

RG-50.462.0455

Summary

Note 1. This testimony is not an interview; instead, a Ms. Rosenberger read a letter that Mrs. Piliser sent from Israel, where she lived. The taping was done in May, 1985.

Note 2. The letter from Mrs. Piliser lasts for approximately 00:06:10 minutes. There is a silent portion from 00:06:10 to 00:14:00 (with a high-pitched sound). Another interview begins and continues to 00:22:20. That interview involved a person who was at Auschwitz and then Bergen-Belsen. There was no identification of that person though s/he was from Yugoslavia. There is no other audio on the file.

Melita Weiss Piliser – Born January 14, 1906 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia (now Serbia). Father – Alexander; Mother - Esther; Brothers – Victor (in Yugoslavian army; died in Belgrade during war); Milo – in Yugoslavian army, captured by Germans, survived in camp till liberation; Sister – Eleanor died during war.

Before the war, Mrs. Piliser went to pharmaceutical school in Zagreb and became a pharmacist. She worked as one till April 6, 1941, when Nazis invaded Belgrade. She went into hiding, but noted many Jews were sent to Semlin (Sajimiste) concentration camp where most perished. She fled to Pirot, Serbia, where she found her sister. A Bulgarian Jew helped her find a job as a pharmacist in Kocane, Macedonia. She took her sister's son Baruch and went there until the end of the war. She noted that she survived because of her job. She went back to Belgrade after the war but found no family left. Her parents and brother Victor died in the war. Milo did survive and moved to NY where he was the secretary for the Association of Yugoslavian Jews. Mrs. Piliser, her nephew Baruch, and her husband emigrated to Israel in 1948.

Her Thoughts: Mrs. Piliser believed the only safe place for Jews is Israel and said in spite of the difficulties there, it is a haven for Jews.