Do you ever feel sorry that you didn't go to Israel?

SB: No, I don't feel sorry that I didn't go, but what I'm trying to do, is to convince my husband for years, already, that we should settle in Israel.

WH: To retire there.

SB: Yeh. But he doesn't agree with me. He says, 'I know.' Because there is an age difference, you know. 'I know you gonna join the Emunah, you gonna run around,' he'll be in, 'What will I do?' He's afraid that he'll be lonely there.

WH: ...does he have friends?

SB: He's not really the social type. He's a wonderful man, don't misunderstand, but when he's home he loves gardening, he has a beautiful garden, he likes to play chess...he always finds something to do. He's not a man who will sit. He either works, or he gardens, or he likes to play chess, or he finds some-.

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SB: Three years ago I received a call, in January, from the Holocaust studies, they submitted my name because they want to have a few survivors to speak on the Holocaust. Now, there was not only survivors, there was Elizabeth Holzman was there too, as a representative... they kept me on the phone for over an hour, and I know why, to test me, how my English is, if I can converse, if I can talk about the subject, if I don't break down, and then she said she'd like to interview me more, but the taping was on April 22, 1986,

and that's when we had Elizabeth and Professor Yaffa Eliach, and we have two other survivors.

WH: What channel was that on?

SB: Channel Nine...and everybody spoke about the Holocaust, about their own experiences. I have a video.

WH: Were you impressed by Yaffa Eliach?

SB: Yes. I am always impressed by her.

WH: ...do you ever feel like it was all a dream, like it never happened?

SB: I can't feel like that it's a dream, no, because I have too many dreams about it. And it always reminds me that it was very realistic.

WH: You were in labor camps and concentration camps?

SB: Yah. I was in the Loge ghetto, 4 and a half years...(talking Yiddish about ?Rumkovsky?...and the times in the Loge ghetto...).

WH: ...which camp were you in?

SB: In Auschwitz I was in Birkenau...my mother and my sister were sent to the left immediately to die...my mother was a walking skeleton...my sister was 15, but she was underdeveloped...my brother was spared momentarily...he was overlooked. But when it came to me, Mengele stopped me. And he said to me, (needs translation). Here I see a good looking German, and I was completely oblivious to the fact that Auschwitz is a death machinery, and at the time, we didn't know. And I answered him nicely, (needs translation). And he pointed to the right. To live. To exist. Live. Whatever you want to call it-then I saw that each one, before me, went on the cattle train, was given a loaf of bread. This was just to humiliate us. They knew good and well, that we'll never live to eat that bread, because the conditions on these cattle trains were indescribable. There were hundreds in one car. People were sitting in their own excrement. People were crying for drink of water, especially children. Nobody thought about eating. They knew it. So I thought that my brother's loaf of bread was nibbled, and mine wasn't touched. So I felt sorry, and I left my line, and I ran to him, and I exchanged, and I gave him the whole one, and I took the one that was nibbled. If I wasn't meant to live, they would shoot me immediately, because this was called, 'fluk' in German that I was fleeing. Nobody said anything, I went back to my line. So, here within half an hour, Mengele stopped me, put me to the right, and I went back to my line, and nobody killed me. So, I

was probably meant to live. What can I tell you. To live, and to have a torch for people that did not survive. And, that's that.

WH: Was there a time when you had to use your head to survive?

SB: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yah! Many times I'm thinking, is it sheer luck, or did I help it? And I think that it was a combination. I was meant to live, because I see there was another instance, in Auschwitz. We were standing for (needs translation-head counting) and I felt terrible shivers, and I came back to my bunk bed and a nurse came, and I said to her, I had very high temperature. And I didn't know what to do. And she said to me that it was a kidney infection. A cold. She said, 'Look, you have two choices, keep quiet and go to the (needs translation), head counting, or you can go to the ambulance, meaning the hospital.' But intuition, I had a foreboding about the hospital. I chose to keep quiet, stand at (needs translation) with high temperature, shaking and shivering. To find out later, that that ambulance was Auschwitz. It was the gas chamber. So here again, three instances in two weeks.

WH: That was a matter of luck.

SB: Yes.

WH: Was there any place where you-

SB: Yes, now we get to that. Then I was sent to...various places...from Auschwitz...to work, but when the Germans saw us, that we had no hair, they were frightened. They didn't want us. They rejected us. That was the moment when our fate was-wait. Are we to be condemned? Are we to die in Auschwitz? Are we to be shot? They had various methods of killing people. What should they do with us? So, the train was going back and forth, back and forth. Finally, they decided they sending us to Bergen-Belsen That was a make-shift camp. From Bergen-Belsen we were sent to /Unterlout?...that was probably the only time where we were resting a little bit. However, we complained we used to work, so the Germans had no choice but to send us to (?Unterlout?). In (?Unterlout?) there were 800 Hungarian girls, and 100 Polish. And the animosity among the Hungarian and the Polish is a shame to admit. Among Jews.

WH: Why did it exist?

SB: The Hungarians and the Polish never got along. They considered themselves superior to the Polish people Jews.

WH: Were these religious girls?

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SB: Well, who knew in the camp what we are really. We were not human. We didn't look like human. We didn't feel like human. We felt like we are just somebody who-.

WH: Also a language barrier?

SB: Of course, we didn't know, but nobody had a chance to speak anyway. That was not the reason. There was animosity long before the camps, and in the camps it definitely came out. So we were sent to (?Unterlose?) and there were a 100 Polish girls and we were sent to (inaudible) digging canals. They needed these canals for nothing. But just so, make us work. All of a sudden, the (inaudible) German, he was probably a Kaiser Wilhelm soldier. Most beautiful person. If he would be alive, I would not hesitate to help that man with anything I could. Each one was equal to him when the Germans were not around, because, -one German could be good, but two together, one was afraid of the other. They had to be bad...(needs translation-about Hitler). All of a sudden he called out, '(needs translation).' Who can chop wood. Nobody said, everybody thought it was a trick. I picked up my hand.

WH: Why did you pick up your hand?

SB: I don't know. That was impulse. I really don't know why I did it.

WH: Did that save your life?

SB: Well, what happened was, digging the canals, people got very sick, it was very cold, they collapsed whatever, I-was allowed to stay in a little wood.

WH: But this is also luck because you didn't know-.

SB: No, I didn't know...but, the only thing, I used my head but subconsciously. And, of course I had it much better than everybody, because one, they were outside.

WH: ...the animosity between the Poles and the Hungarians...do you think it continued in America?

SB: Not to that degree, God forbid! To some extent, absolutely... I don't know where I belong, because my father was really from Bratislava.. He never accepted Polish citizenship...so in a way, I'm not really Polish. I was born there-but I still identify with Hungarian too, because I have great sentiment from my father.

WH: ...you could be Galiciana...

SB: I don't know why they made up that story with the Galiciana. The only thing about the Galiciana, they spoke a beautiful Polish, were the Jews, from different city, did not.



- WH: They made up what? That the Galicians are thieves, you can't trust them...
- SB: That they sly, like in a way, yah. Naa, I met a lot of Galicians here, and I don't see any difference. It's just like they said, there was this Onelm...and they have quite a few (smart people there) and they labeled it.
- WH: Where is your husband from?
- SB: (?) Czechoslovakia...
- WH: ...when you first came here, you came in on the S.S.?Gripsholm? right, and in what month?
- SB: I came October 27, 1947. I came with Cecil (pronounced: 'seal') in my arms, she was 7 months old...and I was pregnant with Florence...that was a lonely trip without my husband...
- WH: ...were the Swedes nice?
- SB: Very nice. However they were glad when we left...
- WB: ...your grandfather sent for the affidavit, and when you came in, what was it like when the boat sailed into the harbor...did you see the Statue of Liberty?
- SB: I didn't know about it. I saw it, but I didn't realize what it was. All I wanted is to have a home, have a place.
- WH: When you got off the boat, who greeted you?
- SB: Yes...I came down with Cecil in my arms, and I remembered my grandfather from his visit in Loge, and somehow I recognized him immediately, and I came out and there was my mother's two sisters waiting.
- WH: Was he a religious man?
- SB: Yes...he had his own synagogue in Flatbush...but he lost it...he didn't worry about mortgages...
- WH: Who helped you the most when you came?
- SB: Well, it was a very tough situation. I didn't expect, really too much, but I expected a little more than I got. My aunt who lives on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, who has the shul, that was 41

years ago, they were limited in funds, very. She really couldn't help me. The one that helped me was the aunt in the Bronx. I came to her. She would not let me go to the HIAS. This was the biggest mistake. She was childless.

WH: Why didn't she let you go to the HIAS?'

SB: She wanted me to be with her. But I didn't realize that that aunt had a lot of psychological problems. Like, her shades had to be drawn because nobody should see her, and she was a wonderful person, charitable, but had problems. And I was not-it was not for me to take these problems. I was still sore. You know, I went through so much. So that was a mistake.

WH: What happened?

SB: She was a very nervous woman and I needed a little more calm (inaudible)-I was just out of the war. And, I should have gone to the HIAS, because my husband wasn't here...my grandfather arranged with the HIAS because he had an influence there, they knew him very well. So a representative from the HIAS came, and they said, 'Come, we have a room for you and your child, everything, until you can-.'-and my aunt came over and (inaudible) she started crying, she said I'm coming to her. And this was the mistake. So the beginning was a little-.

WH: How long did you stay with her?

SB: I stayed with her two weeks...she was not only hovering over me, she was hovering over the baby, like its her-she was childless. You know, like I didn't exist and I resented it...so I went to Mr. Herman Hollander...a friend of my grandfather, and I went to him, he lived in Boro Park...and I said, 'Mr. Hollander, I can't be anymore with my aunt'...and I said, 'I don't know what to do, my husband is not here, and I'm here with a little kid. And my family cannot help out because my aunt has three little rooms and four children and financially they're not comfortable.' He said, 'Don't worry, I want you to come to me until your husband comes.' And they were very gracious about it. I moved in. So he asked me if I want to be upstairs (inaudible). I said, 'All I want is a little privacy, because I really went through the (inaudible) weeks a lot.' So I chose to have the basement. And I wouldn't say that I wasn't living fear alone with a child-so the beginning wasn't easy. Really, really not easy. Even though I had relatives here. I knew they wanted to do everything for me, but they couldn't.

WH: How long until your husband joined you?

SB: Seven weeks later. And he came, two days later Mr. Hollander sent somebody from the company and helped him look for work. Two days the man rested. He was always a man

who wanted to provide for his family, and work for his family. And he wound up with a job as a furrier.

WH: Was he trained in that before?

SB: Close to it...in Europe they had farms...

WH: ...how did the Americans treat you?

SB: That worried me. It left a terrible scare on me. I could not stand it, when somebody said to me, 'This is a greenhorn? A greener?' It's like giving me a knife in the back. Why remind me something that I don't want to be reminded.

WH: ...and you went to school at night, how often?

SB: Not enough. We went to school, I think it was twice or three times a week. So, I started with the first grade, but they kept on sending me from higher and higher grades, and I graduated with what they called, parochial school, within a few months.

WH: Did you ever entertain the idea...of college?

SB: Yes, I did. I wasn't ambitious enough, and my grandfather told me, (?dum midt thine kup, ga, ga?) he was encouraging me. I don't know whether it was an excuse, but I really could not have anybody sit with my children.

WH: ...but not too many survivors wrote two books.

SB: Well, but I think I said it in the beginning, this book deals with my personal experiences, so it does not need a background, real education, it just that I like to write, and there was some talent, so I was able to put it into a book. But I could have done much more, as far as education.

WH: You clearly value education...and rather than spend money on yourself, you'd rather spend it on your children.

SB: Absolutely.

WH: Tell me how you sacrificed.

SB: Well,-because we lived over a store which was not the most comfortable for us, there was a fish store underneath, and you know, the smell was sometimes not the most pleasant. And I had a choice. Move, but I will not be able to pay for the education. So I decided that the children's education is most important, and my husband went along with me.

And, I mean, playing piano is not education, but it's musical education, that was something I had a dream about. That all the children should play piano too.

WH: And did they?

SB: Oh, they all do! All-terrific.

WH: Why piano?

SB: I had a cousin. My mother's sister's son. He is a professor, a conductor in Belgium, a very great, known man. He started out as a pianist, and I always envied him. So I said, the first thing I want to do is to give my children piano lessons. And I remember, I had nothing in my living room-two broken chairs that somebody gave me and a broken couch. And I said to my husband, 'I would love a piano.' And to this day, I am grateful to him, for understanding me, and saying yes and I remember, we took a drawer from that broken chest, not from here, from the old apartment, to match up the wood. I wasn't looking for quality, but to match up the colors-but, my happiness, the joy when they brought in the piano, and when Cecil got her first lesson, is indescribable. And I was very fortunate, because usually you don't buy a piano, you rented-you test whether your children would really take to it. Because I remember we literally, whatever I had to spend, I really spent much less, having in mind that we have to make payments for the piano. It was really a sacrifice on our part. And my husband went along with it very nicely, he made the payments and I remember buying a suit was out of the question, or buying some clothes (inaudible).

WH: No vacations?

SB: No-o-o,-Well, vacations, in a way, yes. The first vacation we took was to Lake Peekskill. But that wasn't on our own feet. That was thanks to my uncle, my mother's brother who really helped us a lot. And he-made sure that we go on a summer vacation,

WH: He paid for the vacation?

SB: Yes, yes.

WH: That was very nice of him.

SB: He was a big help. A BIG, big help-.

WH: What did he do?

SB: He was a rabbi...very educated. He was a rabbi without a shul. What he did, he could have done MUCH more with his life. He was for people.

WH: ...is Florence more modern Orthodox, or more to the Right?

SB: I would think they lean to the Right, but yet they manage to be modern too.

WH: ...Amit'-magazine-used to be Mizrachi-.

SB: What happened to the Mizrachi, (inaudible) Mizrachi Women's Organization, changed their name to Emunan. So, I am automatically in the Eminah, but not with my heart. It bothers me-ALWAYS!

WH: That they took away the name 'Mizrachi'?

SB: Yes. Not only did they take it away, but my great-grandfather's name is nowhere on the stationery! Like he didn't exist. And he was the founder...why I say I don't have the heart to quit that organization, even though I am personally hurt, I take it as a personal insult, that my great-grandfather's name is nowhere in sight.

WH: ...what shul do you go to?

SB: My uncle's. I have no choice. I always wanted a Young Israel. It was better for the children, but I couldn't do it.

WH: Why?

SB: Because my aunt would be terribly hurt.

WH: Of course-there's Rabbi Fink down the block here...

SB: Yah, but we couldn't do it to my aunt. She would have taken it very personal, but in a way, maybe I should have done-because children should be before-.

WH: Do you go on vacations now?

SB: Yes, we go every year. We have a summer home...in Harris...

WH: Through blood, sweat and tears, you saved up to buy the summer home, I imagine.

SB: Well, I would say that thank God, the last (inaudible) when my husband was in business, the last few years, he worked very hard. Sometimes 17 hours a day, 18 hours a day, sometimes he came home 11 o'clock at night.

WH: American Jews don't work that hard, do they?

SB: No, I wouldn't say that. No. No. I wouldn't classify them as lazy. No, American Jews work very hard.

WH: Did you encounter prejudice? I know you couldn't stand the term, 'greener.'

SB: No, that I couldn't stand. But other than that, I was very comfortable, the American (inaudible).

WH: Did you encounter prejudice in the beginning as a survivor?

SB: As a survivor? Oh, yes. Quite a few times. The time when I walked with my grandfather, and a man stopped him, (inaudible...) and he says, '(inaudible) a greener?' I was terribly hurt. I said to my grandfather, 'Why does he call me a greener? I don't want to be reminded of that.' That was one time. And then I went into the butcher store, why that woman said it, I don't know, she said to me. 'You came from Europe?' 'Yes.' 'How come you came to America?' I said 'Where should I have gone?' 'You should have gone to different countries. Why to America?' And a Jewish woman.

WH: Where was this? How long ago?

SB: Here in Brooklyn...at the very beginning, I was here maybe a year.

WH: You lived in Brooklyn?

SB: First I was in Brooklyn with my aunt...then I moved to Boro Park, and then I moved close to my aunt who has the shul here. And ever since we live in this neighborhood. But then, my husband started working very hard, he worked himself up, and like you say, we're not tremendous spenders, my husband saved and now, thank God.

WH: Of your four best friends, are they survivors?

SB: Well, mostly, yes. We play cards...poker.

WH: ...why do so many survivors play cards?

SB: It's fun...I wouldn't say they only play cards, a lot of survivors read a lot.

WH: Do you feel that today's Germans, do you hate them?

SB: Oh, I will always hate them.

WH: Even today's Germans?

SB: I will always hate-.

WH: Even though they didn't do anything?

SB: And I'll tell you-see, I'll tell you. You read German? (inaudible...) we were in Israel a year ago, we had no intention of going again, because as comfortable as we are, we can't afford that. I call it comfortable, thank God, because we not looking for luxuries, so what happened, Cecil, my oldest daughter, called up my husband at the place where he worked, and says, 'Daddy,' she called me first and asked for his number, I said, 'Cecil, I have an arrangement with Daddy, that we only call, God forbid, in emergencies.' It's not his place. She said, 'Well, it's an emergency, I have to ask him about (inaudible).' And I gave her the number. And as soon as I hang up, I said, 'Something is very fishy.' To make the story short, they wanted to make him a big birthday party, but my husband is superstitious. You know, thank God, he's an older man, he's in good health, and he's afraid of the Phora?. He didn't want it. So she said, 'Do you know what we have for your present? A trip to Israel, which includes stone.

WH: Stone?

SB: Yeh.

WH: Why? He likes the mineral things in Israel?

SB: Yes, he loves it. Yah, he loves it.

WH: But what has this to do with the Germans?

SB: Well, let me tell you. So, in Stone, they have a lot of Germans, who come there, a tremendous amount of Germans. And whenever I was sitting in the lobby there, you could see immediately it was a German woman. Tall, blond, typical German. And she struck up a conversation with me, and I said-.

WH: In what language? German?

SB: German, I speak German. That was my first language...I didn't know a word Polish...I am ashamed to say that I'm most comfortable in German. I'm ashamed to say it, because that was my childhood language. And a childhood language you don't forget. Anything you learn in your childhood (inaudible). So, I said to her, her name was Rosemarie Klein, I said, 'I'll be very honest with you. To this day I cannot be friendly with Germans, what they did. Every German will tell you, (needs translation-niche est...)' but I said, 'How do I know which is the one? They all have to be condemned. The one that didn't do anything, has to be condemned for not doing anything, knowing what was

going on. And the one that did, I definitely hate.' Well, to this day, I cannot trust a German, and I cannot like a German, and I cannot go really close. So what happened? We took pictures, and I send her a picture, and she sends me back a beautiful letter, which I have, but I can't answer her. I don't want to continue that friendship. I can't! knowing that she-.

WH: Do you feel that she, in some way, was trying to make up for all this?

SB: I ask her the question. I said, 'Tell me, do you have a guilt feeling? Do you feel guilty? She said, (needs translation-?nine eshat est g'emaucht...).

WH: Did you believe her?

SB: Yes, I believed her.

WH: So why not continue it?

SB: No, I still don't feel that I want to get close to a German. I believe her, because there were Germans when I came To Bergen-Belsen, that was the make-shift Bergen-Belsen-they came with the trucks there, for our luggage. So, they said, (needs translation) -we were afraid to say something. Finally one of the Hungarian girls spoke up. She said, (needs translation...). Some Germans did not know, but the majority knew what was going on.

WH: Do you feel differently about the Pollacks?

SB: Isn't that something? I have a great sentiment for Poland. KNOWING that there was anti-Semitism. KNOWING that in 1950 there was a pogrom...

WH: How come you see them differently than the Germans?

SB: The Polish people didn't create Auschwitz. It was the Germans. The Germans Acknowledge it...people ask me why I went to Poland. I went in search of my father's grave. However I still have a lot of sentiment. Maybe it's a selfish point. I had a very good childhood in Poland, which I cannot forget. A wonderful childhood. And I would say that those were the best years of my life. The 15 years before the war broke out.

WH: Do you think that in your personality, there is something that would have made it likely for you to be a survivor? Are you like a fighter?

SB: Yes. I am.

WH: You don't give up easily?



SB: I don't give up-.

WH: If your children would come home, right, if your children would tell you about a problem that they are having, do you say, 'I don't want to hear about it' Or do you jump in and try to help them.

SB: No, I hear about it. And I want to know it.

WH: Are you an optimistic person?

SB: To a degree. Now, it came to the point now, in all honesty, maybe the survivor will not admit it, they (inaudible) a survivor who's very successfully, who maybe thinks more about money, but the truth is that now, more than ever, the tragedy comes back to you.

WH: Is it because you have more time to think about it?

SB: No, maybe you know, you're aging, you know what I mean? Maybe when you think about death, you remind yourself of their death.

WH: You realize that if it hadn't been for this, you might have had a very ordinary life. Maybe. Maybe not...

SB: I realize it all the time. As I said, we live with it. And we'll die with it.

WH: In a sense, you went through an extraordinary experience.

SB: Oh-h-h-h.

END OF SIDE TWO. TAPE ONE.

SIDE ONE. TAPE TWO.

WH: What do you think you've learned from the whole thing?

SB: From my experiences, I learned that the world could be very cruel. That people, could be so cruel, beyond your imagination. I have seen it, I experienced it. And of course, I learned that they could be very, very cruel. I also learned that a human being could be as strong as an elephant, and could be as weak as a fly, in the case of the war. There were people who were always weak, and yet they gained such strength, in human strength, and I think that I was one of them too, because I remember myself as a sickly child, and yet,

when I had to endure, so much sufferings, I was a fighter, so I learned that you cannot give up. You must fight, of course, it's a matter of luck, but besides the luck, you must really fight, you can't give up.

WH: You live with all the memories of everything that happened, right?

SB: Yes. Not only I, but every survivor. Even as I mentioned, we can talk about parties, we can talk about dresses, but any little thing we'll talk about, will spark memories.

WH: Even with someone who didn't go through your experience, let's say, someone who was in hiding, or someone who was in a different camp, will you compare it to each other?

SB: Well, no. Anyone that was under German rule, was in hell. But of course, there were different steps.

WH: So what would you talk about? What specific content? The food?

SB: No, the food is the least we talk about. We always-the most is whom we lost. About the casualties, about those that perished.

WH: Even if they don't know your casualties?

SB: No, the average person, nobody would go out and say, Look, I lost this one, and this one, and that one. Among ourselves, if we get together, of course we gonna talk about it. And if we go to Yiskor, we talk about it. We pray and then we talk about it.

WH: Who's the we'-like friends?

SB: Yes. The survivors.

WH: If you met a survivor at a party that you didn't know, would you talk to them about it?

SB: No, not right away, but it will come up. It will come up!

WH: How?

SB: In conversation. She'll say, Oh my God, I remember this and this in Europe. But now, they no more here. And this is how it comes up. It always does.

WH: Do you compare experiences?

SB: Yes. Sure. Yah. Where were you during the war? Where did your mother perish? Where did your father perish? Mine in Auschwitz. Mine in Treblinka. Sure, it comes

up. Even by the cards, when we drink coffees.-Sometimes things come up, but we try to squash it right away. Come on! Let's not talk about it now. But it comes up.

WH: It's hard-

SB: Yes, it's hard. I remember, my father loved playing cards. He loved playing. Not poker-I don't know what he played...so once even we played cards I said, 'My God, I remember how my father used to love playing cards.' And the other one said, 'My father didn't play cards, but this and this', but what good is it? Nobody is here anymore. So? You see, any little things will bring out the memories about those that perished, about what we went through.

WH: ...how did you get your group together?

SB: Two people are from the shul. And those two people brought in two more. And one is (inaudible) American-born...we have sometimes nine...

WH: Do you win?

SB: No, I'm not a winner. In cards I'm a loser.

WH: Play low stakes?

SB: Well ten and twenty. Really, not to gamble-it is Saturday nights, we are together...wintertime we start early, like 7:30 and by 10 o'clock we serve, so sometimes-we really try not to, but any little thing, even when we talk about when we played cards before the war, and that one word brings in the Holocaust. That's something you can't help.

WH: ...you ever go away on vacation with this group of people?

SB: No. We all go to separate places. We just play together. We-friends.

WH: ...at the bungalow colonies...where were you a tenant?

SB: That was in South Fallsburg, Brook Cottages. It's on the way where the Pines Hotel is...that was unfortunate the place where Florence was in such a terrible accident...Florence is a-you see, after God spared me Florence, I started believing even more. Because I put Him to the test. I said, 'God forbid that she-.'

WH: What happened?

SB: Friday night, Florence is very good natured. And a Russian boy came and asked her, if she could arrange an audition for him at the Pines, so he can work there, he was a musician...we were not right-far from the Pines, so he figured maybe she can take him there, he can talk to somebody. However, that was Friday, and Florence says, we really can't stay this Shabbas, we'll come again, because Uri has some engagement in New York, and to him the few dollars were very, very important. I said, 'Florence, you're here already, stay for Shabbas.' So she said, 'Let me make a few phone calls, if somebody can fill in for Uri, we're going to stay.' And this is why I felt so guilty about it. And Florence came and said, 'Ma, somebody is filling in for Uri, so tonight we're going to the Pines for the audition.' So, we ate supper, it was like a real Shabbas atmosphere, and they went to the Pines, and by three o'clock at night, there was a knock at the door...and I went to the door...and I saw a police. I got very scared. But what happened, I didn't associate it with the fact that Florence was hurt. I thought that there's something wrong with his papers-Uri's. Because I didn't see Florence.

WH: How many years ago was it?

SB: Exactly nine years ago. 1980. And the policeman said, 'Get dressed, your daughter was hit, she's badly hurt, we want you to come to the hospital.'...when I saw Florence, I didn't believe that this was my daughter. She looked like an old woman, her eyes were black, there were holes in her head, her feet were broken, she was a mess, and they didn't give 5 cents for her life. And God was good. He spared her. And here too, I said, it's important to fight. Florence is a born fighter...she went through so much, that the doctor could not believe that she emerged with a clear mind. So, God was on the way.

WH: And she's alright now?

SB: Thank God. She's brighter than ever. She doesn't give in. She has problems with arthritis...she was so lucky...

WH: Hit and run driver?'

SB: Hit and run...but we found the driver...but, Florence was a gift from God. Florence is a gift from God.

WH: I remember her as a very pretty girl.

SB: She's very pretty. Very pretty, Florence. Very attractive. And a voice? Florence was singing the Hatikvah for 1,500 people at Brown's.

WH: When? Now?

SB: Yeh...

WH: (WH taping television show?)- (Other interviewer-Channel Nine program?)...(inaudible)...(talking about war times and family) I wonder if there's a guilt associated with having survived and seeing so many of your family and friends who didn't.

(Response from? SB? T.V. program? is:) Well, this is what I want to say, yes, there is. Many times- I'm the sole survivor for a family of five. Many times I questioned. I question two things. Why am I the only one, in other words, there is a feeling of guilt. And my second question is, why did it have to happen altogether? But I never got the answer. And when I survived, after the war, and I realized that I'm the sole survivor, I didn't know what direction to take. And I asked myself, was it all worth while? But then, the survivor is a person who is really trying. On the surface, he built a home, he built a family, he built a business. (inaudible section...) And when it comes to our home, we will never, ever be safe. (inaudible section. Plane overhead.).

(Another person being interviewed:). I want to forget it, because I live with it every day, I dream about it in the night, and the next day I think about the dream. It is a vicious circle. The Holocaust was yesterday. It's today. And it will be tomorrow too. And we will die. I lost two hundred people.

WH: (Norman Salsitz speaking on a T.V. program. Channel Nine). Woman interviewer asks questions about during the war and he talks about his family and that time-long pause then a woman speaks (inaudible) distorted history, that the Holocaust was a hoax. And, fortunately, we survivors, an account from a survivor is a most powerful account, are here to testify it, and I don't blame those survivors that cannot talk about it, because there are so many who (inaudible...) but those who can, that are fortunate enough to relay their stories, must do so, and we are also fortunate that our children are very much involved with the Holocaust-. Woman interviewer interrupts as interview ends. (inaudible) 'Straight Talk' is the name of the program...long pause before next set of questions from WH).

WH: (WH resumes questions and interviews Morris Berkowitz) How long have you been a furrier?

MB: Just 45 years, fifty.

WH: These are your tomatoes?

MB: The tomatoes, the cucumbers...we have so much produce, I give neighbor there and there...last year I gave (inaudible) 18 friends...(MB insists WH eat his home grown tomatoes)...

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WH: You were born in Czechoslovakia?

MB: Yes (inaudible).

WH: Did you go right away into the fur business?

MB: No. I went into the fur business in Sweden. I have a background from furs (inaudible) in Europe...but in Sweden I learned the trade in '46 or '45.

WH: Was it tough to get into the business?

MB: Very tough. Because I was already in Sweden, working, and then here, I had a push (inaudible...) Hollander? here, maybe you knew, ?Hollander? (inaudible) they had a brother in Sweden, a brother here, and a brother in Israel. The biggest company from furs in the world (inaudible...) so he gave me the affidavit, he brought me here from Sweden...and he find me a job...and I get to know an American boy in the market, so I bought a machine and-I knew how to cut for it, and I took a partner, an American boy...

WH: ...sometimes people said, Look at this! You just came off the boat. Already you're making money! How do you do it? Did they say that?

MB: Yah, believe me, I suffered in there a lot.

WH: How?

MB: I will tell you...(inaudible...) we start to make, but we couldn't sell...you know, it was hard...we struggled...and then after this, that ?Hollander? who brought me here, he was connected in Sweden (inaudible...) to do me a favor...he bought...still, it was again very bad time, but I did, I already had my own little shop. I went with partners (inaudible) you know, single partners, they didn't care enough to pay the bills, but I wouldn't do those things, I want to be honest. (inaudible) I start to work myself, but it didn't go. So, daytime I worked in my place. After 6 o'clock, I find a place here to go make chickens. I make kosher chickens-plucking and koshering...until 2 o'clock in the night...

WH: Let me understand. You started work at what time in the morning...8 o'clock in the fur store.

MB: Until 6, then after 6 I went to another place to work until 2 o'clock. So I came home 2, 3 o'clock in the night.

WH: How were you able to stay up that long?

MB: Well, I was young and healthy, and had two children there, and I had to give parnosos.

WH: Where were you during the war?

MB: (inaudible) I was in Auschwitz, (inaudible) Bergen-Belsen.

WH: ...did any of your family make it through? Did you have brothers and sisters?

MB: I had two older brothers-they survived. I had four brothers. And sisters didn't survive. And one brother I have here, and the oldest is in Israel.

WH: ...where did you meet?

MB: ...in Sweden. Under the sky...in a train station...

WH: ...do you think your children would have made it through if they had gone through this experience?

MB: How can I tell you-now, I always knew I will get through. I knew. I knew it.

WH: How did you know?

MB: I'll tell you why. I was-(WH is interrupted as he is being instructed to eat, by SB's comments on tomatoes...)- the end we were in Bergen-Belsen (more garden talk...)-

WH: So how did you know you were going to make it through?

MB: I will tell you, in Bergen-Belsen, already you didn't have to do nothing, just-every day and there were people, together, they were working together...(needs translation and inaudible...) I had a feeling, a spirit.

WH: You never stopped believing in God throughout the while thing?

MB: No, no.

WH: What about later on? Didn't you ask yourself-?

MB: I ask myself, but still I had the belief. Yeh, I had the belief.

WH: How come?

MB: Some people didn't. Some people say there is empty-there is empty, nothing. Nothing is there, you know.

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SB: We believed, but we questioned, and we had a lot of bitterness.

MB: Yeh.

SB: I still question. Never stop it. (more comments on the delicious food and fresh from the garden...)

WH: The shul that you go to now, her uncle's shul, are there survivors there in the shul?

MB: Most (all) of them are survivors...all greener. I will tell you, too, the shul is already since I am there, thank God we are in the shul since...47. Since then, the shul (inaudible) four times, died out...

WH: ...when they have shows now, about the Holocaust, do you watch? Are you interested?

MB: Not always. No. Not always. Because, what they showing, and I see, is not 1% what I went through...and I can't watch it, because it tortures me. It tortures me. And then, I went a lot (inaudible-? like more through?) more through, and they showing like a movie. (needs translation),

WH: What about Shoah?

SB: SB: I have it on most-all of the time. My husband doesn't like to watch it. He can't. He can't.

MB: I have dreams after this. Nightmares, and this and this. So, I can't sleep.

WH: Do you think what happened in Europe could happen here?

MB: I don't think so. I hope not.

WH: What's the difference?

MB: (inaudible) people wouldn't come to that peak. They will go with bloodshed. I don't think so.

WH: Before they would let it happen.

MB: Yeh...

WH: ...in Israel, should we give back the land, if they could get peace?

MB: No...I don't think so. We'll be in the same place again. And (came) closer to Syria.



WH: ...did you watch the intifada program?

MB: I watched it.

SB: You mean when that Jewish woman was talking about what the Jews-.

MB: Very, very bad influence-I watched it. Very bad.

WH: ...well, there are many different types of Jews. Some are self-hating Jews, some are not self-hating Jews. And-.

SB: Why do you have to go far? You have the Satamar, who burn the Jewish flag, who are not ashamed to go on the open and condemn Israel, who are not ashamed to send 22 thousand petitions to the Congress that Israel has no right to exist.

WH: It's terrible.

SB: Okay? What more do we need?

WH: ...you're married, how long?

SB: Forty-three years.

WH: Forty-three years, your husband comes home, he compliments you on the supper, he appreciates it.

MB: Why not?...we helping each other. I do in my way, and my wife does in her way.

END OF SIDE ONE. TAPE TWO.

END OF INTERVIEW.