

1 INTERVIEW WITH: JAKE and SALLY PRINCE

2 INTERVIEWER: RON MARTIN

3 DATE:

4 PLACE:

5 TRANSCRIBER: JAMES R. MAVES, 1833 Rome Ave.,

6 St. Paul, MN 55116

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Unknown words are spelled phonetically in all caps.

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Q. I am about to do an interview on the Holocaust with
12 survivors Sally Prince and Jake Prince.

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I know, ma'am and sir, this must be a
difficult time for you all. Right now for us first
to start how do you feel right now at this moment
when you look back; how do you feel; what are your
emotions right now?

18

SALLY PRINCE: I feel sad.

19

JAKE PRINCE: Unforgettable.

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Q. Tell us about it.

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A. (Jake) How do you forget. It's always before my
22 eyes, see the horrors and everything what is
23 happening and I can never forget it.

24

Q. Were you in the concentration camps?

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A. I was there for six years.

1 Q. Where, can you tell us?

2 A. Well, I started off in POL-ZEN which is in Poland,
3 and then POL-TEN-BERG and then was sent to FING-AT on
4 UREK, then back to the large ghetto and from there I
5 went to Auschwitz, HER-WARZ-NO, the last one was
6 Buchenwald. I was liberated April 11, 1945.

7 Q. Were you married?

8 SALLY PRINCE: After the war.

9 Q. You were married here in the U. S.?

10 A. (Sally) No, in Germany.

11 A. (Jake) We met in DP camp. We were displaced
12 persons. And we got married in 1946.

13 Q. What was the process like; did you have leaders?

14 A. (Sally) Sure did.

15 Q. What was the attitude like? Were they --

16 A. Mean. If you don't do what you are supposed to do
17 they hit you with the things.

18 A. (Jake) If you did what you were supposed to do they
19 still hit you. There wasn't no reason for all this
20 stuff what they did.

21 Q. Did you understand why it was done? Do you know why
22 it was done?

23 A. (Sally) No, of course not.

24 A. (Jake) Well, the only reason probably I guess the
25 religion, hatred and just being children so you

1 couldn't have done anything wrong at the time being
2 12 years old or 13 or 14, put you on starvation, put
3 you to work, work all day, all night, anytime they
4 want to, tortured you. I mean you wasn't treated as
5 a human being.

6 Q. What age were you?

7 A. (Sally) 14.

8 Q. And your parents, where were they?

9 A. Who knows. They weren't together with us when we
10 went off the train. They said one right, one left,
11 one right, one left.

12 Q. What I'm trying to understand you lived in Poland at
13 the time and you lived with your parents and there
14 were political antagonisms taking place I presume
15 were there?

16 A. (Jake) Not where I was living. It was a little tiny
17 town only a thousand people population.

18 Q. The name?

19 A. The name is BAL-IS-SLAV-ITZ.

20 Q. What happened, the trucks just came in or what
21 happens?

22 A. Well the first Germans came in, took over the town, a
23 few hours later we were driving the German border,
24 they took us on the other side and separate us, the
25 Jews separate, the Polish people separate, all the

1 Jewish books, scrolls, whatever was important to our
2 religion was burned in front of us. A few days later
3 they let us come home, they burned the whole town up.
4 When we came home there was not even a house to live
5 in.

6 My father was sent all the way back to
7 Germany. He was told to clean the laboratories and
8 they used to put him on wagons and make pictures and
9 make fun of him. My dad, you know, had a beard,
10 something like this, they used to pull the beard
11 something like this.

12 Q. Sally, it must have been a real difficult thing for
13 you as a girl; you must have been really fearful of
14 the whole situation?

15 A. (Sally) Sure was, sure was.

16 Q. You had sisters; do you have any relatives?

17 A. I only had one sister living.

18 Q. Where is she?

19 A. She is in Colorado, Denver, Colorado. I had another
20 sister and a bother I don't know what happened to
21 them.

22 Q. Just disappeared off the face of the earth?

23 A. That is right. I had aunts and uncles and I don't
24 know anything where they are.

25 Q. Do you hate the German people now?

1 A. (Jake) No, I don't hate. Like I said I never did
2 hate. I cannot hate. My religion tells me you are
3 not supposed to hate any human being. Whatever has
4 been done was said in our bible you forgive, but you
5 don't forget. My brother was taken away from my
6 family, being 12 years old, I never saw him again. My
7 brother was hanged.

8 Q. Your brother was hanged?

9 A. Yes, didn't try to escape. They made a good
10 celebration all the guys together and told them to
11 look up there and told them see what happened, if you
12 try it it happen to you.

13 Q. All this happened in Poland in the camps before you
14 were able to come out to America?

15 A. Yes. When I was liberated I weighed 44 pounds and 18
16 years old. I couldn't walk, I couldn't even lift
17 myself. I was taken to an American hospital and put
18 everything, you know, to my weight until I get back
19 to myself.

20 Then I start searching all the camps,
21 search to find somebody. I didn't.

22 My wife, we got married, how we got five
23 kids and grandkids, start a new life. For my family
24 it's gone, it's like a dream. You are happy
25 together, you worship together and eat together, one

1 night you wake up everything is gone. That is what
2 happened.

3 Q. Sally, when you look back on your life here in
4 America are you contended, are you happy now?

5 A. (Sally) Yes, I have my family and my husband. I am
6 happy. If you look back you aggravate it, what
7 happened, how could they do something like that.

8 Q. Do you feel that there is a reason; do you feel that
9 there is a reason that this happened?

10 A. I don't know, like my husband said maybe their
11 religion or something, I don't know.

12 A. (Jake) I said it, it was blamed on us, Germany was in
13 trouble and it was our fault, right. Must have
14 started it because kids like me and my wife I was 12
15 years old, what can we do, and then dragged away like
16 animals, and never saw them again. I never heard
17 from them again, we don't even know where they are,
18 don't even know when they die or anything.

19 Like I said I don't know my brother, that
20 is all, and I will never forget. I think about it
21 all the time. It's hard to think about it too, you
22 know.

23 Q. Do you care to say something more?

24 A. (Sally) It hurts. No, it hurts too much.

25 Q. How do your children feel about this? You say you

1 have five children; how do they feel about your
2 experiences?

3 A. They just can't imagine the people could do something
4 like that.

5 A. (Jake) Well my older daughter I said if there is a
6 God in heaven why can't he look after us, she can't
7 understand it. The younger kids they don't care so
8 much about America. We love America very much, would
9 give our life for it because they are the ones that
10 liberated us. But the rest of them is a bad dream.
11 We forget about it.

12 Q. The children, they love you all?

13 A. (Sally) Yes.

14 Q. They will see that all happiness comes to you I'm
15 sure.

16 Do they have plans to seek into their
17 ancestry to find out the truth and the reality of
18 what happened or are they satisfied with continuing
19 on?

20 A. I don't know what they want to do. I have no idea
21 what their plans are.

22 A. (Jake) The oldest kids they know what happened, they
23 see it on the films, they seen pictures because I got
24 some pictures when I was liberated, the same kind of
25 pictures you see over here.

1 The only thing the grandchildren ask us
2 where are our grandparents. My oldest daughter when
3 she was a little kid she asked me the same question,
4 what happened to your grandparents. So I said you
5 are too young, I couldn't tell you because it hurts
6 too much. So later on they grew up they see movies
7 and I guess they understand. That is about it.

8 Q. Are you satisfied with the conference, with the
9 Holocaust Conference, the gathering together of the
10 survivors; do you feel good about it?

11 A. (Sally) Yes, together is okay, you feel, see somebody
12 that left, you know, they left some people.

13 A. (Jake) We are still searching, just going to be a big
14 one held in Denver, a guy is a friend of mine. He
15 heard the story, he heard the guy over here too. He
16 was searching, he thought he had two sisters that
17 were dead, he found them. That means as long as you
18 are alive there is still hope and that is the reason
19 we came over here. We were hoping maybe, maybe we
20 see a name, maybe see somebody. Always a big maybe.

21 Q. Were you able to see any of your villagers, any of
22 your friends that were in the villages even that you
23 come from?

24 A. I found one over here from my village, him and his
25 wife and two children.

1 Q. What was their reaction; how did you all react?

2 A. Well, it was a very sad, sad thing what happen. They
3 are looking too, they are looking for their parents,
4 they are looking for their family, sisters, their
5 brothers. If you don't find them you are
6 disappointed, if you find somebody, just a friend,
7 you are very happy, you know, even a friend, you
8 know, you know somebody years ago which is 43 years
9 ago now. The war started in 1939. So many years
10 pass by now. 39, 49, 59, 69, 79, it's 43 years ago.
11 And it's hard to remember those things but sometimes
12 I can do something there too and my wife tells me
13 something I might forget it but I never forget
14 Holocaust. That is one thing I cannot forget. I
15 believe most of the time with medicine and I can
16 sleep at night most of the time I awaken I still
17 think about it.

18 My wife, she is almost my same age but she
19 is not as serious as I am but she has got a sister,
20 at least she has got somebody to see.

21 I hope with all this praying to God when I
22 get liberated I would be a free man again I had two
23 wishes; my first wish was to find my family, that
24 didn't come true. My second wish was so I can sit
25 down at a table and eat enough bread and potatoes

1 until I'm not hungry again because six years I was
2 starving. It's a hard question to answer.

3 Q. Listen, thank you very much for talking with me. I
4 know it has been very difficult.

5 A. (Sally) It's hard to describe what happened.

6 Q. The story must be told.

7 A. (Jake) It hurts me very much to talk.

8 A. (Sally) In the SS people and --

9 A. (Jake) Talking about this, about what happened. The
10 children got killed for no reason. I cannot forget
11 it. Like I said I can forgive but I cannot forget.

12 Q. All right, thank you very much, Jake and Sally
13 Prince and God bless you all. May all enjoy peace.

14 A. (Sally) Thank you. I hope it never again something
15 like that happens, never again, nobody has to go
16 through it.

17 A. (Jake) People I don't care who they are or what their
18 religion is would never have to go through this,
19 never. We went through it.

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