INTERVIEW WITH MORRIS B.

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TRANSCENDING TRAUMA PROJECT
COUNCIL FOR RELATIONSHIPS
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INT: I'm here with Morris B. and today is April the...

MORRIS: 26th.

INT: 26th, 1995. This is side one of tape one of our interview. Okay, we're going to begin by talking about the family that you have now. Well we usually start with a name. You said your name is Morris B. But tell me, what was your name originally?

MORRIS: Originally? Moishe Czarnogura.

INT: Would you spell that for me please?

MORRIS: C-Z-A-R-N-O-G-U-R-A.

INT: Oh my. Tell me about that name.

MORRIS: It's funny. My mother's maiden name is the same name, Schvartzberg, that's what it means.

INT: What is it?

MORRIS: Schvartzberg is "black mountain." And in Spanish it would be Montenegro.

INT: Ah hah.

MORRIS: And Czarnogura is in Slavish; it's a Polish name. That meant "black mountain."

INT: Is that the region that the family came from?

MORRIS: No, who knows?

INT: So you don't know where the name came from?

MORRIS: No, I don't know where the name came from. Because I read in the history that people used to get their names by the region that they lived or by the trade that they had. But that's way behind. But that was my name, Czarnogura. My brother in Israel is still using that same name. His children already are using Shahem.

INT: What?

MORRIS: Shahem, that's "black" in Hebrew. The children -- my nieces, my nephews, they changed their name to Hebrew. But my brother still keeps that original name, Czarnogura.

INT: Did he come through Ellis Island?

MORRIS: No, he's not here, never been in America. He lives in Haifa.

INT: Ah, so that's why his name wasn't changed. He went directly to Israel and therefore his name stayed the same.

MORRIS: His name stayed the same.

INT: Your name changed because you came over.

MORRIS: Because here people had a problem to pronounce it and every place you went, Czarnogura, it was too difficult.

INT: So, at which point was your name changed?

MORRIS: Our name was changed when we came over here in 1950, in California, in Stockton.

INT: Oh, you arrived in California?

MORRIS: Yeah, we were in California. We lived in Stockton for a while.

INT: That's where you got off a ship?

MORRIS: No. When we came over we docked in New York.

INT: Oh, you came to New York. I see.

MORRIS: It's a story.....

INT: Well we'll get to that part later. All right, I was just curious. May I ask your age?

MORRIS: I am 74, I will be 75 on August the 10th.

INT: So you were born August the 10th,....

MORRIS: 1920.

INT: 1920. Okay. And what was the name of the town in which you were born?

MORRIS: The town was a little shtetl; the, the name was Wasewo.

INT: Now you'll have to spell that for me. Can you remember how to spell it?

MORRIS: Yes, W-A-S-E-W-O.

INT: And how did you say it?

MORRIS: Wan-sev-oh.

INT: And what was the next largest community?

MORRIS: Ostrow-Mazowiceka. This was right close to, I would say, about twelve miles. That's where I went to Talmud Torah.

INT: So that was the closest place to you.

MORRIS: We belonged to that actually, because we had an area over there like Gamina, Poviet.

INT: Those were the areas around there? Okay.

MORRIS: All the small ones belonged.

INT: So it was like the central place and then all the smaller towns fed into that. Now I know that you were married. Tell me, how many years were you married?

MORRIS: 48.

INT: 48 years. And what was your wife's name?

MORRIS: Anny. A-N-N-Y.

INT: Anny. Was that short for something?

MORRIS: No, that's her first name.

INT: That was it, it's not a nickname?

MORRIS: Like Anne in English, was in Hungarian, Anny.

INT: Okay, I see. Now I know that your wife died this past year.

MORRIS: Six months ago.

INT: Six months. Can you tell me about what happened to her?. I know that's such an important thing for you, I would like to know.

MORRIS: What happened to her?

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: She had not been in good health since 1984, for ten years, but nothing what she passed away with. That sickness had nothing to do with it. She had emphysema and you know, we managed. She was bedridden for a while and I took care of most of the physical, [things] -- the house....

INT: Yes, the housekeeping?

MORRIS: The housekeeping and everything, but she was the brain. You know, "Moishe do this, do that." Everything, when she was around, Anny was the boss. She was the matriarch in the family. I was just, I was...

INT: You were her helper but she...

MORRIS: I was interested to make a living and busy with other things but Anny, Anny was everything!

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: She was the engine of the family, and she was the same way with raising the children. I was never home; I was just trying to make a living. And she worked too, and then she got sick and as long as she was around we were still a family. I got used to it, you know for a long time...

INT: Yeah, you adjust.

MORRIS: For a long time, it was just a normal thing; you learn to do the things. After a while, you don't even think of it, you just do what you have to do and then you go on. And finally, by last spring, in the beginning in April, the beginning of May, she started complaining of pain in the back. She went to the hospital and nobody thought of it as anything too serious; maybe a little pleurisy or something. But when they went in for the checkup they said, "No, you're not going home, there is something more serious."

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: So she was over here in the neighborhood, in Roxborough Memorial Hospital and I had her there for a few weeks, and they took a biopsy. They knew for sure that something's wrong with the liver. And they took a biopsy and said, "Well, there is nothing to worry about, it's not malignant; we can take care of it." And so they made an arrangement with the University of Pennsylvania; over there was supposed to be some specialist. They sent her there and they took their own tests and they said that there is nothing they can do about it. There was a tumor and it's malignant and it's just a matter of time. This was in July. And then we had to take her home, because the hospital doesn't keep you once they know that they cannot help you any more. The hospice takes over, you know how it works. And I took her home and that's it. It was a

struggle from July to October. I didn't think I'm going to make it, because I was already so exhausted. Oh, G-d forbid, that's a 24 hour job. Then it got so bad, and she died in the hospital. Because the last few days, the last five days she wasn't in condition. That was it! All the children were over here when it happened.

INT: They were here?

MORRIS: Yeah, they were a real help. They were here practically the whole summer.

INT: So they all had a chance to say good—bye to her?

MORRIS: Yes. Berl was here practically the whole summer and Jerry came in from the island for about three months. The older one, Henry, who lives in Dallas, he was here for just about a month. But everybody was here.

INT: Well now, tell me about your education.

MORRIS: Practically none [in public school].

INT: But you must have gone to cheder or something. When did you get started?

MORRIS: Oh, yeah, Jewish education. Yeah.

INT: Well tell me. How old were you?

MORRIS: Well over there the custom was if a boy was four years old, he had to go to cheder. He had to learn the alef-bais until seven years old. You did this three years. In the beginning, you learn the basic things from cheder and then there was compulsory public schooling and when you were seven years old, you had to go to public school.

INT: So where did you go to public school, in what town?

MORRIS: Over there in Wasewo.

INT: Oh, in your small town.

MORRIS: In my small town there, yeah.

INT: Okay. Now so you started with cheder from four years old.

MORRIS: From four years old.

INT: And then when you were seven you went to the public school.

MORRIS: When you were seven, you went to public school; that was a must. But you still had to go to cheder after school. You have lunch and then you go back to cheder. You have to advance.

INT: Did you like cheder?

MORRIS: Yes. Yeah, it was OK. I was considered a good student. But then trouble started. My mother meant good but it turned out, for me, it turned out a disaster.

INT: In what way?

MORRIS: In what way? Because when I was nine years old, she took me out of school and she decided for me to learn just Jewish education. She wanted me to go to the Talmud Torah and the Yeshiva.

INT: Oh yes.

MORRIS: And she sent me to Ostrow and over there was a Talmud Torah, a big Yeshiva..

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: And in those days…You see, my mother came originally from that town, you know, and had a big extended family over there.

INT: I was going to try to spell the name of that town.

MORRIS: Ostrow Mazowiecka

INT: O-S-T-R-O-W M-A-Z-O-W-I-E-C-K-A?

MORRIS: Yes, that's a region, something like Pennsylvania, you know, what you would call it. So anyhow, when I was nine years old she decided to send me to the religious school, the Jewish school.

INT: Did you have to live somewhere else?

MORRIS: Yes. Now that was a whole story! Over there -- it didn't just happen to me -- there was a custom. There were a lot of children who came from small shtetlach. And they had a custom, a way of life was over there, when somebody came there to go to Jewish schools, they lived by the "take."

INT: Take?

MORRIS: "Take." "Took" is a day. "Took" in Yiddish is a "day." So "take" meant that you were assigned to a family for certain meals. On Sunday you ate with this family. Monday you

ate over there, Tuesday you were.... It was all relatives, cousins and other relatives from my mother's side, from my father's side, you know, all relatives. But of course you had to sleep in another place.

INT: So you ate in one place and you slept somewhere else?

MORRIS: You had one place to sleep, steady. And to eat you had each day at a certain place. And that's the way it was.

INT: And you were only nine years old and you slept in one place all the time but you went to different people's houses?

MORRIS: Yeah, yes. I was not the only one. That was the custom.

INT: And how were these people paid? Did your family...?

MORRIS: No, there was no pay!

INT: They didn't charge, they just gave you everything?

MORRIS: No, this was not paid. Those days, you know, this was a mitzvah!

INT: Oh, because you were a scholar or a student?

MORRIS: No, no, that was just the way of life. My family didn't have any money to pay. In fact we were eight children and it was very difficult in those days; it was the 20's and 30's, a depression time. Over there we felt it too, you know, it was a tough time. A man with eight children, you try to spread everything out so that the family can survive. (laughs) But that's the way that it was, the way of life that we lived. "Take," it was a normal thing. I was not the only one and I was lucky because in Ostrow, we had a big family. My mother comes from the Kozuchowicz [Ko-zu-chov-ich]. It was a big, big family -- cousins and uncles, whatever. Another person at the dinner table, it was not a big deal.

INT: Let me ask you, do you think that your mother sent you because she felt it would be one less mouth to feed or because she felt that you really were likely to learn?

MORRIS: No, because I was good in cheder. I don't know. I was good in cheder, I guess, and she wanted…she was a religious type of woman and those days was a different culture than now. There was a "yichas," we called it a "yichas." You know what that mean?

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: That she's going to have a son who's going to be a religious one. Well, who knows?

INT: So you were the only one of the children sent to do that?

MORRIS: Yes.

INT: So you were the designated one to be the scholar.

MORRIS: I was the designated one. I don't know for what, for good or bad, but I wish she didn't do it, but--

INT: What was it like as a child, to all of a sudden leave home?

MORRIS: It was normal. It was like nothing because this was the way of life; that's the way we lived. I was not the only one. We had neighbors, some which I still remember, and they did the same thing, and some of them grew up went to the Yeshivas and they became scholars, you know, the Yeshiva "bochers." And, when I reached Bar Mitzvah, I said: "I want no part of it."

INT: Uh huh. So that was at thirteen?

MORRIS: That was at thirteen, yeah.

INT: Okay, then what happened?

MORRIS: Then I had to go back, and my mother took me back to school, to the same school. I remember the guy's name, you know, he was the principal of the school.

INT: This was the public school.

MORRIS: Public school was run by Polish people. You know, there was no discrimination. He said: "What do you want me to do? No. I cannot take him back to school. Where am I going to put him?"

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: "I cannot put him with the class where he started because he is too old for them. I cannot put him in that class according to his age because--"

INT: Yeah, well they knew different things than you did. They knew more.

MORRIS: Because they knew more already. You know it was a few years already from nine until 12, 13. Who knows? And that was the end of it. And I said "I'm not going to go back anymore. I don't want any part of it. I got tired of the "take." It depended on the family. Certain places, I looked forward to the whole week. Like the end of the week -- Thursday, Friday, Saturday, I <u>loved</u> it with those families! Sunday was a good family and Monday was not too bad. But Wednesday, I dreaded the day! You know already I was dreading the day because you know, it was not....

INT: Wednesday was a terrible...

MORRIS: Terrible day because that family, I didn't like them because their house was "schmutzik" [messy], and there was a lot of children and the food wasn't good.

INT: Yeah, yeah.

MORRIS: But that was not a reason to, I just didn't have any interest in it. I wanted to play ball like other normal people.

INT: So now what happened at thirteen, after the principal wouldn't take you in?

MORRIS: So I came home and then what could I do? You know you have to learn a trade.

INT: Right. So?

MORRIS: So we had a neighbor, he was a tailor, an expert. This was in 1934. I remember it like it was today. It was Chol Hamoed Pesach and my father said: "Moishe," he said, "Well I talked to Ozdoba."

INT: Ozdoba, that was the man's name?

MORRIS: His second name, he was...

INT: That's okay. But that was Mr. Ozdoba.

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Okay. And he was a tailor.

MORRIS: And he was a tailor. You know in those days everything was custom. You didn't have any production.

INT: Custom, it was custom made, yeah.

MORRIS: Everything was custom, everything. A tailor was a trade, a respected trade. And those days you had to **pay** [for training], but he did my father a big deal, that he's not going to charge, for three years you have to...

INT: You were an apprentice.

MORRIS: Apprentice for three years. See those days we didn't sign papers or anything. You shook hands and that was it. For three years, I signed up. I made a deal that I'm going to work for three years with no pay and he's going to teach me. So as an apprentice, a kid, you begin and

what do you do? You clean the floor, you go to the store and buy threads and all kind of things. We prepared the irons; we didn't have any electricity then and everything was manual.

INT: Manual, yes.

MORRIS: We went to the bakery to buy the coal so we could press. And that's the way it was. So what happened? After a year, a year and a half that I worked with him, he decided he was going to Argentina. He left everything behind.

INT: He went from Poland to Argentina?

MORRIS: Yes. He left and he did this a few times before. He would come back and stay a few years and then he would go back to Argentina -- Buenos Aires -- he used to live there. And that's it. And I was left! (laughs)

INT: That was it?

MORRIS: Now the shop where he was working was still continuing; his wife was running it.

INT: So he left his wife and went to Argentina?

MORRIS: Yes, she had all the equipment and everything. There were helpers who were working for him but it was not like he was there. It was different. So I found another place. I found another guy and I worked there for a year. (interruption)

INT: All right, so you left the woman whose husband went to Argentina and you really didn't know enough to be able to...

MORRIS: See now I remember! Yakel, Yakel Ozdoba, that was his name! I loved that guy!

INT: Yeah, and he went off without you.

MORRIS: I adored him. You know that's the way I became a tailor, because I loved him so much!

INT: That's what I was going to ask you. Did you love tailoring or did you love him?

MORRIS: I loved him because he was a guy who was working and talking all the time. He didn't shut up for a minute -- constantly telling stories, because he lived through the Russian Revolution. He was in Kerensky's army and he used to tell me what he did and how they put him in jail when Lenin won the war, and the whole thing. And I was very interested, and I would listen to him and he started liking me too because you know, it takes two. (laughs) Somebody has to listen. People who like to talk a lot like somebody...

INT: Yeah, they need someone to listen.

MORRIS: Somebody to listen to them. I loved it, but then he went away. And then I found another job with Label Shultz. I remember I worked for a year...

INT: Well did your skills get better as you went along?

MORRIS: Yeah, you learn as time goes on. Over there they start you as an aide, they teach you how to keep the needle, how to put on a thimble and so on. That's the way that it was in custom work. They showed you according to your ability. If you were able, you learned faster. In those days, people didn't take advantage of you. If somebody took you in he gave you 100%; whatever he could teach you.

INT: So how long did you...

MORRIS: If you weren't capable they would tell you "forget it, it's not for you."

INT: So how long did you stay with the next person?

MORRIS: The next one? A year.

INT: And then what happened?

MORRIS: Label Shultz I stayed with a year. And by then I already knew a little bit; and I heard that somebody needs help. It was a small town and everybody knew one-another. I heard that Chaim Motika had a shop and he needed somebody to help him. I went with him, made a deal. It was the first time that I made a deal where I'm going to get paid!

INT: Oh, finally. (laughs) Finally.

MORRIS: Finally. So we made a deal with for six months. This was what we called a "z'man."

INT: "Z'man" means "time," doesn't it?

MORRIS: "Z'man" means time, yes, but here "z'man" meant six months.

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: And we didn't mean a year. Everybody knew that "z'man" meant six months: From Succos to Pesach, we called that a "z'man," and from Pesach to Succos, that was a "z'man." So I made a deal and he paid me 60 zlotys, not dollars. But that was it; just something I got so I felt like I'm getting paid already. It was a big deal.

INT: Did you still live at home?

MORRIS: Oh yeah! Sure!

INT: Did you give your family some of your money?

MORRIS: Those days, you didn't keep any money; children didn't keep any money. That was not much money to talk about. It was just, just a...

INT: Token.

MORRIS: Token.

INT: So you stayed with him for the "z'man"?

MORRIS: I stayed with him until a "z'man," and then he doubled my pay because he learned I was pretty good. I must have been good because I was about sixteen years old and already I could do a lot of things. I could make...

INT: You were sixteen years old.

MORRIS: Yes, sixteen, seventeen years old, yeah and I could already do things. I was worth it, so I started making good money. And when I was seventeen and a half years old, around Succos, in 1938, I talked things over with my older brother. He was the oldest child in the family and he was married and lived in Warsaw. I decided I'm going to go to Warsaw. I started working there, but it was a different way of life. Warsaw was the capital, it was a big city. And it was very difficult. You had to have somewhere to start. But I was lucky because I had a brother over there. When I came, I had no money, nothing, and you had to have where to live. And in Warsaw it was very expensive. It was almost impossible to find a place to live. But I went there -- this was Chol Hamoed Succos in 1938 -- I went to Warsaw and I found some work but not much pay. But I didn't have to pay rent, and I had what to eat. I lived with them.

INT: Uh huh, this is with your brother?

MORRIS: With my brother, but it was small; it was one room there, but they made a place for me. There was a table and at night they put a mattress on it.

INT: So you slept on the table.

MORRIS: So I slept on the table, yeah, and that's the way it was until the next spring. They had a baby and there was no more room for me. I made enough money so I rented a place to sleep. If you rented a place, you rented it just to sleep. There was a cot; you came in 11:00, you opened the cot, you slept, you folded it up in the morning before you left for work at 7 or 8 o'clock. You didn't come home until [bedtime]. And you worked, you ate outside, and you found a restaurant, practically a steady place. They had restaurants special for this kind of youngster...

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: ...where they cooked like homemade food. It was a homey atmosphere and the food was good. It opened up a new life for me. I started making a lot of money. In those days I found a place. In the beginning it was not so hot, until finally I found a place where three people worked. And they made in this place raincoats and we split the money three ways. I was the youngest one, so the guy who had the room with his machines and everything, he got 51%. The other guy got 35%, and whatever was left over I got the rest. I got about 19 or 20%. We started working 8:00 in the morning and worked 'til 8:00 at night. We worked for twelve hours a day. And it was good. I made a lot of money. For me it was a different life. I never knew that you could make that kind of money. Those days I made about 40 zlotys; at home, I made $60...

INT: Zlotys?

MORRIS: ...60 zlotys a whole "z'man!"

INT: That's for six months.

MORRIS: For six months. And every year I made about 39, 40 zlotys; 40 was what I was making in a **week**.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: You know what that meant?

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: I had enough money...

[Tape 1 — End Side 1] [Tape 1 — Begin Side 2]

INT: This is tape 1, side 2 and Morris was talking about his good fortune of working in Warsaw and doing so well financially.

MORRIS: Yeah, so, but the thing is that in those days there were seasons. The world was seasons, you know?

INT: Clothing seasons.

MORRIS: Yes. Every thing was seasons and in Warsaw it was hot and the living, compared to home, was very expensive. The season ended at Shavous time. So I looked around and I said "why do I have to stay over here?" Our town was only 84 kilometers from Warsaw. "I have enough money that I can live at home for a whole month for what it costs for a day here. I should stay over there a whole summer until the next season? the next season didn't start until Rosh Hashana.

INT: Oh, I see. I see.

MORRIS: You know, if I had to live in Warsaw about two and a half, three months, I would spend all the savings that I had saved up. I thought I'll go home and when the season starts...

INT: You'll come back.

MORRIS: I'll come back.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: This was in '39. It was Sivan-Tammuz, you know.

INT: Sivan-Tammuz, the two Hebrew months.

MORRIS: Yeah, these were the hot months. So I went home and it was fine for a few weeks. And then I went -- it was Tammuz, it was in July, it was very hot day -- I went back to Ostrow, where I used to go to the Talmud Torah. Over there I had all this family; I knew all the people, as you know. And I was all dressed up and I wanted to show off. I had a friend who had a bicycle. I didn't have a bicycle because I wasn't home. And I borrowed his bicycle and I went. It was very hot and I pedaled 'til I got there and I was very sweaty. It was a hot, very hot and humid day. I got there; I went into one of the places I used to eat, it was an aunt, very nice people. They had children my age too, and I went in. I was so sweaty. We had water there in the well. I drank cold water and a few hours later I started feeling sick! And by the evening I got a temperature and I felt very sick and still with all that, I pedaled back home with the bicycle. You know, it was about 18 kilometers. I made it home but I was real, real sick. I had a high temperature. Finally the doctor said I have **typhus**!

INT: Oh my goodness. Did you get that from the water?

MORRIS: Must have been. I don't know. Maybe from the water, maybe not, because in town there were two people who had typhus; one was a Polack, older, much older. Anyhow, I had typhus, and this was already late in July, 1939. And I was unconscious for five weeks -- unconscious. And the doctor came to see me; we didn't have any doctor in town then. And when it comes to typhus, the city took care, it was contagious and they quarantined you.

INT: Right.

MORRIS: They put me in a special room, nobody was allowed in -- everyone in the town got needles -- and only my mother was allowed to go in the room and stay with me. The doctor was in Tuesday and he said that the longest I can make it is until Friday because I was almost dead. He gave up, there was no hope. This was in the end of August. This was August, yes. The doctor was Tuesday to see me. Friday, September the first, the war broke out.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: About ten days before this I got a card from the place where I was working. It was from my boss. He said, "Moishe, come soon, even tomorrow, if you can't come today. We going to have a terrific season this year." The season started a few weeks ahead of time and there was a lot of work. He said, "Make it as soon as you can."

INT: Were you unconscious when this came?

MORRIS: Yeah, I was unconscious when this came. Afterwards I found out about it, and that's it.

INT: So how did you regain consciousness?

MORRIS: This was September the first, on a Friday. I remember like today. Thursday night, this was the night when they started the whole tumult. I was laying on a bed on the ground floor and I heard in my unconsciousness, I heard a lot of commotion, a lot of shooting, and I heard what they were saying -- something about war. And they said they're going to burn down the town and everybody had to run away. And I sensed it. And I said, "I don't want to be burned on the bed alive." I got out of bed. All of a sudden I got a shock! Nobody can understand this that there is such a thing. I got a shock from all this commotion, from the shootings, and the talking, that there is war, and they're going to burn down the town. And I went down and that's it. And everybody in the whole place had to run away.

INT: All right. Now let's wait because we're getting way ahead of ourselves.

MORRIS: Yeah, we're getting ahead of ourselves.

INT: So let's stop there because we're going to get back to that. We're going to work our way back.

MORRIS: My memory works fast.

INT: Well that's fine. Now let's go back to talking about we were talking about earlier.

MORRIS: That's a lot of years that went by. (laughs)

INT: Right, so we're going to recapture those. But tell me, just to get back to your wife, Anny. How much schooling did she have?

MORRIS: Oh she was educated. She had the higher education. She was educated. She went to gymnasium [school] in Budapest. She was just the opposite of me.

INT: So was she able to complete her schooling or did the war interfere?

MORRIS: No, the war interfered with this.

INT: Do you know what grade she went to?

MORRIS: I don't know. They used to call it gymnasium in Europe. She couldn't finish it because she was too young.

INT: How old was she?

MORRIS: In Hungary, originally the war started in '44 when the Germans occupied.

INT: I didn't ask you when was she born? Do you know what year she was born?

MORRIS: Yes.

INT: What?

MORRIS: She was born in 1925. She was born October 25 -- no, October 20, 1925. When the war broke out in Hungary, the Hungarians cooperated with the Germans, but they were officially occupied. When the German army went into Budapest, it was already 1944. It was a year before the end of the war.

INT: So she did have a significant part of her education.

MORRIS: Oh yeah, yeah.

INT: And what kind of work did she do?

MORRIS: In Hungary there was a different way of life than we had. See Hungary had two Jewish --. In Hungary there were two kinds of Jews: one was very Orthodox, they called them "mamarushes."

INT: The what?

MORRIS: "Mamarushes" they called them. They were Rumanian Jews.

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: That's the history, you know, Hungary was part of the Austrian-Hungarian empire. When they broke it up, Rumania took a part of Hungary. Everybody took a part; Poland took a part of Hungary.

INT: So there were the religious ones and the...

MORRIS: There were the very, very religious ones and there were the secular ones that were exactly like the German Jews; they hardly even knew what Jewish was.

INT: So your wife was secular?

MORRIS: She was the secular one, you know, she hardly knew what being Jewish means. She knows she's a Jew, that's it. No language, no Jewish language -- just the opposite from me. Completely the opposite.

INT: Did she have any kind of work experience? When she worked, what did she do? When she worked in the United States, what did she do?

MORRIS: Oh, that's already-- (pause) a lot of years went by.

INT: Oh yeah, I know.

MORRIS: In the war she worked in or near Vienna. There was a camp where they were doing something with chemicals.

INT: But when she worked in the United States what did she do?

MORRIS: Well she worked at the University of Pennsylvania.

INT: Really?

MORRIS: She worked in the physics department.

INT: In the physics department? What did she do?

MORRIS: She was a technician for Dr. Mann in the University. She worked there 23 years.

INT: She worked there 23 years?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: And what did she do?

MORRIS: In the beginning, for about 15 years she worked in the physics department for a scientist.

INT: Was she a secretary?

MORRIS: No, she was a technician.

INT: Oh, okay.

MORRIS: They were doing experimental work, with the rays from the stars and this and that and other machines. She worked with Al Mann for about 15 years until they discontinued the work here because it was too expensive. So Anny went to work for the registrar.

INT: Okay, but she spent her career here at the University of Pennsylvania.

MORRIS: All at the University of Pennsylvania, for 23 years.

INT: Now when you worked in the United States you worked as a tailor?

MORRIS: Yeah, always a tailor. In January of 1950 we came to New York. And when we landed in New York, on the ship they made an announcement: Everybody who has a child under a year has the privilege to go to California.

INT: Oh, so that's, okay. (laughs)

MORRIS: And our oldest son was born in Germany; he was eight months old when we arrived in New York.

INT: Well then tell me about, tell me about your children. How old? Who is the first child?

MORRIS: Henry.

INT: Okay, and how old is he now?

MORRIS: He was named Chaim but in America it is Henry.

INT: And how old is he now?

MORRIS: Oh, he was born 1949, how old is he? (laughs)

INT: Forty something?

MORRIS: Forty—six years old. And he was just eight months old when we arrived in New York. He was born in Germany in Wurzburg.

INT: In where?

MORRIS: Wurzburg, that's in Bavaria.

INT: Now is he married?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Okay, and does he have any children?

MORRIS: He has three.

INT: So you have three grandchildren from him.

MORRIS: From Henry.

INT: Yes, from Henry. What's Henry's wife's name?

MORRIS: Mara. It's an Italian or English name. Who knows?

INT: So she's not Jewish?

MORRIS: No.

INT: Okay. And how old are your grandchildren from them?

MORRIS: Lucy, the oldest daughter is twenty. And the oldest boy, Sammy,will be fifteen; and Joe, he's going to be thirteen. They live in Dallas, Texas.

INT: Do the grandchildren consider themselves Jewish or not Jewish?

MORRIS: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I think mostly Jewish.

INT: Did they have Bar Mitzvahs, the boys?

MORRIS: I don't know. I don't think so. Personally, I don't know the way they live because I was never there.

INT: So you were never in Texas?.

MORRIS: My wife went one time.

INT: Now tell me, where did Henry go to school?

MORRIS: He went to the University of Pennsylvania. See, all of our children were entitled to go to school for free, because those days if you worked three years and you were considered a faculty member, your children were qualified. So all of our three sons studied at the University of Pennsylvania.

INT: And what's his career? What does he do for a living?

MORRIS: He didn't finish his education there. He was an artist. He's still an artist. He was a born artist but for some reason his mother decided he should be an engineer and she sent him to engineering school and he had no interest. She should have sent him to an art school.

INT: But he had no interest in engineering.

MORRIS: He had no interest and then was the Vietnam war and he was supposed to go and instead he went away. For three years we didn't know if he was alive. For three years he disappeared completely. We didn't know anything. We didn't know where he was. That's a whole story. He is still doing commercial art but he never wants to take a nine to five job like other people.

INT: And what about your next child?

MORRIS: The next child is Berl.

INT: And when was he born?

MORRIS: He was born eighteen months after Henry. They are only eighteen months apart. He was born 1950. He was born in Philadelphia already. We didn't stay in California for long. We stayed a few months in California and that was another story.

INT: We'll get to that one too. So if he was born, you say he was born in '50, so he's 45 now? 44, 45?

MORRIS: 44, 45?

INT: Yes, and is he married?

MORRIS: He was born October the 3rd in October, 1950. Yeah, he's married. He has one daughter, a four year old.

INT: A four year old daughter?

MORRIS: Yeah, she'll be five pretty soon.

INT: So he got a late start?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: And what's his wife's name?

MORRIS: (pause) Bridget.

INT: Bridget?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Yes, and do they live in this area or do they...?

MORRIS: No, they live in Annapolis, Maryland.

INT: Annapolis. Oh, okay. So they have the one child [Samantha] who is almost five. And so we have Henry, Berl and then who is last?

MORRIS: Then Jerry.

INT: And how old is he?

MORRIS: Jerry was born in '54.

INT: Uh huh. Okay, so that makes him 41.

MORRIS: Yeah, 41. Soon he'll be 42.

INT: Uh huh, and where does he live?

MORRIS: He's the one, he stayed with his schooling. He stayed, he was just the opposite. He just picked it up when the Vietnam War was over already. He started his masters from the University of Pennsylvania, he was nineteen years old that semester. Then he went to Harvard. But it didn't cost us a penny; which was good because we couldn't afford it. He got married, he was nineteen years old and then they both went to Harvard. At 24 years old they both got their doctor degree in physics at Harvard.

INT: And what is his wife's name?

MORRIS: Eva. She's a Jewish girl.

INT: Uh huh, and do they have any children?

MORRIS: Two girls, yeah.

INT: And how old are they?

MORRIS: Holly will be ten in about two months. The next daughter, Laurel, will be five pretty soon.

INT: So you have grandchildren ranging in age from four to twenty.

MORRIS: Yes.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: The oldest, Lucy, is twenty. [Jerry and Eva] they went to Harvard and after they got their doctorate they lived in Syracuse for a while, got jobs. He worked as a scientist. His specialty was lasers. In Harvard he studied with a guy, Bloembergen.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: Professor Bloembergen. He was a Nobel Prize winner.

INT: Yes. Oh, that's wonderful. I guess you're very proud of him.

MORRIS: Then he worked for Xerox, I think. He worked in New York State, but his wife didn't like the place. So they moved to Boston and Jerry got a job with, what's the name of the company? GTE?

INT: GTE?

MORRIS: GTE, yeah, he worked with them in research. GTE does satellites and this kind of work. He worked there for a while but then they decided to move. Anyhow, they both got jobs at MIT. They worked there for a long time. Jerry worked in Boston, but then eight years back, he worked in Hawaii in an observatory. It was an observatory, which is run-- in other words, MIT makes contracts with the army or whatever. Whenever you invent something, you have no rights, because they pay you and that's the way you sign away your rights. So he worked two or three years with the observatory until the army decided to cut off funds. Then MIT sent them to the Kwajaleins in the Marshall Islands. MIT had an army contract at a missile base, a testing facility. That's way in the Pacific!

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: That's farther than Australia!

INT: So that's where he's been.

MORRIS: Where he's been, yeah.

INT: Okay. Now tell me how would you describe your religious affiliation? Are you connected Jewishly with anything?

MORRIS: No, not much. I'm Jewish from my head to my toe.

INT: From your head to your toe, okay. Yeah.

MORRIS: But not as a religion; nothing to do with religion.

INT: So you don't belong to a synagogue?

MORRIS: I don't belong to a synagogue. We belonged to a synagogue when we lived in the old neighborhood. We lived in Wynnefield originally; that's where the kids grew up. Over there was B'nai Aaron synagogue, so we belonged there.

INT: You belonged over there and the boys had a Bar Mitzvah?

MORRIS: Yes, the boys were Bar Mitzvahed; they went to, used to be Schechter School. What's the name?

INT: Solomon Schechter.

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: A day school?

MORRIS: Yeah. Used to go after school.

INT: Well they went to a Hebrew School.

MORRIS: Schechter is not a Hebrew School. It's a...

INT: Solomon Schechter is a day school and that's all day.

MORRIS: In those days, Schechter was a school where they taught Yiddish.

INT: Oh, it was a folk shul?

MORRIS: It was a folk shul, yeah. It was on Gainor Road in Wynnefield. I remember the teacher was Shapiro.

INT: So your affiliation...

MORRIS: So then when the neighborhood broke up in Wynnefield, everybody left, we moved over here in DuPont Towers, an apartment building. We lived there for nine years.

INT: Is that in Roxborough too?

MORRIS: That's in Roxborough, about a few blocks from where we are.

INT: So but you didn't join a synagogue when you...

MORRIS: No, over here there are hardly any synagogues. There is one synagogue not far away in Plymouth, but it's just a synagogue which I wouldn't go to. If you go in there you feel like you're in a church. It's not for me.

INT: So on the holidays, you don't go on Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur?

MORRIS: No, no I do not go. See my wife, she was not observant and she learned in Germany when they lived in the camp. This was a completely Jewish life. She became like one of us. She learned Yiddish and now the whole thing. Then we moved out, but we've never been religious.

INT: Did you ever keep kosher?

MORRIS: No.

INT: Okay. Did you eat pork and...?

MORRIS: Yeah, we were not kosher. I don't like pork and I don't eat pork, not because of religion but because that's the way I was brought up. We eat everything Jewish but mostly Hungarian style. And I still cook, I cook today my mother's things the way I learned, the way that she taught me. It had nothing to do…See, people can't understand to be Jewish and to be religious. Some people mix it up.

INT: So you see a distinction between being Jewish and being religious.

MORRIS: Yes, between Jewish and religious. Because I came from a very, very religious home. My mother has been buried in Israel and everything.

INT: Does it disturb you that your children married non-Jews?

MORRIS: That disturbed me but I couldn't do anything about it.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: Jerry's wife's parents are German Jews; they come from a different culture whereas I came from the Eastern European culture. Her parents are still alive. They live in Jersey. They are religious.

INT: Are they survivors?

MORRIS: Uh huh. But they came over here before the war.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: Before the Second World War.

INT: Uh huh. Now do you belong to any organizations?

MORRIS: No.

INT: No. (laughs)

MORRIS: No, I'm a loner.

INT: You're a loner? So have you ever participated in any Holocaust activities?

MORRIS: No.

INT: No.

MORRIS: Never. When we came to Philadelphia we joined the Newcomers, you know they had an organization. We went a few times and then we had no interest. See the Holocaust survivors, most survived from the concentration camps.

INT: Right.

MORRIS: I was not a part -- I was never in a concentration camp. Later on you'll see my life history, then you'll find out why.

INT: Are you saying that because your experiences were **different** from the people from the camps that you didn't have enough in common to...?

MORRIS: No, to join to be with them, we didn't have enough in common. And my wife, she came with a culture. She had no interest and I didn't see anything there. I don't know. We just, we lived a different life, we lived by ourselves. And our friends -- we still have friends -- you know the woman who just called me on the telephone? We were neighbors in Wynnefield. We've been friends for about 45 years.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: Or more.

INT: So you had close friends.

MORRIS: We had close, good friends, but all American born people. We integrated into this culture.

INT: Okay, all right.

MORRIS: In a short time, in a few years we were completely -- we forgot where we came from. We had no friends who were European people. Our friends were all, most American born up until today. Jewish people, but they were different. They are Jewish but nobody speaks Yiddish. I'm the only one I think that speaks Yiddish.

[Tape 1 — End Side 2] [Tape 2 — Begin Side 1]

INT: This is tape 2, side 1 of an interview with Morris B. Now let's turn back to your family of origin.

MORRIS: Yeah, we're going ahead of our time.

INT: That's okay. We're going to end up in the same place no matter which way we go, so it's no problem.

MORRIS: There's a lot of things that skip your mind, but I have a pretty good memory.

INT: You certainly do. Now tell me, where were your parents born? We're going back to your family to talk about your parents and their families.

MORRIS: From my mother's side, I remember my grandmother and my grandfather and my mother. From my father's side, I only remember my father and his sisters and brothers, but as far as a grandfather I don't. Because my father grew up practically an orphan. My grandfather, who I'm named after, Moishe, he was married **four** times.

INT: Your grandfather was married four times?

MORRIS: With children from each woman.

INT: Did he outlive all of those wives? (laughs)

MORRIS: I don't know. (laughs) I know there are children. A month ago I was with them in Holon.

INT: Holon.

MORRIS: In Holon, in Ramla. I was there with my father's step sisters.

INT: Oh my goodness.

MORRIS: Just a month ago I was with them. He had a lot of brothers, original brothers. And he had step-- you know from the same father and other mothers. And some of them I knew, some I didn't. But I was just in Israel a month ago and I was with Chava, my father's niece and I was in Ramla with her.

INT: So what town was your father from?

MORRIS: My father was from Wasewo.

INT: That's where you grew up?

MORRIS: Yeah, that's where I grew up. Now when he was a little boy, the other wives just got rid of him, practically, you know what I mean?

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: So he went...

INT: Was he from the first wife?

MORRIS: He was from the first wife.

INT: Okay, so then she probably died and the next wife....

MORRIS: Yeah, yeah, the next wife there was already no connection because...

INT: Because it wasn't their child.

MORRIS: He grew up with neighbors, you know, oy vey!

INT: Oh my. Uh huh.

MORRIS: And he learned, he was a shoemaker by trade. He worked for someone, some family; I guess he grew up, learned the trade. And then my mother came from a completely different background too.

INT: Well tell me about your mother's family.

MORRIS: My mother came from a very extended [family] which I knew everybody. I remember everybody. The name was Kozuchowicz. It was a very, very big, big family; her uncles, she had brothers, a very big family. Almost half of the city of Ostrow were her relatives. And I knew them, I had the privilege before the war, because I used to eat the "takes."

INT: Yes, yes, her family.

MORRIS: Was most of them her family.

INT: Her family.

MORRIS: Her family. Some of them my father's family and a lot of them I had seen. I knew all of her family, but nobody survived.

INT: Nobody from her whole family?

MORRIS: Some of them, very, very few survived and because of my mother's family, her sisters and...

INT: How many sisters did she have?

MORRIS: My mother had Leba, who I remember. Reba and was Rifka and Etka. Then she had a brother in America. And there were four sisters and a brother.

INT: That's her immediate family. And did any of them survive?

MORRIS: No.

INT: No, they are all gone?

MORRIS: All gone. They are all gone. Later on when we talk about how it happened it's another story. And nobody from the Kozuchowicz-- was hundreds, hundreds of uncles, my cousins. I found one. I found in Israel, Chana. She was Perl Kozuchowicz's daughter and I remember her. I used to eat there Sunday, my day. Sunday my "take."

INT: Yes, your "take."

MORRIS: She was going to gymnasium then. She was a young girl.

INT: Yes, and you remember her from then?

MORRIS: Yeah, she had a boyfriend; he was going to gymnasium too. They had a bakery, Kukowka. I remember when she used to be home. She was a teenager; she was about eighteen, nineteen years old. And I found them in Israel. She's an old lady. They left in 1932, she went away, ran away from home with her boyfriend.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: In a kibbutz. They were pretty rich.

INT: And that's why they survived.

MORRIS: That's why they survived, yeah. Her father, the people, her parents didn't survive, from where I used to eat on Sunday. And I find out through my sisters in Israel. I have a very big family now in Israel -- by the hundreds. The same that my mother had Kozuchowicz in Ostrow, I now have in Haifa, hundreds of people of mine, new generation.

INT: But they're from your father's...

MORRIS: No, from my mother's. My father and mother lived in Israel too, in Haifa.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: After the war they went there. They all went there.

INT: So they survived the war and they went to Israel. You survived and you went to the United States.

MORRIS: I went to the United States.

INT: Okay. All right.

MORRIS: The only one. All my sisters and my brother went all to Israel and I, by accident I end up over here because I couldn't go with them. When my parents left the night, I was single yet when they left for Israel. (pauses) No, no, I was married already then.

INT: Because when you came here your oldest child was already born.

MORRIS: Yeah, yeah, I was married already. I married in 1949. The rest of the family left, but the authorities didn't let us go because Anny was pregnant with Henry; she was eight months pregnant. They said, "we cannot take you on this ship until after the baby is born. He'll be about three months, then [you can go]." And that was the end of it. They left and then [the U.S. government] opened up America. You know, before that we couldn't come over here. Truman was the president and they opened up to 100,000 refugees and Anny heard you can come to America. She had relatives, all the relatives and the uncles lived in Philadelphia. She said, "I'm not going to Israel" -- because Israel didn't have anything then. It was a terrible life that they lived in camps.

INT: Now let's talk about your family. What was your father's name?

MORRIS: Ephraim.

INT: Ephraim. And what was your mother's name?

MORRIS: Rochel. Dishka Rochel; they had different names then. Dishka Rochel is what they called her. I had two names too but I never used the second name.

INT: What was your second name?

MORRIS: Moishe Yiddle. Yiddle was like Judah.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: They used to call me Yiddle but I never used that name since I left home. When I was a kid everybody, because there was so many Moishes over there they...

INT: They called you Moishe Yiddle.

MORRIS: They called me Moishe Yiddle or they used to call by the father's name, Moishe Ben this and this.

INT: Tell me about your brothers and sisters? How many did you have?

MORRIS: We were eight children.

INT: Eight children. So who was the oldest? You're the oldest?

MORRIS: No, I am the oldest **now**.

INT: So who was the first child born?

MORRIS: Liber. L-I-B-E-R. That was the oldest boy.

INT: Boy.

MORRIS: Yeah. He was born in 1915.

INT: Okay and then who was next?

MORRIS: And the next was Chaicha (Chaya).

INT: And how old?

MORRIS: She was two years older than me. Chaicha was born 1918.

INT: So you were the third.

MORRIS: I was the third, yeah.

INT: Okay, and you said you were born in 1920.

MORRIS: '20.

INT: '20. Okay, and then who came after you?

MORRIS: After me came a "tzwilling."

INT: What?

MORRIS: We had twins.

INT: Oh, twins.

MORRIS: Yeah, two sisters. I have been just with them in Israel. They live in Haifa.

INT: Oh, oh, okay. And what are their names?

MORRIS: Their names are Rita and Paula.

INT: Okay, so that's five.

MORRIS: At home we didn't call them by these names; it was Rifka and Pesha. But now they live in Israel [and are known as Rita and Paula].

INT: Okay, so then who came next?

MORRIS: Next came Buruch.

INT: But you were the third. Then came the twins, that's five. Then Buruch.

MORRIS: Buruch, yeah.

INT: So you still have two more to account for after.

MORRIS: There was Chanka (Chana). She was born 1932.

INT: Uh huh, and then the last one?

MORRIS: And Zipora. We called her Fanka, but if you didn't know Hebrew you called her Zipora. I call her Fanka. But they call her Zipora in Israel.

INT: Was there a family business? You say your father was a shoemaker. Did he support your family?

MORRIS: No, not with shoe making. No, in those days you did everything to make a living, to survive. In the summertime, he used to deal with fruit. He used to rent -- it was a custom -- you rent a "sad" they used to call it, you know, you rent an orchard.

INT: Yes, yes.

MORRIS: With the farmer, you rented an orchard and then you used to gamble like in the stock market. In April, May, you used to go and look at the trees, how they bloom. Used to buy it according to the blooming. If you had a good season, you made some money. If not , it wasn't good. That's the way it was with this.

INT: So he bought the harvest of that particular orchard.

MORRIS: Yeah. You could rent by trees, single trees.

INT: No kidding.

MORRIS: Yeah, I remember I was a youngster, a kid and I remember like today. You could rent five, ten trees, which ones you picked out. You wouldn't **buy** the trees but you just rented them to use for the season.

INT: Yeah, so then...

MORRIS: So you buy them in April and in May. And we had to pick because it was your tree. You were responsible for taking care of it. And you had to take care, you were watching...

INT: So what happened with the fruit that you got?

MORRIS: We used to sell it. We used to have bazaars that you called "yareed." See, the Polacks, where they lived, every day each different town, different village had a bazaar where they used to come.

INT: A little market place?

MORRIS: A market place?

INT: A market place, you know. It was not a steady market. On a particular day, that market place was open.

MORRIS: People used to go around over there and sell soda, beer or fruit, whatever. That's the way that people made a living those days.

INT: Yeah, so you took a chance that it was going to be a good harvest.

MORRIS: Yeah. I remember because I was a youngster then; we used to have to take care so they wouldn't steal from there. We had to watch them.

INT: Oh, sure. Uh huh.

MORRIS: And I remember when I came home from the Talmud Torah for a few days, I used to lay over there and watch the trees. We had a dog on a chain and the dog was running on the chain and watching so nobody could steal the food. That's the way it was, the way I remember.

INT: So how else did they make money?

MORRIS: My mother helped a little bit, whatever; she used to go and buy milk. I remember she used to go to the farmers, buy milk and sell it. But everybody did whatever came they could. It was a tough life. It was a struggle.

INT: Sure, eight children.

MORRIS: Eight children, well you know eight children, you have to eat and...

INT: And what about clothing?

MORRIS: Clothing, you know clothing. It's not like now, you go in the store and you buy clothing. You made a dress or brought it to the seamstress to make something. You made it for a year. A person, myself, I remember when I was a kid for Pesach I used to buy a pair of shoes, or a little suit, or whatever, thinking you had to wait until the next Pesach to get something new. And that's the way. It was not an exception. See you didn't feel poor in those days because everybody else lived the same way.

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: See, you didn't feel poor; there was so much culture -- even if you didn't go to school. I remember, when I grew up, when I was a teenager, I was not a dummy. I was reading a lot, and you had discussions, and belonged to groups, and people were not stupid. Like you could tell the way the kids look now, you know what I mean?

INT: Uh huh.

MORRIS: School didn't educate you, you educated yourself practically. You grew under these circumstances.

INT: You belonged to groups?

MORRIS: In the beginning, I belonged to the Bund. Working people, most of them, either you were a communist or you were a Zionist or you were a Bund. But the majority who belonged those days were Bund. See, I still get the paper -- The Forward. It is still a bundisha paper.

INT: So what did you...

MORRIS: The tradesmen mostly belonged to the Bund.

INT: Was your family religious in any way?

MORRIS: Yeah, my mother was very religious.

INT: What about your father?

MORRIS: My father was not fanatic religious but he was religious. He was a Gabbai in the shul.

INT: A Gabbai at the shul.

MORRIS: Yes, always a Gabbai in the shul, my father. He was **very**, **very**, **very** involved in the social -- you know, those things they had in the shul -- they had a Lenas Hatzedek. We had a system. In the shtetl life-- See, it's very difficult for American people to understand, because right away their question is "who paid?" See, there was no such thing.

INT: It was more barter, wasn't it, where you had to trade things?

MORRIS: See we paid -- no matter how poor you were -- we paid our incomes to the Jewish organizations. The Jewish had a different way; we lived in Poland but our culture with our way of life was--, we had our own government practically, you would call it. Jews had their own gemina [community] and you paid your taxes to the Jewish people.

INT: Was this to keep the Jewish institutions going?

MORRIS: To keep the Jewish institutions going; that they can take care of the poor and the sick ones.

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: We had a Lenas Hatzedek, a place where you get medicines, nurses, whatever. It's being taken care but by your own. We didn't wait for the government because the government didn't give you nothing. You know there was no such thing.

INT: So the Jews took responsibility for...

MORRIS: So the Jews took responsibility for themselves for Pesach, who need matzos, couldn't afford it, or wine or something. That was taken care of.

INT: That's a Moat Chittim?

MORRIS: Moas Chittim, that's right; you know that! This was the way with the unfortunate who had to have everything for Yomtov.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: That's the way it was, or when somebody was sick. This was in a small town, in a bigger town, the whole way of life -- we lived our own way.

INT: How many Jews are you talking about in this area?

MORRIS: I'm talking about Ostrow where there was a very big city, there was a just a few thousand Jews. I don't know, it was about two or three thousand people and it was considered big. When I was born, that little shtetl was about a few dozen Jews.

INT: So you really had to depend on the larger Jewish community.

MORRIS: Yeah, because we didn't have any basalem, no cemetery, a "bayis olom." Our basalem was in Ostrow, you know, if somebody dies.

INT: Yes, that's where they were buried.

MORRIS: That's where they were buried. We had our own synagogue, we had everything our own, but we were not enough.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: But we were surrounded with-- you know, five miles from that was already another big city. We lived there just because we were born there. But seven kilometers from us was another city. We walked or went with a bicycle or with a horse and buggy. There were no cars.

INT: You didn't have busses or anything.

MORRIS: No busses, no. In Ostrow we had busses.

INT: Oh, but the bus didn't go to the small town.

MORRIS: No, no, no it went to Warsaw. The busses were going from one city to the other, not local. No, it was not that big that you need a bus. It was droshkas we called them, if you wanted like a taxi. They had horse and buggy, they called them droshkas; they were standing in the street. You have to go somewhere, you called a droshka. We had a special uncle, who had a horse and buggy with a droshka, and it looked something like what the Amish have.

INT: Yes, with the surrey.

MORRIS: You know, if you want to go someplace, you go by droshka.

INT: Now did your brothers and sisters stay in the regular government school? You say you went...

MORRIS: Yeah, my older brother, he finished. Over there you have to finish seven, (pause) seven -- pashechen they called it, public school. It was seven years and you had to finish.

INT: So all of the other children went through the seventh year?

MORRIS: No, not all of them. The war broke out. They didn't have a chance. Zipora was four years old. She was born in 1935.

INT: So, what was the year that the war began, when education stopped for the other children?

MORRIS: 1939.

INT: Okay, so until 1939 they all went to school.

MORRIS: Yeah, they went all to school all year except our three oldest ones.

INT: They were finished already.

MORRIS: Yeah, they were finished and you see, when I went in Jewish education, it was considered that I'm in school.

INT: Right, sure.

MORRIS: You had to go to school, it was mandatory.

INT: Right.

MORRIS: But I chose to go to the religious school. It was my privilege.

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: My privilege -- my parents' privilege, to give me an education.

INT: Were your brothers already working in a career, or were they apprenticed or what were they doing?

MORRIS: My older brother was a tailor too. He married a rich girl in Warsaw. I went and my sister was in Warsaw too, Chaicha. It was a short period and then the war broke out. There was not much leave time, you know nothing, there is not a big history. Then when the war broke out, I never saw him again up until today. It was 84 kilometers from our town to Warsaw. The war broke out and after the war stopped, I met people who saw me in the street who thought I had **died** because of that Tuesday when the doctor from Warsaw came to see me. And they thought that I **died**. And the war broke out and there was no connection anymore. We couldn't! After the war, I met somebody in Bialystok; they saw me in the street, they started screaming, "Moishe, we already said Kaddish, Liber said Kaddish already for you. They thought you died." And it happened I survived, I'm still alive and they didn't survive the war. They died in the Warsaw Ghetto, I don't know. There was a baby with them. She was born Chol Hamoed Pesach, and the war broke out a few months later. She was about four, five months old and I never, never saw him again. Never saw him again.

INT: This was your brother.

MORRIS: Yeah, Liber. And Chaicha. We were three older ones who lived in Warsaw already. Liber, the oldest one, was born in 1915; Chaicha was born in 1918 and then I was the third on in 1920.

INT: Oh, I see. Okay. So it was a boy, girl, boy, then the twins.

MORRIS: Then the twins. Then Paula, Rita, then Chanka, then Buruch, and Zipora. And thank G-d they are all around except the ones who were left in the ghetto in the Holocaust. And our parents survived too. See, that the parents survived with us, with the younger ones, that's a whole story.

INT: We'll get to that.

MORRIS: How we survived, that's another story!

INT: Now you say you only remember your grandfather on your father's side, but on your mother's side do you remember what your grandparents were like together?

MORRIS: Oh yeah, I remember like today.

INT: How did they get along with each other?

MORRIS: Chaim, Henry is named after my mother's father.

INT: Father. Okay, so how did your grandparents get along? What do you remember of them?

MORRIS: I remember them like right now I'm looking at them I remember my Zayde, I remember when he died and I remember when my Bubba died. Chanka is named after her, for my mother's mother. She died in 1929. I remember I couldn't go, I was crying, I couldn't go to the funeral because I had measles.

INT: You were only nine years old.

MORRIS: Yeah, I had measles then. I was in bed with measles. And I couldn't go when Bubba died because they had to take her to the cemetery, to Ostrow, because we didn't have our own cemetery.

INT: So you remember your grandparents together, what it was like with them?

MORRIS: With my Zayde I remember like now, his two daughters lived with them, the single ones. Rifka and Leba lived with them. And I remember my Bubba, she died of asthma. I remember her struggle. I remember like now, and they lived not far but...

INT: How did they get along with one another? What do you remember?

MORRIS: Well, my Zayde had a beard. I remember he was a tall, very tall man, Chaim Liber we called him. And Chana, she was always coughing. I used to go over there for supper; and my Zayde loved me, because he used to keep me on his knee and he'd teach me what we davened for Purim or Hanukkah. When I was a little kid, he used to teach me Jewish songs. Purim, we used to give Shalach Manos.

INT: Sure, uh huh.

MORRIS: And Hanukkah we used to play with the dreidle and all kind of things.

INT: Well who was the boss in their family?

MORRIS: Na, I don't think there was a boss. They lived a peaceful life, a very peaceful life, a loving life. You know, they were older people, but I remember it well because I was their grandchild.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: Of course everybody wasn't rich. My mother came from a very distinguished family, the Kozuchowicz family in Ostrow. It was a fine group of people; they were all good, well-to-do. My mother had sisters: Liba, Rifka, Etka, and she had a brother, Moishe.

INT: Well now tell me about your parents. Tell me what it was like, how they were with each other, what it was like when they were together?

MORRIS: Well I remember my mother was always pregnant (laughs) until 1935, four years before the war, was the last baby.

INT: How did your parents get along with one another? What do you remember of that?

MORRIS: Well just the same... It reminds me of my own life.

INT: In what way?

MORRIS: My father was high strung, liked to open his mouth, hollering, and you know, showing discipline.

INT: Very outspoken?

MORRIS: Outspoken and disciplined the children in the way that if they didn't behave themselves, he gave them a good smack. You know, you have to be in control. My mother was just the opposite. She was a "momela," just covering up-- she used to cover with the apron. She was the peacemaker, yeah, very quiet and different, different personalities; quiet, but a very

devoted mother. There was nothing too hard if it was for the children; she would give her life for the children. Very, very, very good mother. I don't know if there is such a thing anymore. In those circumstances -- eight children -- in those conditions, it was almost impossible, but she did it. When the war broke out, that's a whole story!

INT: Well how were decisions made in your family?

MORRIS: No big decisions to make. What decisions to make? There was no decisions to make.

INT: Well your mother decided that you would go...

MORRIS: You worked the whole week, how are you going to make Shabbas? How to have enough flour to bake challahs. It was a struggle. It was a tough life!

INT: So they struggled.

MORRIS: yeah.

INT: How did your parents...

[Tape 2 — End Side 1] [Tape 2 — Begin Side 2]

INT: This is tape 2, side 2. And I was just asking Morris about his parents and how they felt about one another, how they got along with one another.

MORRIS: They got along. It was no fighting, it was just to raise the children. It was a different world. How can I explain this? I didn't see no hostilities. They were busy just to make a living, to raise the family. The culture was not like now, you know, the people getting divorced or something; there was no such thing in those days. Every family they lived like this. How did they get along? They got along fine. (laughs). To produce a family like this, it must be rough. The only thing I remember is my father was strict with the children. Sometimes he went overboard. You know, it was not to my mother's liking. She let him go that far, she saw he was overboard, she said: "That's it! That's enough!"

INT: Oh, okay, so she did...

MORRIS: Oh yeah, when she says it's enough, that was the end of it. You know you have to discipline children. We were growing up and my father was just high strung. He'd holler; just the opposite to my mother. And the same with me, with me the way I live, it's the same thing. If I don't like something I'm not ashamed to open my mouth to tell you. Even now. And my wife was just the opposite. You couldn't talk loud because she didn't know how to argue. And if there was an argument, she started crying and that was the end of the argument. (laughs)

INT: Oh, (laughs) and that will end it fast. But how did you, and your brothers and sisters get along?

MORRIS: Oh G—d! We were such a tight knit family even until today. I was just with them [in Israel]. I was there almost three months. I lived with them like we were never parted. You know, we were apart almost fifty years. They live in Israel, in a different culture, a different language. But when we come together, it's like we've never been apart; we're so close. My mother put so much into her family. We lived through the war and everything, such a tight knit family, but circumstances, unfortunately, caused us to get separated; I got separated from them. They were all together in Haifa. Because I married my wife, and she had her family in Philadelphia, that's what happened. But we stay close. Practically every week I'm on the telephone with them in Israel; there's not a week that I don't talk on the phone with them.

INT: So do you think that it was your mother who knit the family so tightly together?

MORRIS: My mother, yeah, my mother definite, definite, definite.

INT: What is the message that she gave all of you?

MORRIS: That we are family, that we have to stick to each other, that we're responsible for each other. We have to take care of each other. We don't know what if something will happen, you know, we have to stick together. Up until today it still exists.

INT: So did your father feel that way?

MORRIS: Yeah, oh, of course. But she died so much younger than he did. My mother passed away in 1965.

INT: But it was her message that was so clear to you.

MORRIS: Yeah, and it's built into us 'til today. We're still very, very close. Not only them. See, what is more important, the second generation, my sisters' children and their children. They were born over there; they don't even speak English, you know, they are completely different. But the family ties are so strong in the second generation. My nephews-- now, I was there and they didn't know what to do for me. I go there it's like a holiday. They take off and they are taking me around the country, showing me -- whatever they can do. Making parties every Friday night. If I go there I have such a ball, such a good time. I have a bunch of pictures, I'll show you. I'll show you a picture I have of my sisters. Do you want to see the pictures?

INT: So that's really the legacy that your mother left.

MORRIS: Yeah. When I was there last month, I was sitting and talking to my sisters. I said, you know there's very few families like ours. There are survivors over there too, a lot of them that survived and some of them families; but there are **conflicts**, fighting. My family we don't have this. My brother's wife, she has a few sisters over there and they hate, they don't talk to

each other. And we were talking, we were saying look at this. Take a look at our family, you know we've been close, so many years. We said this is in gratitude to our mother. She built it in and it stays with us, all of us what our mother built in us. But it was built in; there is no other way to describe it. It was a built in closeness in our family. We survived the war like this, because of this. We survived with our parents; there still was left six children and we are still all alive!

INT: Uh huh, that's remarkable.

MORRIS: We survived the war because we were very, very close within the family. Very, very close and my, and my mother was very devoted to me. Beside the children, there was nothing, nothing mattered to her. Just of the children!

INT: So what is the earliest memory that you have from your childhood?

MORRIS: I can remember, I must have been two years old or less, the first memories of my childhood. I remember when I had pneumonia when I was a baby. This is a faint memory but I remember it. I see when they took me. I remember the first time when I was sick. I don't know exactly how old. I couldn't be [very old] because I just started walking. When they took me to "feltcher"; we didn't have a doctor and they didn't have a doctor, they called it feltcher then.

INT: What's that? Is that a Jewish word?

MORRIS: Small towns. Yeah, that's a German word. Feltcher is a German word, actually.

INT: Is it a town or a hospital?

MORRIS: Well no, feltcher is a name, you know, a medical name. The army used to have feltchers. People didn't have a doctor, you know, what do they call it? A...

INT: Oh, like a nurse practitioner or something, yeah.

MORRIS: A nurse practitioner, yeah, yeah. They had this kind of, they were not, not doctors but they knew a lot.

INT: Okay, uh huh.

MORRIS: They knew a lot about medicine, you know, those days you used a lot of medicines which were mostly primitive but still herbal medicines. Herbal medicines.

INT: Yes. Herbal medicines. So they took you to somebody like that?

MORRIS: They took me, they put me in that sleigh. It was wintertime and they took to that. And I remember as a baby I was laying on the table and he had on the wall shelves with little

bottles, all colored bottles and I was so fascinated. You know, I looked at these shelves and it stays with me.

INT: Oh, my, you remember that.

MORRIS: I remember this. It never died. That's a memory, that **first** memory that I remember from childhood is the shelves and that there was a Polack.

INT: With all the bottles.

MORRIS: I remember they took me in that room, they put me on the table and examined me. And I was interested to look around. It was new to me because I could see. It was the first time I saw something. You know it was all colored things with the different things. This is the first memory which I remember from my childhood. And then I remember things where we lived in the old home. I must have been about three, four years old and I cut my leg. I went swimming and I cut my finger and it was bleeding and I was a kid. I remember. Then when I started going to cheder when I was four years old which I remember vividly like today when I was four years old. See in those days you grew up in rough circumstances. You lived under rough circumstances. You were a baby but you really had to grow up to survive. You had to grow up fast, 'cause when I was seventeen years old I left home already. I took care of myself. You know I went, I had a trade over there, I could make a living already for myself.

INT: When you were seventeen, yeah.

MORRIS: I left home. I went away to be independent. That's the way it was.

INT: Do you remember any dreams that you used to have when you were a child?

MORRIS: No, how do you remember about this kind of thing? You have dreams, it's normal. It depends in what conditions you live, or you have fantasies. I can't remember this kind of thing.

INT: So you don't have that... you just have that vivid remembrance.

MORRIS: I remember how I grew up since I was a baby, still, still, up 'til today, my whole history which is already a very long one, I lived in a lot of countries.

INT: Yeah, you've been around. (laughs)

MORRIS: I've lived in a lot of countries, lived in Siberia and lived in Germany.

INT: Well we'll get to that part.

MORRIS: And lived in Germany, lived in Austria, lived in Poland. I can't believe I spoke six languages good. So then I came over here and I forgot already most of them. But I was not a backwards person because I didn't have any schooling; I had a good education in life.

INT: You went to the school of hard knocks.

MORRIS: I went to the school of hard knocks, yeah.

INT: Now in terms of family losses before the war. You said your grandmother had died, your mother's mother.

MORRIS: My grandmother died in '29.

INT: Yes, these were natural deaths.

MORRIS: These were natural, yes we still lived the life I described; the way we lived was a normal life. See where we lived, when I was a kid I started to feel anti-Semitism in 1938.

INT: That was practically the beginning of the war.

MORRIS: It was close to the war when the German already started infiltrating, started spreading the poison in the Polish population.

INT: So are you saying that in the town that where you lived you didn't...

MORRIS: We lived mixed between the Polacks, between the Polish people. We went to school together. Was no separation. In Ostrow they had already Jewish school, public schools, yeah. Public schools different but Jewish; the Jews had their own public school.

INT: Oh, but in your small town?

MORRIS: We went with the Polish people together. We grew up together. Our neighbors next door were Polish people. We lived mixed in together.

INT: But what would happen at Eastertime or Christmastime?

MORRIS: At Christmas, they went to church; we had Hanukkah, we had our synagogue, we had our cultural life, our religious life. The only thing that separates us was the religion. But they respected ours and we respected theirs.

INT: So you're saying...

MORRIS: I didn't feel it. I didn't feel it.

INT: They didn't come at Easter time and...

MORRIS: No, no, not, not in my town, not where I lived.

INT: Okay, that's what I'm asking.

MORRIS: I didn't feel it, I didn't feel it at all. We lived with the neighbors next door who were Polacks and they lived their lives with their religion and we lived that but there was no [problem]. In 1938 or it was 1937, '38 when Hitler's starting putting in his poison, the younger generation, the younger ones, the Polacks, you know, they started getting more boisterous. You started feeling the anti-Semitism in the towns; in the villages they put signs "no Jews are allowed to come in" and this kind of thing.

INT: But when you were growing up you didn't experience it.

MORRIS: When I was a kid, when I grew up, I didn't experience it. Of course they used the derogatory word sometimes, "zhid." [Jew]

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: But we didn't make nothing out of it. We didn't feel...

INT: But you didn't feel that they really didn't like you or thought you were different or....?

MORRIS: Maybe we were different, we knew we are different but we were, (pause) we were different because we **wanted** to be different, and they understood it and we understood it. You know it was we **are** different but it was no persecution.

INT: Okay, so you didn't see any overt expressions of anti-Semitism during those years?

MORRIS: I started noticing after 1935. We had a guy who ran the country, was a benevolent dictator. His name was Joseph Pilsudski. He was the President of it. And he was -- he didn't buy the anti-Semitism things, you know -- he was very, very benevolent. You know there was no anti-Semitism. He didn't go for it. The Jewish people had a respected life. After 1938 when he died you could see changes. You could smell, you could feel it. But when I was a kid I..., you know, in a small town, everybody was busy with their own. As far as Jewish, we had our own life and we lived a Jewish life the way I described it. We paid taxes to our own people. And the Polacks, they lived, they lived, they went to, their church and they lived their religion, and we lived our way.

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: That's the way it was. But then it started, close to the war it started.

INT: Well now tell me, how did your family express or show affection to one another? What was that like in your family?

MORRIS: I told you that if somebody hurts you feel the pain. The whole family feels the pain. You know, that's how close we were.

INT: Did your father ever hug you?

MORRIS: No, my father was not affectionate. Well, maybe, you know but nothing.... But disciplined - you have to go, you have to go to Shacharis, Mincha, Ma'ariv three times a day; you have to go to davening. That's what you had to do. You know, over there we had a little shul. In the morning here we had the services, and then you had the Mincha and Ma'ariv. So I listened 'til I was about thirteen, fourteen years old. After I was playing ball, I just started to resent it. See those days our culture over there started changing; you could feel it. The younger generation started being different; they didn't go for this. They started going without a hat. In those days, everybody had to wear a yarmulke. So we started rebelling. We started belonging to organizations: Mizrachi, or even the Zionists organization; they had Mizrachi, they had Shomer Hatzair.

INT: Yeah, but you said you went into the Bund.

MORRIS: I went into the Bund. Usually the working people, working people went, belonged to the Bund and the most better ones belonged to the Shomer Hatzair, but was not a big deal.

INT: So what you're saying is that at that certain point when things began to change, then the authority that your father had exercised over you in terms of...

MORRIS: See what I noticed in my life is that no matter how life is, things don't stay the same -- even then in those primitive conditions that we lived. And I saw with my own eyes how things were changing from year to year. The younger people, every few years had changed. In a lot of things, we were as progressive as now, even more. We were more cultured. You could talk to kids fifteen years old; you could have a discussion in politics. When we went to synagogue, our kids, imagine this, when we were youngsters, teenagers, we didn't daven. We were talking politics all the time! We came in groups and were discussing, arguing.

INT: Yes, and what did you argue about?

MORRIS: Arguing politics, you know, Zionists or the Bund or Hitler's coming to power and this and that. We were very into it. We read a lot of papers, we read books, you know. Saturday afternoon we used to go out and just sit, a group of us and discuss a book or something. Used to take a Shalom Aleichem book or somebody or whatever, or a modern thinker. We used to argue. And I remember when radio came up the first time.

INT: Who?

MORRIS: The radio.

INT: Oh, the radio. I'm sorry.

MORRIS: And there was one guy, he was a barber. And he had the first set and it was a little glass with crystals and you put on the...

INT: Headphones.

MORRIS: And everybody was standing in line...

INT: Oh, to listen.

MORRIS: ...to listen. This I remember, this was in the 30's. It was in the middle 30's, early 30's. I remember like now; Yiddle was his name, the barber. He had a little glass jar and was two crystals and you had to manipulate the two crystals together and put on earphones. In a short time, in two, three years later when I went to Warsaw, over there we had the most modern radios like we have now. I could get all Europe. I used to get Budapest and get Berlin and Prague. It changed so fast in my life, even though I was a youngster, a teenager.

INT: And you were aware of those changes.

MORRIS: And I was aware of the changes, yeah. The younger generation didn't want to go to the synagogue all the time. There were already different ways. Yeah, it was not enough time to develop. I was young then, you know, and then the war broke out and then the whole thing just went kaput. But when I was a kid, it was very, very interesting. I had more experience in life than the youngsters have now. They are going away; they cannot find themselves. We didn't feel like we're missing something. We had a full, full spiritual, intelligent life because we were groups together, and there was always something to talk about, always there's something to discuss. And then the older ones, they already made parties and Saturday night we used to rent a musician, a violin, or accordion or something, have parties together. Boys and girls had dances, they rented a room and we set up to have entertainment. But when people think that people who they lived this way [were primitive] — people were not dumb. They were smarter than now because those days if you finish fourth grade in school, in public school you had an education equal now to, I don't know, they were almost smarter than most of the college kids.. Because was a law, I remember like today, because of that law you could became an officer in the police force if you had four grades finished, you were qualified already. You had so much, because I remember when I was in the third grade, I knew so much already — arithmetic and a lot of things which I learned in school that till today I still remember.

INT: It was that good.

MORRIS: It was that good. Because when you went to school you **learned**, you learned so much in the homework that you got. You spent the whole day in school and then you had the homework to sit down for hours to do. When you finished, people who finished seven grades they were considered very educated people and they **were**.

INT: Now tell me, if you had three words to use to describe your family what would they be?

MORRIS: What would they be?

INT: Yeah. How would you describe them?

MORRIS: Loving, caring, devoted.

INT: So that's really the essence of it?

MORRIS: That's the essence. This is built in, which has paid off. In the long run it paid off. You know this was a very devoted, neat, loving family, brothers and sisters and parents were all just like one, one soul with a lot of different bodies. That's the way I feel. It was one soul in different bodies. That's the way our family was.

INT: Where do you think your mother got that?

MORRIS: From her mother, from the way the culture was. I don't know. It was not an exception then, you know most families were like this.

INT: So you thought it was typical.

MORRIS: It was typical, yeah. It was not an exception. I saw the neighbors in their houses and they all were like this.

INT: All right.

MORRIS: We were the fortunate ones, we survived the war. I think we were fortunate. And I had a lot to do with it because I was already nineteen years old then and I started thinking different than my father did.

INT: Ah, well we'll save that for the next time.

MORRIS: Yeah, that's what saved his life.

INT: Well save that for the next time.

MORRIS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's fine.

INT: Thank you. That's enough for today. Thank you.

MORRIS: It was, what can I tell you? This is, this is a beginning but the real thing is....

INT: Okay, well all right, all right. We'll save that for next time.

[Tape 2 — End Side 2] [Tape 3 — Begin Side 1]

INT: Today is May the 2, 1995. This is my second interview with Morris B. who is a survivor. This is tape number 3, side 1. Now last week...

MORRIS: Where did we stop?

INT: Well last week, I made a list; I wrote it down so I would be sure. Last week we talked about your family of origin, and we talked about your parents and you were telling me about your mother, and your father and your father who had a hot temper.

MORRIS: Yeah, well just opposite natures, you know.

INT: Some of these questions we've already answered but we'll start anyway and maybe refer back to some of what we talked about last week. What would you say was a typical day for you before the war?

MORRIS: Well depends what age, what time, typical day when?

INT: So let's say right before the war.

MORRIS: As I told you, before the war I wasn't home already. I didn't live home.

INT: Yeah, you were in Warsaw and you came back.

MORRIS: I came back, was just a month before the war, but I came back in July. And then September the first, war broke out. You know I told you when I got sick by....

INT: Yeah, when you got sick. Okay, well when you were an apprentice when you first started out, what was the day like for you when you were still living at home?

MORRIS: Well, at the beginning you know you, we worked over there practically (pause), practically twelve hours a day.

INT: So when you were an apprentice you started out you were working about...

MORRIS: Yeah, you worked, you didn't watch the clock over there. But that was, you know, it depends.

INT: When you were about seventeen?

MORRIS: No, no when I started I was about thirteen, fourteen, yeah. And for three years, you work as an apprentice. But then I started and by the time I was about fifteen, sixteen, I already started making money, a little bit. You know I told you about the "z'man" what they called it then.

INT: Yeah, okay, but when, when you were thirteen or fourteen years old I remember one of the things you said was that you were not interested in staying at the Talmud Torah because you wanted to be a normal boy and wanted to play.

MORRIS: No. Yeah, I wanted to play.

INT: So did you have any time to do that?

MORRIS: Yeah, we had time; oh yeah, plenty of time. See in the summertime was not much work. There was plenty of time.

INT: So what did you do during the summer?

MORRIS: See where was seasons, in the summertime you played. My game I liked, I played -- what do you call it? Volleyball?

INT: Oh really?

MORRIS: Yeah, that was my thing, you know, because we didn't have no baseball then, like we have over here.

INT: Did you know about baseball?

MORRIS: No. We had our baseball we used to play with a softball.

INT: Uh huh.

MORRIS: It's similar but it was primitive. It was a bunch of kids and we played.

INT: So what else did you do during the summer?

MORRIS: For then, in the summertime, you played ball and then -- I don't know, you did what kids can do. And then we used to read a lot, we used to have discussions, come together, you know especially on the weekends, especially Friday, Saturday.

INT: Did you go to shul?

MORRIS: Yeah, you go to shul but we already started resenting it. We didn't want to go to shul. It was already a conflict. The older people did, you know the parents wanted to....

INT: So there was already a...

MORRIS: So there was already, in those days, in the late 30's the youngsters started to rebel some. Not rebelling but they didn't....

INT: They didn't want to do...

MORRIS: They already... The world started changing. I don't know.

INT: They sensed that change.

MORRIS: They sensed the change, you know because (pause) it was not much time for me to -- I was still a youngster. Kids get into all kinds of mischief and things, you know, what kids do. Well and this was a small town. Everybody knew each other; it was like a family, like a big family. In the Jewish community, we were not that many people there. I was born in Wasewo, but I lived in Ostrow, in the bigger town, when I grew up. And before you turn around, the war was there, that's all. When I was nineteen you became a mentsh, you know, and there was no time.

INT: See I'm interested in the rebellion part.

MORRIS: No, it was not a rebellion, no, it was not a rebellion. But they already started developing organizations. You had Zionists and organizations — the Shomer Hatzair was big then; the Bund was very big and then...

INT: So this was really a pulling away from the traditional religion.

MORRIS: From the traditional religion. It was never like a rebellion you would call it. No. It was progress of the young people. People would go overseas and the world didn't stay in one place. You learn, you know.

INT: Right, so was this a reaction to the fact that people were traveling more?

MORRIS: We had a lot of interest in sports, bicycling with races. Races with a bike.

INT: Well was it the contact with other people that made you see the world as bigger or different? I'm trying to understand why the people were feeling differently about Judaism.

MORRIS: I don't know. I don't know. I cannot explain this but that's the way I saw it. That's the way it happened.

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: In the circle where I grew up, that's the way I saw it. Of course it was people in certain families, they still...the kids went to the Yeshivas. We had neighbors, next door neighbors and their children they went to the Yeshivas and they still felt left, you know they grew up in different. But they, everybody (?).

INT: So what you're telling me is there were changes that were already taking place.

MORRIS: That were already taking place, as far as I can remember, before the war.

INT: Before the war. Okay.

MORRIS: Yeah we were, we were not backwards as far as I can tell now as I look back at the world. You know we were way, way, way from being backwards people because we knew in politics, we knew everything what was going on. There were a lot of discussions, not like youngsters now where I see what's going on. You know a kid who was eighteen, seventeen years old was already a man; you were responsible for yourself.

INT: So it was a richer, intellectual life.

MORRIS: Intellectual life, yeah, much, much richer. Much. Because Jewish kids who went to gymnasium or higher education were very few or very rich ones.

INT: So you had to educate yourself?

MORRIS: You had to educate yourself.

INT: Did you have a philosophy of life? Can you remember, did you have a view of the world? Can you remember back to some of your thoughts at that time?

MORRIS: We knew the world that we lived in then, but we lived in a time between the First World War and the Second World War. Where we grew up Poland was not an independent country, only after 1920. In the year when I was born, Poland became an independent country because it was all, what belonged to Russia. And I don't remember this, but I was told about the revolution what went on with Lenin, with Trotsky, the whole thing. We had a big interest in that thing because we studied the world in a different, a different light. But that regime, what was then in Poland, was just the opposite. They were fighting, they fought the Russians. And we had a different culture already, completely, but people were telling stories, you know, that generation before me. They lived through this and they tried to tell us what went on. It was just fresh, everything. Then they came in, in the late '30's, Hitler started sending in the spies. You know, it started changing.

INT: But in terms of you, personally, do you remember what you were thinking about the world or what you expected to happen when you were...?

MORRIS: No, no, nobody expected it to happen what happened.

INT: No.

MORRIS: Nobody could expect what happened.

INT: No, no, I'm trying to get a picture of you at maybe fourteen, fifteen, sixteen years old, what you thought your life was going to be like.

MORRIS: What you thought? What could you think then. You thought to grow up and make a living, how to make a living. To learn a trade and how to survive, that's all, period. For a youngster, we didn't have no big fantasy.

INT: You didn't have a big fantasy. No.

MORRIS: Didn't have no big fantasy, because it was nothing, nothing to look forward to, no big changes.

INT: Yeah, so when you looked around you in your village you didn't see any...?

MORRIS: Yeah, even these days, politics was different than politics now. But I don't know, maybe I was too young during then; I wasn't interested. You know a youngster growing up, you have different.... Those days you didn't have much ambition. You know you just want to grow up and make a living.

INT: I don't imagine you had people who were role models in your town and you said "I want to be rich like him or I want to be..."

MORRIS: See one thing puzzles me, I meet people now and everybody who you meet you talk to and they tell you stories which I know are not true — fantasies. Everybody was rich; everybody had this, and they had...

INT: Bubkas? [In Yiddish this means "very little of value."]

MORRIS: Bubkas, yeah. Most of them were people just struggling to make a living. Maybe there was one in a thousand who had something. But now you meet these people and everybody was rich, you know, and it just kills me!

INT: Oh my, that's funny. (laughs)

MORRIS: That's funny, but it's true.

INT: Well, do you think you're any different...

MORRIS: We struggled and that's all. Life was a struggle but it was <u>interesting</u> because it was a close family. Everything was different.

INT: Now were you any different from the other members of your family? I know you went to Talmud Torah, but were you any different in your personality?

MORRIS: No, no, I don't think so. In what way? No, I don't think so. Of course every person has his own personality. I have twin sisters and both of them are different like day and night.

INT: Your twin sisters?

MORRIS: Yeah, we are eight children and everybody has his own personality until today. So that this is not a personality [matter].

INT: If somebody in the family had to say "Oh, Morris, he's the 'whatever,'" you know, fill in the blank; what would they say about you?

MORRIS: Well, no, as far as I know, my older brother, with my mother he was everything because but he was the oldest, I guess, or something. Because Liber was the smartest and the best and this and that, you know. But who knows?

INT: So what would they say about you?

MORRIS: I don't know. I don't know. I know only when I got to be the oldest one, when we lost my older brother and my sister, then I was the one because when the war broke out already there were big decisions to make and I...

INT: Okay, well we'll get to all of that.

MORRIS: I had to be involved in them as far as I remember.

INT: So your role changed.

MORRIS: Changed, sure. You know war changes you overnight. Not overnight, every minute! (laughs)

INT: Well we're going to get to all of that today. Did you have any beliefs, did you believe in G-d or what was your personal belief? This is when you were still a kid.

MORRIS: This was so ingrained, since you were a baby; this stays with you forever. Nobody can take this away, even 'til today. I'm not religious but I'm, I'm...see religious, some people interpret it different than I do. You have to go to the shul and pray and to me, it's a personal thing. I believe in G-d but I'm not a "frimmer." But I'm still, I was born like this and I'm going to die like this.

INT: Okay, well that's what I was asking.

MORRIS: I was born a Yid and I'm going to die a Yid. But I was in Israel; everybody thinks of Israel as a country which...There are more people over there that don't believe nothing, worse, 1000%, but they're Jewish; they're Israelis in their hearts. You know, with a lot of people, if you're not "frimmer," you're not a Jew -- and that's crazy.

INT: Okay. All right.

MORRIS: That's the way I was all my life and that's the way I am.

INT: That's exactly what I was asking you, yes, uh huh.

MORRIS: And that's the way I grew up, and I grew up in a very religious atmosphere and it stays with you. Nobody can take this away.

INT: Well, some people did lose it.

MORRIS: Some people...All my life, my adult life, I was married to a woman which I loved dearly and she was just the opposite. She didn't know too much about Jewishness all together. And at the same time, she was a wonderful person, but religion never came into her [life]. When it was time for the....The kids grew up in a Jewish neighborhood, in a Jewish atmosphere where they had Bar Mitzvah and there was everything and they went to the Folk Shul and the whole thing. But when they grew up, the kids left home and we lived a life. Our friends are all Jewish and -- I don't know. Especially we became so, so Americanized. I don't know. We used to go to Israel every year, practically before she got sick. Why does religion have to come into the whole subject? What does it have to do with it? I don't know why. Why all these questions?

INT: Do you mean why am I asking you questions?

MORRIS: No, but in general.

INT: Oh, well our interest is...

MORRIS: Is how the people lived in those days. There were different people than now.

INT: Uh huh. And the survival...

MORRIS: Was different people and was, you know was different. Not everybody was the same. We didn't live a life, you know, that everybody lived the same way. We had "frimmer." Now the Beis Midrash, the shul where I grew up, the town was not big enough to have separate shuls. The Orthodox, the Hasidim, the misnagdim -- everybody belonged to the same shul.

INT: So everybody, oh. Uh huh, yes.

MORRIS: Now in the bigger cities, already they had "shtibelach" they used to call them. The Hasidim, they had their own "shtibelach" and the regular people, the misnagdim, they had their shuls.

INT: Well what are the misnagdim?

MORRIS: Misnagdim are the same people, but they are not Hasidim; they are not fanatic. The misnagdim, they were a different thing. See, there were different Hasidic groups with their own rabbis.

INT: But they'd still be considered Orthodox, though, wouldn't they?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Okay. So it wasn't that wide of a range.

MORRIS: No, no, but they didn't have any rabbi; they didn't have any special person, you know, a rabbi. That's why we used to call them misnagdim. The same thing you have a Cohen with a Levi with Israel. It was very, very, very important for them to wear the shtrimale [hat], you know, with the black kaputa [coat] and the whole thing. But when I grew up 'til I was Bar Mitzvahed you had to lay tefillin. You know what?

INT: Yes, yes.

MORRIS: You had to lay tefillin and when you were thirteen years old you were already able to be used for the minyan.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: But it was so normal too. It was so normal.

INT: You just took it for granted.

MORRIS: I just took it for the way of life it was. On Yontiv everybody had to go to shul, Yom Kippur, even Shabbas, you must go to shul even if you were not religious. As long as you lived at home, you had to do what the fathers wanted you to do. Even if you were not religious, whatever, you were in shul you did... whether you wanted to pray or not, but you had to, you were there.

INT: But you were there, okay.

MORRIS: Otherwise you would be considered an outcast or something, I don't know.

INT: A nut case?

MORRIS: An **outcast**!

INT: An outcast, oh. (laughs)

MORRIS: But as far as I can remember it changed, from year to year it changed rapidly. In the 30's, you know it didn't stay in one place.

INT: Now let's turn to this section called the Winds of War which deals with everything leading up to the war. Now you were nineteen when the...

MORRIS: When the war broke out? Yes.

INT: Yes, okay. So how did your family respond to what was going on in Europe?

MORRIS: In what way respond?

INT: Well tell me what happened, the events that happened and then tell me how everybody...

MORRIS: Immediately?

INT: Yeah, tell me what happened.

MORRIS: Right before the war, I was unconscious.

INT: Yes, that was when you were in a coma.

MORRIS: I was very sick, when I was in a coma, yes. That was from July, the end of July 'til the war broke out, 'til September I was laying in bed from typhus.

INT: Typhus, yes. And then...

MORRIS: I didn't expect, we didn't expect that there's going to be a war like this. Nobody. I didn't think anybody did.

INT: When did you start... well before you got sick, before you had typhus, could you tell, did you have a feeling that something was going on?

MORRIS: Oh yeah, since Hitler came to power, but we didn't expect, we didn't know. We didn't expect this what happened, no. Didn't expect.

INT: When Hitler came to power did you think it would affect you in any way?

MORRIS: Of course it affected all Europe. It affected the whole Europe.

INT: But at which point did you realize that something was going to happen where <u>you</u> lived?

MORRIS: No, we didn't expect this.

INT: You didn't, so you didn't think it was going to involve...

MORRIS: No, that it was going to involve, that there is going to be a world war, because then France which was a powerful country, didn't think it was going to happen what happened. England, they are over on our side, on Poland's side. Then we didn't know; nobody expected that's going to happen what happened like this; that there's going to be a Blitzkrieg like this.

INT: So you're saying that because France and England were so strong that you couldn't have imagined...?

MORRIS: Because you couldn't imagine, no, no. Often times because we were occupied by the Germans in the '20's. No, not in the '20's -- in 1916, '17, after the first war.

INT: After the first war? After World War I?

MORRIS: After World War I, yeah. And the General was there, and I wasn't born yet then but I would hear the stories that the Jews were the best friends of the Germans. The Jews were just opposite, they were the favorites. The Jews were treated by German very gently, nice.

INT: So there was no reason to fear.

MORRIS: I mean was no reason, there was no... your mind couldn't absorb that's going to happen a tragedy like this. You know nobody thought that it, it would happen. First of all, who thought of war? We didn't think it's going to be that, and Russia was then a big country. We didn't think that's going to happen what happened, that Hitler's going to be, that the Germans are going to be so, so successful. Nobody, nobody could believe it. No, nobody knew that's going to happen. No.

INT: So you're saying you relied on the strength of England and France. You thought nothing's going to happen.

MORRIS: You know the biggest, yeah, Europe, nothing's going to happen.

INT: And you have no reason, the Jews have no reason to fear Germany because the Germans had been friendly.

MORRIS: Of course Hitler had a big propaganda [machine], you know, but a lot of people kept hollering. Anti-Semitism was always in our [lives]. You know we went through pogroms and everything, so what happened, happened. But nobody expected something like this to happen, that people are demagogues and the whole thing. But this what I remember during the '30's, in 1937, '38 we started feeling already...

INT: Yeah, that's what I was going to ask you. What...

MORRIS: We started feeling anti-Semitism even in our town.

INT: What was that like?

MORRIS: What it's like? It was (pause) the young, the young generation, the Polish people they started, they were influenced already by the, I guess Hitler must have sent in his kind of people, with propaganda and you started feeling it. In the little villages they used to have signs already, "Jews Not Allowed," the Jews were not allowed to come in, it started.

INT: The signs that Jews were not allowed to shop in certain places.

MORRIS: To shop in certain places and they started to boycott Jews.

INT: And the non-Jews were told not to shop in Jewish stores. So that was already a separation.

MORRIS: They already tried to separate people; and the churches had a big influence, I guess they must have preached.

INT: The churches were preaching against...

MORRIS: Yeah, must have been because it was, Sundays they used to have like demonstrations. They didn't call it demonstrations then, you know in the religious things that used to go on over there with a...

INT: Parade or a pageant or something.

MORRIS: Pageant. Pageant going around and it was a lot of remarks. But you felt it already. I started feeling it in 1937, you started feeling it change, bad winds blowing.

INT: Yes, yes.

MORRIS: It started smelling already that something is not, not the same, not the same.

INT: So did your family talk about doing anything or going anyplace?

MORRIS: No, no, where could you go? There was no...where would you go then?

INT: So did your family make any plans at all?

MORRIS: Nobody made plans. Nobody made plans. What plans could you make? There was nothing to make plans. Where would you go?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: So you couldn't go like now you travel, it was not such thing. It was a different world.

INT: So you didn't prepare for anything?

MORRIS: No, nobody prepared for nothing. There was nothing to prepare. Where could you go? There was nowhere to go. You were locked in. Where could you go? Certain people, you know there was always immigration but it was so limited. Somebody had family in Argentina, in America or somewhere, but it was isolated cases. I remember certain people left but not for that reason. Neighbors which I still remember, the one left to Belgium; she had some relatives. I know Notkin, he went to Argentina; he had a brother. There were isolated cases.

INT: Is that the tailor?

MORRIS: No, no, no.

INT: Did your tailor get to Argentina?

MORRIS: He went, yeah, but he came back.

INT: He came back?

MORRIS: Yeah, he got lost in the war.

INT: No kidding.

MORRIS: Yeah, he went twice, not once, he went twice.

INT: Yes, I know, I know.

MORRIS: And it so happened that he came back and he got caught up in the war.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: Yeah, the gate closed up and then he got caught up in the war.

INT: So how did this change your family life, with all of this, with the winds changing?

MORRIS: It didn't change, life got even harder because in the way our immediate family depended a lot on the deals with the farmers.

INT: Right, so were the farmers not allowed to deal with you?

MORRIS: Because remember I told you we used to rent the fruit trees? We couldn't go there freely.

INT: That's what I'm asking you, okay.

MORRIS: You know what I mean? You have to look, look over [your shoulder]. Nothing happened to us because the older generation was still [there]; the farmers, the people, we were close. We grew up with them together. It was a lot like warm people, but their children already, you had to look over the shoulder.

INT: But their children were your age?

MORRIS: My age, my brother's age, and a lot of them they were...

INT: Did you feel personally a change in some of the people who were friendly with you?

MORRIS: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Not as much the older generation.

INT: No, I'm talking about your peers.

MORRIS: My peers, oh yes, oh yes, a lot, a lot of change. Especially when they went to the army and when they came out from the army, boy they were so full of Jew haters.

INT: Hatred, yeah.

MORRIS: The young generation, right, this was because they must have... See Hitler didn't sleep. He had all these people already all over Europe.

INT: They were working for him.

MORRIS: Working for him, yeah.

INT: Was there one particular friend that you had who wasn't Jewish who turned on you and you felt it?

MORRIS: No. I had a friend, a good friend, a Polish boy about my age, we were as close as brothers.

INT: And what happened?

MORRIS: I don't know what happened. This is <u>before</u> the war. We ran away after the war. I don't know what happened to them.

INT: No, no what happened? Did he change his feelings toward you?

MORRIS: No, no. Oh no, he stayed 'til the last minute; yes, we were friends. When I went to work he came....

[Tape 3 — End Side 1] [Tape 3 — Begin Side 2]

INT: You were telling me about this one close friend who had...

MORRIS: Yeah, this exceptional good, good, [friend]; we grew up together. We were so close that we didn't even know, you know, different religions.

INT: But with the others, the other people you knew?

MORRIS: Yeah, I never knew. You know it was a small town, each one knew each other. You know, nothing happened. There was no physical, nothing as far as I remember, there was nothing. There was bad-mouthing.

INT: But this was after, as Hitler started...

MORRIS: Yes, this was after '37 already, as far as I can remember that you started feeling — everything was fist fights and remarks. You know, you can tell, you know when things are changing.

INT: Were you frightened?

MORRIS: Frightened?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: I didn't think so. No, we couldn't, we couldn't. We lived in...in those days we couldn't be frightened.

INT: But you went to Warsaw. By the time you went to Warsaw, though, some of this was still going on. This had already started?

MORRIS: Yeah, but it, it started but not so explicit that you could feel it. I mean you lived your life so like you go over here and somebody makes a bad remark, so you shake it off and go on with it.

INT: So now let's start where...

MORRIS: Maybe in different places, maybe different places and different cities. Bigger cities maybe people felt different. And it so happened we lived in a small town, you know we were so integrated, it was so....

INT: Yeah, I'm just asking about your life.

MORRIS: So you know it's right.

INT: Yeah, okay. All right now what I'd like you to do is to start telling me from the moment that you woke up from your coma.

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Yeah, I'd like to hear that.

MORRIS: Now starts a different, completely different worlds, different experiences and different....

INT: Okay, so you had been in a coma, and you heard all the tumult, and shouting and the screaming. So take it from there.

MORRIS: It was on a Friday, I remember like today. It was Friday, September the first.

INT: 19?

MORRIS: 1939.

INT: '39.

MORRIS: In September. And I was supposed to be dead by Friday, that day when the war broke out. I think I told you that Tuesday the doctor saw me and he said there's no way of me to survive. I'll be dead by Friday. And then it took eight days. The eighth of September our town was occupied by the Germans.

INT: So it happened in a week.

MORRIS: In a week, year. It took a week because we were close to the Prussian border. We were not too far from Koenigsberg. Over there was Ostrolenka, not far from the Prussian border where we were located.

INT: They encircled?

MORRIS: Encircled. Our town was occupied exactly the eighth of September, 1939.

INT: And these were German soldiers who?

MORRIS: Germans, sure.

INT: Okay. What about the people...

MORRIS: When the war started coming, when the front started coming closer by, you could see the bullets, you know, whistling by you. And one night was a rumor went around in town that they're going to burn down the town. Before, this was on a Thursday night, that the Polacks are going to burn down the town, **not** the Germans.

INT: So that's what, just what I was going to ask you because you had told me that they were propagandizing and that they were getting the Poles themselves over to their side, the Germans. So you say the Germans came in but now the rumor was that the Poles themselves who lived in the town, or who lived in the outskirts, were going to come and burn the town?

MORRIS: Yeah, there was rumors that they don't to want to leave it for the Germans. People run around, it was nonsense rumors, but they were rumors. And that the Germans are close by already. The Polacks, they were so dumb. They didn't think that they're going to lose the war. For some reason they had in their minds they can stand up to Germany, which was a fantasy!

INT: Oh, oh.

MORRIS: They were fighting and it took three weeks 'til they gave up Warsaw, 'til the Germans could take Warsaw. But see, they didn't think. They thought they can stand up to the Germans, which they didn't have any ability to do. You know, the Germans were mechanized..

INT: Was there a Polish army?

MORRIS: Oh, Poland had a big army. Yeah, they were fighting, was a big, was a war. But they couldn't stand up to the Germans. They had an army with horses and buggies, and the Germans had already a mechanized army. Airplanes, Poland must have had ten in the whole country. You know, it was different; they couldn't stand up and fight back.

INT: So the Polish army was trying to...

MORRIS: They are trying to defend their country. Was a lot of Jews in the army, a lot of Jews, thousands. The Jewish people were a part of the army. But you couldn't go far. The high officer, you couldn't, they kept you to a sergeant or something. So that's it. And what happened, this was that night which they said they going to burn down the town and I, my mother was only allowed to come in the room because it was quarantined. And I jumped up and I said, I said, "I'm not going to be burned alive. I'm going, you know, whatever, wherever everybody's going." I just went out from bed. That's it.

INT: That's when you came out of your coma.

MORRIS: From my coma, yes.

INT: But you must have been very weak.

MORRIS: Weak, of course. I could hardly stand up but I knew — an instinct. I don't know what, how, what. Don't ask me this because I don't know what a person did because it was, it was a matter, you know, that you going to be dead. They going to burn everything down. You are laying in bed, you are going to be burned. And something told me. I was young; I must have a strong heart or something.

INT: So what happened once you got out?

MORRIS: The town I went into was two kilometers from us.

INT: Two kilometers.

MORRIS: It was a little village. Two kilometers, yeah. And everybody went over there. Well over there lived about four or five Jewish families. They were farmers and everybody went over there in the barns where there was room.

INT: Everybody or just the Jews?

MORRIS: Just the Jews.

INT: Okay, so the Jews felt they'd better get out.

MORRIS: Better get out, yeah. So we went over there and I couldn't walk two kilometers. My G-d, I was just, I was almost dead! I wasn't prepared for this. But my father and somebody else took me under the arms and I dragged myself. And we were in the barns -- it was a whole night -- one on top of the other. It was so many people there was nowhere, no space. And the next morning I started hollering, "I'm hungry!" I didn't eat for weeks; for a month and a half. And I said, "But I'm hungry!" You couldn't get no food for me if you had a million dollars, you couldn't get no food, nothing! So I remember like today, my father caught a goose, in the fields, he caught a goose. And we took the goose in and took some bricks, made a little fire. And I was ripping pieces like an animal. It was not even done. And then that time, the plums in the trees, they were half-green, half-red. And I went and stole and filled up my pockets. You know, in normal time people die from things like this.

INT: Right.

MORRIS: Raw meat, practically raw meat I was eating. And the way I was, I don't know what happened. You became, I know one thing, a person, you became an animal in your instinct, your body works like an animal and everything.

INT: So it wasn't conscious.

MORRIS: It wasn't conscious but it just, you know. It was <u>conscious</u> but your system, you know I was, I was starved, I guess, and then all of a sudden I'm alive and I want to eat. So I didn't care what it is. Whatever I could. So we survived. Now the next morning nothing happened. We all went back home.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: Friday morning, this was for the night.

INT: Were your homes safe? Had they been...?

MORRIS: No, yeah, but nothing happened. No.

INT: Nothing happened to your homes.

MORRIS: No, nothing happened to your house, no. Nothing was burned, nothing was. It was just a rumor. And we went back home Thursday. This was on Thursday night. Friday morning I got up already I was standing outside to see. It was about 6:00 in the morning and I saw a patrol, a German, on the motorcycle. This was first German I saw. This was on the eighth of September, they came, they called it was "rosweitka;" this was a scouting party.

INT: A what?

MORRIS: To look out, to see if everything is clear, that the army sends in first -- a few people on patrol.

INT: Oh, okay.

MORRIS: And then a half an hour later you see more, and more, and more and they started coming in by the whole army because the war was still going on. They occupied there but the war was still going on. It took another, another three weeks 'til they, 'til they...

INT: Until they pacified?

MORRIS: No, 'til they took Warsaw. Because over there was a terrible fight. It took another three weeks after they occupied there.

INT: Did the army concentrate on protecting Warsaw, defending Warsaw?

MORRIS: Of course, was big battles over there, Warsaw was destroyed. But then it started, then it started the trouble.

INT: So what did you do? Did you run in the house and tell your family or what?

MORRIS: Yeah, I told everybody and all that. We expected it already, because you hear a whole night of shooting goes on, a whole night, through the night.

INT: But expecting it and seeing it is different.

MORRIS: Yeah, you heard, because the Polish army was still fighting then. You know the bullets were going back and forth and they were coming closer to Warsaw, but the minute you heard, you knew the Germans were coming closer. And by the morning they were already in our town.

INT: Okay, so what happened next?

MORRIS: Next, it happened, then there was... So nobody is in the street anymore. You know the army is going over there, with shooting; everybody is hiding, whatever we can hide. Finally they took over the whole thing, the Germans, you know they were fighting far away. And by 11:00 that Friday, the eighth of September then...

INT: This is from 6:00 in the morning to 11:00 in the morning?

MORRIS: Yeah, 'til 11:00 yeah, the army is going by. And finally, I guess, I don't know how, the Germans walked in. They occupied our town, it was a little town, and they occupied it and they were set up. By 11:00 Friday morning they all of a sudden from nowhere came over Germans, with the rifles, running from one door to the other, "Yuden rause! Yuden rause! All Jews out." And everybody they started chasing in one direction. Children, old, no matter, everybody Jewish. They chased us. The night before they destroyed the whole [nearby] town and afterwards we find out. And chasing and kicking and everybody out and going in one direction over there. From that side, from the same direction that they came from. It was at that time about seven kilometers from us was a govarova; I don't know if I mentioned it.

INT: Govarova. Okay.

MORRIS: Yeah, over there that Thursday night they burned all the Jews. Nobody survived in that town. There was a synagogue over there, a big synagogue was built by American people. And they put everybody in the synagogue, and put them on fire, and whoever jumped from the windows out, they stood with the rifles and they picked them up like flies. These same people, that morning, this same brigade got up and were chasing us to the same place and they wanted to do to us the same thing. A miracle happened or something. While we were running in that direction, all of a sudden came a German on a horse, on a white horse. He must have been a general or something because of the way he was dressed with his uniform.

INT: Uniform, uh huh.

MORRIS: Yeah, you couldn't stand the wind. I didn't know the ranks anyway. And while they were chasing us and we had a neighbor, I don't think he was ever called a carpenter, we used to call it a "stelmach;" he used to make wagons. You know the horse and buggy -- he used to make the wheels for the wagons. In the First World War, he was a "tolmacher."

INT: A what?

MORRIS: Interpreter.

INT: Oh, uh huh.

MORRIS: In German it's a "tolmacher." He was an interpreter between the Polacks and the Germans. He spoke a fluent German. That officer who was going with the army, my father and

he went over to the officer and said: "Where do they chase? Where are we going? Why are they chasing us? What's going on over there?" That officer turned around on his horse and he gave an order, he started screaming, "you 'faflufka,' what's going on with these soldiers? What are you doing to these people? These people, what are you doing?"

INT: Oh my goodness, this is because your father spoke up?

MORRIS: **Not** my father.

INT: But the other, your neighbor.

MORRIS: My neighbor, Muttle Tsukerstein. Muttle Tsukerstein was his name.

INT: And he said it in German.

MORRIS: Yeah, he talked, he talked to that officer on the horse. The officers started screaming to the army and gave an order: "Let these people go back to their homes." Not all the people were from our town; they had run from other places. Nobody is...

INT: Nobody should harm them.

MORRIS: Nobody should harm them. "Why? Old people, young people, what do you want? What are you doing?" You know the Germans, they take orders. For one thing, there's no monkey business. And soon with this they all turned around. And we were a lot of people, not just from our town -- it was a small town -- but it was hundreds of people who were running.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: You know where people were running, it was Jewish people by the hundreds. It was ten times as many people than we were. But thank G—d, everybody turned around, we went back because they didn't know who was in that town.

INT: Did you have to take people into your house who were from someplace else?

MORRIS: Who cared over there?

INT: Oh, okay.

MORRIS: So that's it. So we came home. The whole thing took maybe about a half an hour, three quarters of an hour. And if not that, they would do the same thing here that they did with the synagogue because they must be the same people. After we find out. After we find out because we didn't know what happened over there that it all burned down.

INT: Sure, how should you know?

MORRIS: We didn't know what happened.

INT: Sure, who was going to come and tell you?

MORRIS: Yeah, but after a while, when it quieted down, people, you know Polish people come and they told us what they saw with their own eyes. Because it was seven kilometers, about five miles. That's like in Center City to go; it was even closer.

INT: So what happened when you got back to your house?

MORRIS: We got back to our house okay, you know, everybody was shook up and (pause)....

INT: And what did you talk about? What did you...

MORRIS: Who talked? Who knew? We all were panicked. People were....

INT: Panicked, yeah, okay.

MORRIS: Panicked. People were. This lasted 'til 4:00. 4:00 — all over again. 4:00 in the afternoon again.

INT: The soldiers came again.

MORRIS: The soldiers came again,

INT: They said "rause"?

MORRIS: "Rause," but not chasing us. Not chasing us in the direction. This was a different thing already. They took not only Jewish families; only men. Men and boys, you know, children, they are like at a certain age from thirteen years old. Children they didn't bother, and not women, but Polacks too. Only men, Polacks and Jews. But the only thing they said, "The Jews sit on one side."

INT: Now who did they take from your family?

MORRIS: My family, was me, me and my father.

INT: What about your older brother?

MORRIS: My older brother was not there, he was in **Warsaw**.

INT: Oh, that's right. Okay, so he stayed in Warsaw, he never came back.

MORRIS: No, no, he was married. He had his family over there. They had a child over there.

I came home so I can save some money so I'll live, just from the summer for a month or two I can save some money.

INT: Okay, so they took you and your father and they left your mother and the twins.

MORRIS: Yeah, everybody, the whole shtetl, but only the men and not only Jewish.

INT: Yeah, I understand.

MORRIS: And they separate, you know the... but that day, after that time they took us as hostages.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: Four or five, then when we lined up, you know an officer went on the table, and he made a speech and he said, "We going to lock you up for the night," because this was the first day when they occupied that. See they want to be sure nothing happened to them, you know, was no killing. So they said, "We're going to lock you up in jail 'til 6:00 in the morning. And that one condition is that if nothing happens to a German soldier overnight we will let you out 6:00. But if anything is going to happen to a German soldier, somebody is going to dare to, to shoot at them or anything is going to happen, you're all going to be burned alive." And that was it!

INT: What did you think was going to happen?

MORRIS: Oh G-d. You know it was a jail, a small jail. We were all, hundreds, I mean so many people put in over there and we were all...There was not even room to turn around. And they are all around, one was praying and one was crying, "Ooh, we heard a shot." You know, "Ooh, did you hear? Oh G-d. That's the end of us." And you know, a whole night like this and since 4:00 in the afternoon 'til 6:00 the next morning, you know, you didn't think it was... Who knew if someone cracked up and is going to take a shot or something.

INT: But you didn't think that you were going to make it?

MORRIS: You didn't think you were going to make it, no, because the Polacks they were so fanatic.

INT: Were you near your father? Were you standing there in the jail?

MORRIS: Of course, everybody, no, it was not, there was not room, you know with that, I mean with that nothing, with only men.

INT: How was your father handling it?

MORRIS: Well, how could anybody handle it, you became hopeless. You don't know what's going to happen. In case something happens, somebody gets shot.

INT: Sure, it was out of your control.

MORRIS: It was out of our control. You don't have no control over it and you're locked up. But after the night was over, thank G—d and we still had our lives and the Polish army was still fighting and 6:00 in the morning we hear the key, opens up.

INT: And they let you out?

MORRIS: And they say, "Everybody can go home." Nothing happened.

INT: That's another miracle.

MORRIS: They said, "Nothing happened, everybody can go to their house."

INT: That's amazing.

MORRIS: This had happened one day, on that Friday, September the 8th. That was the beginning. So after they took us for hostages, they want to make sure, that first night to scare us. So they wanted to make sure, I guess.

INT: They wanted to put the fear of G-d in you.

MORRIS: Put the fear of G-d, you know, and so thank G-d nothing happened.

INT: So what happened when you came home?

MORRIS: And we came home and was nothing to eat. You couldn't buy anything. It was whatever you could... you just, you didn't know what's going to happen. You know, the first day an army comes in and what they did to you in a few hours; they round you up and threaten you that you're going to be killed in one way or another. What did you think? What did you do? And by now when we were home there were babies. I was the oldest one, you know, my youngest sister Ziporah, was four years old.

INT: Four years old.

MORRIS: Yeah, and Chanka was eight years old.

INT: And then the twins.

MORRIS: And then you had the twins and then oh G-d, children! Who thought? I mean we didn't know this was going to happen. We didn't even know what's going to happen from one minute to the other. What do you know?

INT: So now what happened next?

MORRIS: One thing I'll never forget when the first night when we were running and it's going to be two kilometers to run, there was a woman, she was not from our town, she was a refugee, another town. She had a baby, maybe about a month old in her arms, and while she was going, a bullet struck the baby. She was carrying a baby and a bullet, the bullet was not meant for her, you know, from the armies.

INT: Yeah, stray bullets.

MORRIS: Hit the baby right in the...

INT: Oh my gosh, uh huh.

MORRIS: They were right close from me, I was right by them. This was the first bad experience which I saw, you know a terrible thing. But you shake it off because your life is not -- you don't know. You became a different person. A day before I was dying and then what it is... up 'til today, I'll never figure out what can happen to a person, people going around, psychiatrists, nobody can tell, nobody can explain this. After later on I saw in the war seventeen year old kids come from the war, white, with white hair, grey. That's later on in Russia, when I was in Russia already I saw children seventeen years old, they were left over from their camp, they come to, they took them to when they were wounded. They were white like snow and in shock.

INT: So you got to the house, and your mother was there and the other children.

MORRIS: We come back to the house, we were all over there and that was the end. Nobody bothered us any more for a while. And two days later, I think it was Sunday, that town was occupied by a battalion of German soldiers. They were middle aged, like in the 30's people. They were carrying supplies for the army, food, or you know to fix things -- mechanics, all kinds of things.

INT: So they weren't real tough.

MORRIS: They took over our town and they were decent people. We lived with them for weeks and was no problem.

INT: So they were decent.

MORRIS: They were decent people. They didn't bother us; they were normal. They didn't touch us, nothing. I mean nothing, absolutely nothing. Of course we didn't know what bad was coming, but they didn't bother us, these people. We were six weeks with them, 'til Simchas Torah, that night.

INT: So you went through the High Holidays.

MORRIS: This was from the tenth of September, I would say from the tenth of September until Simchas Torah; that night yet we lived with these people. It was six weeks.

INT: And everybody went to shul and during the High Holidays?

MORRIS: Yeah, we went through the High Holidays and you know we lived, not a normal life but practically a normal life.

INT: As normal as you could.

MORRIS: As normal as you could; it was a trouble to eat, to try to find some food.

INT: Plus you had those extra people from the other town.

MORRIS: You had the people from the other town but we, we didn't care anymore. You lived like that, whatever one had the other had. We didn't know what's going to be tomorrow. You don't know.

INT: So what happened on Simchas Torah?

MORRIS: With that experience that we went through, you know we, they chased us to kill us and who cared already, we were still alive. What happened before Simchas Torah? Now, when these people set up, now I told you that Muttle the...

INT: The translator.

MORRIS: The translator, he lived about two doors from us. He had all the machinery all set up. These people, they had to pick the horses, the Germans. They set up a team; they used all his tools, and he spoke a good German. But we're friends, you know, buddy-buddies. I was walking with a cane and I was interested; Muttle talks with a German, I want to hear. And I crawled down over there, and I sat down, and he was talking to the German, and that German looks at me. I think he's looking at me with puzzlement. And he looks at me and he comes over to me and he asks me why am I so skinny. Why do I walk with a cane? You know, you are a young boy. So I told him the story. The war did nothing bad; I told him the whole story, that it started with typhus.

INT: Did you speak German to him?

MORRIS: Oh, it's almost like Yiddish. Especially the Prussian German is almost like Yiddish.

INT: So you spoke to him in Yiddish?

MORRIS: No. We knew some German, you know in Europe you know languages.

It's not much difference; it's a different dialect.

INT: So you told him the story.

MORRIS: I told him the story; we could communicate. I don't know whether it was broken German or what, we communicated pretty good. I told him what happened to me, that I was sick with typhus, and that war just took me out and I'm hungry. He didn't say nothing. He didn't answer me nothing. He just listened. It was just in the morning, early in the morning, and then by noon time he comes back to me, he comes back, and in his pockets he had, he had bread and salt. Salt then was more than gold, because you couldn't buy none.

[Tape 3 — End Side 2] [Tape 4 — Begin Side 1]

INT: This is tape 4 of an interview with Morris B. who is a survivor, and Morris was just telling me about his encounter with a German. Go ahead. So he came back and he had...

MORRIS: He came back and he had all kinds of things, whatever he could get from the kitchen, and he gave it to me. And this was in the afternoon, late afternoon; dinnertime, he came back all over again and the next day and he tried to do it enough to put me back on my feet.

INT: But now let me ask you this, you knew that the rest of your family was not getting much food. How did you deal with the fact that you were getting all this food?

MORRIS: Well, I didn't eat it. Whatever I had, if I ate...

INT: Did you share anything with your family?

MORRIS: We shared with everything, you know you gave it mommy. In those days, you don't eat it. Mommy takes care of the rest. You don't....

INT: So it wasn't as though you were the only one who ate, okay.

MORRIS: It was something for everybody; that was a normal thing. I lived home, you know, I wouldn't keep anything.

INT: Right, so you brought this food home and you shared it.

MORRIS: We brought it home and ate, whatever he brought for me and he put me on my feet.

INT: Oh my goodness.

MORRIS: It took a few weeks, six weeks, and after, you know and then we become friends.

INT: Day after day he kept bringing you?

MORRIS: Day after day, day after day he just became... Like you know he's going to take care of me. Then we became friends. We started talking, we're asking about what he was doing home, you know, who he is. After weeks you became...you know we didn't look at him anymore as a German, he was just a good person. He brings me food to eat. And then they ask me and said "Mi-cha-ale," he said "Mishka, Vie alt binst du?"

INT: What is that?

MORRIS: How old are you?

INT: He said how old are you? Yes, and you said nineteen.

MORRIS: Nineteen years old. I saw he started, his tears started in his eyes. I said "Herman, what's the matter? What's wrong?" So he told me that "I have a daughter, I have one daughter, she's nineteen years old, she's your age." He said, "I don't think I'll ever see her again." And we had that conversation; "I don't think I'll ever see her again because we're going to finish with Poland, we're going to go fight France. And this war is not going to be just overnight." He said, "This is a war." See, they knew already. They were prepared. We didn't know what's going on. These Germans, they lived their lives in the army, they did what they did and we just struggled from day to day. But he [Herman] was so involved (pause) till Simchas Torah. This was the middle of the night, I think it was twelve, twelve in the middle of the night. We had shutters on the windows over there, and he knocks on the shutters and he shouts "Mishka, come on, shnell! He told me he had bad news. I said, "What's the bad news?" He said, "We just got the orders, we have to leave the town by 6:00 in the morning. We have to leave this town. We just got the orders to leave and this place is going to be occupied by the SS." He says, "And you'd better move out from here because I saw what they do to your people." Just like this he said, "They going to kill you all." He said, "There's no question." He said, "Tell all your friends, you know, that they'd better move out." Move to where? We didn't know. Where will we go? Move from one place to the other the Germans would occupy. So he said, just like I'm talking to you, he said, "28 kilometers from over here is Sniadowo, they call it. Sniadowo is a town."

INT: Okay, oh, that's the name of the town?

MORRIS: Yeah, Sniadowo is the name of the town. It's 28 kilometers. We knew about where this is. He said, "In Sniadowo over there are the Russians," because they split Poland. The Russians took the eastern part and the Germans took the western part. This was only 28 kilometers from where we lived, from where I tell you all the stories. So he says over there is the Russians and the new border, the closest thing from over here where we are. He said, "Tell your people if you run over there," he said, "You're going to have it bad physically, the Russians won't kill you. You have maybe bad times there but they won't do it to you what you're going to face over here." Just like this "because I saw, you know, what they did to your people..."

INT: From the previous town.

MORRIS: From the previous town when you came over here."

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: Just like this. So in the middle of the night, from door to door you go and tell them the news, you know, what's happening.

INT: Was there anybody who didn't believe you?

MORRIS: No, no.

INT: They knew, they knew.

MORRIS: They knew, they knew. No question. Whatever you packed, you packed, and we packed it in a bed sheet....

INT: A bed sheet.

MORRIS: Bed sheet, and you put in [your things], you made a tie and...

INT: Put it over your back.

MORRIS: Put it over your back and you just keep going. And you went and you tried to avoid...

INT: It must have been cold by then.

MORRIS: Not too cold, no, not too cold. It was cool but no, it was not too cold.

INT: Now which direction was this? North? South?

MORRIS: It was **east**.

INT: Right, okay.

MORRIS: East, to the Russian side was east. And we went, and we went and we went, and then my mother, in the middle she decides, "Oh, G-d! I forgot something!" In the house we had what we called a "kaler," you know, it was a hole. We used to keep some food there because we didn't have a refrigerator. But she kept over there, you know, she put the candle lights there.

INT: The candle sticks? The Shabbas candles?

MORRIS: The Shabbas candles. And she put some rings, and this, and she got it hidden there and she told my father to go back. A stupid thing what a person could do!

INT: Oh my goodness.

MORRIS: He turned around, he went there and he got caught. He got caught! You know, there was already no Jews left over there. He was the only one to go over there. And this town was occupied already, not by the same Germans, but the SS!

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: In the morning I go out in the street. I was so stupid too! I go out and there was an SS man who's putting on a telephone. See they took out ours and they put in their own communication, and I started talking to him, you know, in his black uniform. It was a young kid, a German, and I said to him "What are you doing over here? Why are you changing the telephone?" He said, "Oh, we're taking over the town." (laughs) He said, "We're taking over the town." And he thought nothing of it, and then I thought "Oh, G—d. What am I doing? This is an SS man already!"

INT: Yes, so what happened to your father?

MORRIS: My father went back to get the stuff.

INT: Yes, okay.

MORRIS: And he couldn't leave anymore. He couldn't leave. Across the street from us lived a Polack, Antic, I forgot his first name. He was a farmer, and he saw what's going on and my father got caught up in that. He had a barn. He went to the field; he hid him in the barn 'til he didn't see any Germans, and he let him go, and he caught up, but it took hours. You know it was the most stupid thing to do. Thank G-d nothing happened to him. You should never do this!

INT: So you were all walking.

MORRIS: So we were walking, walking, walking. We tried to avoid the villages because we didn't trust the Polacks already; we were afraid of the Polacks more than the Germans, just as much as the Germans.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: Finally we reached, the next day we reached that Sniadowo, that little town, and oh G-d, over there was thousands and thousands of people, all people, refugees that came from wherever. And we slept on the street. All the synagogues and all the private places, everything whether a school, whatever was a free place, everything was full with people, was nowhere, nowhere to go. So we stayed over there; I don't know, we were there about a few weeks, and the Russians were over there and they gave us something but it was not enough. So we said we going to move in a bigger city. The bigger city was 40 kilometers from there; that was Lomza, was a big...

INT: What's the name of the city?

MORRIS: L-o-m-z-a. Over there was a big yeshiva, it was famous, you know the Lomza Yeshiva. Lomza was a big city already. We thought maybe it was going to be better over there.

INT: So you walked the 40...

MORRIS: No, we didn't walk already there because we were not, we were not in physical danger already over there. You know this was in Russian hands already. That was on the Russian side, see.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: This was Eastern Poland. Over there we weren't worried [about our safety], we were just worried how to survive over there, just to find a roof over our head or some food, so we moved there. So the trains were running there already or busses, whatever, you know transportation, horse and buggy. We moved there and the bigger the city, the bigger the trouble was. More people, hundreds of thousands of people, you know, that ran away from the Germans.

INT: Because they had the same idea as you did.

MORRIS: And they went through certain experiences, you know, who was close to the border went over to the Russian side.

INT: Right.

MORRIS: Not all of them; a lot of them stayed and didn't want to leave their homes, you know, they didn't think. Nobody knew that the Germans are going to be that bad. Who knew then?

INT: A lot of people didn't get the warning that you got either.

MORRIS: A lot of people didn't get the warning. We were just lucky we were in a little town [and we got a warning]. I'm telling you the way it happened, exactly the details, that's the way it happened. We were lucky because we were in a town and it happened that we got involved with a little battalion who were decent people and that was the fate. And over there in Lomza already, people tell you horrible stories about what they saw. They saw people were killed who were innocent. Terrible things. We were over there a while, the same thing. We lived in a synagogue and it was so terrible, you know, sanitation. With the small children it was an especially horrifying experience. We stayed over there for a while. And it so happened that the most tragic thing which stays in you forever... See these people who stayed when they split Poland; they were the local people. They were occupied by the Russians but they were never refugees. They lived in their homes, nothing happened to them. And they treated us horribly! You weren't allowed to come into their house and ask for a drink of water. They felt they're the lucky ones. They felt they didn't have to run away because they fell on the Russian side. I don't know if you know what I mean.

INT: Yes. So you're saying that it hurt you so much that these were Jews and they treated you worse like the Germans would.

MORRIS: These were Jews, but they were arrogant and they treated us, not worse than Germans. No, but it was not, I mean there was not much sympathy.

INT: Right, okay.

MORRIS: We were refugees. It was bad because they were the chosen ones; they had fallen in on that side. Anyhow, we stayed over there for a while and then it started getting cool.

INT: Yeah, well winter was coming.

MORRIS: Winter was coming so we moved to another bigger city. We moved to Bialystok. I don't know if you've ever heard of, it's a big city. We moved to Bialystok and this was already, must have been November or October, it must have been about then

INT: Well this all happened...if it was in September it was...

MORRIS: Yeah, it was all in two months, in two, three months, the whole thing happened. We were in Shnadova two weeks or so and then we moved to Lomza. We thought maybe it is better there, and then we went to Bialystok.

INT: And what happened there?

MORRIS: This was farther east; it was all farther east, closer to the Russian border. And over there the bigger the city, the bigger the "tzouris..." It was bigger with more people, with refugees by the hundreds of thousands. It was again the same thing; was no hope of finding a roof over your head. In Bialystok it was very much the same thing, the refugees didn't get much sympathy from the local people. They lived there and right away they made contacts and they made a living. And we got caught up. What will we do? So finally my father finds a place, was a little forest -- not a forest, it was a little dacha, they called it.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: The rich people from that town, in the summertime they used to go because the city was hot. Somebody who was better off used to go for the summer. They were made from plain wood, just for the hot weather. There was no heating; just planks of wood put together, a little hut. And so, thank G-d, we found this place. We thought maybe we were going to say, but then it started to get real cold. From the walls, the water was running and freezing on the walls. Each family had one corner to sleep in because there was no furniture or anything, no possessions. You just had...

INT: What you carried on your back.

MORRIS: What you carried on your back. A pillow, that's all. And then things started getting real bad and we were on the floor. We had a patchka, we called it, a little stove.

INT: A stove.

MORRIS: A stove, yeah. You had to put wood in it. And we were right in the woods and we used to go and cut wood for the stove. There was an older person, and I used to go with him. We used to cut down the wood; cut down the trees. Then come the Russian officers and they stopped us. They said "This is city property; what are you doing?" So okay, you know, so they didn't bother us. Okay, so they went away, we still did the same thing, you know, we had to survive.

INT: You had to cook.

MORRIS: But it got so bad that -- you know, this was all the way east -- it was colder. The farther east you went, the climate was already much colder. And it got real bad; what do we do?

INT: Now who talked about this? Was your father involved?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: What did your mother do?

MORRIS: If she got something she cooked.

INT: Who was making the decisions about what you were all going to do?

MORRIS: That was already **me**, I was involved a lot in this.

INT: Okay, because we said your older brother's in Warsaw so you...

MORRIS: Yeah, so I was the oldest one there. Yeah, me and my father. And my mother had a lot to do because she was the matriarch. Father did what she said should be done.

INT: So she was the one who had all of the ideas?

MORRIS: Yeah, most, the most of the decisions were made by me and my mother. And my father did...father was a little chicken, you know he was a little careful. He was afraid.

INT: So the whole family dynamics really changed because when you were home, your father was the disciplinarian, he was the boss.

MORRIS: Disciplinarian in a way, but he was not the boss; my mother was the boss.

INT: Your mother was still the boss when your...

MORRIS: Yeah, my father had a big voice, he hollered, talked a lot, but it didn't mean nothing.

INT: Your mother was the power.

MORRIS: My mother was the power, sure.

INT: So you and your mother would, you would discuss...

MORRIS: Then we had to move from one place, one city to another. Me and my mother made the decision and he had to do what we [wanted]. It was not big decision. What was there to decide? You had **nothing**! You put the bag on your shoulder and you went. So we come over there, and then it was bad. We knew it's bad and there's no nothing! One day, you know we had to go into town, into Bialystok. I started to do black marketing, things were so bad. See, my "nase" [miracle] that day...Even in Sniadowo I got with the Russians. I was young and I started talking that language, started to learn Russian, started getting involved. Finally with the Russian, the army with the youngsters, I started talking to them, and I bought a paper. They gave me a Russian paper and I would sit down for hours. I remember like today, and I took the paper... their alphabet is a completely different one and I interpret in, I put it down. In a few weeks I started, I spoke a good Russian, not very good, but I started with a passable Russian.

INT: Now you were teaching yourself to read?

MORRIS: To read and to...

INT: But you were also speaking?

MORRIS: Speaking, see it's easier.

INT: Okay, yes, sure, so you were working...

MORRIS: Because you talked with the officers, you know, in broken [Russian]; it's still a Slavic language. There's a lot of words -- it's not the same language, but it's still Slavic -- it's not like English. In Russian it's different and when I came over there in Bialystok already right away I just looked how to get involved with the Russians. That was my doing.

INT: You became a "hondler" [trader].

MORRIS: Yeah. So I tried to get salt from the Russians. Salt and saccharine [sugar] -- that was the biggest, saccharine.

INT: What was the other one?

MORRIS: Saccharine.

INT: Something sweet.

MORRIS: Sweet, sweet. And "schweblach," what do you call it? Matches.

INT: Matches, okay. So salt, sugar and matches.

MORRIS: This was the top! I got to be buddies with the Russians already. And I got this thing from them, you know, it was girls involved, it was a lot of other things.

INT: Okay, so what did you give them?

MORRIS: I just told you.

INT: Oh, you gave...

MORRIS: No, you did business. The Russians are -- 'til today over there is, you scratch my back I'll scratch your back.

INT: But what could you do for them?

MORRIS: Paid them whatever we could.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: You gave them other things that they didn't have.

INT: Uh huh, but you didn't have anything.

MORRIS: You didn't have anything but you already did business.

INT: So you knew where to get things.

MORRIS: I knew, I knew where to get...

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: I knew where to get this stuff, who sells. There were people, the local people, the Bialystockers, they did business, not as much as me; they did business already with the Russians, black marketing. Just like now, you knew those places where you can buy. You **knew**. I knew. I find out where these... see when you had these three things you could get from the farmers potatoes, you could get flour, you could get carrots, you could get a lot of things if you had **salt** and you had saccharine and you had matches you could exchange them because money was worthless.

INT: Sure. So you were a trader.

MORRIS: Just a trader, you call it a trader. Just to get something to bring home to mommy to feed us and have something to survive. That's the way I started. But still it was tough. Eight people to eat! From day to day there was nothing! There was no wood. My thinking helped me because I spoke already, I learned fast, Russian. I spoke, and I could communicate and I knew already which was the officer that told us how to do things. And it helped a little bit. One day I'd been in town, because we lived in the woods, you had to walk to town.

INT: You are still in the dacha?

MORRIS: Yeah, still in the dacha. Till the end we were there. And because you couldn't get a place where to live over there. Forget it! I see this guy, a Russian, put up a poster.

INT: Oh, I know what you mean. A billboard or something.

MORRIS: A billboard, yeah. A billboard and they say anybody who wants to register to go to the heartland of Russia, into Russia, can... they gave a date. In two weeks they were organizing a "shalon" [transport]. They were making a train with people who want to register and they put in these conditions: They tell you where you have to go -- that's in the Urals, Russia in the Urals. They tell the city. Most of the Jewish people in Poland were craftsmen or business people, but nobody was allowed to work at his own trade for 12 months.

INT: Why?

MORRIS: Because you had to sign...They were building over there -- Stalin was building a new industry, a heavy industry, building factories, military factories.

INT: Oh, so what you are saying is they wouldn't be **able** to.

MORRIS: They wouldn't be **able** to.

INT: There wouldn't be work there for them.

MORRIS: Anybody that has a trade, forget it! You have to work 12 months, one year you have to work in that factory.

INT: Oh, okay.

MORRIS: That you are signing up for. It was legitimate. They told you exactly what [to expect].

INT: So anybody who signed up was going to have to work for the government for a year.

MORRIS: Anybody who signed up will have to work -- not for the government. Everything in Russia, everything was government but the specific city, specific place, and specific factory...

INT: Factory for a year.

MORRIS: For a year. They told you; they didn't force anybody. Because they saw, they knew under what conditions we lived. They were occupiers; this was already their town. They took over. So what now? I came home and I say, I just learned [something] and I told mommy and my father what's going on. And people didn't rush, didn't grab this idea too much, very few people.

INT: Why, did they think that maybe things were going to settle down and they'd go back home?

MORRIS: We thought, you know, we didn't know, we thought we're still going to settle and there's still hope we're going to get home or something is going to happen. Still hope that it's going to settle and that we'll be able to go home or something.

INT: Yes, well why were you different from the others?

MORRIS: I don't know. That's why I'm alive now.

INT: Can you remember back to what you were thinking?

MORRIS: Yeah, I remember, yeah, I remember like today, this I remember!

INT: What were you thinking about?

MORRIS: Now, I sat down with my mother and I told her. I said, "Mom, look at the world. If we are going to stay over here this is only October, I mean December." This was already the beginning of December; it was right in beginning of December. "Look at the world, the snow that's frozen. We're all going to...the little ones, Paula, Chanka, we're all going to be dead! We're going to survive that winter?" Right when it comes January, February, when real winter comes in Eastern Europe.

INT: Sure. Yeah, you were farther east already.

MORRIS: And us over here without food, and I said this will be a catastrophe; we won't be able to last. I said that's the way I see it. My father said nothing, just "blah, blah...I'm not going away; I'm going to go to Siberia?

INT: So what did your mother say?

MORRIS: My mother didn't say nothing in the beginning, I guess. After, she must have been thinking. Then I went back and I didn't talk to my father. I said, "Mom, look at this. Look at

our situation. **What do we have to lose**! What do we got to lose? At home we struggled; we weren't rich people. We always struggled from day to day. We go over there, if we come home, what did we lose? What can you lose? We go over there, maybe we'll work." We didn't know. We'll work, you know what I mean?

INT: You had a chance for a better life.

MORRIS: See what happened, I got Russianized. I spoke the language and I dealt with these people. I did business with them and I had a different, a different feeling for these people. I see they are human beings.

INT: You identified with them.

MORRIS: Yeah, I identified with them. They were human beings. I give them exchange, we're doing business and they're good people.

INT: So you knew them as people, just like you knew the German man as a person.

MORRIS: Yeah, yeah, just as a person, yeah -- no, no, these people are people. They're not like the Germans, they don't kill Jews. You know, we were just seven Jewish people. And I guess that sinked into my mother. So what do we do? See who else is going. Now who else? Are there other people going?

INT: Yeah, sure.

MORRIS: Are there other people. We tried to find out. Some people started to register and the end is that finally my father said "No." So one day I said, "Okay, you can do what you want; you can stay here. I'm going by myself. I'm going to register, I'm just going to go. I'm not going to stay over here and wait over here till I die, because I just went through hell with sickness."

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: I was sick. I'm not going to stay. Whatever's going to happen over there, if this is the end, if I have to die there, that's it. I tried everything. I said if I don't try it, I won't know.

INT: So do you think that having been sick like that really changed you?

MORRIS: It must have, it must have.

INT: Because you came close to dying so what...

MORRIS: Because I came close to dying, I said I saw what's coming, I saw it's bad!

[Tape 3 — End Side 1] [Tape 3 — Begin Side 2]

INT: So you gave your father an ultimatum. You said...

MORRIS: Yeah, I said to him "You don't want to go, I'm not going to force you. I'm going." Because I got so close with the Russian people, I didn't worry, I knew I can be with them. Finally we made a decision, my father -- you know we decided, me and my mother -- we're going! And he had to (laughs), he had to do what we're doing.

INT: Well he was probably afraid to let you go because you were the one that was bringing in the food.

MORRIS: Food and not just the food. Maybe he thought that I made sense, I don't know.

INT: So how much longer did it take before you started, before you went?

MORRIS: Two weeks. It was not much time. It was two weeks.

INT: It didn't take long to pack. (laughs)

MORRIS: It was two weeks. Yeah, no, we didn't have anything to pack. The thing is to go to register.

INT: Uh huh, so you registered.

MORRIS: So finally we went and we registered and they told us we have to come over to the trains. The trains were cattle trains; you put in a stove in the center and certain families, six families in a caboose. We packed up and this was in the middle of December in 1939. And this was a **horrible**, **horrible**, **horrible** time in Russia; they had the war with Finland then. You remember that.

INT: No, I don't remember that.

MORRIS: You couldn't remember this, no. No, this was the time in 1940 when they had the war with Finland and it was a terrible thing. The Russians weren't prepared. They took a terrible beating from a little country. They lost about 50,000 Russians then even before they overcame them. It was a horrible time there. It took about a year 'til they overcame them. There was starvation in Russia. Russia was in panic. It was terrible. They never thought that something like this can happen to them. But the Fins were prepared for this kind of thing, and anyhow, we decided. We went, packed up; we were all together 1,700 people, Jewish people registered. And most of them were people who were not too well off in Poland. You know not rich people, but people that worked.

INT: They had nothing to lose.

MORRIS: Nothing to lose and some people had a lot of children. There was no other way, in other words. They were not in a position and beside people were sympathizers. They thought

Russia is not... We didn't know exactly **what** Russia is, what's over there. We really didn't know. But we went through with the Germans, the whole thing. I was the one. I liked the Russian people; I wasn't afraid. I was full of something...

INT: You were optimistic.

MORRIS: Something, optimistic, yeah.

INT: All right, so you're on the train...

MORRIS: So I'm on the train and the train, we packed up. They gave us what we needed to survive. We traveled. It took us two weeks in the wintertime.

INT: You know what I keep thinking about? I keep thinking about when the Jews left Egypt and after a time they complained to Moses, "Why did you bring us out here to die?" Is that...

MORRIS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's a lot of similarities. Oh, it's hard. You know you can sit from now 'til doomsday, you cannot explain every detail, what we went through. It's almost impossible. This hopelessness and the hope of maybe, maybe, maybe, maybe it's going to work out. You didn't know. It's a strange thing, a strange land, a strange culture. Nobody speaks the language. I was young; I picked it up a little bit faster but it was a completely different world. So we went up, two weeks it took us 'til we arrived over there. This was already heavy in the winter, in January. And the end of December there the climate, it's tremendous. It's twenty below zero, but we traveled, and traveled, and then while we were going there we stopped in every city, you know, the train stops. The trains were like you see in the concentration camps, wagons, this kind of thing, this kind of train; not a regular train. But in Russia in Stalin's time this was a normal thing to <u>them</u>. So me, I had a friend -- a nephew of Yankel Ozdoba, the man who was teaching me a trade -- Kalman was his name. So we went down in the city. The train passed by and we went there and we found a bunch of girls and we started having a good time.

INT: Oh my goodness.

MORRIS: And we already, see, we spoke Russian already.

INT: Yeah, uh huh.

MORRIS: And they never saw foreigners. We were the first foreigners. Since the Revolution, they never saw foreigners because it was a closed country.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: And we got so involved, and the train went away.

INT: Oh, and left you there.

MORRIS: And we...it left us there. In the morning we go, what do we do? Over there, you go to the KGB, but then it was not KGB, it was NKVD. Yeah, it's the same thing as the KGB.

INT: Yes, security force.

MORRIS: Security force, yes. They say, "Don't worry about it. We know, we'll find out, we'll go to trainmaster, we know where the train goes. Don't worry about it. You'll catch up." So they put us on a train, in a good train, a real train. In about two days -- they knew where we were going, in which direction -- and we caught up with them, caught up with them in Kubyshev..

INT: Were they happy to see you?

MORRIS: Yeah, and my mother (screaming). So in Kubyshev we caught up with them and then I remember it was my mother and we were outside of this place and there was beer. One thing, in Russia they have beer. We were sitting there and all the Russians came around. My mother had her handbag, and she put it down under the table and was sitting there. And they tried to find out what was going on and while she was sitting and talking, my mother takes a look, she says, "It's gone!" Whatever she had to survive, the little things what you had -- "Spina" we called them, "spina;" they stole the bag from her. And my mother says, "Oh, my G-d!" The Russian people say "Mishka, don't worry about it. We know who they are, these people."

INT: They knew the gonifs [thieves].

MORRIS: They knew the gonifs. They said, "This is a disgrace. It's a shame, you know, foreigners you come and see this happened; that's a disgrace for our country, that this just happened." In a half an hour they brought back the whole thing the way it was.

INT: That's amazing, yeah.

MORRIS: To make us still not get a bad impression of their homeland.

INT: Yeah, they didn't want to make a bad impression.

MORRIS: Yeah, it was bad, what happened was a bad thing. And then it happened, right away you see that they took care of everything. So we went back to the train and we traveled. Two weeks it took us until we arrived there. We arrived and this was already a completely different world. See, this was already deep in Russia; it's already not Europe, it's already Asia. There was a town that was in the mountains, in the Ural Mountains. Stalin decided to build there a new industry, because they had nickel, the mountain had nickel in it; They decided to dig the nickel and put it in trains and only a few kilometers from where we were in the mountains, there were factories; that's why they got us over there. They wanted to have people working.

INT: What was the name of the city?

MORRIS: Orsk.

INT: Spell it.

MORRIS: O-r-s-k. Orsk was an old town and the people were shepherds.

INT: And what was the nearest large city to that?

MORRIS: Chkalov.

INT: What?

MORRIS: The nearest city was a thousand miles. A thousand kilometers.

INT: Really?

MORRIS: Chkalov and Chelabinsk. You know, over there a thousand kilometers is close. It was deep in the Urals.

INT: So were there any native peoples who lived there?

MORRIS: Native people? You call it native. It was a steppe over there. Was nothing over there, there was

INT: S-t-e-p-p-e?

MORRIS: Steppes were over there; they were raising sheep, you know like the Mongols, a lot of Mongols.

INT: Yeah, so they were nomads?

MORRIS: Nomads, yeah. And they built the plant over there because engineers realized this is a good place to build a...

INT: A factory, yeah.

MORRIS: A strategic place far from Europe. They must have sensed that the war is going to come. They must have known that the war is going to come. Over there they built big military factories; nickel, this was for nickel. All the parts for the airplanes, for tanks, for everything was over there.

INT: So now what happened? The train arrived, yeah.

MORRIS: Yeah, we jumped over too far. The train arrived and so everybody was assigned -- now, oh, this is another [story]. The train arrived, and they took us off and according to the family they gave us one room; only one room no matter how, how...

INT: Big the family, yeah.

MORRIS: So we arrived, and I was separated for some reason and then it started -- a storm, a snowstorm, a "boram" they called it.

INT: A boram?

MORRIS: A boram.

INT: Okay, so is this like with it's swirling so you can't see?

MORRIS: A swirling, yeah, it's like a summer, like a "chamsim." In Israel they call it a "chamsim."

INT: But that's not from the sand.

MORRIS: Yes, this is in the wintertime. You can hold my hand and not see my face.

INT: Yeah, oh my goodness.

MORRIS: It goes on for...

INT: A blizzard.

MORRIS: A blizzard, that's a boram. It's hard to describe them. You know in the daytime it's dark from the snow. It's such a tiny snow. In the summertime you have the same thing but it's from sand. And we got locked in; I was not with my family. I was in another place in the barracks. This lasted five days, nonstop. Couldn't deliver nothing to us, no bread -- everything was dead. It was so bad, no communication, the snow was higher than the roof.

INT: So what were people saying to each other?

MORRIS: Nobody could say. I was locked in a room, I got caught up. We must have been about twenty people in a room. You couldn't go out, you couldn't open the door. It was still snowing. Was just cut off. We didn't have nothing to eat, nothing, absolutely zero, nothing. The only thing we had was a chinik we called it.

INT: A what?

MORRIS: A chinik, you know what you boil. A teapot.

INT: Oh, a chinik! [yiddish word for teapot].

MORRIS: Chinik.

INT: Oh, like "vos hocks mere a chinik?" Yeah, yeah, okay.

MORRIS: Yeah, a teapot we call a chinik.

INT: A teapot, yeah, yeah.

MORRIS: That is a chinik. And we boiled the snow to have some liquid just to survive. It lasted five days.

INT: So let me ask you, did the people say, "Why did we come out here to die like this?"

MORRIS: Yeah, well some people did. This, after five days it stopped, finally stopped and you know right away they delivered, they came, they did everything. This was not their fault. The people, they were good, this was just a disaster. And then...

INT: And then you went back to your family? You got back to your family?

MORRIS: Then, yeah, my family, yeah, we went back. They had two rooms. We were privileged. They gave us two rooms because we were eight people. We were eight with the children. We had two rooms and Oh, it was such a big deal! Then they came and they told us that for two weeks we don't have to go work, we have a rest from the travel, from the journey. For two weeks. And they gave us, the way they were dressed, made from cotton, we called them "fufaikas" [short jacket], "bruky" [pants] with "valinky" [shoes] and "shapka" [hat], you know, the way they were dressed different for the climate.

INT: Sure so they gave you clothing?

MORRIS: They gave us clothing. This kind of clothing, you know what the people wore over there was completely different.

INT: Sure, yeah.

MORRIS: It's made from cotton, heavy. And the boots are made from wool. That's not leather, it's from wool that's very thick. So each person got an outfit. And they told us two weeks you can rest up.

INT: What was it like for the little children? Well your sister must have been four years old?

MORRIS: And then the trouble was there was nothing, the Russians, no matter how they would want to help us, they'd want to help us, make us comfortable, but they didn't know. That's the way they lived. But they were caught up, it was the Finnish War then. You know the socialist system, over there we were far away from everything. We didn't have anything good over there. It was a "midbar" you know, like a...

INT: Midbar, like a desert?

MORRIS: Yeah, a desert. There was nothing growing over there. Everything had to be brought in by train. If there was no delivery...the trains were tied up then -- they weren't prepared for a war -- the trains were tied up with the Finnish War and it was terrible. It was just terrible, not for us, all the population, the local people they were all starving. It was horrible!

INT: Did you ever say to yourself "why did I say we would come?"

MORRIS: Well, I don't know what I said. That was only the beginning; we didn't even get started! It was two weeks. Meanwhile they took us, the people who were qualified, at a certain age, and showed us where we are going to [work], introduced us to the people we were assigned to. Each person was assigned to what he's going to do. And they showed us, they took us and they showed where you're going to work, you're going to do this; and this is construction work. They were all building factories, and we were assigned a job. It was a big, big, big factory; it's as big as the whole neighborhood, the whole Roxborough. The train was going over there. In the factory trains were going, just a big, big factory. So my father [Morris moans] "What do we do? We shouldn't have listened to you."(laughs) And it was cold.

INT: I just kind of knew that was coming, yes, uh huh.

MORRIS: Oh and how. The two weeks were over and they brought us whatever they got, how much food they could. We still got treated better than, better than the local people.

INT: They fed you better.

MORRIS: They fed better, better than the local people. I mean whatever they could they would. There was no such thing as discrimination -- just the opposite. They were going to show us hospitality. But see we had to go to work because we signed up for this. Two weeks and everybody was, "Thank G—d," they thought. Then it started the trouble. It was wintertime, cold, and you had to work outside the whole day and my father was assigned to mixing cement. You know how you mix cement?

INT: Oh, with a shovel, yeah.

MORRIS: You know cement.

INT: How old was your father at that time?

MORRIS: My father was then in his fifties, not an old man. He was in the late forties, early fifties. My father then in 1940 was about 53 or so. And me, I had to carry bricks on my shoulder.

INT: On your shoulder, yeah.

MORRIS: Carrying them up, higher everyday; everyday you had to go and you had to go. There was no elevators. You had to put a certain five, ten bricks on your shoulder and that's the way it was, the system. Everything was manual.

INT: And what did the women do?

MORRIS: The women were doing...I don't remember what the women were doing. I don't think the women went to work.

INT: Were the women expected to work?

MORRIS: Yeah, everybody had to work. Women were assigned according to the needs; certain jobs you had to work. Some worked in the stolova, in the cafeterias, you know, where you had to feed the people. Some worked in the magazines [stores], whatever was...

INT: Some worked in the laundry?

MORRIS: Some worked in the laundry, but I cannot remember this kind of things.

INT: So how long did you work with the bricks?

MORRIS: Now here was a "minetza" [story]. My father was coming with nothing to eat. It was bad, not because we were discriminated against or anything, because in the magazines, in the stores was nothing. You couldn't buy, it was empty. It was empty. You stay over there in line, you could stay in line, you could stand in the ochera [line], you could stay for a whole day and then comes next to you, it's gone. It's not because we were different, it just...

INT: It wasn't there.

MORRIS: And the war was going on with Finland. It was a horrible thing. My father was coming and he said, "This is 'chomer v'livana'[slave's work], the same thing we had with Pharoah" he said. "You know the same thing. "Take a look. This is the same thing the Jews had in Egypt!"

INT: Did he really say that?

MORRIS: Yes, this is "chomer v'livana." This is the same.

INT: (laughs) Oh, that's funny, yeah

MORRIS: Yeah, I heard it a million times!

INT: That came to my mind. I just...(laughs)

MORRIS: Yes, and this is no different. We look at it , so what can you say? You say we looked at it and I felt...

INT: Did you feel the same way?

MORRIS: No, I didn't feel, I said, "Tata, gib a keek."

INT: Yeah, "take a look," yeah.

MORRIS: This is not just us. This is the whole, the whole nation.

INT: Yeah, everybody.

MORRIS: This is the whole, the whole nation. This is a nation of 250 million people. This is not just picking us out, you know, this is not camps.

INT: It's everybody.

MORRIS: But this is what they did. As soon as we arrived, let's say we arrived today, Monday. The next day they took everybody and they gave us passports, made us citizens. Thank G—d. You know, right away we became...

INT: Russians.

MORRIS: We became Russians.

INT: Yeah, uh huh.

MORRIS: We got a passport with them, we became burghers, you know, citizens. Forget it. And in the long run it was a "nase."

INT: A miracle, a nase.

MORRIS: A nase. A nase is a miracle. But meanwhile it was, it was terrible. My father, every night, and it was "Oh G-d." And my mother was different. She already started looking where she can make something so she can make friends and started "hondling" [trading, bartering etc] a little bit.

INT: And how did the little kids manage?

MORRIS: The kids managed. What do you do? How did people survive in concentration camps? We were free people like everybody else, like all the Russian people. It was just a bad time. As long as the war went on with Finland, it was a bad time. Me, I worked in the factory and I said, "Just because I, because I signed this stupid paper, I have to abide by this? It didn't sink in to me that I lived in Russia under Stalin's time.

INT: Uh huh, you didn't know what it meant.

MORRIS: There must be a way to beat the system. So I talked to the guys and they got an idea. You speak a good Russian, we'll give you 25 people, maybe about 20 -- older people, make me a brigadier; this is a foreman.

INT: This is what **you** suggested?

MORRIS: **They** suggested, but I complained. I bitched all the time, you know what I mean?

INT: Yes, yeah, yeah, yeah. So who suggested, the Russians?

MORRIS: The Russians, yeah, the bosses, the nachalniks over there.

INT: They're going to make you a boss?

MORRIS: No, they're going to make me a brigadier, a foreman. They assigned me from our people who couldn't speak no Russian, all the Jewish people.

INT: Oh, okay.

MORRIS: From the people who came from Europe. And the man gave me twenty people, what kind of work, what kind of work? The ground over there is fifty feet deep, frozen. In that climate, dig ditches! These people should dig ditches! You know you have to make a fire over the soil. You know how you dig in frozen ditches?

INT: Yeah, uh huh. Yeah.

MORRIS: And then you have hammers with the wedges. It's stupid! Such a horrible thing. And here I have a bunch of older people. When our people came from Europe, some were...

INT: Like your father's age?

MORRIS: I mean my father's age, older maybe, some of them. So I worked with them and I had, I had to go get tools for them. I had to sign, I was responsible. All the tools that we need and the shovels with all those kind of things, it was <u>all</u> in my name. I had to give it to them. I was a kid. I was nineteen, twenty years old. You know, nineteen and a half years old, I was not even twenty years old. Oh my G-d, and I, how am I going to... So not far from us was housing, and they had radiators over there. It was central heat they had. So I said, "Hey," I took everybody and we went in and we sat downstairs, in the corridors downstairs. And it was warm and nice and we, most of the time we killed there. They find out and they started, "What are you doing?" And I said, "What you want me to do? These are people my father's age. I'm going to make them work? Un uh! So they just went in to warm up a little bit." "Anyway you didn't do nothing!" I said, "Well we'll get going. We'll take care of it." You know, it was fun. They

didn't do **nothing**. So after a while I got so **miserable**, I felt so conscience-stricken, so guilty. You can lie, you can talk yourself out one time, you know. But so I decided one day, I just picked myself up and I didn't go in to work. I just quit, didn't go it. Stopped. Disappeared.

INT: Oh my, yeah.

MORRIS: Disappeared. This was unheard of in Russia then in Stalin's time, you know because...

INT: Yeah, it was unheard of, yeah.

MORRIS: Because there they had a law, a pergule they called it. A pergule is if you came twelve minutes late to work, fifteen minutes, twice, the second time you, you're put in jail, or worse than jail. And I just quit. This is unheard of!

INT: So what happened?

MORRIS: And what happened? I expected the worst, but I gambled. So they called me in the office, of that whole place. Over there was maybe at least 25,000 people belonged to that. And guess who was in charge? The nacharnik of the whole thing was a woman. Zemlanska was her name. Never forget her. She was in charge of the whole thing. Finally they must have given report of what happened. "There's a guy, a young guy, he came there and he don't go to work! He's not [working]." So she called me and I said, "You know, I'm a tailor. I want to work. I don't want to not work in Russia; I want to work, but I'm a tailor." She said, "Yeah, but so are all the people. Everybody. One is a tailor, one was a shoemaker, one is a barber, one is a carpenter. You know all of you people are, but you knew it! What did you do? You signed up. We told you, this is the thing. You signed up for this with these people over here to build..."

INT: To build a factory.

MORRIS: "We don't have any light industry." She said, "A tailor shop is in Vitepesk, the Ukraine, there are factories for tailors." She said, "You know why you came here." She said, "I listened to you, but still." I said, "You know what?" I knew that about three houses from me there is a little tailor shop. It was an artel, they called it. An artel is there, a few people coming together, you know, they bring a certain...

INT: What's that word?

MORRIS: Artel. Artel. Artel means that it's not a kolhos. It's a few people, let's say a few tailors that come together, still government supervised, but it's like a group of people -- like a cooperative. Artel is a cooperative.

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: And I tell them, over there is a guy and I talked to him and I went to ask him for the job and he says he's not allowed to take me unless he gets a release from you. Filonov was his name. And he said "Are you kidding?" "Yeah, after the twelve months, you can do whatever you want to." I say, "Un uh. I want it now." I said, "If I'm a tailor, I can help, with a bunch of kids at home, I can make enough to help them or they were going to starve." And I gave her all kinds of stories. This was in February, no, this was in March, 1940. Year, beginning of March, 1940. And she didn't do anything. We talked. I went. Nothing happened. She didn't do nothing to me and every morning I said, "I'm going to go..." There was a bench, in the office was a bench outside, and I was sitting on the bench waiting for her. I came before she comes there. Okay, maybe today -- and she came in, I went in the office and I said, "Maybe, maybe today is going to be my lucky day." This went on for, for months, and I felt a weakness, that she's not going to do anything, not going to report me, because otherwise she could have done it in one second. She had all the powers to put me away. So she said, "I'll make a deal with you." I said, "Oh, once you want to make deals, it's good already."

INT: Oh, that's good, yeah.

[Tape 4 — End Side 2] [Tape 5 — Begin Side 1]

INT: This is tape number five, side one of an interview with Morris B. And we were just talking about his experience with the woman who managed the whole project where he was living and working. Okay, you were saying that finally she says "I'll make you a deal."

MORRIS: She'll make a deal with me, yeah. "See we have electricians, we have carpenters, we have anything you name, except tailoring's a light industry. You know we don't deal with these kind of things." She was honest, but I didn't want to buy. I said, "No. I want." And this lasted and I, I felt already that she's not going to do anything, because she could have gotten me, you know with a blink of the eye, she could have put me away. But she didn't even...

INT: So if she didn't do anything by that point,

MORRIS: ... I knew that she had some weak spot, I'm safe. And if you see a person every day and she didn't do nothing to you. And I was a young kid, and I don't know why, for what reason she did it, she didn't bother me.

INT: Well what happened to all of the men that you were supposed to be managing, the older men?

MORRIS: They? I don't know. I guess they... Afterwards, I find out what happened. Because all the tools, it was about 11,000 rubles it amounted to.

INT: Rubles.

MORRIS: Rubles, yeah. It was not big money but it was still a lot of money. All the tools, I was responsible, all got lost and I was responsible for it because I just left everything when I told

you I didn't go to work. That's it. So this was going on 'til the middle of June and you see a person, I guess like a friend. I was sitting there, you know, I'm going to play on her nerves and she's going to be stubborn; she's not going to give in and I don't know whether, if you ask me today, I don't know how to explain it. One day, middle of June she said, "Come on in." She said, "You won." (pause) "Laws are made," just like this, "laws are made to be broken" in Russian. She said, "Laws are made to be broken, you won." She said, "Mishka, you won," like this, "You won." [shakes a finger]

INT: Yeah, shaking her finger at you.

MORRIS: There was already a whole bunch of papers laying on the table. And she said, "Look at this, see?" Every tool what I signed out for was registered. She got it from the office where I was in that place. "Everything," she said, "this amount," she said, "altogether there's about 11,000 rubles." And she said, "See this? You're going to have to pay back every penny of this!" But the voice was like, I don't know. I said, "Okay, I'll pay." Because I knew if I worked there, it will be nothing. She said "Okay. You have to sign this and every month we're going to take out 1,000 rubles from over there. She knew already where I'm going to be. She knew the place where I'm going to go. "From the place you're going to work, we're going to take out 1,000 rubles from you." I said, "Good, I'll be glad to." And we're talking already in a friendly way. I singed up and signed all the papers and I go back, and the same day I go and I told them, "Here's the paper." And he said, "Here's your place." Yeah, he gave me a table with a machine with everything. And my life turned around already and meanwhile the war with Finland stopped. Life became a little easier and these people, you know, I had so much respect for these people. Till today I have a good feeling because they are good men. That guy took in work from...In those days you had to bring in your own cloth. If you need something made, you have to have your own material.

INT: Your own cloth.

MORRIS: Yeah, your own cloth. And instead of registering it in the books, I used to make it and he used to collect from the people the money, and he used to give it to me. I didn't have to turn in any slips. You have to make a "norm." [a quota]

INT: He did this off the books.

MORRIS: Off the books. And I couldn't do nothing because he knew the people, you know, I couldn't do anything. He knew the people, and was ready to help me, to give me a break.

INT: So you did all your regular work.

MORRIS: I did my work, my regular work and I had enough extra time to make other things and I started different work. And then a friend of mine started...

INT: Wait, you know that's the second time that that happened to you because when you went to Warsaw and you went in with those other fellows in your own business, that was when you

started to make some money. That was the first time. That was another world to you. Remember you were telling me?

MORRIS: In Warsaw? No.

INT: When you were a tailor and you went to Warsaw and you started making raincoats.

MORRIS: Yes, but that was a normal thing. That was nothing to...

INT: But those were the words that you described to me because you started to make a little money then and that's...

MORRIS: Yeah, but that was another... that was just a normal thing. I worked **hard** for it. I worked twelve hours a day.

INT: Yes, but it was the first time that you really came out with money.

MORRIS: Yeah, that was the first time I came into money. But that was nothing to do with it. That was a normal thing. Because I was young the first time I came into some money. That was nothing to do with it.

INT: No, but now you're telling... I'm just comparing the experience.

MORRIS: See in Poland it was a normal life. It was a free enterprise. You did whatever, you know, that system was a free enterprise.

INT: Yeah, I understand.

MORRIS: You know you did whatever you could. If you are able to make a dollar, if you had it, you could. But in Russia it was a different thing, it was a socialist system.

INT: Yeah, I understand.

MORRIS: In communism, you know everybody was assigned by the government what to do. You couldn't do nothing without, without your bosses to tell you what to do. Then it started, you know it started to get better at home too. See those days whatever you made, you gave the money to your mommy. There was no such thing that you had money.

INT: Still, so this was still in Russia, that was still...

MORRIS: That was a custom. This was a custom the way it was. If you lived home, whoever made it, all went in one pile, and mother was taking care of it. That's the way the system was, the way we lived. I know that's the way of life. So things were starting to get good. So what happened, we got a "nase."

INT: You got a miracle.

MORRIS: Got a miracle. This was in the middle of June and life became easier, not for me--my father was still carrying on the same thing. He still had to go to work every day. A friend of mine tried to do the same trick, was another my age, Ozdoba, Kalman's younger brother. He tried to do the same trick. Boy, they put him right away in jail. They didn't let him. You know, right away they said "No, this was an exception. Mishka [Morris] got away with it but nobody is going to make a game of it." You know what I mean? I was the person who went outside, I was lucky and that's it -- done. That was the end of it. Everybody had to work But what happened, whatever was bad, they survived. The year went by. To the minute, the year, everybody was freed. Everybody could go. There was no baloney. Every person, all the 1,700 people could go every place they wanted. They fulfilled the contract. So what happened? Everybody went, left this place. They went to Ukraine or Belarus (Beylo-Rosia) and west. And some went to Minsk and Kharkov and Vitepsk. Over there was light industry, was all kind of factories. There was tailor factories, shoemakers; was a different way of life over there. There were the most Jewish people, heavily populated, all the Jews were concentrated in Kiev and Kharkov and Vitepsk and Minsk; big, big Jewish community. And they wanted to integrate, to live within their own. And most of the people went. In one month, was nobody left in our city.

INT: But you stayed?

MORRIS: I said to my mother, "I'm not going. I like it. I have friends."

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: You know I was young and I had it good compared to the others.

INT: You had a business?

MORRIS: No, no business. No business.

INT: But you were working in...

MORRIS: Yeah, I worked and I liked the place. Yeah, I worked in my trade already and they treated me exceptionally good; you know as a foreigner, they treated me well and that foreman who ran the place, we became good friends. Over there they invite you to come to their house. We became good, good friends and was girls were working over there, young girls. You know, I liked it over there. And I said, "Mommy, I'm not going. I'm not going. I'm not going to move, find something somewhere else, start looking for work. I have it made over here. I'm comfortable over here, I work in my trade, I'm respected and they try to help me as much as they can." I was only twenty years old then. So I'm going to go to Minsk and go over there in the big factories? What's the big deal?

INT: Sure, uh huh. So what did you do?

MORRIS: My father said, "I'm going." He had already found a place somewhere in the Ukraine. There was a factory where he's going to have a job already waiting for him and everything and he's going. And I said, "Go ahead. What's the big deal? I'm not a baby no more. You know I can take care of myself."

INT: True.

MORRIS: And my mother wouldn't go without me, I knew. This was already in spring, Pesach time which was in '41 already. Because the contract ended in January, January, 1941. And everybody left, it was only a short time.

INT: Did you make Pesach? Did anybody...

MORRIS: Oh, we'll come to that. We'll come to that. This is only the beginning. And I said "Mommy, I'm working and everything." It was not an emergency, you know what I mean? Some people left today, some people left next week. And I said, "I'm not going yet." My father is saying he's going. He just talked! He's not going to go without me. And from all the people, we were four families, four families were left in the whole transport from these 1,700 people.

INT: 1,700 people, down to four families.

MORRIS: Everybody left, everybody left, and a lot of them went to Minsk. All of them the tragedy happened after. And me, I had a ball over there. It was me and Ozdoba, that guy's brother with his family which I learned my trade, and another shoemaker and we were four families, we were staying, we were over there still. You know eventually we would go, I guess. You know maybe they would go or not. And I had a good, and it was not a big deal. And while this was going on, the 22nd of June, Hitler attacked Russia. The whole thing what I'm telling you this happened in only a short time. This was only a month, you know weeks. It was the 22nd of June or July, I don't remember. I think the 22nd of June, Hitler attacked Russia. And all these people in Minsk, they were occupied. All these people who lived with us got caught for the second time and they all got killed, nobody survived.

INT: So the Germans invaded those cities and they killed the Jews.

MORRIS: The Ukraine was occupied in weeks. Minsk was right on the border with Poland. These people who lived with us, can you imagine the thing what happened? We stayed that far behind, deep in Russia. We weren't threatened because of my stubbornness, or mazel. [good luck]

INT: Or your mazel. Yes.

MORRIS: Or whatever you can call it. The whole people who lived with us, maybe one or two who survived from the Partisans, but most of them got destroyed. And we were the four families who lived. They were the people who ran away from Hitler the first time only to be killed by him later on. But this whole people, if they wouldn't rush so fast, they could take their time like I

did. I was lucky, I had already a place. You can't blame them. I had a place already where I was working.

INT: Yeah, maybe you would have gone too if you didn't have a place.

MORRIS: I don't know, maybe. I had a place that was comfortable, and I liked it and so the whole family stayed. In a month or two the war broke out and that's it, there was no question already. But the trouble is all these people who were over there could have been saved if they wouldn't have rushed.

INT: Who knew?

MORRIS: But who knew then? No, who knew? So they were caught by the Germans the first time in 1939 and then we went over there, and they all survived, and they went back and the war broke out and so many good things happened to me, good things. Then what happened in Russia, that was unbelievable! You had to live it through. This was in 1941. I remember when the war broke out, I remember where I was. I was in the Steppes walking. And I heard on the radio, they were telling that Russia had been attacked by the Germans. Then my friends and I, we were in a village somewhere, we went overnight. We were walking in the morning, we were walking back and we heard. I stopped at a house for a drink of water and they told us the Germans just attacked...

INT: Russia.

MORRIS: Russia. And then we went home and then it started another "kapital." [chapter] The war was on and everybody started to get mobilized. You know it's a terrible thing, the whole country was...They lost by the millions on the first few days, the Russian army, the whole army, everything was in panic. Then they started mobilizing all the young people, and I was of age. I was twenty-one years old.

INT: So were you...?

MORRIS: And I was caught up and they told me then... it's hard to explain to believe this. If I look back, it's hard to believe this. I don't know what they call this. You know when they mobilize the place, the recruiting place; it was about thousands of people. They used to call them by the alphabet, you know, a, b, c. You know in Russian I was -- "C" in English, I was the third one, but in Russian it's almost the last one. "Cha" is almost the end of the alphabet, like "Z" would be in English. Czarnogura. So that they called up, there was a group that was already from the morning from 8:00. By about 1:00 in the afternoon my name comes up, begins with "Cha." And they called me over and there was a table with commissars, you know, and my paper comes in to one guy and he looks at me like this with his glasses.

INT: He was looking over his glasses, right.

MORRIS: Yeah, like this and looking over the glasses. "Czarnogura? Mishka? Michael? What are you in Poland? Portnoy? (portnoy is a tailor). He says, "Portnoy, go sit in the end of the bench and when I'm through with the whole group, I'll talk to you. Nothing. That's it. I go and wait, and then when they're finished with everybody, right away was trucks outside. You didn't go home anymore.

INT: That was it, huh?

MORRIS: That's it. You're going in the truck and you're going in the training camp and you're in the army. When he finished, then he called me over and he said, "You are a tailor," and he said, "You know I could postpone you. I could postpone your enlistment temporarily. I have some clothes I want you to make, a "plashtch."

INT: Some uniforms?

MORRIS: Not a uniform. He explained he wants something like a raincoat but from "brazine," it was of a...

INT: Oh, a raincoat? Well that's...

MORRIS: The material what you make tents from.

INT: Canvas or something?

MORRIS: Canvas, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. It's a canvas. It's heavy and this makes...

INT: Yeah, so he wanted something to keep the rain off?

MORRIS: To keep the rain off, yeah. And they didn't have nothing. He said, "I have the material and I'm looking for somebody who could make it." He said, "If you could make this, I'll postpone you. And when you make it, then we'll see." Now, I didn't know -- I was a tailor, I could do the sewing -- but I didn't know how to cut.

INT: ...the pattern?

MORRIS: The pattern. And he caught me off-guard and I said, "Sure." I'm not going to say "no." Why not? I figured I'm going to tell Filonov, from the artel where I worked with that guy, and he's going to help me, I'm pretty sure. And I said, "Sure, why not? You know, just tell me." So he gave me the address. He lived in a village somewhere far away and I had to walk. And I came to his house and they were very hospitable. They had everything in their house; they had "chalav u'd'vash."

INT: What does that mean?

MORRIS: Honey, milk and honey.

INT: Oh, chalav u'd'vash!

MORRIS: So they, the commissars, they had everything, believe me, there was nothing what they didn't have. So he belonged to the party -- I guess otherwise he wouldn't be in this kind of work. And they were, very hospitable, you know right away they made a table and they ate. And over there you drink vodka.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: You know over there it's a custom. It's a normal thing. And I told them about my family, how I have little sisters, and the whole thing. And right away you know they pack up a bag so you can take home to your family. Then he said, "Don't rush. Take your time. When you have it done, you'll let me know." So sure I'll take my time.

INT: Did you measure him?

MORRIS: Yeah, sure. I knew how to measure. I measured him and he explained to me he wants it with a hood and I never, I never made a hood!

INT: Yeah, sure, what's the difference? (laughs)

MORRIS: I never made a hood with this and the whole thing. He wants it double breasted and everything. Okay, fine.

INT: It sounds like a poncho, what we would call a poncho.

MORRIS: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Something like this. And I, I knew what he wanted because I knew the way they dressed over there what he wants. Believe me, I came home, and I sit down the whole night, and I made papers, and I was making samples, and I did everything, and I took my time, and finally I made it. And I took it back to his home and it was just what he wanted, just what he wanted! It was lovely. He liked it. Now I'm sitting again by the table, we eat dinner and he said, "Mishka," he said, "You know I have come up with an idea." He said, "Where you live are 'zimlankas.'"

INT: What's that?

MORRIS: They lived in that section that, you know which...barracks they called them. You know, it's houses; row houses. Everybody is assigned a room, and every family...

INT: Communal living?

MORRIS: Communal...No, not communal living. But the housing there was not the best. "But I know where you live, not far from the zimlankas." They had prisoners -- not prisoners, but people who became forced laborers.

INT: Oh, okay.

MORRIS: But not hard criminals.

INT: Were these political criminals?

MORRIS: No political criminals. Political prisoners were sent to Siberia.

INT: So these were petty...

MORRIS: Petty criminals. Petty criminals or older people who couldn't go in the army, they mobilized them to work and to build the factories.

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: But zimlankas are built after they dig this big hole in the ground, deep in the ground they'd dig a hole and make a roof over on top of it. It's under the ground. And there they put in bunks and they lived there and had a stove, and that's the way they lived, and they had to get up early in the morning, 5 o'clock, and worked until dark, and that was the way.

INT: Zimlankas, is that the name of the place?

MORRIS: No, this...

INT: Or is that the name of this kind of dugout?

MORRIS: Dugout, yes. Dugout, yes. They called them zimlankas. And this was a whole road, you know, like a street; it was long rows, but each one had a number. Number one, you know, number nine in zimlankas was my house. So he says, "Over there it's not far from you, it is within walking distance..." (You know it was like to the supermarket over here.) He said, "Over there there is a tailor shop." There was <u>one</u> sewing machine and so this sewing machine is, I don't know what. No, no, no, I'm going too far. He said, "[Go] over there, instead of going into the army." See whoever worked for this was considered mobilized, because he worked for the military factory.

INT: Oh, uh huh.

MORRIS: And on your passport they put a red stamp across this way. It means they cannot take you, you are mobilized. But at the same time you're mobilized, you cannot...

INT: You've been drafted.

MORRIS: You've been drafted, yeah, you've been drafted and you work for the army inside the factory. He said, "You know I'm going to send you over there and you'll be considered

mobilized, in the army. Come to me tomorrow in the office, you know over there in that same place, (the first place I told you was the recruiting place), and I'll give you papers and I'll tell you where to go." Was no tailor, was nothing. He didn't know that what's doing over there. He just knows there's a place over there I can work locally instead of going in the army. So I went there and he give me the paper and he says, "Go see Fralofski." Fralofski was a guy who was in charge of the cadres; he was in charge of these zimlankas, of the working force.

INT: Oh, okay.

MORRIS: That Fralofski was a guy, when they build the Metro in Moscow, he was in charge of 4,000 -- no, 40,000 prisoners when they build the Moscow Metro.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: He was in charge, he was in the party, a big shot.

INT: Yeah, so wasn't this a demotion for him to be running these things?

MORRIS: No, the Metro was finished. No, it was not a demotion. It was a big deal because they sent him to a new place, a new city, to build a new city, new factories. It was a big deal!

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: And he was in charge of all these things because he had experience.

INT: Right.

MORRIS: And he gave me the paper, to go see Fralofski. And I came over there, and there was an office, and I gave him the paper and he reads it. And it is all written down, who I am, you know, I'm a tailor, and then my whole biography, whatever it is was written on the piece of paper. The same thing here, he has his glasses and looks like this...

INT: He looks over his glasses.

MORRIS: "Czarnogura? Portnoy?" (Portnoy means tailor).

INT: Tailor, yeah.

MORRIS: Well yeah, sure. He sent me over here and he wants to assign me for a job. I didn't even know nothing; there is tailors over there. So he "keeks" [looks] and he says, "okay." Right away with a different tone, he says, "I'm going to send you to Karpov." Karpov is the guy who was in charge of the...he took care of the brigadier, the foreman who took care of this group so they go to work on time.

INT: Right.

MORRIS: ...feed them, you know, the whole damn thing, he was in charge. He said, "See Kaprov, and over there is one barrack where there's a tailor with a machine. Maybe they can put you in that barrack, so you don't have to go work in the factory." I would have had to go back to the factory, which I refused. In the beginning, remember the year before I refused. But it still was better I accepted it, because you go in the army and get killed. So he gave me a piece of paper, whatever he wrote on that to Karpov, you know, to find me a job, to give me the job in that barrack to work in the...

INT: Yeah, the tailor shop.

MORRIS: The tailor shop. There was no tailor shop over there. But they had from the old tires...

[Tape 5 — End Side 1] [Tape 5 — Side 2 — Blank] [Tape 6 — Begin Side 1]

INT: Today's date is May the 9th and this is tape number 6 of an interview with Morris B. And at the end of the last tape which was not completed, we were talking about Morris' experiences in a factory. Go ahead, tell me. We started, it was something about rubber and...

MORRIS: Yeah, they sent and they assigned me to that place to work, and they were making for the people who had to go work in the cold weather they should have something on their feet. So they used old tires, as I told you, and I made the tops, you know, from "brazine," they called it.

INT: Brazine?

MORRIS: Yeah, that, that's the way they make...

INT: Is that some kind of leather or cloth?

MORRIS: It's a cloth, a heavy cloth that they use making the palatkas, tents.

INT: Oh, so it's tent fabric, some kind of canvas.

MORRIS: Yeah, some heavy, heavy canvas, yeah.

INT: Oh, so that was the tops of the shoes.

MORRIS: So I, yeah, and I made it. For a while, I worked with this and...

INT: Then what happened?

MORRIS: And it was in the wintertime, it was very heavy in the wintertime. Anything was good that time. It was a bad time then there because there was hardly what to eat, you know it

was a terrible time. The war was going on and the battles in Stalingrad then, it was a bad time. But you accepted, it was good; better than to go out to the front. And I worked for a while over there, then that same guy, that Karpov came over to me with an idea. He said, "Why don't you live close by, right by?" He said, "Why do you have to live with these drunks?" He gave me the idea.

INT: Well what happened? Where was the rest of your family living?

MORRIS: They were about five minutes away.

INT: But he considered that with the drunks?

MORRIS: This, you know, (laughs) the Russians are -- without vodka, nothing goes, no matter how bad it is, this comes first. so he said, "Why do you have to live with these people?" My family, the parents lived within walking distance. No even a kilometer. No, even close by, very close by. You could see our homes. He said, "You could do the same thing at home. Why do you have to sleep over here?" In the beginning, so he said...

INT: Oh, so you were...

MORRIS: ...in the beginning, no, no. He said, "In the evening," he said...

INT: Oh, I understand.

MORRIS: "In the evening," he said, "after work, why do you have to sleep over here with this?" It was dirty, filthy.

INT: So he wasn't referring to where your <u>family</u> lives as with the drunks. He was talking about with the **soldiers**?

MORRIS: With the soldiers, yeah.

INT: And so he's thinking that you could live...

MORRIS: They were not soldiers, they were criminals mostly. In the beginning he said, "Why do you have to stay over here after work? He said, "You can go home for the night, stay home. Why do you have to stay over here?" I looked, I said, "Oh, my G-d. It cannot be true." I said, "Okay, fine. Thank you." Then after a while he said, "You know, why don't you find a sewing machine and you can do the same thing at home. You don't have to stay over here." Who the hell cares?"

INT: Why was he so concerned about you?

MORRIS: I don't know.

INT: Didn't you have any sense of why?

MORRIS: No, really I don't know. Just, you know with...

INT: Were you nice to him or was there something special?

MORRIS: Oh yeah, it happened... Yeah, I remember now, vividly. Yeah, yeah, see, one day he came to me, he knew that I'm a tailor, because I was registered.

INT: He knew you were a tailor, yeah.

MORRIS: Yeah, and he found some cloth and he said to me, "Mihail," he said, "You know I need for tomorrow, I have something, I want you to make me out of this a 'mandure,' a military uniform."

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: Yeah, he was dressed in military uniform. You know, I need it for tomorrow. This was in the afternoon.

INT: It sounds like a fairytale.

MORRIS: Like a fairytale. I said, "How the hell do you think I can do it? I'm a magician? That's impossible." He said, "I don't care. I want it. I want it; I need it for tomorrow. You'll find a way to do it." And this, I don't have a machine, you know, you don't have nothing! You need canvas to make a pattern.

INT: Pattern, yeah.

MORRIS: But what do I do? I see that the guy did so much for me. You know he was nice to me. I said, "The hell with you, I'll try." What can I do? It's like pushing against the wall. So I said, "Okay, bring it in." And I sit down, and I cut it, and I went to my mother, I say, "I need the canvas." So she took potato starch, you know you...

INT: Oh my, yes, and put it in the cloth to stiffen it.

MORRIS: And put it in the cloth, you know, to stiffen it.

INT: Yes, yes.

MORRIS: Everybody did his share, you know, to make it a reality. And I was sitting a <u>whole</u> night. And tomorrow, in the morning by 10:00 I had it **done**! And I had it down and it come out just the way he wanted. It's a fairytale, but it's true and look at this. That's the way. And you know and that's it! We were buddies!

INT: Oh, so that's why he...

MORRIS: You know I was young and I was, how old was I? I must have been about 23 years old.

INT: 22? 23? Yeah.

MORRIS: Was about 23 years old in '43. And one thing leads to the other. They he saw the way I did, you know, that it was "tov" [good]. But he needed it. He wanted something, and I did it for him. He said "Mihail," he said, "I got an idea. Why don't you get a machine? You don't have to stay over here. I'm the boss, you know, what the hell? You can do the same thing at home." My mother used to sell vodka. And by the table she always had a jar, and they used to come and she used to sell them by the glass. And he was one of them, sometimes he used to come. He knew my mother because they used to come over, you know, to get a drink. And I said, "Vey, a machine! Where am I going to get it? It cost a lot, where am I going to get?" He [Karpov] said, "Anything can be done if you want to. Anything can be done." So I go out, I tell mom what he told me. Where am I going to find a machine? My mother was a thinker, the same ideas, you know -- you have to try! You tried. She went right over to friends and started talking. So she finds out there was from Kiev, when they ran away, a family, a Jewish family and they put her husband in jail for something. She brought with her a sewing machine and she wanted to get him out of jail. You know over there you "smear," "habar." For vodka, for money, you could do anything. With the commissar or whatever, you know that system. And she would sell the machine for 20,000 rubbles, which it was a lot of money but it was just nothing. So I said, "Okay." So finally she made a deal for 18,000 rubles, she's going to sell the machine so she can get her husband out from jail. So I said, "Okay," I come to Karpov, that guy, and I say, "Okay, I find the machine but where will I get the money?" He said, "Don't worry about it; I'll take care of that." So those days if you had any products, you went in the bazaar and you sold. You sold what you had, because if you had food, it was the main thing. If you had flour, butter, anything what was edible, you had money. He had the magazine where they had supplies to feed the people.

INT: A store. He had a store?

MORRIS: Storage, you know, in one of the undergrounds, there was a storage room.

INT: Oh, a storage room, okay.

MORRIS: Yeah, where they kept the food, you know you have to feed something to the people. There was some flour, some butter, some oil and sugar. He filled up and he said, "You will have enough money."

INT: So he wanted you to sell food from the storage room?

MORRIS: No, he gave it to me, and we took it home and the next day we went to the bazaar, my sisters and everybody took out something and we sold it. In an hour you got enough money. You got more than 18,000 rubles.

INT: So you took, he told you to take food from the storage area and gave you...

MORRIS: He gave it to me, yeah so I'll have money, so I'll make money

INT: So you can sell it

MORRIS: So I can sell it and buy...

INT: And buy the sewing machine.

MORRIS: And this, in one day was the whole deal was done. That's the way that life went over there. So right away my mother and everybody pitched in. It was no problem. Once you had food...because the ruble was worthless, it was just...

INT: The food was more valuable than the money.

MORRIS: And two days later, I had this machine at home and that's it. That was the end and I was till the end of the war I was sitting home.

INT: And you were still making these shoes.

MORRIS: I made the shoes for a short time because it was in the wintertime, in February or something. You didn't need them for the spring and the summertime.

INT: Okay, so what did you make then?

MORRIS: What did I make then?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: Then he had friends

INT: Oh, Karpov.

MORRIS: Karpov. Now that guy that Frilovsky that I mentioned before, who sent me to Karpov...

INT: Was he the guy with the raincoat, that you made a raincoat for?

MORRIS: No, no, no. That was gone. That Frilovky that I told you that he build the Metro...

INT: Oh yes, yes.

MORRIS: That guy.

INT: I remember him, okay.

MORRIS: He was in charge of this, of the cadre, of the labor cadre, they called it. He called me in the office. He told Karpov to send me over to him, you know he wants to talk to me. I went over and he said, "Can you come to my home for dinner?"

INT: Good.

MORRIS: "I need something, you know." So he had two teenaged daughters and he said he would like me to make them something.

INT: Had you ever sewn for women?

MORRIS: I knew about ladies clothes as much as you do. Well, I was a tailor. You know what I mean? I was a tailor, but I had so much ambition that I never said I cannot do it. That saved my life. I never said I can't. I said, "Sure, why not?" You know I figured out, I finally figured out, and drew pictures, and measured and I accomplished what I wanted. It was beautiful. He liked to come home to them and they had everything, <u>everything</u>. The people were starving but the commissars, they had, they lived like [kings].

INT: The officer whose house you went to, for whom you made that raincoat, you told me they had such a beautiful spread and they fed you so much.

MORRIS: Yeah, because these were all party people, where they belonged to the party.

INT: Yes, yes.

MORRIS: They were in charge of the whole, you know the whole thing. They were running the -- all the government people -- they were running the show. They had everything for themselves. It was painful to look when the people were starving. You used to go out in the morning and they used to pick up like trash, starved people, people frozen from hunger.

INT: Oh, from hunger.

MORRIS: I mean this was a terrible time and then there was the battle in Stalingrad in '43, '44, that was a bad time. But see, they had for themselves they had everything. You came to their home, one told the other one, they were a clique. And I remember one, he was in charge of a big, big company, Kapone was his name. He had a young wife, and I went to their home to make something. After a while I started, I started...

INT: You had a clientele.

MORRIS: A clientele. And the one I started with, this Karpov, I told him to go to hell!

INT: Oh, you don't need him anymore.

MORRIS: You know, I didn't want to bother with him anymore.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: Well, in one way. If he needed something, I'd help. Of course, he was mobilized too from somewhere. He wasn't a native; he didn't have a family with him. He was just sent over here to work. So, he was single, so what did he need? Just vodka and to get dressed nice, that's it. Because they had everything for themselves. That was painful. To look at it that way, you know, who cares in a time like this? Every time I went to the homes of the commissars, I came back with a package with food for not only me, but for my family.

INT: Now you mentioned that your mother was selling vodka by the drink.

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Okay. Was anybody else in your...

MORRIS: My mother, at home before the war, she always sold something; to make a living she always sold something -- milk, or this or that.

INT: Were you otherwise the sole support of your family?

MORRIS: No, no, no, I wasn't. The two sisters -- the twins now in Israel -- Rita worked in a "stolova," they used to call it. That's a restaurant where they feed the people, the working people. In the factory they had a...

INT: Oh, it was like a cafeteria.

MORRIS: Cafeteria.

INT: Oh, okay, so she worked there.

MORRIS: She worked there, and my sister, Paula, didn't work. She was sick. She was very, very, very sick. She was sick then too with typhus and dysentery, with all kinds of sickness.

INT: Oh, oh.

MORRIS: And then I had the typhus again in the end of '43, in that wintertime there, I was very sick. And then I had dysentery.

INT: Oh my goodness.

MORRIS: It was very catchable because the conditions were so bad. And over there they have a system, you know, you go in "banya. " They didn't have any bathtubs for you to take a shower in. There was nothing. Every time you wanted to take a bath or a shower, you went to the banya.

INT: Was it a bathhouse?

MORRIS: A bathhouse, yeah.

INT: So there was community bathing?

MORRIS: Community bathing, that's the way the whole country was. Even I think today they still do the same thing. And that was...

INT: So it spread disease very easily.

MORRIS: Spread disease, lice, you know, it was horrible. You went in, you put your clothing down, and you don't know who was before you. You couldn't avoid it. That was horrible.

INT: So what was your father doing during this time?

MORRIS: My father was working in a shoe...they had a little artel where they made shoes, a shoemaker. About three guys were working over there with him. Artels -- it was not, it was government. It was that a few people went together and they made, they called it an artel. That's like a cooperative.

INT: A cooperative.

MORRIS: A cooperative. But what did they want? They didn't make a living.

INT: Yeah, but everybody contributing was enough to keep them alive?

MORRIS: ...was contributing, as I told you. Now, when I had the machine, after a while I used to do **nothing**. I used to take in my own work.

INT: Ah.

MORRIS: All the girls who worked in the stores and they called them magazines, they were...

INT: Yes, the stores.

MORRIS: The salesgirls, they wanted a coat, a ladies coat, and I learned already, I knew how to do things. You know, you make one, you learn to do things. So that everybody knew that

Mishka can make this. So I was sitting around and I made my own shop. I charged, I remember, I charged not money, but I charged eighteen **breads**. They stole it from the shop. Everybody, in those days, everybody used to get a...

INT: A ration coupon?

MORRIS: Ration coupons. Every person used to get ration coupons, how many grams, they called it, how many ounces of bread you get a day; and that's the way we lived. And they were **stealing** and I charged, I remember I charged eighteen breads for a ladies coat.

INT: So they would just take it from work and bring it, they would give you the coupons or give you the bread?

MORRIS: My mother used to go there and you understand, they knew her already. They already knew what was going on.

INT: (Laughs)

MORRIS: Over there it's a different life. Even now I think they live in that kind of system. You know how, otherwise....

INT: The underground economy.

MORRIS: The government knew what's going on. They kept their eyes closed. That was the same system like now I'm looking at here with the drugs that is going on. The government sees what's going on and they do nothing about it. We pretend we're going to do something and it's flourishing. That's the way, that's the way but the whole country lives like this, otherwise that would collapse. If you do something for **me** and I'll do something for you and that's the way it was, it was going on [for those] who had ability to do this. The people who couldn't do this, they just disappeared.

INT: So now what was happening in the world at this point? What was going on in Russia and…

MORRIS: The war was going on, it was first battle.

INT: What year was this? 19...?

MORRIS: This was '43, then it went into '44. It's hard to remember details, to picture the way, the way it was. You didn't need that much bread; you didn't need 18 breads. And the ladies coat, it took almost a week to make it; you don't make it overnight. And meanwhile, I had to do for this friend, for the commissars.

INT: For the higher ups, yeah.

MORRIS: You know the good thing for me was that they didn't have enough cloth and you couldn't get nothing, and I had plenty of free time.

INT: So what did they do? I was going to ask you.

MORRIS: If they find something, you know if they got something...

INT: So they would bring the cloth to you.

MORRIS: Yeah, over there they bring to you, sure.

INT: And with the coats; the girls would bring you the cloth?

MORRIS: Of course, over there...

INT: So you didn't have that expense, it's the labor.

MORRIS: Those days -- even in this country -- those days you went to the tailor, if you need something you have to bring your own everything, your own cloth. The tailor was just doing the...

INT: The sewing.

MORRIS: Yeah, it was the custom. It was a different world. That's the way it was. If they got a hold of some pieces, so I made something for them, the rest I was doing private. And the whole war, till the end, I was sitting. I had a ball. Then I got to fighting with my mother. My mother got at me because I got lazy. When you have it good and you're young, you just [get lazy]. Friday night, with all the commissars, we used to have parties. I used to go over Friday night and came home Tuesday morning.

INT: Oh!

MORRIS: And my **mother** [said], "If you would do and sit all this time, you know how much you could make?" But my idea was different. You know you have friends already. Who the hell, I didn't want to care because...

INT: Well you never really had a chance to be a kid and to let loose so it sounds like you were doing it now.

MORRIS: No, when I was a kid, I had no time. But I had to grow up. Because see, I found myself in a situation, I was the oldest one. And the little ones, they were still young kids. Ziporah was a baby, practically. She was about five, six years old. And in '43 Ziporah, how old was she? She was born in '35 -- she was about eight years old the time I'm talking about now. And Chanka was two years older. She was about ten years old. And the twins were already teenagers.

INT: They were working. I mean the one was working.

MORRIS: Yeah, one was working. Buruch was a young kid too. He went in a factory to learn to be a "litayshik."

INT: A what?

MORRIS: Dye and toolmaker they would call it.

INT: Oh, tool and dye maker?

MORRIS: Tool and dye maker, yeah. And there was an accident. He [was in an] explosion. He got burned from top to bottom, and we didn't think he was going to survive, but he survived. And so I grew up faster than I had to those days because I felt responsibility. But I had my fun. I didn't miss anything. The trouble was started by my mother. Those days we had neighbors, Jewish, all the same that came from the same place when we ran away. One guy, her neighbor, he worked in a factory; he was delivering the bread from the factory to the stores. And of course he stole, and you could buy those days. He was a pretty shrewd guy, you know, those days for 750 rubles you could buy a gold piece. They called it....

INT: Is that a coin of some kind?

MORRIS: A coin, yeah. A coin. Before the Revolution, it was illegal. It was very, very illegal. You are not allowed to. G-d forbid they caught you, your life is gone. So you could buy for 750 rubles a gold piece, and a bread, what I told you about, eight breads, you went in the bazaar to sell it. If you had bread, you sold one bread, it was a kilo and a half. How many pounds would that be? I don't know. They called it "kapeach," a brick, a brick of bread.

INT: A loaf?

MORRIS: A loaf of bread, it was, they called it a kapeach. It was 150 rubles. Can you imagine? I charged eighteen loaves for a ladies coat. So it helped to survive, you know it was eight mouths to feed.

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: So that's the way we lived. So I got so spoiled, then I got lazy, and I didn't want to work. I just had a good time. In the morning I used to sleep till three o'clock.

INT: You slept all day?

MORRIS: Slept the whole day, yeah, that's what I did.

INT: So then what happened?

MORRIS: And I worked only when I felt like it. I didn't have no pressure, already from these people. I didn't have to worry that they are going to take me to the army and those things. One time they caught me in the bazaar where I used to hang out. The KGB used to run down and circle around and all the young people had to show the passports.

INT: Uh huh, you had to explain why you were there.

MORRIS: And I didn't have it with me, to show why I was there, because you went in the bazaar to do black marketing, to make, to do something. So they put the young people right away in the trucks -- and good-bye. Took them to the place where I told you about in the beginning, where I met that guy, and they sent them away. They process them and gone, good-bye. I came to them, I made a call to my buddies. (laughs) An hour later I was home, you know, because...

INT: You were very lucky. (laughs)

MORRIS: I was lucky. I knew and I wasn't afraid because they all knew me. That's it.

INT: You had friends in the right places.

MORRIS: The soldiers who caught me, they didn't know who I am, you know what I mean? But when I came over there, **they** knew who I am because we're buddies. I went home. Who cared? And I, and we managed, thank G-d. And then my...One episode I'll tell you. I must tell you this. It was in the end of '43. Somebody came to my father and my mother and told them that there is in Chkalov -- Chkalov was the capital of the "oblast" we belonged to, you know, like Pennsylvania.

INT: Oh, a state?

MORRIS: States? Not states, it's a territory.

INT: A territory or a region.

MORRIS: It's a "gubernia." You used to call it a "gubernia" before the Revolution. Over there it was about 1,000 kilometers from us. We belonged to that region. Somebody told my father that there is an old synagogue locked up.

INT: Oh locked up.

MORRIS: Yeah, from 1917 you know when they closed up after Stalin closed all the churches and the synagogues. It was all locked up. [He was told] there is a place over there where some Sefer Torahs are hidden.

INT: Oh, uh huh.

MORRIS: And I don't know how, I remember my father went with another guy, a friend of his, they went there and they brought us back a Sefer Torah, one of them, they brought back to our house. We had two rooms, it was a privilege. We had two rooms because we were a big family. In one corner we made a little Aron Kodesh.

INT: A little ark, yes.

MORRIS: And all the people, there were a lot of them from Rumania, from Bessarabia -- Jewish people that had run away from Kishinev. A lot of people were running.

INT: Did they run because of the war?

MORRIS: Because of the war, yeah.

INT: They were coming from other parts of Russia rather than coming from...

MORRIS: When Hitler occupied, who had a chance to run away? Who had time to run away? It was by the hundreds, by the thousands, a lot of Rumanian Jews and Bessarabians, most of them.

INT: So was this going east for them?

MORRIS: Yeah, we were way back in the Urals. There was no war in the Urals. We were making ammunition, to supply the army...

INT: That's what the factory was, okay.

MORRIS: That's why the factories were over there.

INT: So you had all these Jews from Rumania, from Bessarabia.

MORRIS: Yeah, was a lot of them from Bessarabia. They were more than the Polish group. They were the majority.

INT: Oh, because most of the Polish Jews had gone, you told me. Most of the ones that came with you they left.

MORRIS: They left.

INT: They went to the larger cities.

MORRIS: That's right.

INT: And then they were the ones who were killed by the Nazis.

MORRIS: These Rumanians and Bessarabians, they came when Hitler attacked Russia in 1941, on June the 22nd.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: And they ran away, who had opportunity to run away. We were established. See we lived there already, we were established. Remember I told you that a few families, about four or five families were left?

INT: Yes, uh huh. So they were all affected by this.

MORRIS: There were a lot of people over there, a lot of Jewish people, Russians from Kharkov, Kiev, Minsk -- who had a chance, who survived.

[Tape 6 — End Side 1] [Tape 6 — Begin Side 2]

INT: Okay, this is side 2 of tape #6. Now Morris, you were just talking about the fact that you had Rumanian Jews and other Jews....

MORRIS: Bessarabians, yeah.

INT: Who had fled eastward into the Urals to get away from the Germans.

MORRIS: Yeah, in 1941.

INT: Okay, so go ahead and tell me about the Torah.

MORRIS: So when we got the Torah --there were a lot of older people, people who lived..., you know how we lived over there. There were "fruma yidden," religious people, but they knew there was a Sefer Torah, and everybody was coming, whoever had yartzeit would come to our house.

INT: They would come to your house.

MORRIS: ...and we had to make a minyan. There was always a minyan, every night practically was a minyan. And Shabbas, Friday night was a normal service and Saturday morning was a service. The young ones had to go to work. See in terrible times, even the young ones became religious, in dire times like this, because everybody had to go to work. Over there, there is no such thing that you don't go to work. They call you a parasite if you don't go to work. They had a slogan: "Who doesn't work, doesn't eat!"

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: It means that you know if you were late, fifteen minutes to work they called that a pergule; twice, you are put not in jail, but to work in labor camps.

INT: Now did you observe, before you got the Torah, did you observe Shabbas at all?

MORRIS: Me, personally?

INT: Was Friday night...?

MORRIS: Yeah, I never bothered, I never was. I tell you the truth, I never took part in this.

INT: Did your mother have Shabbas dinner?

MORRIS: We used to do this...Shabbas dinner, this is the way... people then were starving from hunger; there was starvation, period. For all the ones who were hungry, we called it "shalla shudas." [Shalosh S'udah]

INT: Oh, it's a third meal on Saturday.

MORRIS: The third meal, the end of Shabbas.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: Shalla shudas, that was the custom. We had a table, whoever was hungry, and you knew these people, they came to say Kaddish, but we knew them; my mother knew already who [was hungry]. She always cooked the whole day so that everybody who wanted to eat could eat.

INT: She sounds like a marvelous woman.

MORRIS: It's indescribable. My mother was good not just to the whole family. I mean she was a "golden n'shama." And what I want to bring out is that I was not religious. I never practiced it, but there was not a thing I wouldn't do for my mother. I felt **so** good! To her it was everything, a mitzvah, you know, no money could pay for this.

INT: So how did having this...?

MORRIS: So whatever I did, my mother accepted because I did so many good things, religious like for her, for them, to help them because who would dare then to make a synagogue in their house? Nobody in the world! Now what happened then? Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, people came by the **thousands**; not by the hundreds, by the **thousands** people would come to pray, you know was a big...

INT: Was it a field or something?

MORRIS: Was not a field, but it was enough room. It was houses and there was a...

INT: A communal area?

MORRIS: Communal, yeah. Outside -- how many people could go in the house in two rooms?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: The young people didn't go Yontiv, to work! The Russian neighbors didn't know what to do with us. They loved us so much because we had enough nerve to do this, because, you know, it was verboten in Stalin's time. A synagogue? It was unbelievable. So everybody stopped working to come Yom Kippur, then right away, what? All the commissars they started getting panicky. What's going on? So they called my father, and they want him to come out and tell them what's going on. Hey. This is in Russia since the revolution, since 1917 you don't see something like this. It's against the law! So what, what do I do? I said to my father, "Don't worry about it." I didn't. And I said [to the commissars], "Well, what are you bothering for? These are old people. They're going to break your Revolution? Don't be stupid! That's all that they have. They lost their families and everything. So they want to pray, so what?"

INT: Let them pray, what's the big deal?

MORRIS: "What do you care? Why bother them?" And that's it. That was the end of it. And this Sefer Torah, when we went to Poland, we brought it with us when we left Russia.

INT: When you left Russia you took the Sefer Torah.

MORRIS: We took the Sefer Torah back to Poland, and then over there the Germans occupied Silesia, there was a synagogue somewhere there.

INT: In Silesia?

MORRIS: Yeah, Silesia, yeah. And we left it, we left it in a synagogue over there somewhere, not where we lived but a little farther was a synagogue and we left it there.

INT: So now let's move on from here. So what happened next? The war...

MORRIS: The war continued and I, we lived... (pause) We lived, comparing to other people.

INT: Yes, it sounds like you managed.

MORRIS: Then there was an episode, a neighbor of ours, that Lefkowitz that I told you I met in Israel about a month ago...

INT: Oh, so you saved him from having to be in the army.

MORRIS: I saved him from being -- he was going to the front already, to Stalingrad they would have sent him. His mother took him off, -- he and my mother and they worked on it -- I had to go, I had a friend, Notkin, and they made me papers. That Notkin was from Chernigov, a Jewish fellow too. He was a commissar there. He ran away too with his family. He belonged to the party. He got a job and he made me papers. I could go on with this story I'm telling you, I would go on the whole day on the way it was done. But for me, he did it because I said I want it and that's it. And that Frilovski, his wife worked with him as a secretary. And this was a Russian woman but we made a plan that we worked out; it was good.

INT: So what about Lefkowitz?

MORRIS: And we took him out, and we send him back from where they took him, where they mobilized him, and he survived the war! I just met him after so many years, I was in Israel now and I met him, finally.

INT: Does he feel that you saved his life?

MORRIS: Yeah, well he knows. (laughs) When he found out over there, you know right away, he asked questions, he wanted to make sure it was me and I told him his mother's name, his father's name, the whole thing, and then we came together; the whole story. But the whole thing, I was lucky. Our whole family survived because we made the right move in the beginning. We went in 1940, 1939, then we went to Russia over there, remember it was impossible, the whole story?

INT: Oh we had the whole story, yeah.

MORRIS: This was the first day because we had passports, we were accepted.

INT: Yeah, you would have died if you hadn't done that.

MORRIS: The other people who were left there, they took them and they sent them to Siberia. Some of them, most of them died there like in the concentration camp; it was concentration camps really over there. In Siberia. Very few -- one guy came back, and I don't know if you know the history, when the war was going on, there was a Polish general over there, organized their own army. Stalin organized their own army, with a General Sikorski, a Polack. So they took all these prisoners from Siberia, the Polish and the younger ones, they made a Polish brigades. it was all communist, it was just...

INT: And he made those brigades to fight against Hitler.

MORRIS: They made brigades to fight against Hitler, yeah.

INT: Okay, okay. So now what I want to know from you, I'm trying to take this in some kind of order.

MORRIS: See I'm trying to tell you, my personal life, comparing [things] after the war -- see, the time that we're here, we didn't know what's going on over there. We didn't know what's going on, that there were concentration camps, we didn't know nothing!

INT: You didn't know, no. I'm sure you didn't. But what about your oldest brother who had lived in Warsaw? Did you have any contact with him?

MORRIS: We didn't, no contact, nothing.

INT: So he didn't know whether you were alive and you didn't know if he was alive?

MORRIS: Before '41, before Hitler attacked Poland, we were in touch with my sister, Chaicha. We know she's alive. So we wrote a letter, this was in May, 1940. No, May, 1941. I wrote a letter to Kalanin, he was the president. Yeah, president was a formality, you know he was known as president but...

INT: He was a figurehead.

MORRIS: Figurehead, yeah. And then I wrote him a letter so he can -- because the Germans and Russians they were working together, supposed to be. They didn't know they [the Germans] were going to attack them. I wrote this letter. My mother, she had a fantasy that she could bring over my sister legally through the embassy, legally to bring her from Warsaw.

INT: Now see I don't understand. I knew your brother was in Warsaw. Your sister was in Warsaw too?

MORRIS: Yeah, sure, they both were.

INT: That I didn't know. Okay, so she wanted to bring your sister over.

MORRIS: Yeah, we didn't know what's going on over there was that bad. And my brother had a family, had a baby there, and my sister was single yet. So we tried to bring my sister, legally to bring her over from Warsaw. It was a dream. But anything my mother could hang onto from her dream, she would hang onto. This was only about three months before the war broke, before Hitler attacked Russia. They attacked them on June the 22nd. And that was the end of it. Now I got an answer from Kalanin too, from the President. I got an answer from him! He answered me. He said he'll do everything. He would write to the German consulate, legally, and we'll see.

INT: Did anything happen?

MORRIS: He didn't say "no," he didn't say, "it can be done" or "it cannot be done." He said "we will try." And shortly after that the war broke out and that was the end of it. Until then we didn't know what happened, till <u>today</u> we don't know what happened to them.

INT: But then that was the end.

MORRIS: Never, after -- I met some people, this was '39, when we ran away we were in Bialystok already -- I met people in the street, some who ran away from Warsaw, people we knew, friends. And remember I told you when they saw me they started [to scream]?

INT: Oh yes, because they thought you were dead.

MORRIS: Yeah, they said I'm dead.

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: So some of them told me that they saw my brother Liba and they saw him somewhere. Then one guy I met, he told me that Liba was shot. He tried to cross the border on the Russian side. They caught him and he was shot. And now I'm telling another story: After the war was over, I had a cousin, Lipszyc, and he told me that he saw my brother in 1943 in the Warsaw Ghetto. So the real thing what really happened -- we don't know what happened. That he lived through the uprising, that's what Yitzchak Lipszyc told me. This was after the war, Yitzchak he went to South America to Mexico somewhere. But [what really happened to my brother] was a mystery

INT: So at which point did the war end? Go on from there.

MORRIS: The war was going on 'til '45, 'til May '45, but I was a spoiled brat by then. See my mother wanted me to work and make money so that she can buy gold pieces. And I didn't want to do the work because I was a young man, you know I had my own agenda. I had a good time. See we didn't know if we can go back. Those days, the story what I told you all this about is, we didn't know that a day is going to come and we are going to be able to go back to Europe.

INT: But you could have stayed too if you wanted.

MORRIS: Yeah, of course.

INT: Okay, so how did that come to be?

MORRIS: How did it come to be? Now in Yalta, if you remember history, they made [a meeting],was Stalin, and Roosevelt and Churchill.

INT: Roosevelt and Churchill, right.

MORRIS: And there was a Polish general, Sikorski; they put in a paragraph and they made a deal that when the war finishes, all the Polish subjects, Jewish people or not, it didn't matter, Russia has to, when the war finishes, they have to let us go back to Europe, to Poland. This was the only good thing. And when the war finished, everybody had to find some kind of a paper, you know, to show where they were from. We were already--we were citizens!

INT: But you told me a while ago that the reason why you were willing to go to Russia and you told your parents, "Look, we don't have anything back at home. Why do we want to go home?" So what was the difference now?

MORRIS: Who wanted to stay? Really, who wanted to stay there forever? We didn't. Who wanted to stay there forever? First of all, my mother had a dream that she going to find her children. You have to go, there was no question! She didn't want to, she didn't want to accept it that she lost them.

INT: So how did you hear about the end of the war? Tell me about that time.

MORRIS: Oh my G—d. How did we hear? How did you hear in America about the end of the war?

INT: No, I want you to describe for me what it was like as you were finding out what was happening and what was going on as the war ended.

MORRIS: Yeah, we knew, our information came from the government. You didn't have the information; Pravda told you what to do and what to think and that's it, and you got information. They didn't tell us that there is concentration camps, those horrible things -- nothing!

INT: So all you knew was the war is over.

MORRIS: We only knew that when they came, the Red Army came to Warsaw to the Vistula, they stopped. They knew what's going on over there, there's a massacre, and they didn't want to help. Stalin was a bastard; he was another Hitler. He had his own agenda. He had plans already for Europe, what he's going to do; that he's going to grab Poland and Eastern Europe. But they had to let us go. That's the main thing, because it was in the agreement with Roosevelt and Stalin and what Sikorski, the general, had written in there.

INT: So describe for me what it was like in your leave taking, what was it like for your family? I want to know how you were feeling and what was going on as you were getting ready to leave.

MORRIS: Well you had to go register -- everybody. And they organized the same way with them by the boxcars. One day in the spring, it was Easter time, in April, the end of March, and we went.

INT: And what did you think you were going to find when you got home?

MORRIS: We didn't know where we're going and what will happen. This was all organized by the Russian government.

INT: Did they do anything to try to make you stay, to encourage you to stay?

MORRIS: Yeah, they encouraged us to stay. This was already with the people, I felt guilty, I felt terrible. I would like to stay close to them because I...

INT: You made a life here.

MORRIS: I made a life for myself and all the people and all the friends which I had, and all of a sudden you felt like you are a traitor.

INT: To leave, to want to leave.

MORRIS: To leave, to leave was...They came to us; they were crying like babies. "We never dreamed that you going to **leave**," you know. "You're not like everybody else, you're like **us**!" We went through together the war, we survived together and everything. And so we had to tell them our story, that we have family, we have to go find who survived and everything.

INT: That must have been very.... Weren't they angry at you for leaving?

MORRIS: No. They understood that we were going to look. We didn't know that everybody got destroyed. I mean I told you, we had a big, big family over there. We thought we're going to find them. We didn't know what's going on over there.

INT: Especially your mother's family.

MORRIS: My mother's family, you know, her sisters, with everything.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: In our fantasy we couldn't imagine what had happened, what we would find when we came back; that everything is gone, the whole thing. We didn't know. The Russian government, they didn't tell us **nothing**. We only heard what's going on in the front, who's after this and who is after that, and battles. We didn't know what was really going on in the world, nothing. Only what they feed us with their propaganda, what they told us and we have to believe them. We didn't know. And your mentality, especially me, I was young. I felt like I was **born** there. I was one of **them**. You think like them, and you eat like them, and you live like them, and that's it. The thing is, I don't know. What happened to people in the concentration camps and what happened to me, the difference was like night and day. I felt that G-d looked over me or something; our whole family, because...

INT: Do you really feel that G-d was with you?

MORRIS: I don't know. Something happened. I don't know. See the funny thing...

INT: How do you explain that?

MORRIS: See the funny thing is, I was never religious. I told you the story. I was just a normal person but I didn't believe in all those things. I didn't want to observe things. But my mother was just opposite and whatever was good for my mother, if I could help her, there was nothing too hard for me and there was nothing too hard for her. I did my share to make my mother...She wanted to have a synagogue. An opportunity came up, you know that we can get her a Sefer Torah. So I helped her whatever I could through my connections, because I knew the right people.

INT: Yes, so what you're saying is what you did was not out of a feeling for **Judaism**, you did it out of a feeling for your **mother**.

MORRIS: Yeah, right. Now you couldn't take out Judaism out of me because I grew up, you know, I went to Talmud Torah, and until today you cannot take it away, it's in **me**. You don't have to be a fanatic, be religious, to be a Jew. This is going to be for the rest of my life. That's the way I was born. But I was young. And I'm still not religious -- I'm not going to lie -- I'm not religious. I'm Jewish and everything, but when it came to the synagogue and praying, that's hard for me. I don't know. That's the way I am, the way I have lived all of my life. But, it has nothing to do with...People you see here [in the U.S.], they ask you the first thing if you belong to a synagogue, if you go davening, and if you do this. I told you, over there I did everything to make...Other people did it and that was enough for me. I loved it, I could do something. I was in a position where I had the connection that I can help them. That was for me that...Did you ever hear of those people, rich people going in the store and shoplifting?

INT: Yeah, sometimes.

MORRIS: They go and they shoplift. They don't **need** it but just because...What drives them? Me, everything which was illegal to do, I did it! I felt good about it because it was verboten.

INT: You took the risk. You like taking risks.

MORRIS: It was not a big risk. I didn't consider it a big risk. But of course it was illegal and I did it. In the beginning, because nobody could leave work, I dropped everything, and I took a chance, and I didn't go to work, and finally with that woman [who ran the factory], which I explained to you, and I won the battle and I didn't [work where I was supposed to]. I didn't stay the whole year. I went to my trade and I did all the whole thing and I felt like it was a feather in my hat. I can do it!

INT: You were rebellious, yeah.

MORRIS: Rebellious in a way, not...

INT: If somebody said to you no, you can't do it, you said I'm going to try.

MORRIS: I can't do it? I'm going to try.

INT: Yeah, that's interesting.

MORRIS: And it worked out for me. Somehow it worked out. It was a challenge and I faced it. I didn't think it was a big risk later on because I wasn't worried anymore. See it was a different life over there. It was different times. It was who you knew and to take advantage of this situation, that's it. You don't have to be a genius or something.

INT: You had to know how to work the system.

MORRIS: You have to work the system. And me, luckily I found myself with the little things, you know that I got to know the right people in those circumstances, and once you knew the right people over there, you didn't have to worry.

INT: So you mentioned something about G-d. What did you think? Did G-d have any role in this?

MORRIS: Yeah, maybe. I wouldn't deny it. I don't know. (laughs) I'm not a (pause) I am not **religious** but I am not **against** religion.

INT: You're not an atheist.

MORRIS: I'm not an atheist but if you believe in it and it's good for you; if it makes you feel good, good for you! Sometimes I wish I would be, like when you have real trouble with somebody in your family or what happened to me. I envy those people who are religious because they have something to lean on. They have an answer, G-d wants it. It's G-d's will.

INT: It's a way of explaining...

MORRIS: It's a way to explain to yourself. When you have times like this or...

INT: Or to believe in an afterlife and if you don't...

MORRIS: An afterlife, yeah. But you know the difference and you can believe in or not believe in. And I'm, I don't know. I never think about it. It doesn't bother me.

INT: Well now tell me about...

MORRIS: The only thing which I don't really like is, I don't like hypocrites! If people pretend--if somebody's real religious, I have the biggest respect. But there are people who are pretending to be. And I look over here in American life at the Jewish people, they keep a kosher home, but when they go outside, they can eat everything. (laughs) But at home they have to be kosher!

INT: So that's hypocritical.

MORRIS: That's hypocritical. Why do you have to, you know...

INT: Not for you.

MORRIS: No. If you are real religious, good for you. There's things you could talk about from now 'til doomsday; nobody has an answer for them and I'm not that philosophical.

INT: Do you think that the Russian philosophy, the communist philosophy, do you think that that influenced your, your way of thinking? Were you...

MORRIS: No, absolutely not! Absolutely not! It was just a joke! I just was selfish, I was just looking out for myself, how to survive and my family too. You know who cares about their philosophy?

INT: Well you saw that hypocrisy there too with the commissars who ate like kings.

MORRIS: Yeah, of course.

INT: And the poor people who starved.

MORRIS: It was terrible, and I saw it and I realized what was going on. But I didn't care. I just cared about me, myself and my family, how we can take advantage of this. I was never a believer. I saw it myself after the war, I saw what happened. I analyzed myself because all the kids, all my sisters and brothers when they came up with the Chalutzim, with the kibbutzim -- they run and they run. I said, "Wait a minute. I'll catch up. I'm not running. I'll see. If it's going to work out good then I'll [join]." They all laughed; they all went to Cyprus, they went to...

INT: But you're getting ahead of the story.

MORRIS: No, I'm not getting ahead, I'm talking about my personality. That's what I'm trying to bring up.

INT: Okay, so you, you are a little more cautious.

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: "Let's see, let me think about this."

MORRIS: No ideology influenced me.

INT: So you're saying that they were influenced by the...

MORRIS: Yeah, by the new thing. There were kibbutzim started and my brother and sisters they got it...

INT: And that was an ideology that captured them.

MORRIS: That captured them right away and I said, "Take it easy."

INT: Not so fast. Okay, okay, I understand. Okay,

MORRIS: And that was in the beginning of my story. Everybody was trying to do this. I said "Let me do my way. Let me do it this way." And it worked out, it worked out for me good.

[Tape 6 — End Side 2] [Tape 7 — Begin Side 1]

INT: This is tape number 7 of an interview with Morris B. and this is side one. Now Morris, we were just talking about ideology because it's the question that I raised since you did spend time in Russia and what you're trying to explain to me is that you weren't influenced by anybody's ideology.

MORRIS: No.

INT: Okay, you thought for yourself.

MORRIS: Yeah, that's it, because people were getting carried away, you know, "Oh, this is good," it didn't influence me.

INT: Not so fast!

MORRIS: Not so fast! You know, I'll catch up. It's not going to run away tomorrow, it's going to be here, if it's good. I never joined groups. No way. No, I was an individual.

INT: Do you consider yourself an individual?

MORRIS: An individual, yeah, even today the same thing.

INT: So that's a quality that's stayed with you all your life?

MORRIS: That's a quality that has stayed with me all my life and that didn't change. I don't know for good or bad. Now I'm suffering, I'm paying for it now.

INT: In what sense?

MORRIS: Because I'm lonely now and it's very hard for me to join.

INT: So you were never a joiner.

MORRIS: Never a joiner.

INT: You were always an individualist.

MORRIS: I'm an individualist. See I feel like now I'm paying the bill. I don't know (pause) but that was my life. That's the way I... When I look back, when I analyze it, it's unbelievable to me too. Was I **that** lucky? I wasn't the smartest guy. I had no big education, but I see that a person don't have to go to college to have sense, to do, to make decisions, you don't have to be a..

INT: You don't have to be a college graduate.

MORRIS: A genius, you don't have to graduate college. Common sense I think is more, more than anything for a personal survival.

INT: But you were, all along you were able to analyze a situation, you were able to reason it.

MORRIS: I am able to reason it or not, I know one thing, that in dire times like this the human being became an animal. The instinct takes over. The instinct for survival takes over and there's nothing stronger than your instinct for survival. Some people make the wrong decisions...

INT: Yeah, you still have to, even with your instinct you have to make...

MORRIS: You know even with your instincts, you have to make [the right decision]. The main thing is not to get carried away. There's always people who are trying to tell you what's good for you -- you should do this, you should do that. But then you have to sit down and make your own decision. But what is proper for **you** to do, not what they felt is good for you. I think that's what's happened to me. When I look back, I think that's what saved me, that I wasn't influenced by other peoples' words. But see what hurts me, my children don't know **nothing** what went on. They weren't...

INT: Didn't they ever ask you?

MORRIS: They never asked. I never, never, never could communicate with them. They didn't know. No way!

INT: Do you think you gave them any kind of message that they shouldn't ask?

MORRIS: Never. They don't know what went on. They know, but in detail they don't know nothing.

INT: Okay, that's a whole section that we're going to talk about. We'll get to that. Let's go back in time and I want you to describe what it was like packing up, and leaving and getting on the train. Did you know where you were going?

MORRIS: Not exactly. It was all government organized.

INT: Okay, so tell me about it. Tell me about that.

MORRIS: We went, I remember we went , we loaded up the cattle trains and we were sitting and waiting about a week. It took us more than a week until we took off.

INT: Did you take things? Did you have any things to take back with you? Any things?

MORRIS: Not much. What could you take? There was no possessions, no nothing, practically. Nothing. Just nothing practically.

INT: So whatever you had on your back and a few things, yeah.

MORRIS: And the local people who are our friends, they came every day to the train. They were so...

INT: They were concerned?

MORRIS: ...concerned, where are we going? And maybe you'll change your mind, you know. I remember it was the Filonovs and a lot of families, the Russians, that came and said, "Maybe, are you sure you're doing the right thing? You know you are going in a place where there was a war, everything was destroyed." The war was finished already and people and the soldiers started coming, they started telling stories, what happened over there; that Europe was a mess, was destroyed; especially the Jewish people had suffered. We started hearing, we knew what's going on, you know. And then the more you heard the more anxious you got, you want to see...

INT: You were more worried about the people you left behind.

MORRIS: ...about the people, year, the more you want to see if it's true or what. And finally we took off and they sent us, not home, they sent us to Silesia -- Nider Schlesen. They made new borders after the war because the Ukraine, like Lemberg, all that region, Bialystok which belonged to Poland before the war, the Russians took it away, they made it Russia.

INT: Sure because the Germans lost the war.

MORRIS: Yeah, and they took that part, Germany, a whole region of Germany, the Eastern part, Nider Schlesen, and they gave it to Poland.

INT: And Schlesen, was that Silesia?

MORRIS: Silesia, yeah.

INT: What does "Nider" mean?

MORRIS: Nider Schlesen is lower, Lower Silesia, yeah. They took this away from the Germans and they made new borders completely, the way Poland was before the war. And there was a different thing. All the eastern part, which the Ukraine Byelo-Russians claimed always

was theirs, so they took it away and they took that big part, compensated Poland, and at that place, all these people from Russia, they sent us over there.

INT: So was that a DP camp?

MORRIS: No, no camps already.

INT: No, no camps?

MORRIS: No, nothing. Over there already was a lot of Jewish organizations. The chalutzim had a big, big...

INT: But where did you sleep? Where did you stay?

MORRIS: They took away from the Germans property, houses, and they put us in...

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: See they gave us, right away we got a home, a beautiful place, a beautiful home where the Germans used to live. They chased them out and they put us in. I remember in that place where we lived there was a woman and she didn't have a husband. Her husband must have been in the military or whatever. We got the whole apartment and everything.

INT: You must have felt like a king.

MORRIS: Sure. But it was not so good. They said we come to Reichenbad, it was a city over there.

INT: That's in Silesia?

MORRIS: That's in Silesia, yeah. And we stayed there for a while and then we moved. We moved to another place and there I started working with textiles. I learned how to make cloth. But at the same time my sisters, already they were teenagers, they went to the kibbutz.

INT: So they already knew that they wanted to go to Israel?

MORRIS: No, there was no Israel then.

INT: Oh, to Palestine.

MORRIS: See, when we look back, there is a lot of politics went on there. The Russians -- Poland was taken away. Stalin already established a communist system right away after the war, and they took us, used us against the English. Palestine was then, it was English, and the Russians had already made plans then to push the English out from there.

INT: So they got a lot of Jews to go to Palestine.

MORRIS: To Palestine. And so they overlooked, they let all the Zionists go legally. Now you look back, we didn't understand it then, but after you come to see what went on.

INT: To see it in perspective.

MORRIS: Perspective, what went on. We saw that this was a plan Stalin was starting. He wanted to push out the English from over there and the only way you could do it is to allow the immigration legally, because the borders were practically open. It was all occupied with Russians. The Russians, they saw the way we were going to Czechoslovakia, we're crossing borders, and with one eye they looked. Because this was a plan they made. And you look back, it happened because the Jewish organization became so forceful that the English had to...My sisters and my brother, they went, you know, with that illegal immigration to what then was Palestine. And they were fighting with the English and they [the English] put them in Cyprus.

INT: So did your sisters and your brother go directly? Where did they go?

MORRIS: This was in '46. They went first to in the kibbutzim and then they went to Italy.

INT: Are you saying there were kibbutzim in Silesia?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Oh, that's what confused me. Oh, okay. So they were already...

MORRIS: Yeah, it was there already. See I was, a member in Peterswald. I joined for a few weeks.

INT: Uh huh, that's all it took.

MORRIS: Yeah, three weeks. I went over there and they told me, you know that I had to give everything to them, the money what you make. Right away I opened my own business. I started doing the sewing, and the kibbutz said, "Well you have give us the money. You cannot do this, you cannot do that." I said, "The hell with you! Nobody is going to tell me what to do."

INT: So the people were in the kibbutzim preparatory to going to Palestine, that's what they thought they were doing.

MORRIS: Yeah, already they were very strong organized. They had madrichim [counselors, leaders]; you had all over madrichim and they organized the youngsters.

INT: Okay, so what did your mother and father do now?

MORRIS: My mother and father went -- when they [the older children] left for Italy.

INT: Who?

MORRIS: My sisters and my brother.

INT: So the ones who were in the kibbutz movement, they went, they left?

MORRIS: Two sisters, my two older sisters with my brother, three of them. The kibbutz decided, you know that they're going to move to Italy. They were in Austria a little while. I still remember.

INT: So who was left?

MORRIS: I was left.

INT: Yeah, and your parents.

MORRIS: And the two little ones, Ziporah and Chanka, they were still young kids.

INT: Okay, so there were five of you.

MORRIS: Five, yeah. Rita, the older one and the two little ones. Because when they lived on the kibbutz, I said, "The hell with you, I'm not going to stay in that regime, you know, having people tell me what to do." I was about twenty-six years old then. And it was in '46. I was twenty-six years old and I said "I'm not going. Oh, the hell with having somebody tell me when to do, all this singing." You know, they carried on with these things. I didn't want no part of it! But the youngsters there got carried away and they **went**.

INT: Was it okay with your parents for them to leave?

MORRIS: No. My parents didn't know. They found out **after** they left.

INT: You mean they left?

MORRIS: They left.

INT: Oh because they were in the kibbutz, so they weren't even living with your family.

MORRIS: No, they were on the kibbutz.

INT: So after the fact that they left for Italy, then your parents found out. What happened then?

MORRIS: Nothing, what could have happened? My parents went to Germany, Western Germany and you could go there then and they went.

INT: Did you go?

MORRIS: No, I didn't.

INT: Okay, so they went. Now your family is really breaking up.

MORRIS: We were broken up. That was tragic. We survived the war, all the war, the hardest time, all the Holocaust what went on, all these things. We worked together like a close-knit family.

INT: In two rooms.

MORRIS: Yeah, we were a close-knit family. We were together. We were helping each other. And after the war we just broke apart. They went, three of them went with the chalutzim to the kibbutzim.

INT: Okay, so how was the decision made that your parents would go to Germany and you wouldn't, and what about the two younger children? They went with the parents?

MORRIS: Yeah, they went. They went together and I was left, I was left alone.

INT: Were you alone because you decided not to go with them?

MORRIS: Not to go with them. See because I was left alone, where was it? In Peterswald, yeah, in Peterswald.

INT: So this was in Silesia.

MORRIS: This was in Silesia, yeah. Then from there they went, they went across the border to Czechoslovakia. From Czechoslovakia they went to Italy.

INT: So now you always thought things over and decided what was going to be best. Why did you decide to stay where you were?

MORRIS: I was there, I had a little sewing machine and I made money and I had my own things that I did.

INT: So it didn't make any sense for you to go.

MORRIS: It didn't make any sense for me to go. I didn't want to go. I knew I hated kibbutz life.

INT: But I'm even talking about with your parents.

MORRIS: My parents, they went to Germany. It was a thing then, you know, we went to the American zone because Germany was divided in the English zone and the French and...

INT: So they...

MORRIS: They went over there. In Germany they had the Joint...with the HIAS.

INT: Joint Distribution and HIAS, yes.

MORRIS: ...with the HIAS, Joint Distribution and HIAS. They had already, they called it DP camps.

INT: That's what I was just going to ask. They went to DP camps.

MORRIS: Yeah, they went to DP camp. It was not camps, it was...In other words, they made special for the Jews their own camps. There was a lot of refugees from the whole of Europe; was Polish, and was Russian, and was all kind of Yugoslavians, and all kinds of people. But the Jews had it organized. They had their own camp and they had kibbutzim in the camp and they made their own government like, they had their own police.

INT: So you parents, they went?

MORRIS: And they went to over there in the...

INT: Was it their intention to go back to Poland to see where the family was?

MORRIS: They **were** in Poland. There was nobody here. This was Poland. Nider Schlesin was Poland already. There was nobody. You know we looked around, there was nobody. We knew there was nobody who survived. We already knew then what happened, the Holocaust. We knew already; we were there! We knew what happened over there with Auschwitz. We knew, we just couldn't believe it! You know, it was unbelievable what happened. See this Nider Schlesin belonged to Poland already. You could go and come wherever you wanted, but it was dangerous to go.

INT: So had they gone back to your hometown at all or didn't they have to?

MORRIS: No, they didn't have to. It was too dangerous to go there.

INT: So they knew pretty much...

MORRIS: They knew already what was left, there was nothing. They knew already, what's going on. It's not such a big country. We knew what happened already from the Holocaust. So they went to a place, Wilcek which was by Bamberg. They settled over there, yeah, it was Wilcek. Bamberg was a small DP camp and Wilcek was a very small one and they were there. And I found myself in a terrible, terrible situation. I met first with my sisters -- this was in

Austria when they were there. I caught up with them in the kibbutz, I found them. When they left...

INT: When your parents left?

MORRIS: No, no, no when the kids left the kibbutz

INT: Left the kibbutz to Italy.

MORRIS: To Italy. They went to Austria first. They stayed there a while in Austria. That was in Linz.

INT: And they were in a kibbutz there?

MORRIS: In a kibbutz there.

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: And I was by myself and I couldn't... Finally I went, I couldn't take it no more by myself all of a sudden after the war, our whole time, and I started looking for them. So I caught up with them, I found their kibbutz in Weksheit near Linz.

INT: In Austria.

MORRIS: In Austria. And the same thing, I was with them, I didn't want to join the kibbutz. In Linz I found a place, there's a guy, he was doing the tailoring and I worked with him. In the meantime they went to Italy.

INT: So you stayed in Linz and they went to Italy.

MORRIS: Yeah, from Linz, from Weksheit they went to Italy, it was Rita, Paula and Buruch, these three. They went to Italy and then my trouble started. I wound up in Salzburg. I was there the whole winter, and I was the whole winter in Salzburg and this was the worst experience in my life!

INT: In what way?

MORRIS: Starvation.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: You couldn't get nothing! I was starving. Meanwhile, in Germany they had organized already the DP camps. In Austria then you know was a lot of things. They didn't feed us. We lived in a place where the Germans were supposed to... I think what happened,

personally, they were selling, people were making a lot of money on our misery. They were selling on the black market.

INT: The food was being siphoned off.

MORRIS: Siphoned off what's supposed to feed us and was sold on the black market. And I remember one week, seven days I was without food, without a crumb, nothing! I was standing in line a whole day and a whole night for a piece of bread and...

INT: Did it have anything to do with the Austrian dislike for Jews?

MORRIS: No, no this had nothing to do with **Austrians**. The Austrians had nothing to do with us. This was only the people, with the American army and with the people who were running this thing and they were selling it on the black market to make money.

INT: So people survived in order to starve in Austria.

MORRIS: And I found some friends over there, I stayed with them, we just hardly survived. It was **such** a bad time. For weeks without, without eating -- there was nothing. It was so bad in the 1946, that winter for me it was the **worst** thing. I didn't experience anything like that the whole war, like what went on all that winter. I had a **bad**, **bad** time. And I didn't know then where my parents were. I had no idea where they were. I knew they went to Germany, but I didn't know where, what. One time I remember the army organized a transport, legal -- you had to register -- to go over to Germany. And I didn't register and I was a wise guy. I said I'm going to smuggle in. I just went off and they started counting, and I didn't have any proof, and I met MP's, Americans. They took me off and beat me up and sent me back. And they sent me back to Salzburg.

INT: Salzburg, yeah.

MORRIS: But I didn't give up. By then I had no choice, I went to the Haganah, and the Haganah was already was very active over there. And I told them my story, what happened, that I have parents somewhere in Germany, and the rest of the family went to the...

INT: Kibbutzim.

MORRIS: Kibbutzim. And they said, "Come twelve midnight, come, and we'll take care of it." So I went and this was already close to springtime; I went and they put me in a truck, and they already had connections with the border guards. There were doing some, you know, they were transporting. They were dealing with the Russians. It was already taken care of. They were going back and forth. And they took me over and by the border they let me off in BadReichenhall.

INT: Where?

MORRIS: BadReichenhall was on the German side, near the border. There was a place not far from there where Hitler had the bunkers. It was in the mountains. It was close to the Austrian-German Border, but BadReichenhall, I remember. And I was there; this was middle of the night they left me off. It was about 12:30 in the night. I slept until the morning. I went out; I walked in the street. This is an experience I'll never forget. I walked, it was a big camp. The Germans used to house an army over there.

INT: You mean the barracks?

MORRIS: Barracks, barracks, it was a big place. And I walked and walked and I heard hollering. "Moishe! Moishe!" And I hear my mother's voice!

INT: Did you think you were hallucinating?

MORRIS: I think I'm hallucinating. This was in the morning when they took me over from Salzburg to BadReichenhall, and I hear my mother's voice. I hear her holler "Moishe." I look around and I see my mother!

INT: Oh my. Oh!

MORRIS: Where are you? For six months I've been looking for you! The people told me that they saw you somewhere over there and people are telling stories that are not true. "I saw him in Hamburg, I saw him; I saw him there." So she went from one place to another. She said I am traveling, for six months I'm traveling.

INT: So she was actively looking for you.

MORRIS: Looking for me from one camp to another, whatever was in any city, you know, every city, everywhere. She says, "I've been in all of the places." That night when I crossed the border, she was in that place looking for me. They lived in Wilcek by Bamburg somewhere. They lived in...

INT: How do you explain that?

MORRIS: How do I explain this? I come in the same place and she came in that same place looking for me. She didn't know where I am and I didn't know where they are. We came together. We were in the same place and I walked in the street and she walked in the street.

INT: It's a miracle.

MORRIS: Yeah. I'll never forget that experience! So I went with them. Already they had -- comparing what I went through, hunger -- they had already everything. They were at a German "caserna."

INT: Caserna, what is that?

MORRIS: That's a barrack, caserna, military barracks. They had their own rooms and everything and they had food. And I remember they had **peanut butter**. I never knew, I never saw peanut butter, and I tasted it.

INT: Oh, that's very American, yes.

MORRIS: They had bread and everything; they had everything, they had what to eat, it was enough.

INT: Were you really skinny by this time?

MORRIS: Must have been, yeah, must have been very skinny. Sure, I mean I was starved! But I was young.

INT: What did your father say when he saw you?

MORRIS: Well, what could he say? They were happy, everybody was happy when we finally joined together, you know we came together again. They [Rita, Paula, Buruch] were already over there in Italy, we knew. We got letters, my father got letters from them, they got letters. I didn't know nothing. But they already corresponded with them. They were in Austria a little. See there was no Israel then yet.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: And finally, you know I was glad to be home, I had what to eat and then I was home already together, we were together and that's it. And that was an experience you cannot forget. We survived the war and we broke up. I was left alone, and by accident we, my mother and father and I got together.

INT: Can you picture in your mind, can you capture in your mind just that sight of your mother?

MORRIS: Yeah, you kidding? You cannot forget it. "That's Moishe! Moishe, where you been?" How do you explain? I don't know. I don't know. I explained it that the mother, that the instinct from the mother is so strong.

INT: She was a tough lady.

MORRIS: That she's a tough lady, very, very.

INT: How old was she at this time? Do you remember?

MORRIS: Oh, in '46 and my mother was, (pause) my father, in '46? My father was born 1888. How old was she? Was seven, and forty-six. Fifty-three years old. Yeah.

INT: So now you're living with your family. Now what happens next?

MORRIS: I'm living with them. Then they moved; a short time later they moved; this place they closed up because it was too small. It was too expensive to run it because there were not enough people there. It was close to the Czechoslovakian border, it was Bamburg. So they moved up to Eichstatt, it was close to...

INT: To where?

MORRIS: Eichstatt. It was in Bavaria. It's between, it's on the Autobahn between Nuremberg and Munich. It was a city, not a too big, but a little city over there. They had a camp with a lot of people and we settled there and we lived there for quite a while, about two years.

INT: Oh really?

MORRIS: About two or three years we were there. That's where I met my wife.

INT: Oh, that's what I was... Okay, so what did you do in the camp?

MORRIS: I was there in the camps, in the beginning they, the ORT they organized a...

[Tape 7 — End Side 1] [Tape 7 Begin Side 2]

INT: Okay, now you were telling me about ORT, how they set up a knitting...

MORRIS: Yeah, they set up knitting for women. There were knitting sweaters and they set up, it was about two dozen sewing machines. They made a tailor shop. We started to make the hats, you know, the little caps for the Israeli army.

INT: Berets?

MORRIS: Berets, you know. In the tailoring shop, yeah, we were making... There was no Israel yet.

INT: No, it was Palestine.

MORRIS: For the Haganah we called it. We made it for the Haganah. But somebody was already working. We didn't know. Who? We didn't know what's going on. So I worked over there for a while. Then the military on the American side, they said we should have our own [security]. We didn't want any German police to have authority over us. We set up our own security. We would take care of our own thing. We would need policemen. So I went for two weeks to Nuremberg. No, not Nuremberg, Regensburg. Regensburg they sent me for a course. It was baloney! So I was about two weeks there and I became a policeman. You know, but it was nothing. It was just some people in case someone steals.

INT: Now how old were you? About twenty-seven?

MORRIS: I was about twenty-seven years. When I was a policeman, it was '47 already. And we lived the best we could. It was no starvation any more, but we were hopeless. We lived in camps. People from all over the world came together; you didn't know nobody. You know, you made a community. And in the spring, my wife's mother lived in the same place. She was a...

INT: Your **future** wife's mother.

MORRIS: I had only one wife! (laughs)

INT: Yeah, but at that point she was just your **future** wife.

MORRIS: Yeah. She was in Hungary. But her mother was in Bergen-Belsen in the war. When they were liberated, their family was broken up too. She lived by herself with the youngest boy. He was, I think he was about twelve, eleven, twelve years old and she had four brothers. Nobody knew where the other one was, and the husband was in another place and they were all broken up. Her mother was over here and lived in the same place where my mother and father lived. And we were already in Eichstatt. so her father came. One day they find out where Anny is, my wife, and he went back to get her. She was in Vienna, my wife.

INT: Now who found out that she was there?

MORRIS: She left, she went and found out that her mother... My wife, she was a girl, she was twenty—two years old then. Anny she found out that her mother survived, she's in Germany.

INT: Meanwhile Anny was in Vienna at this point.

MORRIS: So Anny crossed from Budapest to Vienna. This is not far; it used to be one country before. And over there her father went and he brought her over to Eichstatt where we lived with her mother.

INT: Eichstatt?

MORRIS: Eichstatt, that's the name of the city. You want to see? I'll show you something. This is my marriage certificate. My son was born in Wurzburg.

INT: Okay, but how did Anny's father come into the picture because you told me that the mother and son...

MORRIS: Yeah, he came already. He knew. They all came. Everybody wanted to come to Germany and he found out that his wife is in Eichstatt, you know, he found her.

INT: Well then he went to find Anny.

MORRIS: They find out that Anny crossed to Vienna and he went over and one day he brought her back. This was in the spring, I think in April, 1947, yeah.

INT: So, so they introduced you? I mean how did...

MORRIS: Well no, he came over. It was a small place. We lived like across the street, you know closer than this.

INT: Uh huh, but what I'm trying to find out is what was it like when you first met each other?

MORRIS: He brought her over and one day in the morning I saw -- I saw the mother goes with a young girl and I know Clara. Clara was her mother's name. I saw Clara was with a young girl I didn't know. Then, then I ask her, "Clara, well who is this young lady? Would you introduce me?" "This is my daughter. Last night she came over. Her father, had to bring her over and she came from Vienna." Nothing, so and a few days later -- you know, over there they used to make cholent. In that lager there was a garage and they made an oven, and they used to bake matzos there.

INT: Oh yes, uh huh.

MORRIS: Every Friday afternoon we used to bake cholent. Her mother prepared the cholent and...

INT: And they took it to the bakery.

MORRIS: To the bakery.

INT: And everybody baked, they baked their "shissel." [bowl, pot]

MORRIS: In the same yard. There was a yard, you know. And that's the first.. You want to know how we met. And she was carrying that cholent, to put it in the oven, this was Friday late in the afternoon, you know, for Shabbas.

INT: Sure, for Shabbas.

MORRIS: And while she was going, I started kidding around, you know, and I put my arm around her. I said -- we called the Hungarians gypsies, "tzigon." So I said, "Oh, you're Hungarian, you're a tzigon." I don't know if she got insulted. "What do you mean tzigon? I'm a Hungarian. Now the thing is we couldn't understand each other. She didn't know what I'm saying and I didn't understand Hungarian. She didn't speak Yiddish, not one word. The only thing, she knew a few Russian words and I was fluent, I spoke a good Russian.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: But she knew a few words in Russian, because Hungary was in the Russian sphere, you know. And that was it! She went home and the next day, we were laying in the grass, the neighbors, and we're talking politics. Over there was already going on a lot of politics. The Jews talking politics all the time. And she was there with a group of people; they were laying in the grass and I went by, you know, I lay down too, to join the discussion. And I made contact with her, started talking.

INT: What language did you, were you talking Russian?

MORRIS: Russian. Russian, only a few words Russian. But we could communicate a little bit. And she lived right across the street. And then we went -- I remember the first time there was some kind of a circus in town and we went together watching them. And over there was a soccer game, was a big deal. In Europe soccer was big. We used to go to soccer games together and then we went to the movies. I remember the first movie we went to was Franz Lehart, he was an Austrian composer. The movie was about his life. And we started dating steady.

INT: Well when did you know that she was special? Did you know right away as soon as you saw her?

MORRIS: Yes, I fell in love with her.

INT: Right away?

MORRIS: Not right away, no. It took a little while. We started dating. We went around, you know, young people. This was and then it happened, a tragedy. My mother got very sick. My mother had a breakdown.

INT: Really.

MORRIS: My mother had a nervous breakdown. She couldn't take it, she didn't find the children, she was disappointed; the two, she hoped she was going to find them.

INT: But she knew already. So it took a while working on her.

MORRIS: She knew but...

INT: It took a while before she broke down.

MORRIS: It took a while. This whole thing happened in one year, in two years the whole thing I'm telling you. This was not stretched out in history. All these things happened. We came back in '46 in spring, Pesach time when we came back from Russia and this was all a short, short [time] you know everything happened fast. But I'm telling you so it looks like it's a long story but it happened so quick. It was only months.

INT: So in grieving for...

MORRIS: In grieving for this, and then I think it was... See, now those days we didn't know what it was. I think menopause had something to do with it. And she was very, very sick and we didn't know what to do. We put her in (pause) -- what was that place? I think it was in Augsburg. It was a German place, a hospital where they had a lot of people like this.

INT: But you knew it was a psychiatric problem.

MORRIS: We knew, yeah. We knew what it is because the local doctors, they knew what it is, but they said there is a place over there in a big city. I think it was in Augsburg.

INT: So you took her to the hospital.

MORRIS: We took her to them; we went and we talked to a professor, German. We told him what's going on and he told us to bring her. We put her there. This was before Pesach, I think it was in March or it was maybe February, it was wintertime. And we put her there, and they locked her up and it was a terrible thing, a terrible thing to go through it, horrible!

INT: What do you mean? In terms of, of leaving her there?

MORRIS: Terrible, leaving her there. She was put in a place, you know they locked up the mentally disturbed people. What happened to our mommy, to such a brilliant person? What happened? And that...

INT: How long did she stay?

MORRIS: This was already before we got married. No, we put her there after we were married already. No, no, no, no.

INT: Okay, so she was hospitalized before you were married.

MORRIS: She was hospitalized there.

INT: How long did she stay in the hospital?

MORRIS: A few months.

INT: And what did the rest of the family do while she was in the hospital?

MORRIS: I cannot remember when we put her [in the hospital] whether we were married already or not.

INT: All right.

MORRIS: It's important to me.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: Because we, no, no, we didn't put her there until we were married already. That was all in '47. Anyhow, mommy was sick. No, no we didn't put her there yet. Mommy was very sick. We were going around; already we were in love. And now it's coming to me. And we decided -- they told us that my mother wouldn't last for long! She's got a short time because she was bedridden and...

INT: Yes, she was not eating?

MORRIS: She was not eating properly.

INT: It sounds like she was severely depressed.

MORRIS: ...was severely depressed and the local doctor said that there's not much time left. She's going to deteriorate and at that point she's going to be nothing. So I said to Anny, "Let's get married." I wanted my mother to be in my wedding. Before she dies, I want her to..

INT: To have the pleasure of seeing you married.

MORRIS: Have the pleasure, yes, to see me married. No matter how sick she is, but I wanted it while she's still alive. So we decided, we made a date. We went to the rabbi and the whole thing and they made a date for the third of December. Our wedding was on a Tuesday. Tuesday is supposed to be a mazel...

INT: All right.

MORRIS: So we made the date. Mommy was still alive then and it was a terrible thing. And I remember they took her down -- she lived on the second floor -- they took her down on a stretcher to the chupah.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: But that's what we wanted to do and that's it. So we had our wedding. And over there a wedding was nothing [much], you know, so you...

INT: There was a ceremony.

MORRIS: A ceremony. Everybody knew each other. Maybe the whole, the whole thing was two camps, we were living in Eichstatt the small one and the big camp over there, and what did we do? We put up a sign, you know that's there going to be. Anybody's invited who wants to come to the wedding. You know it was 1,000 people. Who knew? We had an orchestra. You served whatever food you could, you know whatever it was, who cared?

INT: Was it a happy...?

MORRIS: It was very happy but it was not happy for me because my mother was sick. I remember they put her down in that chair and she didn't know what's going on.

INT: Oh, she was out of it.

MORRIS: She was out of it. And she was not too happy with my marriage.

INT: Why?

MORRIS: Because her daughter in law didn't speak Yiddish, she was not from the...

INT: So she couldn't communicate.

MORRIS: She couldn't communicate. I picked a girl who was not...

INT: Wasn't a "landsman."

MORRIS: Not a landsman, you know not from our culture. And to me, she was a beautiful, beautiful blonde girl and was completely different from me, educated and a very modern person. I said, "Mommy this is not going to work," and my mom, she didn't know what's going on already. She was very sick. We got married and thank G—d Anny went, and arranged then [an appointment] with a doctor. Anny said, "We're going to take you to that doctor. We're going to take her out of Augsburg." The doctor said that he's going to do the modern thing, he's going to give her shocks, electric shocks.

INT: Oh, shock therapy?

MORRIS: Those days, shock therapy, those days it was a thing which nobody [knew about]. He was a general professor, they were advanced already, and she was there for a while. And one day, they gave her the shocks. And we were going there practically -- we didn't have nothing else to do -- practically every day, every second day we were going, because it was about twenty kilometers from where we lived. And we were going, one thing I remember, it was about a week before Pesach, and my mother came to her and she said, "Annala, take me home, please," she said, "Take me." She called my wife "Annala" and she said "Annala, take me home. I want to be home for Pesach." And we were shocked.

INT: This was after the shock treatments.

MORRIS: After the shock treatment we were, we were stunned. She knew what's going on.

INT: So you took her home.

MORRIS: And I took her. We had to get permission, they want to give her... You know she was on medication. Every week, she got better. And in a short time, I don't know, about two, three weeks, the doctor said you can take her home. And we took her home and in no time she got better.

INT: It's another miracle.

MORRIS: Another miracle, yeah, she got to be a normal person. It took a while but she got better, and they helped her.

INT: I would say the word miracle, but is that what you think it was?

MORRIS: I don't know. I'm telling you exactly the way it was. We took her home and she was a different person. She started taking care of the house again because Ziporah was a little baby, about nine years old, and Chanka was not much older. Chanka was about thirteen.

INT: Who was taking care of everybody while she was so incapacitated?

MORRIS: These two, this Chanka and the two little girls.

INT: They were taking care of...?

MORRIS: Taking care of everything and grew up. You grow up in those circumstances and me and Anny, whatever we could. And we were living close by.

INT: But you had your own place to live?

MORRIS: Yeah, we had our own place. It was one little room. But we were glad she's come home. We saw an improvement which was unbelievable. We couldn't believe it. We almost gave her up a few months ago. In December we thought she's not going to make it because that was why we rushed the wedding. Otherwise we wouldn't have got married. And while this was going on Anny got pregnant.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: We were going over there, traveling to see my mother at the hospital with a truck, you know, in the back you sit in a truck. There was bumping up and down.

INT: Yeah, bumping up and down.

MORRIS: She got, she lost...

INT: So she had a miscarriage.

MORRIS: Miscarriage. And Anny, oh my G-d, it was horrible. Anny had a miscarriage, and she wanted to have a baby so bad because all the girls in our town were pregnant and it was terrible, but who knew.

INT: But how did you feel about that?

MORRIS: I felt bad about it. What can you do? So we blamed it on the traveling.

INT: Yeah, bumping up and down.

MORRIS: You know because it was bumpy. I remember I was there, it was terrible. It was terrible. So what happened? Nothing. You go on with life. She came home and started, little by little she got stronger and a little while later she became pregnant again, she started carrying. While this was going on, we got a letter from Italy. My sister, that kibbutz in which they were in Italy, in Austria -- they decided they're going to go to Palestine. (pause) There was no Israel yet..

INT: Yes, I know.

MORRIS: The English caught them in Haifa, sent them back to Cyprus, put them in Cyprus, if you know the history. They were in Cyprus there for a while and nothing [happened]. And that time that I'm talking to you about, was going on in the United Nations (if you remember the history), they had the vote to make Israel a state or not. It was the ship, the Exodus at that time. Now they were on another ship. But then one day I remember, I was standing there and everybody was standing by the radio and listening while they were taking the vote. And finally it was yes, Israel was accepted, it's going to be a state. So Israel was a state finally, so from Cyprus they went, the English had to let them in. They went to Haifa -- Buruch, Rita and Paula. After a few months they were there, so was opened up transport from the camps for whoever wanted to go to Israel. My mother decided she wants to go to be with them.

INT: Yeah, what about your father?

MORRIS: My father, the same thing, you know my mother wanted to go, he had to go too.

INT: Your father decided, he went too, yeah.

MORRIS: So my father, and my mother, and Chanka and Ziporah, the two youngsters and (pause) the two youngsters and my father, four of them.

INT: So the four of them.

MORRIS: They registered, they went to Israel. Me and Anny went [to register]. Anny was pregnant again and they told her we cannot go. This was already in'48. This was '48 already when Israel was...

INT: So why couldn't you go?

MORRIS: Because they wouldn't take her on the ship. You know they were cracking up ships then, you know what I mean?

INT: Oh, they told her it was too dangerous.

MORRIS: Too dangerous. At eight months pregnant they said...

INT: Oh, eight months.

MORRIS: Yeah, she was seven but she was in the late [part of the month]. They said you cannot go. When you have the baby, then when the baby will be three months old, then you can do it. They didn't want to take responsibility, you know, and they didn't let her go.

INT: So was your mother stable by this time? Was she okay?

MORRIS: Yeah, my mother was okay already. She was already good otherwise she couldn't go. Oh it was a miracle. And they went and left us; me and my wife stayed over there in the same place.

INT: So you stayed where you were.

MORRIS: Yeah, where we were. They left, they left for Israel. They went to Haifa , but over there was another "tsuras." They lived in tents there, they didn't have any houses -- whatever they could find, some Arab's house. And [meanwhile] me and Anny were still there, and they closed up that place, Eichstatt.

INT: The camp where you were.

MORRIS: They started doing, concentrating,

INT: Consolidating.

MORRIS: Consolidating all the smaller places. It was more economical, for economic reasons.

INT: So what was happening is people were leaving from these different camps and going to other places.

MORRIS: A lot of people were leaving Europe, got thinned out, was not enough people, so they started consolidating. It was more economical for some reasons, you know, and then we were sent to a camp near Wurzburg. The name was Gibblestadt. It was a luftfield...

INT: An airfield?

MORRIS: Yeah, airfield, a military airfield over there, a base. So the UNRAH people took it over.

INT: UNRAH, United Nations Relief...

MORRIS: UNRAH and the Joint [Distribution Committee], they worked together.

INT: Okay.

MORRIS: And in the military they worked together. They took over that place and there were a few thousand people, and they sent us over there. And over there, Wurzburg was a big city like Philadelphia, it was all colleges, universities, very advanced, hospitals that were very, very advanced. Wurzburg is a historic city. And Henry was born there. This was in '48, '49.

INT: Now in what language did you and Anny end up talking to one another? What was your common language?

MORRIS: Yiddish. Completely Yiddish. Anny learned Yiddish like she was born [with it]. See in the camps, it was all Yiddish.

INT: She learned Yiddish in the camps. And you already knew Yiddish.

MORRIS: I knew Yiddish, I knew, I still know Yiddish. Yiddish was my "mamaloshen" [mother tongue]. I'll never forget Yiddish, you know.

INT: So then you talked Yiddish to Anny.

MORRIS: Then in the camp everything was all Yiddish. Everything was in Yiddish and German because we lived in Germany.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: Because we lived in Germany, you spoke German and then I learned a little bit of Hungarian.

INT: Well wasn't that hard? When you speak the language that you were born it, it's the language in which you express your feelings. Wasn't it hard for her to talk about anything that was important to her?

MORRIS: No, no, she sang it, Hungarian, beautiful. She had a voice such, oh, when she opened her mouth, she sang in Hungarian, it sounded like heaven. I mean, you love somebody and she... Anybody who knew Anny was privileged to know that woman. And we lived in a place, she learned Yiddish and German. Between us we talked a lot of Russian too. She learned Russian. When I came to Philadelphia, I spoke a good six languages. I forgot already, but over there you had to.

INT: Because there were people from so many different places.

MORRIS: In Poland I was born, I grew up I spoke -- you know this was almost my mamaloshen. Polish and Yiddish was mamaloshen. Then I went to Russia, and I had to be a Russian. I was completely like I was born there. Then we came to Germany. German to Yiddish, from Yiddish to German to learn is not a big deal. It's almost just a dialect, a different one. Then I learned from her a little Hungarian.

INT: Okay, so your son Henry was born.

MORRIS: Henry was born in Wurzburg.

INT: After whom is he named?

MORRIS: Chaim, after my Zayde. After my mother's father.

INT: How come you didn't name him after your brother who died, the one in Warsaw?

MORRIS: We didn't want, no, we didn't want to accept it then.

INT: Oh, so you still didn't know that he was dead?

MORRIS: No.

[Tape 7 — End Side 2] [Tape 8 — Begin Side 1]

INT: This is tape number eight of an interview with Morris B. and we were just talking about the naming of his firstborn son, Henry, and the fact that he was named after his maternal grandfather and that he was **not** named after your brother because you couldn't really accept the fact that your brother was gone.

MORRIS: No, because you see people, after five years, ten years people used to find each other accidentally.

INT: When did you find out for **sure** about your brother and sister?

MORRIS: Time. Time. We didn't find out for **sure** up 'til today but...

INT: But at some point you must have known in your mind.

MORRIS: At some point you have to accept it, you have to accept it.

INT: Did you grieve for them then? Did you mourn for them?

MORRIS: Of course you grieved. An older brother in the family, to my mother, because he was the oldest or what, he was special.

INT: He was first born.

MORRIS: He was first born. And he was special. He was very talented and good. He was everything! And you give up hope, in time, you know, you accept as time goes on, he didn't show up. Because there were people that after a few years they still were finding them.

INT: Do you remember when it was that you accepted the fact that he was gone?

MORRIS: Ah, I don't remember. You know life has to go on. You just, you accept it. What can you do? We were still lucky. When you saw what happened to other families, we were exceptional. We were eight people, from ten. We were ten together and we survived, the eight of us. In a Holocaust like this I think we were lucky.

INT: It was a miracle for you.

MORRIS: We considered ourselves still the lucky ones. And you accept it, after a while, a few years, but you still didn't want to name [a child] after them. It was too short a period. It was only about four years after the war, and we still didn't want to accept this and we didn't want to name [a child]. We wouldn't feel good about it unless we were sure 100%.

INT: So then...

MORRIS: So anyhow we decided you had to pick a name. So we named him Chaim. That's it. While this was going on my parents were already in Haifa with them [the younger children] and what happened? Israel was established in 1948. In '49, one day we hear that -- Truman was President then -- that they passed a law that the 100,000 displaced persons can go from the camps to the States.

INT: To the United States?

MORRIS: To the States. The camps, they wanted the camps to be liquidated.

INT: So now, okay.

MORRIS: One day we heard -- this was already in the fall, in the fall of '49, I remember it was in the fall that the United States opened up to begin with 100,000 people, refugees can go the States. But everybody...

INT: It's a drop in the bucket.

MORRIS: Huh?

INT: It's a drop in the bucket.

MORRIS: It's a drop in the bucket, yeah. I don't know if it's a drop in the bucket. It was a good drop in the bucket.

INT: A good drop. (laughs)

MORRIS: And before this, they started to do underground [activities], you know buying papers and all kinds of things. I remember I had an aunt in Philadelphia, she sent us $20 so we went over there in Augsburg, (pause) I tried to get some papers. It was not official until they passed a law in Congress, you could go, but you needed sponsors. This was already...

INT: But wait a second.

MORRIS: At the same time, in Wurzburg where Henry was born, they closed up that place too. They sent us in another city. They had to pick up and go to Augsburg; Lechfeld was the name.

INT: But see I know you well enough to know that you must have been thinking about what you were going to do next.

MORRIS: No, no, no, no!

INT: You weren't thinking about it?

MORRIS: No, no, no. Because we knew it was closed. We couldn't go anywhere. We were in the camp. We didn't know, we got desperate. You live a life like this and you wait for the rations.

INT: Yes, and so you were living day to day.

MORRIS: And they decided, you know after every few months they closed up a camp and you have to pack up and go, go to another place.

INT: So you weren't thinking beyond where you were going to be for the next day.

MORRIS: No, we didn't know nothing. No, no. A lot of people registered, went to Canada, to Australia. See Australia, they let in some people. Canada they let in some people. It was limited. So a lot of our friends went to Canada. I remember one family went to Paris. Wherever somebody had some relatives or some kind of connection, they went to that country.

INT: You weren't talking at all about where you were going to go?

MORRIS: We were talking, we're going to go to Israel! We're going to go when Henry is a few months old. We didn't know because the whole family was there. We are only the two ones left.

INT: That was the plan. The plan was to go to Israel.

MORRIS: Yeah, we didn't have no plan. We're going to go, you know as soon as he gets about three months old, then they take us and we're going to go to join the family. There was no other kind of plan.

INT: Okay, so that's what the idea was.

MORRIS: Because they keep liquidating the camps, so they sent us to Lechfeld which was in Augsburg, a big camp, a very big camp. And we lived there and at the same time it came out that they're going to open up and you can go to the United States. When Anny heard, when my wife heard America, forget it! that was the end of it! She had relatives, she had a lot of relatives on her mother's side in Philadelphia. She said, "Forget it," she said, "Moishe, I'm not going to Israel!" And right away we went to register to go to America.

INT: So was it okay?

MORRIS: It was a big deal then, you kidding? To come to America. It was a big deal.

INT: Was it okay for you <u>not</u> to go to Israel?

MORRIS: It was all right. We could try, we always could go to Israel. To go to America then was like a, you know, like a fantasy. The "golden...

INT: The "golden medina," yes.

MORRIS: You know the golden medina, you can go to America! When they left [the rest of the family], there was no chance. Maybe if they hadn't left for Israel, I'm pretty sure they would come...

INT: To America, yes.

MORRIS: To America, too, because my father had two brothers in Brooklyn. He had relatives all over; a lot of relatives lived in Brooklyn. My mother's -- a lot of family we had in Brooklyn. I'm sure they would have come too, but there was no, no...

INT: There wasn't the opportunity.

MORRIS: We didn't even know that we can go to America. And when this thing happened -- it was in the spring in '48, '49, and that fall, in the winter time already the register came out, and we packed up and we went.

INT: When did you leave Europe?

MORRIS: We left Europe in December.

INT: December of 19..?

MORRIS: December, 1949. It took us eleven days. We registered and they sent us to Munich in a camp and we were there a few weeks. They sent us to Bremerhaven and I remember the ship we went on, it was a military transport ship. They used to carry the military, to transport in the war time, General Muir was the name of the ship.

INT: M-u-i-r?

MORRIS: Yeah, something like that. Anyway, General Muir was a military bunker, it was a little small ship. This was in December; it was a bad time of the year with the storm, the sea stormy.

INT: And how old was Henry?

MORRIS: Henry was eight months old. And we went on the 27th. Three days before we arrived in New York, we ran into a storm. We thought the ship is going to break in two. The waves were so steep and the ship was right in the center of the wave. They tied up all the beds, the tables and everything was going from one side to the other. Everybody was laying sick, seasick.

INT: Did you think you were going to die?

MORRIS: Yeah. Everybody was seasick! See, in the military they had different floors, the officers had the highest cabins. They had cabins for the officers and the lower ones, in the bottom were for soldiers. So luckily, people who had a baby with them they got...

INT: The quarters.

MORRIS: The quarters, the officers' quarters, you know the top, with a bed, nice with everything, with cabinets. So Anny had it, Anny with another woman, they had one cabin and she with the baby had a good cabin. But me, luckily I didn't get sick, seasick. So they put a black arm band on me and I had to take care of the sick ones. And so I walked around like nothing, you know it didn't bother me! And these people were laying, practically, they couldn't eat and drink, nothing. They were laying sick, hundreds of people. Only a few people didn't got seasick, it didn't bother them. They put armbands on them and they made them in charge. They had to take care and give whatever help [people needed]. So it took eleven days and we came to New York. And then I think the Joint or the HIAS [was put in charge], I don't know who took care of that then. Everybody had to be assigned to each city. There was a system there; each city according to population had to take in that many people, because in those days there was no illegal immigration like [there is] now. Every city, the Jewish community had to be responsible, they had to sign up for -- like Philadelphia, for example, could take in let's say 300 families, or New York according to the Jewish population, or Chicago -- every city was assigned a certain amount of people. Everything was done by alphabet.

INT: Oh now wait a second. Wait a second. When you came... When did they change your name? Did you have your name changed already?

MORRIS: No, no, no, no.

INT: No, you still didn't have your name changed?

MORRIS: No, still the old name. No, this name we changed later on when we were all in the States.

INT: Oh, you changed it **yourself**?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Oh, I thought it was changed when you came over.

MORRIS: No, no we came over with the old name. Now over here, American people were in charge of the organizations, the HIAS, the Joint. They must have worked together. And we were there about two hours and it was chaos! Then we hear, they say anybody who has a baby **under** a year has a privilege to sign up to go to California -- Henry was eight months old -- to go to California! We didn't know where California is but we knew that California is a different climate and everything. So we went to register for California and we had a privilege; they said it's a privilege, it must be something good!

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: If they give you a choice because you can go, it must be something good. Otherwise, if we would have a choice, we would have signed up for Philadelphia because she [Anny] had relatives. But we had nothing to say and we heard we're going to be assigned somewhere who knows where.

INT: So since you didn't know where they'd send you, you were better off choosing California.

MORRIS: We didn't know, we're choosing California because we couldn't, we didn't have no choice to pick out, we couldn't go to Philadelphia or New York. So there we were assigned because they had to sponsor us. So we signed up and they sent us to California. We didn't know where.

INT: How did you travel there?

MORRIS: We traveled there by train. We got on the train on our own. Without a language. It was the most horrible experience! We couldn't speak one word of English. We didn't have any money in our pocket, nothing!

INT: How did you eat?

MORRIS: Well they must have given us -- I don't remember -- they must have given us enough just to survive or something because there already we were assigned to Stockton. Stockton, California. Over there, there were seventeen families.

INT: So was there somebody waiting for you at the train?

MORRIS: Oh yeah. Oh, because these people knew that people were coming. The organization they worked for was, Stockton was assigned...

INT: So they spoke Yiddish? The people there spoke Yiddish?

MORRIS: Stockton, yes, Yiddish people. Seventeen families we were sent to Stockton, a small community and we were only seventeen. It was a miserable time because we didn't know that while we were on the ship, Henry got German measles, caught German measles while traveling. It took eleven days. And in Chicago we had to stop over; we took the Pennsylvania Railroad to Chicago. In Chicago, we had to take the Santa Fe to California and you have to wait from morning until night, about twelve hours or more till we get a connection for a train. And Henry was **so sick** and we didn't know what to do. He was screaming. In the station, in the train station he carried on screaming. It was embarrassing and we couldn't speak English and we couldn't explain what it was. Finally, we thought he was hungry and we didn't have what to give him to eat. We went to buy milk and there was a "shvartza" [black] salesgirl and she couldn't understand us. Can you imagine? "Milk, milk." In German it's "milach" and she couldn't make out that we wanted to buy milk. And it was horrible. Anny started crying. "What kind of people are these? It's for a baby, milk." Finally a woman saw what's going on. She spoke German so we told her that we need some milk for the baby. He's hungry because he's crying, he must be hungry. So finally we got milk. She gives us cold milk. How can you give cold milk? So we wanted warm milk. So that woman went where there is a sink with hot water, we put his bottle in and warmed up the milk a little bit. But that was not the answer. We didn't know, the answer was not the milk because he was hungry. He was sick with a high temperature. So the Red Cross came and took the baby, put him in a room so he wouldn't make this noise. We put him in a room, was a bed, a crib and everything. We waited and at midnight was the train, to Santa Fe, and we took him and we went. Can you imagine what a trip it was? It took **four** days. It took four days with one night until we arrived from New York.

INT: You had no idea how far away California was.

MORRIS: We didn't know. We heard California, and who knows? From New York to Stockton it took us four days and that one night, four and a half days till we arrived in that place. We had a sick baby and he was carrying on; it was unbelievable. We didn't know what to do. Finally we arrived there, the people were waiting for us already. They put us in a hotel in a room temporarily. And he was carrying on there till Mrs. Kessel, G-d bless her, she was an angel; the next morning she found a doctor who was a Czech, a Czechoslovakian.

INT: Czechoslovakian.

MORRIS: And he spoke German, so we could communicate. He took a look at the baby and knew right away what's going on. He's got German measles, he's not a bad baby, he's sick, very sick. He gave him medicine, it took a while, and he got better. So we stayed there, and I find a little work. It was a small town, there was no clothing industry but there was a store, Berg's. Berg's was the name of a clothing store and I found temporarily a little work. **But** we didn't have to worry there because these people, after about two weeks, they found us a nice apartment. A good apartment with furniture, everything! And they told me that they don't want me to do nothing, to forget the tailoring business, go to school, learn English. Anny was a very loving person, she made friends with these people, she was the favorite of theirs the whole time. She was the doll. There were very rich people that they made already their lives and they were philanthropic. They would take care of the newcomers and we were just, to them like toys. They were glad to help. They did everything. I mean your mother couldn't do better that what they were doing.

INT: What did you think when you first came there?

MORRIS: We think it was a dream. We had our own home already, a nice apartment with furniture. The Jewish community -- there in California they had communities -- there was a Jewish center and you used to go over there for entertainment, and Anny was their favorite. They likes her personality and she made friends with them. And there was nothing which Anny would say that wouldn't be right there.

INT: Now how old was she at the time?

MORRIS: Anny was, we got married she was 22.

INT: So she was about twenty four?

MORRIS: Twenty five. Anny was born in 1925. And this was in '50. Anny was 25 years old. She was a young girl and had a good personality. This family, Kessel -- he was Morris Kessel and her first name I forgot -- they had one daughter, she was in college, and we were their whole life! Like we were their own children. They couldn't love more their own children than they loved us. They did <u>everything</u> possible! "Moishe, you go to school." He spoke a good Yiddish, I remember, he spoke a very good Yiddish.

INT: Okay, so he spoke Yiddish and he'd said to you "Go to school."

MORRIS: He was in his fifties. They had a clothing business and he had a heart attack, and they made enough to retire. They were very well-to-do people, good people. There was another woman, a widow, Mrs. Frankel, she was a millionaire, an older lady, she was an old lady. I remember her like today. She was very, very helpful in the organization to help the newcomers. And they wanted nothing. They took Anny, they had cooking lessons, they had a place where they were teaching how to cook American style. She used to go there and it was fun. And they

found me a job to kill time and not to be lonely. Because they paid the rent and they brought, made food. We didn't have that to worry about anything. They said, "Don't worry about nothing, Moishe, go to school. We don't want you to be a tailor." That's the way, Morris [Kessel] took me outside, we were sitting down. He said, "We want you to go in our shoes, take over. When we get old and we pass away, you're going to take over. We want you to do for the next generation. There's always going to be Jewish people in need. We want you to be in a position so you can help." Just like I'm talking to you...

INT: That's remarkable.

MORRIS: Just like I'm talking to you, that's the way he talked. "We want you to take over our because the old immigrants, we know what's going on. We knew already it was a Holocaust, it was a terrible thing. And go to school, learn the language and we'll open you, we'll get you a store, we'll get you merchandise, we'll get you whatever you need. We'll teach you how to run it. We don't want you to be a laborer. We want you to be in a business so in years you can be in a position..."

INT: Was that okay with you? How did you feel about that?

MORRIS: Yeah, with me that was fine. I started going to school.

INT: But it sounds more like it was **their** dream rather than **your** dream.

MORRIS: It was **their** dream, yeah.

INT: Was this your dream too?

MORRIS: Well we didn't know. We were confused. We didn't know. We were just, we couldn't speak English, we were in a new country. It was just, still big.

INT: Okay, so you were following

MORRIS: It was only a month, in a month and a half time.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: We went to the store and we saw the supermarkets, we saw all these things you can go buy everything for pennies. In those days it was cheap. You know our mind was confused. We thought we're living in a fantasy, that there's not reality. We came over from the places which we..., and we come over we went to the store and you could get everything, you know free. You could go. The only thing is, we went to an ice cream parlor. We went in the street, the next day Henry got a little better. We went out and we wanted to buy ice cream. We went in, we couldn't buy no ice cream.

INT: Why?

MORRIS: Because we couldn't **say** what we **want**.

INT: Oh.

MORRIS: We went in, Anny went in to buy ice cream, she comes out crying. "What you crying for?" "Ice cream." She said, "For ten minutes I'm trying to tell her what I want and she didn't understand what I want." When you buy ice cream they ask you what flavor. Ice cream, ice cream, in German its "itsa creama." And they asked her about flavor and she didn't know. She said, "Itsa creama, itsa creama, itsa creama." And finally she came out and started crying, "What kind of people is this?" (laughs)

INT: So what happened?

MORRIS: I went in and said you point with your finger what you want, you want a vanilla, or you want this.

INT: So is that what you did?

MORRIS: Yeah,

INT: You took her back in, yeah.

MORRIS: Yeah, but no, we were so.... American people just... In Europe people speak different languages, you can communicate.

INT: So did you assume?

MORRIS: We had a bad experience in Chicago at first. We wanted milk and we couldn't get milk.

INT: Did you just assume that since in Europe people knew different languages that when you came to the United States people would know different languages?

MORRIS: Yeah, people would. I don't know. We didn't know nothing. We looked at the American people as ignorant. They looked at us like we come from a backward [culture]. We didn't come from a backward [culture].

INT: You were "greenas," yes.

MORRIS: "Greenas," but we weren't! We had so much of life experience! See the people that came in the First World War, in the 20's, they came from a place in Europe, Europe was backward then. They had no electricity; they came from the shtetls which was way backward. We came already from a more civilized world. We knew already what's going on. I don't know.

We were different already. Over here they tried to treat us the way it was when they came to this country. They thought we lived over there the same as when they left Europe.

INT: So these were Jews who treated you like this?

MORRIS: Yeah, Jews and not Jews, it doesn't matter. When you went to the store it was not Jewish. It was the population, you know, they didn't treat us bad, just, there just was no communication. We didn't know how to communicate because we didn't know the language. We couldn't speak English period, nothing.

INT: So you went to school to learn English.

MORRIS: I went to school and this was in, already in the spring. In the meanwhile, Anny's mother was already in Philadelphia. She came from Germany right to Philadelphia because she had brothers. She had three brothers and a sister over here. Anny's mother had...

INT: Yeah, uh huh.

MORRIS: But they came before the war. They came in 1915 or whenever. They all grew up over here.

INT: So they were all established.

MORRIS: They grew up, they came as kids to Philadelphia from Hungary. And this was before the war. Their parents came. And so her mother started sending us letters in California. She finally knew that we were in California, we corresponded. In those days the mail was delivered two times a day. The mail was delivered and we used to get twice a day letters how good -- we should come to Philadelphia -- how good it is and are we making a good living. And she has a rich brother, Louie is rich, a millionaire, and he was a rich man over here in Philadelphia. But oy, why do you have to be separated? And she keeps "hocking me a chinik" all the time. And Anny bought it and I said, "I don't want to go." Because, Morris Kessel, when we told him that we want to leave, Anny told him she wants to go to Philadelphia to live, it was like somebody died! It was a tragedy! We were the favorites, we were going to leave there. They did so much for us. They want to do, they want to build us a new life. So Morris took me aside and he gave me a picture. He said, "In the East, in the tailor shops, you're going to be a slave! You know that in America there are sweat shops?"

INT: Sweat shops, yes, sure.

MORRIS: You know he give me a picture of this sweat shop.

[Tape 8 — End Side 1] [Tape 8 Side 2 — Blank] [Tape 9 — Begin Side 1]

INT: Today is May the 15th and this is Tape number 9, side one of an interview with Morris B. And last week when we were finishing our conversation you were telling me about living in Stockton, California, and being helped by a family and now you're...

MORRIS: That was a Jewish sentiment, that's special, that family took an interest, became close friends, good friends.

INT: And you were to go to school to learn English because the Kessels wanted you to be in the family business.

MORRIS: Morris Kessel told me, "Moishe, I don't want you to be a tailor. I want you to learn the language and we'll get you a store. We'll help you to get established.

INT: Well while this was happening your wife's mother was writing to her from Philadelphia.

MORRIS: Yeah, **every day**, **twice a day**. Those days they had mail delivery twice a day.

INT: So you went to the Kessels and you said we're going to Philadelphia.

MORRIS: No, no. I didn't go. The Kessels found out what's going on because Anny said she wants to go to be with the family to Philadelphia. So they said, "Oh, how can you do this? Over there you're going to have a terrible life."

INT: Shows you pictures of the sweat shops.

MORRIS: Sweat shops and said, "I would advise you not to do it, no way!" They didn't want to hear about it. So they started working on me and they started making deals. So finally they came out, they said they'll give me money, because we didn't have no money. Then they said to go by myself, to leave the family here and look around a few weeks, about a month, you know, "Look around in the East, and go to New York, and Philadelphia and look around. If you're going to like it so Anny will come then." And I said, "Fine with me."

INT: Yeah, well what were they hoping for?

MORRIS: Because he gave me a picture, he gave me a picture and I knew. I had a different picture of this country than Anny because I used to work with people in Europe, people who were in this country before.

INT: You had worked with people from America, yeah.

MORRIS: People, yeah, and I had a different picture. She was a young girl, she used to look at the movies; Hollywood, that was in her mind. But she didn't want to know nothing to do with it. She didn't want to hear about it.

INT: Were they counting on the fact that you would come here, and you would be discouraged and come back?

MORRIS: Yeah, he knew. They knew. They said you'll see over there what's going on. And certainly they didn't want me to be a tailor. No way.

INT: They don't want you to be a tailor. So then what happened?

MORRIS: So it took a few weeks, we were back and forth and who won? (laughs)

INT: Well you're in Philadelphia now. (laughs)

MORRIS: Who won? I said, "What am I going to do?" Listen. And then she was pregnant with Berl, because Henry and Berl are only 18 months apart.

INT: So she wanted to be with her mother?

MORRIS: And she wanted her mother, and it's going to be easier. How can you [say no]?

INT: Yeah, how did you feel about it?

MORRIS: I, how I felt about it? What did I know? We were greenas. You know we just came to this country. We didn't know much, we just looked around. We were confused. I mean we came to a different world. See, Kessel, he spoke a good Yiddish. We could communicate. We used to sit for hours and talk. Now I had a good idea. I thought, "Oh, we'll always make it somehow. Over there I'll have to start a new life and here, oh hell. I'll have to start from the beginning again. How old was I? In 1950, I was 30 years old and Anny was only 25 years old. I'll have to start a new life from the beginning."

INT: And so that didn't scare you?

MORRIS: That didn't scare me but I, I liked it over there. It was beautiful. It was nice, and it was completely different. And so we packed up and then we came over here to Philadelphia. And soon as we got off of the train, we saw what happened. The whole thing, it was a mistake!

INT: Did Anny realize it was a mistake?

MORRIS: Yeah, right away. On the first day.

INT: What happened that made you realize that it was a mistake?

MORRIS: When we came in, it was a lie! All the letters were a lie. The mother...

INT: Oh, the mother painted a picture...

MORRIS: Painted a picture which was not **true**. She just was selfish. She wanted to have the children close by. It was a **terrible** thing that she did, unforgivable, a mother to do something like that. She did it to her son, the oldest son. Anny had a brother, an older one.

INT: An older brother.

MORRIS: An older brother, she brought him from somewhere in Michigan. He came with the same thing, and she brought him over here and told him the same stories about her brother, Anny's uncle. He was a rich man, he had a plumbing factory. And that was all. He brought in Strawberry Mansion a house, a nothing place on Natrona Street. And we came in, we took a look. Over there she lived with a boy; Lenny was ten, maybe twelve or thirteen years old.

INT: This was your wife's youngest brother.

MORRIS: My wife's youngest brother, yeah, the youngest one. So we were with him and then she had her son and...

INT: From Michigan.

MORRIS: The son was from Michigan, you know and they had a baby about Henry's age. He was older than Henry by about three months. And was an old, a horrible place! The front kitchen, there was no refrigerator, there was nothing, no money. It was unbelievable!

INT: Well why didn't you go back to California?

MORRIS: Pride! Oh, we were ashamed even to tell them what we did. And Anny realized it too, that we made the biggest mistake of you lives. But she couldn't...

INT: Would you have done it?

MORRIS: We couldn't, we didn't have any money to go back and we would have to write them to send us money, which they would do, I'm pretty sure. But Anny would never do this. I suggested it because in those days you couldn't get in communication like now. It was difficult and it was embarrassing. How can you do this, to say that you made a mistake after they worked for weeks with us, they begged us and we didn't want to listen, and all of a sudden, you know... They would be happy to. I bet they would, there was nothing better they would like, but we didn't do it. It was pride.

INT: Is that one of the big regrets that you have in your life?

MORRIS: No.

INT: You don't regret it?

MORRIS: No. Why? Well who knows how would the life be different? We don't know how it would have worked out. It took a few years, but I made a life here in Philadelphia. We started from the beginning but we made it. I have no regrets at all.

INT: So what happened? Okay, so what happened? You got to Philadelphia, you were in Strawberry Mansion living in this run down house.

MORRIS: This was worse than in the war to go through for me.

INT: This was worse than the war?

MORRIS: Worse than the war for me personally, because we lived in the congestion, with the arguments.

INT: It was a ghetto.

MORRIS: Yeah, it was a ghetto. I mean in our little apartment, in a little house, we lived three families. You had to wait for the gas range -- there was a little gas range -- who's going to go first. **Oh**, I remember it was just **unbelievable**, **painful** with no money, no job, I came over here. Well, what do I do? So the uncle I told you about, the rich one, he had friends. Eighteenth and Chestnut, there used to be a store. It used to be run by Ben Wilks. It used to be Browning-King.

INT: Oh, Browning-King, oh yes.

MORRIS: Yeah, that's his name, the owner was Ben Wilks, Browning-King. So he gave me a little part-time, whatever he could to help me a little bit, but not enough to make a living. And we struggled. Whatever I made, five dollars was a big deal then. See, I could make five dollars, just to have something. When I came down from the ship, I had 57 cents in my pocket, that's all I had. We had nothing with a baby eight months old, with no money, with no language. This is after we had gone through a war. And then somebody told me there was a union. I didn't know about a union, so he told me where to go. I went, it was on South Street, 21st and South was the Amalgamated Union. I went over there and for a while they gave me a job. There used to be a store, 11th and Market, used to be a Howard's Clothes.

INT: So the union sent you there?

MORRIS: Yeah, they sent me for a job. Then I worked over there for a while. See, you worked for the season, and after the season they laid you off.

INT: Uh huh, so it was seasonal work.

MORRIS: Seasonal work. The wages then for tailoring work, when I came to Philadelphia, it was $66.50 for forty hours; that was the minimum wage of the union. So I worked there and I must have been good and they must have liked me because, when they laid off the tailors, they

did me a favor. Howard Clothes had a factory on Fitzwater Street, 26th and Fitzwater, they had their own factory where they made the clothes, because the store was in a different place. So the foreman went together to help me out, which was nice of him. I remember my boss was Manny, Italian, all Italians; they were nice people and so they talked to the foreman...

INT: They talked to the foreman.

MORRIS: Until the season starts to keep me there, no matter how much I'll make, but it's still to hold me so I won't go look for another job.

INT: You must have been good though. Didn't they see that?

MORRIS: Yeah, must have been.

INT: You worked fast and...

MORRIS: I worked fast and I guess they liked my nature and they wanted to help me, I guess because I came over from the other [side]. They saw the condition; they were nice. I appreciated what they did. I didn't look those days at how much I made, how much an hour. Who cared? **Anything** was better than **nothing**.

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: The baby needed milk.

INT: Now was, was Berl born yet? When was he born?

MORRIS: Well, Berl was born on the thirteenth of October, 1950.

INT: Your wife was pregnant already when you left California and you came to...

MORRIS: Berl was born when we still lived in Strawberry Mansion.

INT: So what I'm asking is how long were you in Philadelphia before Berl was born?

MORRIS: We came to Philadelphia Pesach time, you know like this time of the year, in the end of April, and Berl was born in October.

INT: Okay. So by this time you had two children.

MORRIS: We still lived on Natrona Street, yeah. And I was still struggling there. It was still a struggle. It was still horrible. Finally it got so bad and in Howard's I made some money already, so we went to Ridge and Diamond.

INT: Ridge Street and Diamond.

MORRIS: Ridge and Diamond there were big apartments and used to be in that time you had all doctors that were living there. We found an apartment on the second floor. It was terrible. No, no, no, in Diamond Street -- no, we lived on Ridge and Diamond first. It was little steps to go, you thought you're going to get killed. This guy made an attic over there. He made an apartment, the floor was, you know if you walked on the floor like, like...[gestures with hand]

INT: It was slanted?

MORRIS: Slanted, you know you walked on the floor like you were seasick. I remember one time when Berl was born, so that rich uncle Louie's wife comes to visit us. So she was about five minutes and she said to her, "You have to excuse me, I cannot stay longer because I'm getting seasick."

INT: Because the floors were uneven, yeah.

MORRIS: Because the floors, yeah, it was not even. So we went, we bought a table, for playing cards with a few chairs, with dishes. I remember the color, the dishes were red dishes, cheap for a dollar, whatever you could get and that's it. We set up and we had a gas range.

INT: Uh huh, but at least you were on your own.

MORRIS: But we were on our own, just to get out from that place because we couldn't take it no longer, you know, with that sister in law. It was unbearable. It was terrible.

INT: But how did your wife deal with her mother after being so disappointed?

MORRIS: Nothing, we just moved out. You know once you are not in the same place, you don't have the same problems. Her mother was just the opposite of my mother. Different. Different thing completely..

INT: But it sounds like Anny was not like her mother, though.

MORRIS: Selfish, selfish. Anny told me stories. Even at home her mother never took care of her children like my mother; it was different. Her mother had reasons to be [that way]. She had a miserable life. Anny's father was no bargain. Cheating.

INT: Oh, cheating.

MORRIS: He never worked. She was the breadwinner. She had a little store and it was a different life. They lived a different life and it was never a life, you know, like we were used to in my home. So we moved out of there. We stayed for a while until I started making a few more dollars. So we went looking around for a better place to live, because the steps to walk up over there, there were times you thought you're going to get killed. It was a terrible place. And there was a flower store downstairs, Axelrod's, yeah, I remember all the names.

INT: Yes, you do.

MORRIS: Axelrod's was the flower store and that guy who owned this apartment he had a little candy store downstairs (laughing) old people, and we paid at that time $29 a month rent. That's all we could afford. But we were by ourselves, we were happy. And then I don't know how long we stayed there, about a year I think, or less, and we went looking around. We found a nice apartment at 30th and Diamond.

INT: And that's still Strawberry Mansion.

MORRIS: Strawberry Mansion, yeah they all were. But over there already next to Berks Street there was a complete Jewish neighborhood. There was a baker across the street, Liss Baker was...

INT: But what language did everybody speak?

MORRIS: Yiddish.

INT: Everybody spoke Yiddish to one another?

MORRIS: The children went to the store. Henry started talking, he started early talking. And he went to the store, you know "give me," (laughs) I will never forget this, the bakery right on the corner a bakery. So Anny sends him. I don't know if he's about a year, a year old or more. He went to the store. And Berl was a baby yet, and we told him [Henry] to buy a Jewish rye bread. So they loved him, the way he talked Yiddish, a baby, he was a "pitzical," a baby.

INT: Yes, but he must have been about three years old by then.

MORRIS: What three? No, he was...

INT: Now wait a second, if he was eighteen months...

MORRIS: The most two years old. He was not even two years old because Berl was a baby yet. They were eighteen months apart.

INT: So that would make him about two years old.

MORRIS: Yeah, about two years old and he is supposed to...

INT: She sent him to the store at two years old?

MORRIS: Yeah, it was on the corner of the street. It was a few doors away we had our bakery. the whole place was neighbors. Those days every street there was a corner store and there was a

bakery store. So he went over there and they loved him. He came in, "Give me a ...give me a Yiddish rye bread, und kimmel."

INT: Kimmel. [caraway seeds]

MORRIS: Und kimmel. And they laughed, they enjoyed, they loved it. So they gave him a bread, so they gave him a cookie. The salesgirl gave him a cookie. He said, "No, give me another one. Give me [words of Yiddish here]"

INT: Oh, "you have a little brother at home," yeah.

MORRIS: Give me another cookie. And then they came, you know and they told us that he was just a lot of fun. Beautiful.

INT: So how long did you stay there?

MORRIS: We stayed there on Diamond Street, was a nice apartment on the second floor, big, completely different. It was much better. We didn't have a bedroom set and slept on a mattress on the floor. And we had a crib. We were happy, young, who cared then. We didn't think about it. We were happy-go-lucky. I already started making -- you know I started learning the language and I found a better job. I found a job at a place on South Street, used to be a store, Al Kagen, 638 South Street. And I found a job over there. They needed a tailor to do...The union told me, over there are all Jewish people and it will be good for you. And I went there, and I started working and he saw that I am able. And he had a lot of problems. He had an Italian guy he used to be a fitter there. In those days you had a fitter. He lost a lot of business; the customers were unhappy. And he saw that, I was in the back working in those days, you know, I was doing the tailoring. One day, Al Kagen, he was running it then, he was a partner with Harris Goodman. And he comes in to me, he said, "Moishe, you know what? I want to get rid of Danny because I can't take it no longer. I want you to come up in front, do the fitting. I said, "Un uh, no way. I'm going to be embarrassed every time I'm going to come up I cannot talk. How am I going to correspond with the people?" So he said, "Don't worry about it; you'll do the work and I'll do the talking. They are mostly Jewish customers and we'll manage, don't worry about it. First of all you'll make a better living, you know, fitters make more money." And, he said, "I'll take [responsibility], I'll run it, it's my store."

INT: Yeah, let me worry about it.

MORRIS: Let me worry about it. So I went and I talked it over with Anny. I thought what the hell, I just cannot talk. Now I'm going to talk to old rich people we looked up to, you know, I'm a little tailor. What I'm going to do? I'm going to be embarrassed all the time. So and we decided why? What can you lose? You always can go down and sit down on the bench working. Nobody is going to take away your trade. The man offers you a deal and you -- and G-d bless him!

INT: Who gave you that advice?

MORRIS: The owner of the store because see, the fitter was in charge of the shop, that was the custom. The guy who did the fitting, he used to tell you what to do because he was responsible; because he had to deliver the stuff.

INT: He was the supervisor.

MORRIS: He's the supervisor and he's responsible, when you fix the suit that you should keep the customer content.

INT: Sure. So you, so you did it.

MORRIS: He didn't get along with the boss, the people didn't like the way [things were being done]. He couldn't do what I could do. He was American. He wouldn't know; he grew up over here. He's not a European tailor. So finally I said, "Okay, Al, it's your business." And this was the **best thing** whatever happened to me! I started going out [to the showroom]. He let this guy go and I started going out, and I managed and it took me no time. In a few months, I spoke English. Once I started getting in front of the people, I spoke a broken English, but it was no problem at all. And Al was so good. He helped me in every way to communicate and the people loved me. The customers used to come in, they just loved my work, the way I did things.

INT: They liked your work.

MORRIS: They liked my work and it was a different life. And then Al was a good person on top of it. He knew the customers personally, because they used to come in every time and they were friends practically. And when they came to take out the work he said, "You took care of Moishe?"

INT: Oh. There was a little extra something that they should "shtip" you?

MORRIS: A tip. Those days the wages were sixty dollars a week. And if they gave you twenty-five dollars a week, you know that was a lot of money.

INT: Oh yes.

MORRIS: A pound of meat, good meat then cost nineteen cents.

INT: So he encouraged the customers to give you tips.

MORRIS: See it was a good deal for him, to run the business, he had less headaches, he delivered and he made more business. For me it was a G-d-given thing, you know, it couldn't be any better. It was like sent from heaven. I started making money. Wednesday night and Sunday there was the biggest business. Wednesday night everybody used to go out shopping.

INT: Sunday they shopped?

MORRIS: Yeah, we were open Sunday. It was seven days a week we were open then. He lived on the second floor, the owner of the store. He was a rich man too; somebody's money was invested, because he was a salesman and he opened up a store. A very good person. He put me on my feet and what can I tell you? Wednesday night I came home, I still had twenty-five dollars in tips.

INT: Oh my goodness. That was a fortune.

MORRIS: Sunday I used have... Over there the business used to come from people after church. From 11:00 to 3:00 it was so busy, people would stand in line to get fitted, because after church they used to from Jersey, all the people used to come and the gentiles, the farmers, and everybody used to come to buy clothing.

INT: Gentiles.

MORRIS: Gentiles. From 11:00 'til 3:00 we were so damn busy just chalking, fitting. That was the biggest, that was the business. So Sunday I made about twenty dollars tips because the most tips you got from business people, and Wednesday was good because you had a different clientele.

INT: They were more generous, yeah.

MORRIS: They were a different clientele. And then after a while, you started to know the people. I worked about seven years there. So this was 1952 that I'm talking bout. This was 1952 because I started working for Al Kagen in the fall of 1950, in 1951? I don't remember, I think 1951.

INT: Hadn't you just come to the country in 1950?

MORRIS: In '50, yeah, but this was in a short time, in a half a year. I worked at Howard for two seasons, I think. And I think it was about '51 at that time, yeah. And then I started saving pennies. Anny got ideas already. Right away she wants to buy a house (laughs). I was laughing. "What are you taking about, Anny, you need a few thousand dollars to buy a house." She says, "Don't worry about it." She opened up a bank account. She had a few hundred dollars. She thought she's the richest person in America! She went around every week and she's looking for where we can find money. Ambitious. And see, I worked, he [Kagen] let that guy go. I took his place. **I** needed somebody to take **my** place.

INT: Oh, you needed somebody to work in the shop.

MORRIS: I needed somebody to work in the shop. So I find out a guy, he was from Auschwitz, a survivor, Arnold Shay. You must have heard about it.

INT: I've heard about it.

MORRIS: He did this kind of work like you're doing now. Arnold Shay.

INT: He did interviews?

MORRIS: Not interviews different, different things but he was writing.

INT: Did he collect?

MORRIS: He collected the -- what do they call it? He was collecting memorabilia.

INT: Oh, okay. I know his name. I know I've heard of him, yes.

MORRIS: Yeah, that's him, he was in Philadelphia.

INT: So you hired him.

MORRIS: Yeah, he was working

INT: He was a "schneider."

MORRIS: He was a tailor but he was a little younger than me. He was in concentration camp and I was in Russia. I was working my trade, you know I was much more advanced in tailoring, yeah, completely. But he knew a little bit and I showed him, I taught him. It was good for me; we could talk Yiddish, a "landsman." He was from Bendgin, Poland, in Europe; it was across the German border. He had brothers over here. Anyhow, he worked for me, he lived in Wynnefield, and we still lived on Diamond Street. And Anny used to go every week and go around looking

INT: For houses?

MORRIS: For houses, (laughs) looking at somewhere. She got an idea, and I was a fitter, it was a big deal then.

[Tape 9 — End Side 1] [Tape 9 — Begin Side 2]

INT: This is tape number nine, side 2. And you were telling me that your wife is looking for a house.

MORRIS: We are looking around. I just started making a few dollars and she saved it right away, put it in a savings account. Finally, I remember we had $1,300 -- this was 1954. She thought she's a rich lady. (laughs)

INT: Yeah, well that was a fortune.

MORRIS: "We're rich." You know it was a fortune then!

INT: You came with fifty-seven cents.

MORRIS: We came with fifty-seven cents. Anny, if she had ten dollars, a dollar had to go in the bank no matter what. She had to put away something. That was her philosophy and she didn't want the kids to see that we are poor people. So we have our own checking, our own savings.

INT: Yeah, so then what happened?

MORRIS: Now I worked with Arnold. Arnold Shay worked for me, and we talked. You work a whole day and you talk. I told him Anny's going around looking for a place. He lived on Georges Lane in Wynnefield. He bought a house before. And one day he comes, he tells me that there's a couple, Israeli people who lived on Peach Street. It was the next street. So he said there's an old couple, they have a daughter, and they live together and they want to sell the house. That's 1725 Peach Street. So, okay, I came home and I told Anny; so we went and looked. It was a row house. But for us, we looked in the Northeast and knew we couldn't afford it there. People were laughing at this kind of money, $1,300. So we looked around and said, "Well, we're going to buy it." So we made a deal this way we paid for it, I think $7,500. But it was so "schmutzik," so **dirty**, you know, that was so horrible! Finally we made a deal because we feel that's all we can afford. So we'll fix it up our own way, what the hell. We bought that house on Peach Street and it was a job! We called the gas man to fix the thing; he didn't want to fix it, it was so dirty.

INT: He didn't want to fix the gas? He didn't want to connect it?

MORRIS: No, it was so dirty, he went into the gas range and he took a look and he said, "I'm sorry." He says, "I just cannot do this." It was dirty, full of grease. It was so horrible. Brrrrrrrr. It was a terrible thing. So on the weekend me and Anny were sitting over on our knees, and we cleaned it up and made it...

INT: Presentable, yes.

MORRIS: We couldn't buy one, we didn't have no money to buy a new one. Now we bought the house but there was not enough money. We needed, we needed $2,300 to buy the house, to give a down payment. You need 10% or something, I don't remember. And we only had $1,300. What, what do we do? We couldn't buy it. We want to buy it but we didn't have enough money. $1,300, and we need twenty-some hundred dollars. So I don't know how, somebody told me there was a rabbi on Marshall Street, Wertheimer, an older person. He knew people. We went and talked to him, we told him the story, you know what's going on. He said, "Don't worry. I know somebody who will lend the thousand dollars for a second mortgage." We had to buy the house and we had two mortgages, one we got from the bank. So he said, "I know a man, Levine, you have the papers that 4% you had to pay, or 6%" -- I don't remember, 1954, how am I to remember? So Levine gave us $1,000 and I had to pay him every month, I don't know if it was

$40 a month or it was for forty months. I remember this, it's for forty months we got $1,000. We have to pay him each month with interest, but it was fine.

INT: So you'll pay your mortgage and you'll pay him.

MORRIS: And Wertheimer, the rabbi, in case we cannot pay, he says "I'll be responsible, don't worry. These are nice people, don't worry." How did we find that Wertheimer? These people we want to buy the house from, they knew that rabbi.

INT: Yes, so when was Jerry born? Was he born in this house?

MORRIS: Jerry was born in Wynnefield four years later.

INT: Oh, four years later.

MORRIS: Jerry was born in 1954, the first year when we moved in. When we moved to Wynnefield, when we bought the house, Anny was pregnant with Jerry already. This was in '54. Anyhow, from Levin we got that second mortgage and we bought the house and we started right away, started fixing it up little by little. It took a while, at least not right away because we couldn't [work too much]. Jerry was born and it was terrible, because when Jerry was born I thought I lost Anny already because it was...

INT: It was a hard delivery?

MORRIS: A hard delivery and it was Caesarean. And after Berl she had a lot of problems, because when she had Berl, we didn't have no money. We had no money to put her in the hospital. She went somewhere in Strawberry Mansion there was a hospital, I forgot the name, it was a woman's hospital, where they messed her up. She had cysts in the ovaries and they messed her up.

INT: So they didn't treat her properly.

MORRIS: They didn't treat her [properly] and that was horrible. That was terrible that they patched her up. It was a horrible hospital, a terrible place and she had a lot of problems. So next door -- we lived on Natrona Street in Strawberry Mansion, where Berl was born -- there was a woman next door to us. I remember was a young couple with a mother, and she couldn't have any children. She used to go to Dr. Sussman; he used to be a woman's doctor. So she told Anny she was going to see the doctor. She told him that next door lived a couple, "greenas" just came over and she has a lot of problems, and they don't have any money and she was bleeding all the time. So he told her next time you come, bring her with you, I'll take a look at what's the problem. And the money, if she has money, whatever she has she can pay me, not to worry. Marcel Sussman, that was his name. And she went with a neighbor; it took about three months, he took care of the problem, burned out the cysts, and he helped her a lot.

INT: But still it was difficult to...

MORRIS: He told her to try not to have any more babies because you can have problems. But after four years she got pregnant and we were then in Wynnefield already, we lived in Wynnefield. And she lost the water, one morning and before they took her to the hospital, it was terrible! She was hemorrhaging!

INT: Oh my goodness.

MORRIS: And there used to be a hospital at 17th and Spring Garden Street, they used to call it the Doctors' Hospital. Dr. Sussman belonged there, and we took her in a taxi. We got to the hospital and it was a terrible thing. And I remember they had her in the delivery room and everything there was on one floor. And I heard Dr. Sussman and he was hollering, "Anny, don't go. Hold on. Hold on. Hold on, Anny." He knew her as a patient from the office already a long time. And he came from that same Hungarian background too, they were...

INT: Landsmen.

MORRIS: Landsmen, you know. Not him, his parents. That was a good relationship, he was an older person already, but very good people. And I hear them hollering in the operating room, "Anny, don't go. Hold on. Anny, hold on." They gave her blood, transfusions and she couldn't keep it. As they gave her the blood, she lost it. And she was already... The heart one time stopped beating. And I was standing outside the door and I heard everything what's going on there, and over in my mind I'm thinking, I have two little kids home and this is happening. What happened? I fainted, I collapsed right there. And so right away a whole bunch of doctors were around me to revive me. And afterwards they told me the story, they said I had more attention than Anny got because they thought I had a heart attack or something. I just, I was overwhelmed. But this was going on, this was already hours and hours after when they took her into the hospital. This was already a lot of hours after when they tried and finally they did a Caesarean. And they couldn't stop the hemorrhaging, it was terrible. I remember the nurse told me when she came over and asked her, "Tell me what, what do you want? Anything. Anything you wish you can get," because they thought she was dead already. She came back from...

INT: It's like she came back from the dead.

MORRIS: She came back from the dead, yeah. And so the nurse said, "Anything, if you're still alive." When she opened her eyes she's still alive. The first thing she said was, "I want a cigarette."

INT: Oh. (laughs)

MORRIS: She said, "You want to give me anything I want," she says, "so give me a cigarette." After they were teasing her, after she got better they were teasing her. And Sussman said, "Anything she wants; give her a cigarette, it doesn't matter." He was a very heavy smoker himself. His fingers were black.

INT: So she recovered from that...

MORRIS: And she recovered. She was a long time in the hospital. And finally she recovered and since then she was never a completely healthy person. She recovered but it was all right.

INT: But her health was compromised.

MORRIS: But she recovered. Compromised but after a while she recovered. She was pretty good. She was recovered completely.

INT: So now you had three children at this point and you were working at Al Kagen.

MORRIS: I was working with Al Kagan, and the time was going on, and I started to know the language and became, you know, normal. We tried so hard to get integrated into this culture. We bought a television then, I remember a Philco, had a television when Anny was sitting with the kids always watching and learning. She learned the language faster than me.

INT: But she learned it from watching television.

MORRIS: Quicker, yeah, by watching television. I didn't have time for this. (laughs) And with the kids always, and she was a wonderful mother. Everything was the kids. There was nothing, nothing too hard. I used to go when she had a Mother's Day or a birthday or anything, I used to buy her presents. On Market Street was a store, a lingerie store. Those days I used to dress nice, I was a fitter. When I used to come in the store, the salesmen used to know me already. They all were jumping, and I told them, "You pick," for this occasion today or whatever it was.

INT: This was a lingerie place?

MORRIS: A lingerie. It was 13th after Wanamaker's, there was a store on the right side. When I used to come in the store the saleslady, I used to tell her what's the occasion, and I used to bring stuff home. And she didn't say nothing. The next morning she went back and took back the...

INT: She took it back?

MORRIS: And went and bought for the kids clothing. A lot of times she bought for the kids.

INT: Did she keep anything for herself?

MORRIS: She'd keep little things. I used to make tips, a lot of tips then and I always had my money, because I used to give her my check, and I always had money in a pocket because I was a big shot, because it didn't matter. The salesladies loved it, I used to come in, I didn't care how much it cost. Those days $20 was a lot of money, it was a big sale.

INT: So she came in and turned it in. Could she buy something else in the store for herself with it?

MORRIS: No, she got back the money. And she used to go to Howard or some other store. There used to be a lot of children's stores on South Street and she used to buy for them little clothes, whatever the kids needed. See, she was a person that never, even till the last minute, she never cared about expensive things. She said, "I'm not impressed, never impressed with it." she said, "I don't have to 'pitz' myself up. I look good without that." She never believed in that. And I used to buy a tie, those days I used to pay $15 for a tie and I had it the rest of my life. See I was a man who had nice ties; I didn't care how much it cost. So what? I make money. And I used to always share the tips, you're a big shot, you can buy it. What I could buy for that money? (laughs) So I let it go, you know, what do I care? It was there. I used to buy nice clothing. I liked what was a little different. She never cared about that.

INT: Well, but clothing was your business.

MORRIS: It was my business and I had to dress nice and that was that. Anyhow that was a minor thing. But we started working in the house and we fixed up the house so beautiful. We put in new floors and then three years later we remodeled the whole house and we hired a contractor to remodel the walls. And we re-made the kitchen, we bought everything new, a new kitchen completely, a dishwasher, we bought everything. The sink we moved to the other side. It was beautiful. It was a little house but we just made a beautiful, beautiful thing. And what happened? (pause) One day, Al Kagen decided to close up the store.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: This was in 1957, '56 or '57. Because what happened was the money he ran the store with was not his money. The investment was from a store -- Harris Goodman used to be a big clothing store on South Street -- and he [Al Kagen] used to go and it seemed to the men that he couldn't take it no more.

INT: So he decides to close the store.

MORRIS: He decided to close the store. This was in the spring of '57, and he found a place on 54th and City Line.

INT: Oh yes, I remember.

MORRIS: 54th and City Line. He had no money to open the store. He had a lot of friends, a lot of Jewish friends. He had a friend who was a dentist, Nate Feldsher, I'll never forget. Good buddies. And Nate Feldsher had a father who used to be a carpenter, he was old, retired already. So Nate's father worked the whole summer over there putting in fixtures, to fix up that store. Because Al didn't have any money, you know he was completely broke and he had two children too. And so, all of a sudden I'm left without a job. Over here, already, everybody knew Morris, you know, I'm the big tailor.

INT: Yes, you're established.

MORRIS: I was established and I made a name for myself already, with the union, everybody knew. In the whole city everybody, everybody knows Morris.

INT: So now you're out of a job.

MORRIS: "Morris is the best and this and that." Now all of a sudden I'm out of a job. **Now**, Al Kagen told me, "Moishe," he said, "Don't go look for another job. As soon as we open the store..." I said, "Well how about the whole summer; what will we do?" He said, "When I start doing business, I'll pay you back. I cannot do it now. I have no money, but I'll pay you. Don't go look." He figured I'm a part of his business because the people liked me and I was involved already in his business, and I was very loyal too. When I work for somebody, I didn't feel like I worked for somebody. I feel like I worked for myself, all my life. And he said, "Don't go." But while we were on South Street, there was a boy, Al Schwartz. No, no, **Chick**, Chick Schwartz. He served in Korea; the Korean War was going on. He came from the army and was a stock boy on South Street. And after, he went to look further and he finds a job with Morville. Morville used to be at 15th and Walnut. He got a job as a manager over there. Morville hired him as the manager and it was. They had a lot of problems with the shop because the Italians over there, they ran this place and they ate up the profits. They did business but there was nothing left for the owners. The shop, the tailor shop ate him up. He had about twenty-three tailors; eighteen tailors working over there, and whatever he sold, fifty suits, everything went to the tailor shop. So one day Chick -- Sam Feld was the owner, the son-in-law of Lefkow -- the...[tries to remember name of another store]

INT: Well, it's okay. Not important. So Chick, what did he say?

MORRIS: Chick told him -- he was talking to Sam Feld -- and he said, "I knew a guy (because Chick knew me from South Street), there was a refugee, a guy, he's the best. He's not working now because Al Kagen closed up. He's waiting till they open the store. Meanwhile he's not doing nothing; let's talk to him." So Chick called me up. He said, "Moishe, can you come over? I want to talk to you. I just talked to Sam Feld." Sam Feld was a big, big, guy -- like you're talking to the President. And they called me up, made an appointment with Sam Feld and he told me what he wants to do. He needs somebody and he told me the real truth, and he told me what goes on. He was ready to give away the key already because he just couldn't make it. If not for the father-in-law he would have been broke a long time ago, because he married a rich girl. He was a salesman for them in that store. They had twenty-three stores. (pause) [Tries to remember name of chain of stores.]

INT: You'll remember it. When you remember it you'll tell me.

MORRIS: They're advertising every day on television. That's a discount store now.

INT: All right, don't worry.

MORRIS: There was that family, it was a famous one, they had a lot of stores. He married the daughter from that and then he opened up his own business. He opened up in 1947, before I came to Philadelphia. So what happened? He gave me a picture of what he wants to do. And I worked in a small little store, and this was a **big**, **big** fancy store. I had to start all over again. "So try it," he said, "You have nothing to lose. Come, come try it." Over there, I'm in the shop. It was run by an older gentleman, Italian guy, a very, very nice person. Joe Napolitano was his tame. He was running the place, but he was too nice to be a boss, too gentle. The people took advantage of him. He was a custom tailor, a good one. You know, those days it was all custom tailors. He was a very fine tailor, but to run a place like this you have to be...(pause) [bangs on table]

INT: Firmer, stronger.

MORRIS: Strong. To be a foreman, you have to be strong, because in the factory is a different thing. In the factory they are working by bundle, by the hundred, and they get a bundle how much they make, they're getting paid for it. If they do them fast, they make more money; if not, they make less money. Our trade, alterations, they used to call them "bushel men" then. See, our local, Charlie Weinstein ran it. We belonged to the same union, the Amalgamated, but our Local was 56; it was considered custom tailoring. Why? We had to pay by the hour not by the bundle. There was no piecework. You come in, you punch the card or whatever, you get paid how many hours you put in, not for the bundle, because for alterations you couldn't do this. So there in Morville, in the shops, they work and make overtime, overtime, and overtime -- and there is no profit. So I went in and I tried for a few weeks. Al Kagen found out what I did! You won't believe it, I'm still embarrassed. He finds out that I went to Morville working, and he didn't know I'm just trying it out. He went to the union and complained and said that's it's not fair. What he [Al] did for me, and all the things, and now he's trying to open up a business, and now Morville is trying to steal me away from him. I don't know what he did.

INT: So what happened?

MORRIS: Finally the union -- one day, it was on a Wednesday -- the union comes and called me over, because those days the union was powerful, you know.

INT: They were very powerful.

MORRIS: Very powerful. The owner of Morvilles, Sam Feld, I come in there and they're both sitting there.

INT: Oh my.

MORRIS: And the union man told me, "Moishe, sit down." And they started arguing between themselves, Ben Feld with Al Kagen. It was like a war! And I am sitting and I listen what's going on, oh my G-d. Now I felt sick in my stomach! Al, what he did for me, he actually made, he made a mensch of me and all the things, you know where he helped me. I told you the story

with the language with everything. Now I felt like I betrayed him or something, you know like I was a deserter.

INT: You were disloyal.

MORRIS: Disloyal. G-d, I got sick. I got sick. Suddenly I got so emotional I passed out there. Just total, completely.

INT: So what happened?

MORRIS: They were arguing, arguing and I felt guilty. Fourth of July the clothing store used to have a sale right after the holiday, it was a holiday the 4th of July, eh?

INT: Sure.

MORRIS: Every clothing store used to have a sale. So I didn't go back to Morville, I couldn't. It wouldn't be fair to do this to Al Kagen. So about two weeks I was walking around, then Ben Feld calls me again. He said, "Morris," he said, "It's close to the holidays, it's close to the Fourth of July," he said, "I'm going to run a sale. Think it over again. You have your own family to think of. Al Kagen, he'll find another tailor and it's a small store. It's not a problem." He said, "I want you, I want you to take the job." He saw I worked for two weeks and he saw that I'm an ambitious guy. I don't think he had much choice. So I sit down one time with Anny again and we had a big discussion. I said, "Listen, (pause) in Al Kagen I had to work...," I said, "Loyalty is one thing. I love the guy and he did a lot of good but I **never** saw my children," because Sunday they were open, I had to work three or four nights a week because we were open from nine till nine, and Thursday used to be my day off. And in season when it was very busy I worked **seven** days to make an extra dollar.

[Tape 9 — End Side 2] [Tape 10 — Begin Side 1]

INT: This is tape number ten of an interview with Morris B. and Morris was just talking about sitting down with his wife to talk about what he should do next.

MORRIS: Yes. So finally we decided what I have to do. Now in Morvilles, 15th and Walnut was just opposite. Sunday was closed; Saturday I only had to work if the shop works overtime. If the shop don't work overtime I could take two days off. For me it was unbelievable. No night work; they were open only Wednesday nights. Again, he said, "Moishe, if the shop works overtime Wednesday night, you work, if not it's up to you if you want to stay, help out the fitter," because they had one fitter there and they were very busy. "It's up to you." I said, "Uh huh." And we sat down and we had a plan. My G-d, that sounds like a new world. Every night I'll be home for dinner, they were open 'til five, 'til five, six o'clock, I don't know, five o'clock. I'll be home every night and Sunday, I'll be home. Saturday I'll be home too if I want to. And he offered me then -- those days he offered me $100, $110 a week -- it was a...

INT: It was a fortune.

MORRIS: Forty hours, no weekends. I thought that's too good to refuse. I'll tell Al, "Look at this. You cannot meet these conditions. You cannot meet what he is offering me." I said, "Please understand. Look what this is."

INT: So you actually went to talk to him?

MORRIS: Yeah, and I told Al, "Look at this, if you were in my place, I know you're my friend, you did all this." I just talked to him open. "I cannot refuse it." Secondly, the prestige those days to work for Morvilles as a foreman!

INT: Oh sure.

MORRIS: A Jewish boy, a refugee to come, it was like unbelievable. See the clothing business those days was different than it is now. Clothing was the second to paying rent -- rent came first -- and then everybody was buying clothing.

INT: Clothing.

MORRIS: You didn't go out without a hat in the street, without a tie. Your shoes had to be shined. It's not like now you put on sneakers with the dungarees. It was a different world. We lived in different times then, a different world. Clothing was a part of it. And to work in Morvilles was a very high, prestigious thing, and for me to be the boss, and I had about twenty three tailors and I'll be in charge of them...

INT: Sure, how could you say no?

MORRIS: I mean how could you say no?

INT: So did you make peace?

MORRIS: And I had a lot of ambition and I told Al I'm going to go back. He couldn't do nothing. This was in the beginning of July, and his store he planned to open up after Labor Day. It was a whole summer yet to wait. No, that was not good. I didn't have that much money. And the thing that was appealing to me was the hours, they moved the hours. Anyhow, I make it short, I went back. I started working in a sale. During a sale those days, they sold by the thousands. It was **unbelievable**, so much work I never saw in my life. And I started working in **my** way. See these tailors were used to working there, and making extra money, and taking the time. And I put my foot down! I was not ashamed. I opened my mouth and I said, "Forget it. This is a **new** picture. Anybody likes to work over here has to get used to **me** now. Joe is not going to be your boss no more. If you don't like it, you have to go look for other jobs. You have to get used to the way **I** want to do, **my** way." I knew what I'm doing. And it was not easy. And then you have a union to deal with. You can go so far and you have to stop. Once you are in charge, you have to be a politician already. And I learned all the tricks and I worked through to Labor Day. Right after Labor Day, Thursday morning Sam Feld calls me down in his office --

this is the boss from Morvilles -- and he said, "Morris, you went through the sale," he said, "I'd never believed it, for a young men, you could do things that you did. You are the best! I like you! Here's $20, a raise." This was only for two months from the Fourth of July till Labor Day, and he said, "Here is $130 you are going to make now." My G-d, no night work, no weekends, and I'm home.

INT: And your extra money too.

MORRIS: And extra money. But I **gained** money and I **lost** money because I got cut off from the tips. I got cut off from the public. But to me, to be home every night with the family, eat dinner at home, there was nothing more rewarding than this. And he gave me a raise, and that was a completely different world. I worked over there as a foreman for a lot of years. I must have worked about ten, fifteen, then I got tired of it. They opened the shop -- I had a shop there in the back. He started doing so much business. Sam Feld saw that he's got something going for him. He was a shrewd businessman. He started opening new stores. In 1961 he opened a store in Cheltenham, a big store. The first night we did thousands of dollars of business. And the next morning I got in already work, and I have the same amount of tailors. I started figuring what to do. So Sam comes in, and across from there was an attic; it was nothing, it was an empty place. He said, "I want to make a shop in that place." I said, "It's dark." He said, "Don't worry about it. For money you can do anything." He's got ideas. And so he hired carpenters and they made the whole thing. It was a whole long floor, it was a big one, the whole building. In the next door was a billiard shop. I think it's still there. They were playing billiards.

INT: Billiards.

MORRIS: Billiards, yeah. And we made a shop and he said, "Morris, I want to make everything modern. I don't care how much it costs." He said, "Money makes money." So what do I do? Eighth and Arch, there's Bert Zeldis. He had a store, he was selling all machines for tailor shops, for factories, and he knew how to set up shops too. So I called in Bert Zeldis to come over, and I told him what's going on. I said I'll spend up to $15,000. I want everything new, modern, what's the latest in the market in equipment. He said, "I'll set up everything." And he tells me, "I'm doing to set up the whole thing. Don't worry." I gave him $12,000 -- those days it was a fortune -- and he helped me set up, measured up how many tables you need, how far the things went. He knew exactly what to do. Fine. So it took a while until he set it up, and I started getting ideas and I worked for that place, not like I would work for Morville, but like it was Morris's business. I started changing all the time. I figured out production, how to make it cheaper. I started hiring women. There was a lot of things the tailors were doing where we didn't need tailors. You have to rip the linings and many things...

INT: It's like asking a doctor to do nursing.

MORRIS: I said, "No, you're not going to do it **this** way, you're going to do it that way. Tailors, you can do only what needs tailoring, ripping off the buttons, and the linings and these things, you know. But they used to take up a jacket or take it from the beginning, and rip, and make the collar, and the sides, and the sleeves and it took two jackets a whole day, the most.

And I said, "No, no good. Cannot be. There must be a better way. How come in the factory they can make 10,000 suits with a few hundred tailors, they can make 10,000 suits a week? Why can't I figure out to do something here?" I figured it out. I had women who sat at a table and just ripped the lining, the buttons and all the hand work. They didn't have to be tailors. And there was a lot of resentment. And I told them, "If you're not going to do the way I want it, you're going to have to look for another job." And they, you know they...

INT: You had a lot of confidence in yourself.

MORRIS: I had a lot of confidence, a lot of ambition. Oh yeah, I was frightening. Ooh, I was, I was tough. I was very, very tough and **fair**. I didn't demand something, I knew. See they couldn't tell me what cannot be done, how long it's supposed to take, because I knew all the answers. And you had problems with the union but you had to fight and then you see which one is good. A good mechanic you have to play a different game, and one which is not that important can be replaced, you handle them different. That's a trade where you have to do a lot of things, and I must have been pretty good.

INT: I would think so.

MORRIS: Because I stayed 26 years, I did it. And I set things up and he opened up eight stores in three years. He opened up over in Decker Square was a big store, Morvilles. In Moorestown was a very profitable store, in Plymouth Meeting, all over; in Neshaminy. They had eight stores. Then the place got too small. We rented a floor 11th and Vine. They used to call it the Pincus Building, a big building there. Morvilles, we rented the 8th floor; was a very big floor and set up over there, because on Walnut Street was too small and we couldn't handle this. It was the whole floor, and I had **fifty** tailors working for me.

INT: Well now, to get back to your private life, did you stay on Peach Street or did you move?

MORRIS: We stayed on Peach Street until 1976. The neighborhood started falling apart.

INT: Changed?

MORRIS: Changed. The whole neighborhood just disappeared and we had to move out. There was no other way.

INT: Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your children because obviously this was a period of time in which you were more involved, you were home more.

MORRIS: Yeah, more and more involved, yeah.

INT: So I'm going to ask you some questions about that. How would you describe that your marriage during those years? What was your marriage like?

MORRIS: What do you mean how our marriage was? It was normal. I think it was love, I loved every minute of it. It was just...

INT: So it was a very happy time.

MORRIS: It was a happy time. When Jerry was about seven years old, he started going to school. Anny felt like she can go out and help do something. So in the neighborhood on 54th Street, there was a photographer who opened up a studio. And he needed somebody, a secretary, she had to be a secretary and a bookkeeper, everything. So Anny went over there. It was in the neighborhood, right about a block away from where we lived. So she helped him out and he paid her, not a lot of money, but anything that comes in is extra income. Jerry's school was not far from the store, the Mann School, 54th and Berks Street. Henry was going to be a teenager, Berl too. Time goes on. So she went out and got a little job. Then we started thinking of college already, what will we do? Of course we didn't have the money. So we had in the family, her mother had a sister, Aunt Jean Chaiken. Her daughter-in-law used to work in the University of Pennsylvania before she got married. Beverly, she married Jean Chaiken's son. Those days the family used to get together often on the weekends. Anny started talking to her and Beverly says, "Anny, you know what? In the University, if you could find a job, if you worked three years, your children, if they qualify, can go to school. They can go to college free if you are a faculty member." Anny didn't think much. The next day she was there and made an application. There was no opening and a month later, two months later she gets a call, they need somebody. She got a job there.

INT: And that was it.

MORRIS: And that was it. And Henry must have been about twelve years old then, you know not more than thirteen because three years, it takes three years 'til you work there then you're entitled. But it worked out just perfect. Henry finished school and he was ready to start college; he made applications. And Henry was **so brilliant**. Everybody in the country wanted him. He sent out his resume, because he was an athlete.

INT: An athlete?

MORRIS: He was good in the rings, you know on the bars?

INT: Yeah, he was a gymnast.

MORRIS: A gymnast. A gymnast. Cornell wanted him so bad. Every school wanted him. He got a National Merit Scholarship and my union gave him a scholarship. My union, the Amalgamated gave him a scholarship for $1,400, $1,300, I thing was what they gave him.

INT: So why did he go to Penn if he could have gone to the other schools?

MORRIS: (pause) Because Philadelphia was close to him. And the mommy worked right next door.

INT: So family made... so the decision was made that he shouldn't go away?

MORRIS: No, Henry had a scholarship from National Merit. And my union gave him $1,300. Every year the union used to give, I think six students a year, the union would give scholarships, $1,300. And the state gave $2,400. So I told the union to give it to somebody more needy, because we had other scholarships. And finally we decided he's going to go close by.

INT: How did he feel about that?

MORRIS: To engineering school. We told him, but that was the mistake we made. This was an engineering school and we didn't know from nothing. Henry was born an artist. He was **born** an artist. His only interest was to draw. But we told him that's what you're going to do.

INT: Whose decision was that?

MORRIS: Mommy's, Anny's.

INT: Did he argue with you?

MORRIS: You couldn't argue those days. That was a different world, not like now. The parents said you're going to do this. And he was, he was a good kid. I don't know. It was no question.

INT: Why engineering, though?

MORRIS: I don't know. It was prestigious or something those days. Those days engineering was a big deal.

INT: Yes, I remember there was a time.

MORRIS: There was a time then, they were building bridges, and building highways, and it was the top! And that's what we picked, and this was a mistake, later we saw what happened because we should have sent him to art school. He was a boy, he was two years old and he was drawing things which were unbelievable. He made things you wouldn't think he was a baby. Anyhow, so he went to school and a year-and-a-half later, Berl went to the University.

INT: Who decided what Berl would take?

MORRIS: I don't know. I don't know what Berl took. Berl didn't take engineering. But Berl was a different kid. Berl was different.

INT: How was he different?

MORRIS: Berl was not an athlete and Berl had his buddies, they started smoking. He was twelve years old, he used to go smoking cigarettes, riding motorcycles. Berl was different.

INT: Oh my goodness, he was a rebel.

MORRIS: Yeah. Henry he had his gymnastics, he was different. Berl was a fighter. But none of them finished college. That was the Vietnam War time. Henry found a buddy; he was a Greek guy from Chicago. He was really wild, a rich, spoiled kid.

INT: Was this somebody he met at Penn?

MORRIS: Met in college, yeah, at Penn.

INT: So he dropped out.

MORRIS: Then he was supposed to be drafted in the army and he ran away. For three years we didn't know if Henry was alive. **Three years** and we gave him up already. For **three years**, **nothing**, we didn't hear from him. We lived already over here. We lived...

INT: In Roxborough.

MORRIS: I remember, Anny was sitting over here and I was sitting over there; it was on a Sunday. The telephone rings. It was about 2:00 in the afternoon. We always cooked for the week. Sunday we were working both in the kitchen. We pick up the phone and a girl is on the line. She says, "Your name is Morris B. with Anny?" I says, "Yeah." She says, "You have a son named Henry?" We almost dropped dead! "Henry, he's alive? We didn't hear from him for so many years. For three years we didn't know nothing. What's going on? Henry, what?" So she told me, "Yeah, Henry's alive." This was on Sunday. She said, "Last Wednesday I was with him." I said, "Where?" She said, "In St. Thomas, in the Virgin Islands." She said, "I just came home today and he told me, he gave me your telephone number. He said when you come to Philadelphia call my parents." "But where?" She said he has no address. He lives wherever. I cannot give you no address, no telephone number because he lived on a big boat. So what do we do? This was on Sunday. Monday morning when Anny went to work she stopped over at a travel agency on Walnut Street and made an appointment for Thursday. I told the boys we had to go, it was an emergency. We have to go. At work, I always had an assistant in my shop.

INT: So you flew to...?

MORRIS: Thursday we flew down to St. Thomas.

INT: Did you find him?

MORRIS: And we didn't know where to find him. We talked to people and they told us where people congregated. A beach...

INT: A beach?

MORRIS: Yeah, a beach, and you can talk to people over there. So the next morning we went and took a boat across to the Beachcomber Hotel.

INT: The Beachcomber.

MORRIS: That's right next to the airport and over there was a Hungarian old lady, and her son owned this place. And my wife, Anny, became right away became good buddies and she told her everything what you know what is going on on this island because they lived there for the business. And we walked on the beach and we found Henry. We asked him to come stay with us at the Beachcomber. A few days later he came to the hotel with a girl and we urged both of them to come home with us. They said no, and we had to leave to go back to Philadelphia. A year later, Henry came home. He stayed with us for a while and spent a lot of time with his friends at the University of Pennsylvania and with a girl from England who was working as a nanny.. He married the girl from England and they had a baby. We were living in an apartment in another part of Roxborough at that time, and they came often to eat dinner with us. At some point they decided they're going to California, packed up the car and left. They got as far as Dallas before the car broke down and so that's where they stayed.

INT: They are still together?

MORRIS: I don't know if they are together, I'm not sure.

[Tape 10 — End Side 1] [Tape 10 — Begin Side 2]

INT: You were saying that your grandsons from Texas called you.

MORRIS: Yeah, the other night they called me. Henry wasn't home, he was working. And one of them told me, "Grandpa I have poison ivy!" I said I had it twice. I know how it is; you got to be careful. So anyhow he's going to be sixteen years old and he's driving a car already, you know and I told him when he's going to get a car I said I'll help you because teenagers' insurance is very expensive.

INT: What kind of job has he done in raising his children?

MORRIS: I don't know. They came here a few times when their kids were small yet and (pause) now last summer Henry was here for quite a while. Henry was here about three weeks before Mommy passed away. She was very sick, in the last stages. All three of them were over here.

INT: Did you have a chance to talk to him when he was here?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Did you talk about the past?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: What did you say?

MORRIS: He knows he made some mistakes. Now he became just the opposite from how he lived when he was younger. He became a vegetarian; no smoking, no nothing. Just completely different. When he stayed here, nobody was allowed to smoke.

INT: Well tell me, generally, how were decisions made during your marriage? How did you make a decision?

MORRIS: Now Jerry, the youngest one turned out just the opposite. He chose his friends; if a kid was wild or doing something or smoking, you couldn't be his friend. He spent all his life in the Franklin Institute. He was a brain, that's all. He's finished, he got his Masters from the University of Pennsylvania. Then he went to Harvard and he didn't have to pay a penny. He got a whole scholarship for that. He married when he was nineteen years; he finds this girl and they got married. They both graduated in the same, they both got a Masters, and they both went to Harvard, both got their Doctorates in physics from Harvard.

INT: I think we spoke about this the first time I was here we talked about him.

MORRIS: Yeah, I don't remember. And what do you want to know about my life, family life?

INT: Well, the question was how were decisions made in your marriage? How did you decide things?

MORRIS: We decided, we talked about [things], but decisions were made by Anny; she was the matriarch.

INT: So she decided where you would live?

MORRIS: Anny, everything, where we would live and whatever. I was so involved with my business. Family life was for me... I came home. Family decisions Anny made, to be truthful, because I figure that she's more intelligent than me and she knows more facts and I trusted her judgement better than mine, because Anny was a very intelligent person. She knew much more about the world than I did because I was involved with my tailoring and that was my life. And Anny was a more progressive person, and when it came to these things, we talked about it. So we made decisions, Anny made the most decisions, I would say, because she was...

INT: Now at which point did your children learn about your war experiences?

MORRIS: Never did.

INT: They never?

MORRIS: Up until today they don't know much about what happened.

INT: They don't know?

MORRIS: No, they don't know.

INT: Did they know...

MORRIS: They were never interested. They didn't have the patience to listen. Now, now Henry would like to know. Henry would like to know, but when they were kids we never talked, we never talked. See we never talked at home that we were survivors.

INT: Did they realize that you had an accent that was different from some of their friends?

MORRIS: Yeah, that's all. That's as far as they knew. We never discussed, we never...

INT: Did they ask you why you had an accent?

MORRIS: No, never. They knew where we are and where we come from.

INT: Well how did they find out?

MORRIS: We never -- we were so assimilated in our home that we never, we never felt...After a few years we lived over here, even myself, with my accent, I didn't **hear** my accent. I didn't feel like I went through a war or something and Anny the same thing. We never discussed, we never talked about it. We tried from the beginning to get, to get so American, but in those days it was fashionable. I don't know what. We were so integrated into this [society] because we didn't have not one friend -- Anny had some friends, I think about one or two friends, two friends that are Hungarian -- but all of our friends were all American born until today.

INT: You say they knew, but how did they know?

MORRIS: I don't know. They knew about the history where we came from but we never talked about the war, what we went through, our experiences, the war experiences, we never talked about it in our house. We never talked about it.

INT: But if you never talked about it, how did they know?

MORRIS: What do you mean how did they know? They knew. Well, we **talked** about it, they knew. They knew my family, you know they knew who they are, where they come from. They knew my sisters, they met all of them. They never met their grandparents because they were in Israel.

INT: But their grandparents were alive.

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Which was different from a lot of other people.

MORRIS: It was different, yeah, but they never met them, so it's different. They never met them physically because we were in Philadelphia. They remember Anny's mother; Anny's family from over here they remember. But my family, only one sister was over here. Ziporah lived in the States for five years. They knew Ziporah.

INT: So they knew of the family, but because everybody was in Israel they didn't have family.

MORRIS: Only one sister of mine they knew because Ziporah lived over here. The children were born over here. But they knew who we are, that we lived through a war. They knew all these things, but we never talked at home, you know.

INT: Didn't they ever ask any questions?

MORRIS: Nothing, we never discussed. We never talked about it.

INT: And was this a conscious decision that you and your wife made not to talk about it?

MORRIS: No, no, no, no conscious decision. No, just that's the way it was. We never talked about it. Maybe because I was not in the concentration camps. See I was a different survivor than all the people that I know. I told you the story, that I was the lucky one and ended up, by accident or what, I wound up in the Urals.

INT: Yes, so I understand that.

MORRIS: Yeah, and I didn't have that experience... I went through after the war a lot, a lot more physically, suffering than in the wartime.

INT: Yes, I understand.

MORRIS: In the wartime, I had it good. I told you the story. Comparing to other people, I had it very comfortable. In that time, I think it was good. Very few people had it as good. Last month I was in Israel and [I saw] that guy I told you about the last couple of weeks. And he said, "Oh, hey, Moishe, he had it made!"

INT: Didn't you resent it though if people say you had it made, because you suffered?

MORRIS: What? He said, "Moishe, in the morning he used to shine the boots for the Russians. that was his job, to shine the boots and go and have a good time." Going over there you go in the

bazaar and meet people. The way people lived, I had it good. After, we find out there was a Holocaust. We didn't know about the Holocaust in Europe.

INT: Well when did your children find out about the Holocaust?

MORRIS: But my children, they never...

INT: Didn't they learn in school? They never did?

MORRIS: No, never talked about it. They felt they are American children, that they were born over here and they felt... Even Henry was born over there but he was eight months when we come over here, he was a baby.

INT: Are you saying they never thought of themselves as children of survivors?

MORRIS: Never children of survivors, no, I don't think so, no because their friends, the kids they grew up with, **their** parents were all American. They grew up on Peach Street in Wynnefield. All their friends -- there was no survivors. They didn't know they are different than the other kids.

INT: How about now as adults? Do they realize that they are children of survivors or don't they think of themselves that way?

MORRIS: I don't know. No, I don't think so. Maybe, but they **knew**. They **knew** but it didn't mean anything to them.

INT: It didn't mean anything to them.

MORRIS: Last, last year, last year Berl with his wife went to Europe for a vacation. The company gave them a vacation. They went to Switzerland and Budapest. Anny was still alive and she gave them the address where she grew up and told them to see that place. So they went there but it didn't make [any difference]. He came back, but it didn't make any impression. I don't think that's instilled in them. They didn't grow up like children of survivors. They **didn't** feel that. I don't think so, because we never discussed at home, we never talked about what we went through. But with strangers, I mean Anny was with people, with strangers, I could talk about it. I could sit from now till doomsday and I could talk about my experience. But in the family, we never talked. Anny didn't <u>like</u> to listen. When I talked about it, she went away. She didn't want to hear about it.

INT: Anny, she didn't want to hear about it?

MORRIS: No. It's gone.

INT: Was she ever in the camps?

MORRIS: Anny?

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: Anny was not in a [concentration] camp. For a short time she was in a labor [facility]. But see over there, when they were occupied, it was almost after the war. They took a lot of them and right away they put them into concentration camps, to Auschwitz, a lot of Hungarians. And Anny only was in Vienna; she worked in a factory with chemicals. She worked with chemicals to wash bottles, for a short time over there.

INT: So you are saying to me that because of the experiences that you both had, you didn't see yourselves as...?

MORRIS: We didn't, no. After a while we didn't think about it, that we are survivors or something.

INT: Do you think if you had been through the camps that you would have felt differently?

MORRIS: Of course, pretty sure. People lost their whole families, their immediate family, the parents, the fathers, the mothers. I didn't. I lost one brother and a sister but the most of the family, we survived up till today. We went through [a lot] in the beginning of the war but during all of the time of the war we were so isolated, we were so far away from Europe.

INT: So you think that the fact that your family, most of your immediate family survived, that that made the difference?

MORRIS: Maybe, maybe it made the difference, I think so. We survived as a unit. Eight people, we survived, the whole family. The older brother and sister they...

INT: They died in Warsaw.

MORRIS: We hoped, you know for a while we were going to find them, but it was still a big family, eight people. How many, how many people survived as whole families in the war?

INT: So you experienced the war in a different way than most people.

MORRIS: In a different way, yeah.

INT: Do you think that you had a feeling of more control over your life than people did who went through the camps?

MORRIS: Oh, of course.

INT: How do you see that?

MORRIS: I've never been under, (pause) under a detention place, not even for a day. I told you the story when we went, by accident or by what, I don't know how we came, by mazel, we went over there to Russia, that was the first step, we made the right step and that we registered to go for a year; we signed up.

INT: And these were choices, these are all conscious choices.

MORRIS: These are conscious choices we were making. That did it! That was the best move. We didn't know then how it is going to work out, but it worked out this way for the best. See we had thousands, hundred of thousands -- I think it was about 200,000 people in Russia, they were in the Gulags, because they didn't **do** what we did. They didn't want to register. They want to demonstrate and then Stalin took them over and send them, put them in the cattle cars, and sent them over in the Gulags. And they were over there till 1943.

INT: I guess I'm trying to establish whatever connection you make in your mind between the fact that when you came here you wanted to integrate, and that your children felt that they were Americanized, and I was trying to figure out what it was that caused that.

MORRIS: See those days, to be American citizen was so much; you were so proud of it.

INT: So you wanted to be American.

MORRIS: We were so proud. It's not like now. You got illegal immigration, you couldn't come over here unless somebody sponsored you and you had a job. The government couldn't, was not responsible for you. Either some organization or somebody; you had to have a sponsor. And to be an American then was a feather in your hat, it was like a big deal and we were proud of it.

INT: And you wanted to become Americanized.

MORRIS: We did become...we **did** and I accomplished in every way. See you asked me a question the other day, if I made the right decision, if I should have stayed in Stockton. I don't think so. I made a good life. It was **hard** in the beginning, but I made in Philadelphia for myself -- I raised a family -- my name in Philadelphia was so famous! Morris, in our trade, you didn't have to say "Morris B____," you just mention "Morris." Everybody knew in the whole industry, everybody knew who Morris is.

INT: Do you think you would have been successful no matter where you went?

MORRIS: I don't know. I don't know. Maybe because I was ambitious, very ambitious. Nothing was too hard. I never said "It cannot be done."

INT: But that was the way you were in the Urals.

MORRIS: Yeah, that's the way, yeah, yeah.

INT: Every time that you had a challenge you said, "I can, I'll try."

MORRIS: I know I can do it. Somebody can do it, I can do it better. And Anny, Anny said, "Always somebody can do it, you can do it better." That was her mother. And if I was in the other place and I wouldn't have made the decision [to come to Philadelphia], I don't know. How can you tell? But maybe I would make it because I was ambitious, you know, over here too. When I was in Philadelphia I was the only Jewish guy who had a position like I did. The whole trade, everyone knew me, Morris.

INT: But you have no regrets that you came here.

MORRIS: Everybody said here, if you could work for Morris, you could work anywhere. Tailors used to ask for a job, they ask them, who did you work for? Did you work for Morris at Morvilles? That was enough. If you could work for Morris, you must be good.

INT: You don't have any regrets that you came to Philadelphia?

MORRIS: No, no, absolutely not. In the beginning it was tough, you know in the beginning it was terrible. Anny made a big mistake when she left Stockton, but after years went by, I didn't feel -- up until today -- I don't feel no regret because I made a good, I made a good living.

INT: Now I wanted to ask you some questions about...

MORRIS: I have no regrets at all.

INT: ...how you and Anny raised your children. Now I know you told me that she played a big part in it but I want to ask you about some of your attitudes and some of, perhaps your philosophy in raising children.

MORRIS: Okay.

INT: What was the attitude that you had towards discipline? How were the children disciplined? Who did it and how was it done?

MORRIS: Very strong discipline. The kids had to have respect; they couldn't talk back to the parents. When one of us made a decision, that's what had to be, as long as they were home. But see, when they left -- I felt all the time, that what we did wrong, they say you let the chicken go too soon from the nest. They were too young when they left, when they left home. Henry finished school, he skipped grades. Henry was about fifteen years or sixteen years old when he went to college.

INT: So he was young.

MORRIS: Henry skipped two years. He was young, he was brilliant and that was a mistake. And right away we rented a dormitory for him. He could have come home, stayed home. It was not that far. He could go every morning. Mommy went to work; he could have gone to school the same time with her, because she had a car already. But he wanted to stay in the dormitory. The dormitory we had to pay for it; that was not included.

INT: So you feel with Henry that he left home too soon.

MORRIS: He left too soon. Henry was only, he was not even sixteen years old. But they all left home very young. That was **our** mistake, we didn't see.

INT: But they wanted to leave.

MORRIS: They wanted to leave and we didn't have no objection, we didn't know what's going turn out this way. See our kids were models, in Wynnefield, our kids were the model kids, the best.

INT: Examples.

MORRIS: Examples, yeah, for other kids, the best. And even in college when they started they were just brilliant; our children were **brilliant**, not good, **brilliant**! But it turned out when they first started finding their own buddies, their own company, it turned out... And the second, that was, that was in the peak of the Vietnam War. You know what went on in the colleges, and that was a big part [of it]. They got caught up in it. Today, they are still brilliant kids; they are still good children. But we had so much hope that they are going to be Einsteins. When Jerry went to school, the Vietnam War was already over, and he stayed in school all the time.

INT: It was a different time already.

MORRIS: Different time already, yeah. And his nature too was different already. He had different company, different friends.

INT: So are you, are you saying that if it hadn't have been for the war and for what was going on...?

MORRIS: The war had a lot to do with it, yeah. At that time, you know the demonstrations were going on with...

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: Kids were running around, running away to Canada, running away to over... It was turmoil, this is the time that our kids became teenagers; the time that they had to go to the army. That's unfortunate, but that's the way it happened. Our kids are brilliant. People were envious, how can you have three boys that are brilliant? Jerry was two-and-a-half years old, he read the paper, he read **The Bulletin** like nothing!

INT: What do you think your attitudes were about school?

MORRIS: Oh, that's a priority. That comes first. They went to school, then they came from school, they had to go to the Folk Shul. They had a Yiddish education. They all went when they were teenagers before they left home, they had to go. I think I told you there used to be a Folk Shul on Gainor Road.

INT: But they didn't go to Hebrew school, they went to...

MORRIS: They went to Sunday school.

INT: That was the Folk Shul.

MORRIS: No, no, no. Before Bar Mitzvah they, when we moved to Euclid Street, B'nai Aaron used to be on Euclid Street over there in the neighborhood. B'nai Aaron used to be right, a half a block from our where we lived. We lived on Peach Street and Euclid. B'nai Aaron was right on the corner from us.

INT: So they went to Folk Shul until they got to the point where they were ready for Bar Mitzvah, close to Bar Mitzvah age? No, they started earlier?

MORRIS: No, no, Folk Shul they went when they were youngsters.

INT: Little.

MORRIS: Little, yeah.

INT: So they went once a week? They went on Sundays to...?

MORRIS: Sunday went to B'nai Aaron. Sunday school we used to call it.

INT: Sunday school, yeah. And did they learn to read Hebrew?

MORRIS: Of course. Not Berl. Henry's Bar Mitzvah was like a big wedding. Everybody came. I have pictures from Henry's Bar Mitzvah. Do you want to see them? I have a picture we made in Wynnefield. Oh boy, was that a **big**, **big** occasion. Dembowitz was the rabbi then.

INT: Did Henry mind going to Hebrew school or did he?

MORRIS: Henry learned the Sefer Torah like, oh G-d! I'll never forget. It was beautiful. Berl was already... See when Henry had a Bar Mitzvah, I still had my European culture. See when my mother passed away we lived in Wynnefield. On Berks Street was a Bas Hamedrash. Bas Hamedrash, not a school.

INT: Oh, it was an Orthodox synagogue.

MORRIS: It was Orthodox, old fashioned; it was the same way that I grew up in Europe. I felt comfortable there because it was the same atmosphere, the same way, the davening was the same way. My mother passed away and for twelve months I didn't **miss one** day, I had to go to say Kaddish, to minyan. They knew already, I had to go to work, so they made it an early minyan. there was not one day I missed because I had still my European culture, that you have to go to say Kaddish. And I loved my mother so dearly. On Berks Street I used to go every day for twelve months.

INT: What did the children think of that?

MORRIS: Nothing, normal; there was nothing to tell the children, they knew. When they were little, I'm telling you, they spoke Yiddish, they spoke Hungarian, and spoke Yiddish and spoke English. They were speaking three languages till they became teenagers. After that forget everything like it was nothing. And when they grew up they were speaking -- and Henry especially and Berl -- they were speaking a good Yiddish. And now they don't know, they don't remember nothing!

INT: I guess what I'm trying to figure out is the transition, how it came from being so involved and being so steeped in it.

MORRIS: It takes time, time takes care of everything. Time does it. Now Anny was different. See me and Anny, when it came to upbringing, we came from two different worlds.

INT: Yeah, I understand that.

MORRIS: See we came from two different backgrounds completely. I grew up in a Yiddish area and a religious home. My mother was very religious. My father was always a Shamas and Gabbai in the shul, and the whole thing and I grew up in that atmosphere. If I'm religious or not, it doesn't matter. It's in my blood!

[Tape 10 — End Side 2] [Tape 11 — Begin Side 1]

INT: This is tape number eleven, side 1 of an interview with Morris B. and we were talking about the differences in upbringing between himself and his wife and how that expressed itself in terms of Judaism, perhaps at home and in other aspects of their lives. Do you think that because you were away from home so much working and that Anny was here, that the children developed more secular attitudes?

MORRIS: Yeah, probably. And I, I was not the, I was not religious myself.

INT: So it didn't matter to you? Did you care?

MORRIS: I went to the synagogue only, you know Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, or if there was a wedding or something, or occasion or Bar Mitzvah, otherwise I didn't. After I finished with my mother's Kaddish... But you live, you live your family life at home. We were not kosher and for a while, the first year, two years, we only had kosher; not because for religious reasons, we couldn't get used to it to go to the store and buy. So we used to go, I remember when we lived on Diamond Street here, every Saturday we used to go on Fourth Street. Over there was a market, it was a "shochet"[ritual slaughterer] over there.

INT: On **Saturday**?

MORRIS: No, no.

INT: On Sunday.

MORRIS: Sunday, on Sunday. But I remember we took -- I don't remember which day -- on Fourth Street there were trolley cars, used to be a number seven trolley, we used to take the kids to Fourth Street and we used to buy live chickens.

INT: Yes, and then the shochet killed them.

MORRIS: And the shochet was over there, I remember the store like now. It took us a long time until we could go to the store and buy a chicken. And you had to flick the feathers, the whole thing. It took a long time till we got used to it. There are certain things we were doing, not because you're frum or something as religion, it is because you grew up like this. You know you have to do this.

INT: So you were kosher not because of any religious beliefs, it was more habit and custom.

MORRIS: It was habit, it was born in, you know you grew up like this.

INT: Did you ever have a feeling about whether you wanted to transmit Judaism to your children or what...?

MORRIS: I did, but it was impossible for me. I couldn't, I was so occupied that it didn't matter to me.

INT: Oh it didn't, it was not important?

MORRIS: I thought it's going to stay with them. Who the hell knew? Who knew what is going to be. It doesn't matter, that you have to be a "frimma Yid." See, I separate these things, to be a "frimma" Yid and to be a Yid; it's **two different things** to me. I know a lot of...

INT: It's a difference between what you feel in your heart and what you observe?

MORRIS: Yeah, I knew a lot of people, they are not religious but they are still good people, Yiddish, they are so full of them. That's the way I feel about myself. That's in my blood. I was born this way and I'm going to die this way.

INT: Do you attribute that whatever you do, whatever's good about you, do you attribute this to your Jewishness, and to your Jewish background and your Jewish upbringing?

MORRIS: Yeah, my mother brought me up this way and I'm gonna stay this way the rest of my life. Anny was different. I never told Anny what to do and Anny never told me what to do when it came to this kind of thing. When the kids were small, we knew we lived in that neighborhood, we have to raise them this way. But after, I don't know. It didn't play a part in our lives. All of our friends were Jewish. They were the same as us.

INT: So you didn't really feel that...

MORRIS: They were the same and they were good people. Some of them up till today, the Browns, they are more religious. They were **born** over here. They are more religious -- not religious, but...

INT: Observant?

MORRIS: ...observant than we were because Anny was not into religion, because her philosophy of life then was different, completely.

INT: What was her philosophy?

MORRIS: That you have to be a good person. You don't have to be a religious person, but that didn't mean anything to her. You have to be a good person; that's what matters. And what kind of religion you are doesn't mean anything. Some people are religious, and they are **good** people, and there are religious people and they are **bad** people. What has that got to do with it?

INT: So whether you're...

MORRIS: We took religion like it was personal, like it's a private thing. I don't know. I had my own feeling. I'm proud, that's what I **am** because that's the way I was all my life. But in a home, I lived with a woman which I loved very much and we got along; we never fought; we never argued; there was no such thing; we didn't know what a fight is. So our problem was with the kids, certain things.

INT: So how did you deal with those?

MORRIS: We solved the problems. Our kids grew up with so much love; they grew up with so much love in the family. They could only see we kiss each other or play, but there was no such thing [as fighting] and we came from two different backgrounds. But our life was wonderful. She passed away and I still feel like I'm with her. I do things now, I feel that Anny's with me.

So the question is about religion. I don't know. I have my whole family in Israel and my parents both are buried in Haifa, in Israel, and my whole family is over there. I have a big, big family and I'm so involved with, I'm so full of it. But to be a "frimma Yid," it's to me a different thing. I've never been since I was fourteen years old. I respect very much, sometime I envy people who are very religious.

INT: Why?

MORRIS: Because I feel when I'm in trouble, I would have something to lean on. Because religious people can overcome grief easier, terrible times because they say that it's G-d's will.

INT: So you're saying you don't have a concept of G-d like that?

MORRIS: No. No, I don't say there is no G-d. I believe in it but I have a different outlook. I don't know. I don't feel like it's a crutch. I can never think that it's G-d's Will, you know, that G-d is going to take care of it. I don't know how to explain this. I don't think anybody can explain this.

INT: Well it sounds...

MORRIS: Now, there are atheists, and there are non-believers and there are skeptics.

INT: Yeah, where are you?

MORRIS: I'm in the middle. (laughs)

INT: A nonbeliever?

MORRIS: No.

INT: A skeptic?

MORRIS: A skeptic? Well I don't know. I don't think about it. It doesn't mean anything to me.

INT: Well what role do you think that G-d played in the Holocaust?

MORRIS: I wish you wouldn't ask that question (pause) because He couldn't stand by and see what went on. (pause). Fiddler on the Roof tells the best -- why didn't you choose somebody else? We are the chosen ones. G-d, why didn't you choose somebody else? I don't know. That's a questions maybe smarter people than me can maybe answer. (deep sigh) If there <u>is</u> a loving G-d, he wouldn't permit this kind of thing to happen, what happened.

INT: Did your feelings about G-d change after the war?

MORRIS: No. (deep sigh) I grew up at a time when we had people that went to shul every day. Some went to mincha, ma'ariv and shaharit and musaf and the whole thing, and they were bad people. And I knew people who didn't go to mincha, ma'ariv and shaharit and musaf, and they were **very good** people, devoted Jews. Thanks to these people, we have our own state now. We have Israel. These people who didn't stay all day davening, thanks to these people we have our own proud country, a beautiful country which I just saw with my own eyes. Two-and-a-half months ago I was there, and I'm proud of it. And this was build **not** by people who stayed the whole day and davened and they were some of them very good people. See that's the way I look at it. I cannot explain it in a better way except that I'm from that sort of people. What you have is so personal; what you have in your heart nobody can take it away from you. I love my people. I grew up, I loved every minute. I saw different nations. I lived in so many countries in my life: In Germany, and Russia, and Poland, Czechoslovakia. Then after the war, we were with Rumanians, we were integrated with all kinds of different cultures. In every people there are good and bad ones, but my people, that's what I was born into. **It's me, nobody can take it away**! My G-d, even my own wife couldn't, and I loved her dearly. We left each other alone, she never told me not to do or what to do or to be frim or not to be. Before I met her it was different. To be a "frimma Yid," we called it, religious, is a different thing. I have nothing [against it], you know, G-d bless them. In my way, I feel just as good for myself to be a Jew as the frimma who stays and davens. He chose this way, he feels good to be this way, good for him. I respect him, I love it. But don't tell me. That's not me, I have the right to be my way. I have to live my own way.

INT: If we can get back to this for a moment. How does...

MORRIS: Maybe the children would be -- maybe it's a reflection. It could be. If I would be a frimma, the children would be different. I don't know! I don't know. I know Rabbi D. He's a brilliant man and I love him, but he had more trouble with the children in his personal life than I had. I know the whole story.

INT: How were decisions made concerning your children? Did your children get involved in making any decisions that involved them?

MORRIS: Involved them?

INT: Yes. So you already said that your wife decided what school they would go to. What other? Did they ever have jobs? Did they have part—time jobs while they were going to school?

MORRIS: Yeah, oh yeah, Berl worked when he was a teenager. Berl was in a gasoline station.

INT: What did he do with the money?

MORRIS: Ah, pinball, smoking cigarettes.

INT: So he earned money for his own pleasures.

MORRIS: For his own pleasures. Well they used to get an allowance. But Berl, Berl was different. Berl liked different things; motorcycles, and we found out one time and we caught him smoking cigarettes when he was twelve, thirteen years old. We saw him from the car when he was standing on the corner; he was standing with his buddies. Then he used to go play pinball machines. That was just a stage though. Henry was different, Henry played sports. And Jerry was a "tutish" we called it in Hungarian.

INT: A tutish?

MORRIS: "Tut," in Hungarian it's a tutish,

INT: What's that?

MORRIS: You know, you study all the time.

INT: A brain.

MORRIS: A brain there in the book. In the book.

INT: How did they get along with one another?

MORRIS: Henry and Berl grew up like twins, that close. You know they were so close in age. Very close together, very close, very, very close. I cannot understand **now** how they, that they were so close that it's unbelievable.

INT: What's their relationship now?

MORRIS: Berl and Jerry, they talk by E-mail. I don't know what it is, E-mail, they talk through E-mail. I asked Jerry last night, "Do you know what (unclear)...?" He said, "Yes, but I just talked to him by E-mail." (laughs)

INT: They send messages by computer.

MORRIS: Messages by the computer, yeah. In Israel I was talking with E-mail to Jerry in the Kwajaleins, in the Marshall Islands.

INT: How old is Henry now?

MORRIS: Henry's forty-six. 1949... He's forty-six. He was forty-six in April.

INT: What kind of work does he do?

MORRIS: He does commercial art, decoration, you know, like outside you make decorations for games, certain things. They sent to Philadelphia -- the Regatta what they have over here -- the Regatta, they had signs.

INT: Oh, the Regatta?

MORRIS: He made signs for them. You know they have these kinds of things; they have for circuses, for restaurants, for certain thing. That's what he's doing. Inside decorations, art. He said somebody went to him last week. Some crazy guy wants the whole house he wants to make it look like original bricks, like original bricks inside. See he makes things like this, he made this for Anny for her birthday. [shows interviewer]

INT: This is...

MORRIS: For Anny, he sent for her birthday when she was sixty-five.

INT: So it's her name and then around the circle it says, "Any way you look at it it's still Anny."

MORRIS: See you can turn any way.

INT: For Anny's birthday, uh huh.

MORRIS: See any way you turn it, it comes up Anny in the same way. It says, "Happy Birthday. Love, Henry." Anyway, what did it say?

INT: Anyway you look at it...

MORRIS: Anyway you look at it it's still the same, Anny. He was very brilliant with this kind of thing. We should have let him go to art school.

INT: What about Berl? Did he turn out the way you expected?

MORRIS: Berl, Berl was running around, at one time he was flying airplanes, at one time too we got a big scare, he got lost. He was out taking lessons and he got lost in the airplane. He got lost. He couldn't find the place where to land. It was a big scare. He learned a trade, and then he went to night school and now he's got a very big job. He's got a job with a big company where he's in charge of the whole computer thing. Very busy with computers.

INT: So how do you feel about the way he turned out?

MORRIS: Very good. He's very close to me now. He's very good-natured.

INT: How about Jerry? Are you satisfied with the way he turned out?

MORRIS: He got a good education and he got his doctorate in physics from Harvard. We get along well, but he's always lived far away.

INT: So what do you make of all of this?

MORRIS: I don't know. I don't know. It's like you take a person, if you look in the ceiling you see how little you are. If you look at the floor you see how big you are. So I don't know. I have a lot of good stuff, a good life, opportunity. They had all the things to make their lives the best they wanted. They had the brains, they had the opportunity, the whole world was open to them. Maybe they had it too easy, too good. They didn't have to go through what I went through, what we went through, as teenagers what we went through in our lives.

INT: Did you and your wife consciously try to make their lives better than the lives that you had or was this something, a goal that you had?

MORRIS: Sure, of course we had a goal. But we didn't have, we didn't have the opportunity. We lived in a "galus."

INT: Where?

MORRIS: Galus is the Diaspora.

INT: Oh, oh, oh.

MORRIS: We didn't have these opportunities like the kids had in America.

INT: Did you have goals for your children? What were your goals?

MORRIS: Yeah, we thought they could be anything. They are going to be professors, doctors. Jerry became a professor, doctor. How many parents can say, you know my son is a doctor, has his doctorate in physics from Harvard? It could have been much better. So it's mixed feelings. You look one way, you look and you see how wonderful, healthy they grew up. And they're still making a living. You see other people, how they're not working.

INT: So you had different, you had very high...

MORRIS: We had high, high hopes because they were **brilliant** and they had a mother who was on top of every situation. They had to do everything that Anny said had to be done. They had a lot of support, they loved their mother. You know there was no such thing as talking back, there was Mommy said something, that's the way it would be. After they left the house, I don't know what they did. You look now what's going on with youngsters. Horrible. Not good.

INT: Let me ask you this, how would you like your grandchildren and your children to think of you and remember you?

MORRIS: I don't know, I don't know, I don't know how because we hardly see each other, once in a while. They're jealous of the older one. [unintelligible] I lost? so much with that girl, when she was up to six years old. You cannot love more, she was everything, she was so brilliant. I love my own children.

[Tape 11 — End Side 1] [Tape 13 — Begin Side 2]

INT: From our conversations, it sounds as though your children are more Jewish -- your grandchildren and your children -- are more Jewish than you, than you let on.

MORRIS: Well, they still grew up when they were teenagers until they got married, they grew up in a very Jewish family! Now I wasn't talking about the fanatic family, religious. But, they grew up in a Jewish atmosphere. Maybe their friends, the kids, our friends, they were all growing up as Jewish people.

INT: Yes, so you think that they were Jewish...

MORRIS: But we were not **religious**, you know to go everyday to synagogue or something, but we lived a Jewish life!

INT: Do you think that they have the same thing inside them?

MORRIS: It stays with them. You know the thing which stays with you forever. I know from myself since I was a kid. You cannot take it away. I have the European influence because that's the way I grew up. I was already older than them. See in Europe we lived different, a more ghetto life. It was not a ghetto but a more segregated life. The Jews lived separate. You were not integrated into society like you are over here. But they still knew who they are because they grew up in our house and we lived a Jewish life. In other words, Yontif or something, we celebrated; that was a normal thing, Hanukkah or Pesach or...

INT: So you celebrated the holidays but the distinction you're making is between the people you saw as being "frim," and yourself who you didn't see yourself as "frim" but you did observe the holidays.

MORRIS: "Frim," yeah, no, I didn't. But this has got nothing to do with it. It has got nothing to do with being a "frimma." I don't know, maybe I don't express it right.

INT: I understand.

MORRIS: There's a frimma and there is **not** a "frimma," but it doesn't mean that you're not the same, the same thing.

INT: Well isn't it like a matter of degree? If you drew a line, at one point is people who don't do anything and at the other line is people who do everything. And you're in the middle someplace.

MORRIS: See in Judaism that I grew up, that I remember, we had different [kinds of Jews]: You had Hasidim; you had misnagdim; then you had secular -- you had different kinds. We were split and we were in organizations too. We had Zionists and you had bunds, you had Communists -- a lot of people liked the Communist Party; a lot of people liked the bunds; a lot of people liked Chalutzim. There were Mizrachis; there was the Agudah, and you had Shomer Hatzair, and you had all these. See, I think we were more progressive. In the backward way we lived, we were more developed culturally. I think we were much more advanced than you have you life over here. Because we were together more, we had smaller countries, society had different structures. Society was different structures and everybody had a choice. Nobody told you [what to do]. You belonged to the group you felt good in, and it had nothing to do with the nationality, with the feeling of being Jewish. I met the Shomer Hatzair, they were devoted, but they were godless.

INT: Godless.

MORRIS: Godless, yeah. And then the Mizrachis were half-way; they were frimma, but not fanatic. Chalutzim was a labor party of Zionist organization; and then was the opposite, you had the bunds, socialists, and then you had the extremes were the Communists. And the Jewish people, we were in a small country compared to the United States, we were three-and-a-half million people. We could afford to have our own, to be segregated to live our life the way we chose. I wish you would read this newspaper. See this, here there is an article and it tells you the whole story. In the Spanish Inquisition and from the whole Judaism, I read last night, it tells you, explains how the Jewish culture developed. Here's an article from the misnagdim. It explains it from the beginning, how misnagdim developed, how the Hasidim, the Baal Shem Tov and the whole thing [developed].

INT: This is the Jewish Forward?

MORRIS: This is the Jewish Forward, yeah. See, it says: [Reads in Yiddish.]

INT: So you're saying to me that between Europe and America is a different world.

MORRIS: Different world completely. A different culture, and we lived different. But in a certain way, a teenager was much more culturally developed, even with a lesser education. But we had our own education, self-education. And I remember, we had a neighbor, and he was brilliant! He never went to school a day, and he was the most brilliant person in the world. Scientist, he was a genius, but he never went to school, was self-educated, a genius. There was a lot of people like this. Just take a look at Israel. Who built this country? It started with Ben Gurion, with Sharett, the whole thing. Where do they come from? They were all Litvaks. They were all brilliant people came from shtetlach, from the little towns and they developed into giants. The whole generation, the real people who made the foundation, thank G-d to them, we are proud to be Jews in our own state.

INT: So you attribute that to their background.

MORRIS: To these people, that they all they came -- I know the places where they came from: From Vilna, from Minsk, from all these places, the whole generations. I remember they left, when I was a kid, it was maybe 1930, my cousin, my father's brother's son, in 1933, they picked themselves up, they left. They died over there; they died of malaria. They were brilliant people.

INT: So why do you think if...

MORRIS: ...were brilliant people, well educated, they had so much culture, so much. Fantasies. They had a vision, they had a vision.

INT: Well why if the United States, when you came here there was so much education, why...

MORRIS: Who came over here? The best, they got destroyed. Very few left...

INT: No, I'm (?).

MORRIS: How many people, a hundred, two hundred thousand from the three-and-a-half million what's left to us? They all got [destroyed], there was nothing left.

INT: No, I'm talking about **your** family, **your** children.

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: I guess I'm trying to see the connection between the education and the opportunities that they had compared to what...

MORRIS: I look at myself now. With all of the things that I told you, I feel my life was a tragedy.

INT: Why?

MORRIS: My, my young years, when I had time, I had no opportunity to develop. I was a kid, I had to start to work to learn a trade. And then the war broke out right after this; and I was in a culture and I was integrated. See, I told you over here that when I came to America, we tried to get integrated. When I came to the Soviet Union, when I came to Russia, after a year, I didn't **know** that I was born in a different country, I was so...

INT: I remember.

MORRIS: ...I was so integrated in their culture that I thought I was **born** there. I felt so involved, you know I didn't know. See when you're young or when you mature and as you get older you cannot learn the language, you cannot lose your accent.

INT: So you're saying those years...

MORRIS: You can lose your accent to a certain age, to twelve years old. After twelve years old you cannot lose your accent. This is proven scientifically.

INT: So during the years, during your formative years and during the years...

MORRIS: I got caught up in a time which was, it was a turmoil, you know it was all over the world.

INT: That's the tragedy. What do you think you would have been?

MORRIS: I don't know. Maybe would be worse. I don't think I would have had a good life like I did have. That had nothing to do with it. You don't **know** what it would be. How do you know what it would be? But I didn't have time. See I was **too** young or **too** old in one way. In that generation that build Israel, was the giants, they were much older than me. They were a generation or more older than me.

INT: So they had had time to finish their education.

MORRIS: Education, you know and they had time to develop. I **didn't** have time.

INT: But then the people who were very young children, they had a chance to get education later.

MORRIS: And the best, the brightest got destroyed, got burned in the concentration camps.

INT: So why were you too old?

MORRIS: I'm left alive by myself by accident, by mazel or by whatever you can call it. It just happened, you know, it turned out my way. But the majority didn't' survive. They all got burned; they all got destroyed. You're talking about six million people! You're not talking about one hundred people or something. A whole nation. In Poland alone, we were three-and-a-half million people. I remember in Warsaw, it was filled with Jews. You lived in two worlds. How could it happen that they could destroy such a civilization. We had build our own civilization, even in "galus" (you call it galut), we lived our own rich life; poor like hell, poor, poor life...

INT: So it's the cultural life.

MORRIS: Poor, poor life but a rich cultural life.

INT: It sounds like you had to struggle with that all your life.

MORRIS: You had to struggle with that all your life, yeah, yeah, yeah I struggled all my life. I felt deprived all my life.

INT: So you felt deprived of not having been able to grow up in your culture.

MORRIS: Of not having been able to grow up in my culture. I grew up always in strange cultures.

INT: That's the tragedy of your life?

MORRIS: Yeah, might be. I don't know if it's a tragedy or not, I don't look at it that way, I don't think about it in that way.

INT: Well you used the word **tragedy**. That's why I wondered what you meant.

MORRIS: Yeah, tragedy because I got caught up in a time with a turmoil. A lot of years, you didn't know **who** you are. You tried to make the best of it. Thank G-d. You tried to make the best of a bad situation and maybe I survived because of this. I always tried to make the best of a bad situation. Maybe I survived by this, I don't know.

INT: But if you had had your choice you would have preferred to grow up in your culture.

MORRIS: Yeah, I grow up in my culture and...

INT: In your own country?

MORRIS: Because a spiritual life, I think that means a lot to a person to develop, you know.

INT: You were always a fish out of water.

MORRIS: I was a youngster, you know, I was almost dead and I survived. The instinct of survival takes over. That comes first. If a human being wouldn't have an instinct of survival, nobody would survive what we went through. We wouldn't have had all the survivors, the little that did survive. The instinct -- I knew for a fact, I knew when I was in bed with typhus five weeks unconscious, and I heard in my unconscious that there's shooting and that something happened, with 105' temperature, I went down from bed. The instinct, something told me that I didn't want to die. You know I told you that story, I don't know if you remember.

INT: Yeah, sure.

MORRIS: That they going to burn down the town, you know...

INT: Yes, I know the story.

MORRIS: And I said I don't want to be burned alive and I just went down from bed. And the next morning I was saying I am hungry. So there is something in the human being, the will to survive in wartime. It was bad times, so you had a dream some day it's going to end, and it's going to be **better** times. The sun is going to shine again. That's the way people survive, I

guess. I hear stories -- I didn't go through what these people did -- I hear stories these people from the concentration camps, they tell how they lived, how they tried to survive. That's impossible. If they wouldn't have had that will, that instinct, that will to survive, they wouldn't have survived. Now in the normal times you get sick, you get a cold, you die. You get a pleurisy, you get all kind of things. These people lived like rats -- animals lived better -- and some survived.

INT: So you attribute that to their will to survive?

MORRIS: Yes, yeah, that's right and nobody's going to deny it to me because I knew what I went through twice, typhus and dysentery and all those things.

INT: Well I guess we ought to stop. There's still more, I know, but we'll just have to complete this the next time. I think we've talked enough for one day.

MORRIS: But see, when this started, you know I don't think about it. But when I started talking to you, it started bringing back things which you don't ever think about. It's tragic, and it's good, and it's bad, I don't know. I'm only telling you **my** story. I cannot tell you everything in detail and after what happened, so many things, it's impossible to remember everything.

INT: Well that's not our goal.

MORRIS: Every day has twenty-four hours and we went through so many **years** in between. Every day, every minute it was a struggle, and you have to weigh it, did I make the right [decision]? You always have to make decisions. Did I make the right decision or not? Thank G-d it turned out good for me. But people who know how to write books, they can put it down on paper. I can't, I don't have the talent for it. I wish I would.

INT: Oh, you've got it down on tape here.

MORRIS: See now people are putting it down on paper, they are writing their books and everything and it's interesting, but I don't have the talent for this.

[Tape 11 — End Side 2] [Tape 12 — Begin Side 1]

INT: Today is May the 25th and this is tape number 12 of an interview with Morris B. who is a Holocaust survivor. Now let's start with this: How would you describe or what would you see as the successes of your life, and how you got them and how you achieved them?

MORRIS: You mean the new life what I built?

INT: Well throughout your life, looking back now what were your biggest successes?

MORRIS: I don't know, what successes? I worked hard.

INT: Yes, is there anything that you're especially proud of?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: What?

MORRIS: That after all of this, what we went through, we built a new life. It took a while, but we were very successful. We were happy, we raised a family and thank G-d that we are... Even now, she [Anny] passed away, but I'm in good shape except loneliness. Otherwise I consider it a success. After all we went through, and we started working here. So what else? What do you expect in life? Of course we had the ups and downs like anybody else, but in general I think I was...

INT: So your big success was having started life again here?

MORRIS: Yes. I was happy and (pause) I keep going, I don't know. I don't know. You look at other people, maybe some people were more successful financially but hey, it never bothered me. I never had ambition to be rich. How do we explain this? I never, never even today never had ambitions, money, you know to be rich or something. Just to make a living, to be comfortable. I never, never had any ambition to be rich.

INT: Why? Why do you think?

MORRIS: I don't know why. To me it don't mean nothing. I don't know why. (laughs)

INT: Okay, well.

MORRIS: A lot of people, they'll do anything just, just to make money. Of course, you need money to go on.

INT: But that was not your goal.

MORRIS: That was not my goal, no.

INT: And if you had to point to some of the **mistakes** that you've made in your life, could you do that?

MORRIS: Mistakes in my life? (pause) I don't know. Maybe, if I would have been living with my whole family, if we had moved to live with them in Israel, I don't know. See now the whole family is there. They all live in Israel, but family, tremendously big family, in the hundreds, with two, three generations. And I'm alone, period. I'm alone over here. When I went there, I thought maybe I'm going to settle and move there and then I thought it is not feasible.

INT: You couldn't handle it physically.

MORRIS: No, physically and I don't know. Too far gone culturally and the whole thing.

INT: Do you know what comes to mind?

MORRIS: I don't think I would be happy. I would like to be together with them. I looked around and I saw the good side and the bad side. The main thing is the health-wise.

INT: Health.

MORRIS: Yeah, to climb up and down, yeah, I'm still paying. A few months and I'm still paying the price. I spent two months to get my health back. Yeah, yeah a hard price.

INT: It reminds me of when you went away to the Talmud Torah.

MORRIS: Yeah, I was a kid. That's different.

INT: Wait, wait, I know. Listen. Listen. You went away, and you came back, and your mother tried to put you in school, the principal said, "Where am I going to put him?"

MORRIS: That's right.

INT: He's been away too long. So he doesn't fit here and he doesn't fit there, what am I going to do? So it sounds to me like you're saying you went to Israel and it's too late. If you had gone there at the beginning you would have been part of it, but coming now, it's too late and you don't fit in. It's not...

MORRIS: You don't fit in. It's hard because you have the language, and the culture and the way they live. It's beautiful, everything, I love that but I -- not for me anymore, because the last fifty years, practically, I lived in a different culture and a different lifestyle. And I don't know.

INT: But that's what popped into my mind as you were telling this to me I just thought how similar it was to your experience as a child.

MORRIS: Well, a child you do -- I was a youngster, I was a baby -- you did what your mother wants you to do, what your parents tell you to do. So that's different, not the same thing. But who knows? I discussed it with my wife many times, about the same question, you know, we were asking each other, wouldn't it be better if we were together over there? And she said, "How do you know your kids wouldn't be in the army, and they wouldn't be killed, with all the wars they went through." How do you know? How can you tell if you did the right thing or not? Who knows?

INT: So over the years though you had this pull of wanting to be with the rest of your family.

MORRIS: Yeah, but one thing it would be, we always were in contact. We never lost contact with them. Every week, you know I talked to them and whenever they have a chance my sister

comes over here for a while; two of the sisters, and I go there. I've been there about five times. But to settle over there, not now, it's too late for me because it's not easy. It's very hard physically by myself. If I knew that someday the kids would do this, they would come too, but I know it's just a dream.

INT: And you don't want to be that far away from your children?

MORRIS: No. If they would want to come they could come see me, or I could come see them. That's not a problem, no. I just don't have the energy anymore to, to pick myself up now and start building a new, a new life, you know. I'm comfortable here, very comfortable here. And who knows about tomorrow? I don't know.

INT: Do you blame yourself for anything that you did or didn't do over the years, for any mistakes?

MORRIS: No, definitely not. What?

INT: No.

MORRIS: No. How can you say? How can you answer a question like this? How do you know what would be or wouldn't be? (laughs) I don't know. Remember, we were talking, you know in California, we should have made it there. In the beginning I thought we made a big mistake, but in the long run I don't think [so]. It worked out for the best.

INT: Do you think your nature is such that you would have made something work out for the best no matter where you were?

MORRIS: Yeah, maybe, yeah because I was a go-getter.

INT: Oh, a go-getter. Oh yes.

MORRIS: Yeah, you know nothing scared me, no, nothing scared me. And I told you, I didn't have big ambitions. The only thing which all my life stayed with me that I felt I needed, was that I didn't get a formal education.

INT: So that's a regret.

MORRIS: That stayed with me all this time. If I had education I could go a little farther, but see the difference is, whatever I didn't have in formal education, with my self discipline I accomplished more than a person can.

INT: So you made up for your lack of formal knowledge.

MORRIS: I made up for my lack of formal knowledge. Can you imagine? I grew up, I went through a war, and we talked about a lot about what went on. And then I met a nice person and

you know, we were married, forty—eight years, raised a family. And we built a life -- we came to this country -- we started building a new life and we were very successful. Our son went to Harvard graduate school.

INT: This is your younger son.

MORRIS: The younger son.

INT: Give me an example of how your lives were different than your children's lives.

MORRIS: An example? We were, we did everything together. To us it didn't matter and we could walk in the street, it could be nowhere, we could kiss, and this was a **normal** thing. You know it was always affection. Their lives are just opposite from ours. Ours, we looked at ourselves and we look at the children; the way we lived and the way **they** live is just like, there is no resemblance at all.

INT: Is it connectedness?

MORRIS: No, but the things which young people are supposed to [feel]. I remember when we were their age, my G-d! There was so much happiness, and they don't have it. They don't know what it is. I think it has to do with the times too, I don't know, with this women's lib, with the whole thing what's going on. It's a different world. They saw the way we lived. Many times they made a remark, "Well, there is not another mommy." Sometimes we criticized or we'd say something and they'd say, "Well, what do you expect? There's not another..." They'd tell the mommy, "There's not another person in the world like you." Anny used to say, "What do you expect? A different world." That's it.

INT: A different world.

MORRIS: Yeah. Maybe they're right. I don't know.

INT: Do you think they were referring to the differences of the European background versus an American?

MORRIS: No, no, no. It was not a European thing. That had nothing to do with it. It was personality. Anybody who knew, who knew Anny, my wife, not just because it's me, because anybody who knew this person was, was just -- she was just an exception. She was a very, very different person; personality, smart, she knew how to handle situations too. And she expected maybe her children to be like her.

INT: Now I want to ask you some questions about the Holocaust, about the section that's called confronting the Holocaust. So here are some questions. Do you read any Holocaust literature or see any Holocaust films?

MORRIS: Yes, I saw Holocaust films, a lot of them, oh yeah. Almost all of them, whatever's been put out. And I read a lot, because I'm getting the Jewish paper, The Forward, the Jewish Forward, and there is constantly every week, you learn the whole Jewish history. That paper I enjoy more than anything else because they have from the Bas Hamedrash time, every week there are articles in the paper, in The Forward. Jewish history...everything, articles are written constantly.

INT: So you learn from that.

MORRIS: Well I didn't learn from that, but see, you read what people publish, and these people are from my generation, a lot of people from Warsaw. These people that I read now who are publishing in the paper, I read them when they were writing even **before** the war, the same people, very, very, very bright. Very good stuff, good stuff.

INT: Have your children read anything about the Holocaust?

MORRIS: I don't think so. I don't think so. I don't think they know anything. They are not interested. Absolutely, they don't know.

INT: Would it be important for them to know this, to know about the Holocaust?

MORRIS: It **would** be but if they didn't learn up till now, that's too late, so forget it.

INT: What about your grandchildren? Should they know about the Holocaust?

MORRIS: My grandchildren, I don't think they know anything. My kids, when they were small we never discussed it. As I told you we never talked about the Holocaust or this kind of thing.

INT: Well thinking about the world outside of your family, how important is it that other Jews know about the Holocaust? What is **your** opinion?

MORRIS: People, I think should always not forget. This is a thing which you should never forget it. You should always remember it can happen again. Anybody thinks it cannot happen again is...

INT: That's what I wanted to ask you about. What are your thoughts about that?

MORRIS: People should not forget it. You cannot let them forget. It's a tragedy. I don't know, I cannot understand why these generations... Now when you read in the bible all the things what happened in Babel, with Amalek, with Haman... All these things, you know they're written down forever. Now it's even hard to talk about it and the tragedy was not as big as what happened now. They were persecuted, chased around, they were killed and burned alive. But now it's almost accepted; it happened, so what?

INT: So you're saying to me that anybody who reads the history of the Jewish people and looks back at all the things that happened to them, and you mentioned Haman and Amalek and that they...

MORRIS: Amalek, and you know what happened over there. With the Romans, you know when you go back; with the czars, with the whole thing, but it wasn't as bad as what happened in the Holocaust.

INT: The Holocaust was the worst.

MORRIS: The Holocaust was the worst, so we should not forget it.

INT: Why do you think it could happen again?

MORRIS: Because, why do you think it can happen? Because they're already trying to deny it. You have all the people denying that it happened. Already while we're still alive.

INT: How does that make you feel when you hear that?

MORRIS: How does it make me feel? It makes me feel mad. It makes me feel terrible. What's going to happen in twenty years when nobody's going to be left? There are still survivors, everybody's in their seventies. And they are already denying that it happened. Why can't it happen? You see it over here already. We thought we're so safe over here. I don't know if we're so safe. Not too sure.

INT: What do you feel happening that makes you feel not that safe?

MORRIS: What makes me feel that way? Antisemitism is still real. You can still feel it. Anybody thinks that it's gone is kidding themselves

INT: So you sense that here. What about when you read the paper and you see what's going on in Europe? You know, when you read the news, do you have concerns about things that are going on in Europe about the future? What do you think about Europe?

MORRIS: In general?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: Europe in general?

INT: Yeah, what do you see going on there?

MORRIS: (laughs) I don't know, I'm, I feel it's not over.

INT: It's not over.

MORRIS: No.

INT: What do you mean it's not over?

MORRIS: That people think -- you know, we said the war is over, and that there's not going to be a problem anymore. We never know. Europe is not stable yet. There is still a turmoil. It's not settled. Europe is still boiling. Russia is not settled, and all these little countries, they thought they... I don't know. The future is not clear yet, what's going to happen, and anybody thinks there's going to be no wars anymore is kidding themselves.

INT: What did you think when the Soviet Union broke up?

MORRIS: Broke up? It was good but look what's happening now. It's not much better now than... I think it was more stable before, (laughs) before the breakup.

INT: Yeah, in what way?

MORRIS: In what way? It was control. Now it's out of control. There's nobody to control it. There's no, everybody's pulling in a different direction.

INT: And what do you think is going to happen?

MORRIS: Who knows? I'm not a politician.

[Tape 12 — End Side 1] [Tape 12 — Begin Side 2]

INT: Okay, go ahead. Continue. You were talking about the breakup of the Soviet Union.

MORRIS: Yes, well look at what's happening. All the things what they kept under the lid, the ethnic, the ethnic hatred. Look at it now, it's all come up; it's more than ever before.

INT: Yeah, within Russia.

MORRIS: Within Russia. It's not Russia, it was a big continent.

INT: It was spread over several continents.

MORRIS: Of course.

INT: It was Europe, it was Asia.

MORRIS: And Asia and so many nationalities. Look at what's there now, it's come to the surface because they kept it, you know they kept it under the lid. So who knows?

INT: Yeah, what do you think about Chechnya?

MORRIS: Well it's easy to criticize about Chechnya. I think the Russians have a right to do what they are doing, in my opinion. Picture this. Let's say if Texas or any state would decide they just want to be separate and they are just going to decide to do it. So would our government just say, "Okay, go ahead, it's your privilege?" How would we react to this, talking like this? It's easy to criticize. I don't know. And another thing, the way I see it, if they would let them get away with it, do nothing about it, the whole thing would collapse. Each republic would just do the same thing and that's the end of it. They would be the real chaos. That's my opinion.

INT: That's what I'm asking. (laughs)

MORRIS: You know, just for example, let's say everybody is going to do what he wants to. (laughs) See, first of all you have to know **their** culture. See it's different than we live over here. We are integrated over here. We have **states** but we are **mixed**. Over there, with the republics, there's ethnicity, each republic has their own. Over here we are mixed in, you know, different nationalities. We don't have, you know like in Pennsylvania lives a certain religious people, what do you call them -- ethnic group. You got over here all kinds of people. It's hard, you cannot compare our system to theirs. But in the way they handle this, I think they have a right. I don't know. Even our government agreed with this, said that they had a right. Who knows?

INT: Look, I asked your opinion, you gave it to me. Okay. How would you say that the Holocaust affects your political views?

MORRIS: (Pause) Not at all.

INT: You don't think it colors the way you look at politics here?

MORRIS: No, absolutely not.

INT: No?

MORRIS: No, it has nothing to do with it. That's a separate matter.

INT: When you vote for somebody here you don't take it into account?

MORRIS: No, no. In fact I changed my political views completely.

INT: Really?

MORRIS: Yeah, a long time ago.

INT: You changed them from what to...?

MORRIS: From being a liberal.

INT: Yes. So you were a liberal when you came to this country?

MORRIS: Well, more like...

INT: Do you think that was colored by anything that you experienced?

MORRIS: By my experience, by my experience, yeah. Especially when they started building the welfare state over here, people getting something for nothing. They got so used to it, it's common today, and I disagree with this completely.

INT: So you became more conservative?

MORRIS: Very much so. In my outlook of life I became much more conservative. I believe if you want something you have to work for it. Because if you get something for free you don't appreciate it and after a while you get used to it, and it doesn't do anybody any good. It don't do good to the receiver **and** the giver. It does harm on both sides.

INT: Well you've always had to work very hard for everything.

MORRIS: Because I remember in our time, when we came over here, nobody gave us; we didn't expect them to. We were glad, we were happy to find a home. We had a place where to settle, to make a life for ourselves. And who even wanted to take? I was ashamed to receive. If somebody would want to give me something, "No, no, no!" And now, it's become so terrible already; people just think it's coming to them. It has to come from **somebody**. Government doesn't have any money. Government has to **take** it from **me** and give it to **him**. Why should I kill myself working; why should this be -- people are producing babies and I have to support them? I don't feel like I have to support somebody's children, to raise them.

INT: So that's the major change that's taken place in your thinking over the years?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Uh huh.

MORRIS: Because I worked **hard** for everything, for every penny, for everything that I got. And that's good. See when you **earn** something you work for it, you appreciate it. When somebody gives you something, it's not the same thing. You don't appreciate it. And that's a fact of life; nobody can deny it. And now society became so spoiled rotten. I blame the government, our system, politicians. They hold onto their party; they are doing everything. Secondly, all these things that we give, there's more to it than that. You have to help people, there will always be a need. Where I grew up there was an established system for taking care of the poor. There was no such thing that you neglect the needy. This is true more in the Jewish tradition than with any other group.

But in our system, the way it is over here, all the things that have been collected don't go to the needy people. The bureaucracy makes a living from this. But you build up a bureaucracy and they're thriving on this. Because a very little percentage goes to the needy ones. Most has been swallowed up by a rotten bureaucracy and it's growing like a mushroom; there's no end.

INT: You saw that when you were in the Urals, though, when you were describing to me how the commissars lived.

MORRIS: Yeah, they lived like -- in the worst time they had **everything** for themselves. Every way it was, it was a dictatorship. You could understand this. You know it was a different system there. Eighteen million party people belonged to the Communist Party from about two hundred and fifty million people and they ruled it. This bureaucracy, they didn't **care** about the masses.

INT: They didn't care about what?

MORRIS: About the masses, how they lived. You know they starved to death. Yeah, the masses, that's it. You started seeing it over here, the same damn thing. The people who are working have it taken away from them; they've been practically raped by the system over here now. Look at what people make now, a half of it goes for the government, more than a half. A person works now, he works almost 'til June, he works for the government, almost a half a year he works for the government 'til he sees something for himself and I think it's crazy.

INT: So you don't see the connection that you saw when you were in the shtetl and you gave tzedaka or you gave to somebody who was needy, you saw that what you gave went directly to the needy.

MORRIS: Went directly to the needy, yeah.

INT: And now you're seeing something...

MORRIS: Was no bureaucracy to make a living from this. The people just did it for a mitzvah or whatever you can call it. They did it from the heart, and not to make a living from this. That was a different thing.

INT: Now did you ever feel that people, once you got here, were interested in hearing about your experiences and what happened to you? Was there any interest?

MORRIS: No. Not too much. We were so busy building a new life, whoever thought of this kind of thing? We didn't have time for this.

INT: So people never asked? Did people ever ask you?

MORRIS: You come together with people who you know, you talk sometime but nothing special.

INT: How about people outside of your circle of friends? Was anybody ever interested in your story?

MORRIS: Some people, yes, but very little as I can remember.

INT: How about now?

MORRIS: Same thing. Very, very hard to talk about it. In my circles where there are people that I know, we don't talk about it, never did. We never brooded about the past.

INT: You never?

MORRIS: We never try to think about the past. Time, time takes care of it. I don't know. You cannot go on with your life, you couldn't live if you were always thinking about what it was. You can't. You wouldn't be able to go on with your life with all this brooding and thinking what happened, you wouldn't survive.

INT: I guess I was asking that question because some survivors, when they got here, felt that nobody wanted to hear, they wanted to just forget; that people didn't want to know what went on in Europe, and it made it very difficult for some of the survivors because they couldn't even talk to anybody about what happened to them.

MORRIS: Yeah, sometimes you felt like this but...

INT: Yeah?

MORRIS: Yeah, you felt sometime, a lot of time you felt like this.

INT: Can you remember something like that?

MORRIS: People, you know had no interest. I remember what...

INT: An example, can you remember?

MORRIS: Nah, nothing that I can remember. I don't know. We never think of this kind of thing. That's **gone**.

INT: That was the past.

MORRIS: That was the past. Especially me and our immediate family, we decided to assimilate so much into this society when we come over here. We were always striving to get to be Americanized as soon as possible. We started living like anybody else.

INT: What would you say have been the happiest moments since the war?

MORRIS: The happiest moments?

INT: Uh huh.

MORRIS: In what way?

INT: Just whatever comes to mind.

MORRIS: In the personal life or?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: We were happiest when we were told, when we were in the camps, we were told they opened up the doors to go to America. That was the happiest time. That was something!

INT: So that really stands out in your mind.

MORRIS: That stands out in my mind. Wow, it was a dream come true, you know we never believed that's going to happen and all of a sudden one day it happened. And that was a happy time. And it was a happy time when the war was over, the day when we learned, you know when the whole thing stopped and that was a very happy time and the whole world was happy. But it took a lot of years 'til we put ourselves on our feet, it took quite a few years, it took ten years.

INT: To get on your feet.

MORRIS: It took from 1945 'til we started to make, started living, started to be a little normal, I'm talking about our personal life.

INT: Yeah, that's what I'm asking.

MORRIS: Personal, mine, it took about ten years practically, because in 1954 we bought our own little, little, little house. That was a happy, happy time.

INT: That was the first house you owned.

MORRIS: That was the first time, yeah. It was nine years after the war was finished. You know all the travelling we did in Europe, and Austria, and in Germany and Czechoslovakia, all these places. We were all homeless! We didn't have no home. And all of a sudden you know you got a chance to build, you got a place, you've got a country. Especially, America then was the top, America was something. It was everybody's dream and it came true for us. That was a happy, happy, happy time. But it took a lot of years and meanwhile you had to go through hell.

INT: What happened when you were married twenty-five years?

MORRIS: Twenty-five, what year would that be? We were married in '47, it would be '67.

INT: No, that would be twenty years. Was there anything special done to celebrate your twenty-fifth wedding anniversary?

MORRIS: Yes, very much so.

INT: What?

MORRIS: Twenty-five years, we were already established, we already had a family and we were doing pretty well.

INT: How did you celebrate?

MORRIS: How did we celebrate?

INT: Did you have a party?

MORRIS: We had a party. It was nice to have a party. We always had a party, every anniversary we had a party. Family, family came together. And see those days we had a family yet, a big family in Philadelphia.

INT: Was that Anny's family?

MORRIS: Anny's family, yeah. Anny had four brothers and their children, and back then we had teenage children already. You know it was a big family used to come together, yeah, it was a happy time.

INT: So those are happy times that you remember.

MORRIS: Yeah, and my fiftieth birthday I remember was a big major surprise party for me. That was something to remember too.

INT: It sounds like you did a lot of celebrating at happy occasions.

MORRIS: Oh yeah. It was normal, it was a normal thing. Didn't every family do the same thing?

INT: You don't think you celebrated more than other families?

MORRIS: No, I don't think so.

INT: How would you describe, or what would you describe as your most difficult moments since the war?

MORRIS: Difficult moments. After the war?

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: Being in this country already or before we came?

INT: In this country. Yes, because now we're kind of looking back, what is called retrospectively. We're looking back and I'm asking you to think about over these years since the war, since you came to the United States.

MORRIS: The most difficult times?

INT: Yeah, the most difficult moments.

MORRIS: In the beginning we came here and tried to find a steady job to make a living. That was not easy. It's easy to talk about it, but as time goes, it took time, you have to go through a lot of things. A language barrier, to blend in in the culture. Then was a difficult time when the sickness started coming. That was a difficult time, especially with Jerry; that was very touch and go. We thought we lost Anny then.

INT: Oh, with **Anny** when she was so sick, when she was pregnant with Jerry. Oh, okay.

MORRIS: With the birth, this was a very, very terrible time.

INT: Yeah, I remember that.

MORRIS: I was not the healthiest person when I was younger, I had a lot of health problems.

INT: Do you think they were related?

MORRIS: Ulcers I had, yeah, it was tension. Yeah it was all related to all this. You suffer from ulcers, you have pain all the time.

INT: When did you get rid of it; when did that stop?

MORRIS: That stopped, it took a lot of years. It took a lot of years, a lot of years. It stopped when life became more normal.

INT: Did you have ulcers when you were running the tailor shop for Morvilles?

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: You had ulcers then?

MORRIS: Yeah, a lot of tension.

INT: Well you were young, you were only in your early thirties.

MORRIS: Yeah, that's when you get ulcers, when your stomach acids are strong. Older people don't get, don't get ulcers. Most ulcers are in the young people.

INT: So you paid your price physically.

MORRIS: I paid my price physically, yeah, yeah, terrible, I suffered a lot. For a long while, I used to go to the doctor; the more medicines I took, the worse it got. And then one day we decided, we're going to stop and just eat normal and everything and that helped.

INT: So you changed your diet.

MORRIS: Changed my diet. I used to live on baby foods and all kinds of things and milk and that kind of junk; taking medicines, and it didn't do any good. Anny said, "It's enough, you're going to stop that thing." And that helped. She was right. I started eating normal, and it just went away and just forget it.

INT: So you haven't had ulcers for a long time.

MORRIS: No, for a long time. But the thing is, we had a lot of problems with her. She was sick from when Jerry was born and she was never the same. We moved in over here -- already we bought this house. We moved in the 25th of March, 1976, and the second of May, the same year, we find out she has cancer in her mouth.

INT: Did she live with that all these years?

MORRIS: She lived all these years. She was operated on at Temple by Dr. Howitch. He said nobody lives long. She couldn't talk. It was horrible, was terrible. They cut out the palate.

INT: The palate, yes.

MORRIS: And they had to make a prosthesis and it was very difficult, very difficult, she couldn't talk on the telephone and she couldn't go to work, and oh, it was a very bad time. And she was complaining to the doctor, and he said, "What are you worrying about? Nobody lives more than a year, at most!"

INT: Oh my goodness.

MORRIS: Because the prosthesis is not working, and he says, "Nobody lives more than a year."

INT: What a terrible thing to say. But she was determined?

MORRIS: She was determined, very determined to learn and she found a place that made a prosthesis, and after a while she went back to work and lived a normal, normal, normal life. And we lived with this for...

INT: It's almost twenty years. You said '76, so it's '95, so to '94.

MORRIS: Almost twenty years.

INT: And she was only supposed to live a year.

MORRIS: Supposed to live a year, yeah. Then she had ulcers too, she had twice a stomach operation. See I didn't want to be operated on. I had a certain diet but for her it was too big an ulcer. And sickness all the time, that was the bad part of it. But she took it in stride and we would go on, our lives were going on.

INT: Do you think that your sickness was related to everything that you had gone through?

MORRIS: Yeah, could be. Who knows? She lived ten years, since 1984, she lived with emphysema and angina. With medication, with oxygen. The last ten years were difficult, **very** difficult. She was almost bedridden.

INT: So what you're saying is you both had serious health problems.

MORRIS: Health problems, yeah.

INT: Yes, and for most of your marriage.

MORRIS: Yeah, health problems. (Pause) But we still lived a happy life. It was still a good life. A happy life.

INT: Despite all of those...

MORRIS: Despite all of those, yeah. We made the best of it.

INT: How would you say that your family background influenced the way that you lived your life since the war?

MORRIS: My mother's influence even up 'til now, is still with me.

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: Yeah, I still do things, I still do things, you know which I learned at home.

INT: Give me an example.

MORRIS: A lot of things which I still do the way mommy did, my mommy did, cooking and certain things. You cannot put your hand on it but...

INT: How about ways of thinking or?

MORRIS: Closeness, family closeness.

INT: Values, yeah.

MORRIS: Values, yeah, that's the most important thing. My mother instilled a lot of this in all the children.

INT: Did she have a favorite saying? Would you remember in Yiddish?

MORRIS: (pause) I don't know. It's too long to remember.

INT: What are a few of the values that were most important for her that stayed with you all your life?

MORRIS: My mother was more liberal than my father. She was religious, very; she was more religious than my father, I mean a very, very religious person. And raised not to harm nobody and you know, just...

INT: The golden rule?

MORRIS: With the golden rules: don't do no harm to nobody and try to accept life the way it is, you know, and try to make the best you can of it. And she proved it. She didn't talk about it, she...

INT: She lived it.

MORRIS: She lived it.

INT: Do you think you've lived those values too?

MORRIS: She lived in difficult conditions and she raised eight children then. I remember how difficult, very, very difficult it was in a little town, in a little shtetl, in a depression time. And nothing was too hard for her.

INT: Do you think that you have lived those values yourself?

MORRIS: Oh yeah, definitely. I've never harmed anyone in my life, nobody. And if I could help somebody, I felt good about it.

INT: So it sounds like she was really the most important role model in your life.

MORRIS: Even today, if I can help somebody, I feel good about it. If somebody does something for me I appreciate it, sure, but if I can do something, it makes me feel good.

INT: You attribute that to your mother's...?

MORRIS: I don't know, it has to come from somebody. That's the way I grew up; that's the way I lived all my life. I don't know where it's from.

INT: Do you see any of those qualities in your own children?

MORRIS: I don't know. I'm not with my children so much. That's it, I don't know about their private lives, I don't know.

[Tape 12 — End Side 2] [Tape 13 — Begin Side 1]

INT: This is tape number 13 of an interview with Morris B. I guess my confusion is that I get a picture on one hand you say about being very much separated from your children but then you're telling me things that say that you're very close.

MORRIS: We're not separated, we're separated physically.

INT: Yes, but you're...

MORRIS: But we are constantly in touch.

INT: See that's what I was missing. That's what I was missing.

MORRIS: No, no, we're not, no, we're not separated. Physically, you know we're far apart, distance-wise, distance we are separated. But otherwise we are constantly...

INT: Oh, see I didn't understand that.

MORRIS: Even with Jerry far away, in the Marshall Islands, we talked to each other. We knew everything, every move, whatever goes on we, we were always in touch with them. Berl, he's the closest [physically] to me. With Berl I talk every night, practically. If it's two days, it's already a lot. Either he calls me or I call him, but most time he calls me. And Henry I speak to at least every few weeks. Even with my family in Israel, there's not more than two weeks that I don't talk to them.

INT: So you're very connected with your children and your relatives in Israel.

MORRIS: Connected, very, very. When I was there not long ago we were talking. My sister made a remark, Paula, she said, "Look at this. Our mother left so much in us. Take a look. How many families are that close? Even there they live, they're like **one**, a unit. If one gets sick or something or needs help, everybody is there. Everybody is right there, and they attribute this to my mother. We were talking about it. "Look at this. After that many years we are parted, but still, when we come together it's like we've never been apart." I didn't feel that it's fifty years we've been separated. It's so...I don't know. I see other people. Over there in Haifa, my brother's wife, she has sisters who don't talk to each other. There is so much **hatred** between them. When they come together, they are so distant. And take my family, my brother and my sister, they're just like a unit. There must be something that comes from our mother. Even they mentioned it. They said this all comes from our mother.

INT: Well now, looking back over the past forty-five to fifty years, how do you **feel** about your life, your marriage, your children, your grandchildren?

MORRIS: How I feel? I told you before, we were talking about it. You always feel it could be better. Thank G-d they are all healthy.

INT: And looking back now, how would you describe the way in which you were able to rebuild your lives? What was it about you that made you able to rebuild your life here in the United States?

MORRIS: What made me?

INT: Yeah, what was it that enabled you to rebuild your lives, your life?

MORRIS: Age, I was young. (laughs) We were young and we had a lot of ambition.

INT: So you were young, you had ambition and...

MORRIS: We had ambition and we wanted to build our lives, forget the past. We worked hard on it, we worked very hard on it, both of us. When Jerry was seven years old, when he started going to school, she went out and got a job. We discussed this before, and two people work, it got easier. You know you could accomplish more.

INT: I guess I was thinking more in terms of your personality, what was it, your determination or what, that made you do what you did?

MORRIS: I don't know, I was, I was ambitious. In my trade, what I knew best I did, I made the best of it, that's all. I worked hard, I worked hard. Nothing stopped me to do what I had to do to make a living so the family will be comfortable.

INT: I guess I was thinking about this business of coming to Philadelphia and starting all over and being so determined.

MORRIS: If you think it was easy... (laughs) it's **easy** to **talk** about it.

INT: No, I'm sure it wasn't.

MORRIS: It's easy to talk about it but you had to go through, oh...

INT: What was it about you that made you able to do that?

MORRIS: I was not an exception. Everybody, everybody had to, most people, you know they built a new life, the most of them, the newcomers. Everybody built a life and I was not an exception. I was just one of them and I did the best I could. And I told you I never reached the ceiling, you know I never, I never had big ambitions. With my background, with my education, with my little thing what I knew, I did fairly good for myself and I'm happy.

INT: Okay. Looking back, how did you cope with the memories of all of your war experiences?

MORRIS: Now! That's another thing. When the war finished, when the whole thing was over, when I found out what went on, I saw that I was just the luckiest person alive. I didn't think **anybody**, **anybody** was so lucky like I was. And I realized what happened and comparing the life what I got, I was just in heaven. I was in heaven. Even until today, I cannot imagine how lucky I was. I didn't go through these kinds of things, what all those people went through. The people that were left -- you know we lost most of them, and their immediate families and all, all. We were three-and-a-half million people in our country, in Poland!

INT: In Poland.

MORRIS: Gone! Three-and-a-half, there was not a handful left! And I lived through that time. We thought maybe it was bad then, you know, but come on, I **lived**! I had a good life but whatever I touched just went my way. It worked out for the best for me, and after the war when it's all over I thought I was lucky. The whole family survived -- most of the family survived and…

INT: But still whatever happened to **you** happened to **you** and you still had to deal with the memories of what...

MORRIS: Immediate family, we lost -- my mother had a few sisters, the oldest and closest. I lost my older brother and my older sister. Up till today, I don't know what else happened to them. It took years, it took a lot of years to accept it. You know, you hoped that maybe they are going to show up somehow somewhere.

INT: Yes, you told me that you couldn't name your first son after your older brother.

MORRIS: Yeah, that's right, yeah because we still were hoping because there were a lot of incidents of people finding each other after a few years. But comparing to other people, I was lucky, so my memories were... I didn't have that time. The Holocaust was a terrible thing, but personally, I was lucky, just plain luck, I think. I don't know. I didn't have to go through this what the other people went through.

INT: This may sound strange but how did you deal with the loss of your brother and sister?

MORRIS: How do you deal?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: Oh my. (sighs) Most of the people, very few survived. Well some families survived but for most of them, one person of the family survived. They didn't have nobody. There was only one person survived so you know between the survivors, they lost their mothers, and their fathers, and their brothers. How do you accept it? You know you lose somebody you never, you never, you never accept it. You always feel, feel you lost it I still think of my brother and sister. What can you do about it? You look at the other side, what other people went through -- much worse, so you have to accept it. That's life. What **can** you do? You cannot bring them back. This happened, it could be much worse, that's what you say.

INT: Looking back, how did you sustain the energy to work hard and look forward to the future?

MORRIS: How do you sustain?

INT: Yeah, how did you?

MORRIS: I don't know.

INT: What kept you going?

MORRIS: What kept you going?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: I don't know. What do you mean what kept you going? Ambition or just to go on with life.

INT: You must have had some idea of what the future would be like?

MORRIS: Doesn't everybody?

INT: Yeah, but I'm asking what yours was.

MORRIS: The same as anybody else. You always hope it's going to be better, tomorrow it's going to be better, and that's it. Sometimes it works out, sometimes it doesn't. Nothing special about me. You did the same as anybody else. You struggle, you go, you're doing things. The only thing is -- the difference is we appreciated it. And every little thing which we made, we got, we went forward, our life improved a little bit. We didn't take it for granted; we appreciated it. Any little thing that came our way, we very much appreciated it. We feel we are lucky. (pause) What I mean is that people getting things for nothing, they don't appreciate it. We worked hard for it, and you are reaching something, you get something and so you were happy. The kids were good, the kids when they were small they were very, very good kids, good students. And we had a lot of pride in them and we thought they were the best! And so you are happy. Everything...

INT: Do you feel any guilt or any shame or anything about what you went through or what you didn't experience during the war or what?

MORRIS: No. I didn't feel. Why? Why should I feel guilt? What guilt? In what way? Why should I feel guilt? Why did I survive? Why did I have it better, better than the other people? It just happened. I told you. We made the right moves and it worked out for the best. When, when we did it, we didn't know it's going to work out. Who knew?

INT: How big a part do you think luck...

MORRIS: I don't have any guilt.

INT: How big a part did luck play in your life?

MORRIS: I think a <u>big</u> part. I think a very big part. A lot of things I think back I say how, how could that happen? Why was I so special? Why was I so lucky? Yeah, if there is such thing as mazel. (laughs)

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: If there is such thing as mazel, I had plenty of it.

INT: Why? Why do you think you had such mazel?

MORRIS: We talked about it before. You know I made a few moves, a lot of moves, and it just turned out that I made the right decision.

INT: You think you helped mazel along?

MORRIS: Yeah. Well didn't you hear the saying? G-d helps the one who helps himself.

INT: So you think that's what happened with you.

MORRIS: Yeah, I still believe it. G-d helps the one who helps himself. It's still true today.

INT: How do you think that works?

MORRIS: How it works?

INT: Yeah.

MORRIS: If you look the way that the capitalist system is built, it tells you in a nutshell. In this society, in the capitalist system, G-d helps the one who helps himself. You take risks, you take chances, sometimes you fail, sometimes you win. I think that's the fundamental thing of our system. You have to take chances. And people are going around always crying and chips on their shoulders, that one has too much and I don't have enough. I look at it this way, that people are going around and always complaining, crying it's not enough and they don't get enough and that one is rich. I never saw a poor person go to get help from a **poor** one. They always have to go to the rich one, to the one who has, for help.

INT: (laughs) That's why Dillinger robbed the banks because that's where the money was.

MORRIS: Yeah, because that's where the money was.

INT: Well now what do you think the impact of the Holocaust will be on future generations?

MORRIS: (pause) Ah, one thing I don't see. The Jewish people have too much and they don't work for one cause now. From the Jewish people there is a lot of denial.

INT: Yeah, what are they denying?

MORRIS: Well, a lot of people they are always worried about somebody else's problems more than their own.

INT: So the Jews should be more concerned about...?

MORRIS: Concerned about their own, yeah. They should have learned enough, but they didn't. I don't think they learned enough about what went on, to worry about their own first, then somebody else. They always go to somebody else's cause. Now, personally, me, the way I feel, I became so hard and so disappointed with the way the Jews took up with the black people. Nobody helped them out of slavery more than the Jewish people. And look, they are the biggest enemies of ours. You know there is a saying, "If you don't raise an enemy, you won't have an enemy." That's the way I look at it.

INT: If you don't raise an enemy you don't have...

MORRIS: You won't have an enemy. That's what we did for these people. We did so much for them to help them in every way, financially, morally, in every way. The Jews did more for them

than anybody else. Look what's happened now, they are the biggest Jew-haters. Anybody can deny it, they have a right, but that's the way I see it.

INT: Well do you think that the risk from blacks is greater than the risk from the far right religious groups and the militias?

MORRIS: No, that's, that's something else, no, no.

INT: No?

MORRIS: No.

INT: Do you think there's a risk...

MORRIS: They aren't dangerous.

INT: So what's the difference?

MORRIS: Well the difference is the Jews should worry about themselves.

INT: Now what's the difference between black people and the people who are anti-Jews and who are on the far right, the Christian Coalition and all these people?

MORRIS: Well, (pause) I think it's two separate things.

INT: What's the difference?

MORRIS: What's the difference?

INT: Yeah, what's the difference that you see?

MORRIS: Well the right, the religious right, they are bad, they can be physically dangerous, you know to our whole existence. G-d forbid that they would get more power.

INT: Is this something that you can see happening?

MORRIS: Oh yes, you see it too much already.

INT: What about making laws, you know influencing Washington to make laws that would restrict people's freedom?

MORRIS: We have to change our system. What do you want to go to a dictatorship? By this system, by that Constitution that we have you know everybody has a right (laughs). It's good in one way, but if you're going to go on the other way too much, then you have to give up a lot of

freedom which you don't want to do. There's a balance. There's always a balance. It's not an easy thing to solve.

INT: Are you optimistic or pessimistic about what's going to happen in this country?

MORRIS: Pessimistic.

INT: Really?

MORRIS: Yeah, very, very pessimistic. People didn't learn enough from history. Especially your nation. We didn't have any turmoil like they had in Europe. People don't think that can happen here, and it's a mistake.

INT: So people don't appreciate the freedom and the government that they have, is that what you're saying?

MORRIS: No. I think our government has a lot to do with it. A lot of things that happened now I blame the government. The government became too, too intrusive, butting into too much of our lives, takes away too much of our, our freedom. That's what created the problems I see. I blame 90% of what's happening, because we have the right wing with this Coalition and that, I blame it on our government, on our system. It became uncontrollable. The government became too damn big! It takes too much away from our lives and people started resenting it. They can't take it no more, there's a limit. In government there is no limit. It's out of control. It's like a mushroom. There are more bureaucrats, now there are more people working for the government than private industry. There are about eighteen million people working for the government -- state, local, federal, all kind of things. And the government has no control, because the people we elect, they don't make our rules, the way to live. The people, the faceless, you don't know who they are, they make the rules for us how we should live, the bureaucrats. But see when it comes to this, I'm very conservative. I'm very troubled by this kind of thing. People you don't know who they are, they're putting so many restrictions in our lives. You cannot move, nothing. Little things which is not the government's business; they have nothing to do with it. And people started resenting it. And unfortunately the Jewish people are involved in a lot of these things. If you look at it, a lot of Jewish people are involved in these causes, in the liberal causes which, and it's been always mentioned the first thing, you know they will point out the Jew. Like it or not, but it's true. The Jewish name is sticking out.

INT: When you read the paper and you see a Jewish name it jumps out at you.

MORRIS: No, you read the paper... We're not that much of an influence like it sounds. <u>But</u> Jewish people are always trying to solve somebody's problem. We have enough, we have enough.

INT: What problem should the Jews be working at?

MORRIS: Nobody has so much trouble. Look in history. Nobody, no people have as much problems than the Jewish people have. But they forget, one generation from the other they forget.

INT: Name me a problem that the Jews should be working on that they're not.

MORRIS: The Jews should be working for their own culture. Why did we survive for so many thousands of years? The way we used to live in a closed society we were poor and all this, but we didn't forget the next door neighbor and everything. But now it's different, completely different.

INT: Are you saying that the Jews have lost what was special to them?

MORRIS: They lost, what Jews should do now? Jews should... First of all, the whole system the way it's structured with the synagogue, with the whole the cultural thing. That only show-offs...

INT: Show-offs?

MORRIS: Yeah, who can get in the paper, put his name in the paper and that's it.

INT: So they've lost something.

MORRIS: They lost something. The real Jewish values they lost.

INT: Uh huh, so you don't see the Jewish values are as...

MORRIS: No, the Jewish values now are: He's in the paper, he contributed that much. He gave, you know $10,000 for Israel, a bond and he bought that many bonds and that's it. That's bull!

INT: So what should Jews, what should we...

MORRIS: We're losing now more Jews, including myself, we're losing more Jews now to get away from Jewishness than in any time in history. What Hitler couldn't do physically we are doing it now. We should concentrate in this country how to, to do something about this, this is an epidemic.

INT: An epidemic of Jews leaving Judaism.

MORRIS: Jews, with intermarriage with the whole damn thing what's going on. We're losing the whole Jewish culture. Nobody, nobody can read. You can hardly even publish a Jewish paper anymore because there's nobody to...

INT: There's nobody to read it.

MORRIS: To read it.

INT: So you're pessimistic about...?

MORRIS: I don't see nothing good coming in the future for this. The Jews are their own worst enemies. We worry about what the Christians are going to do.

[Tape 13 — End Side 1] [Tape 13 — Begin Side 2]

INT: This is tape 13 — side 2.

MORRIS: We have a saying, you know that a whole army cannot do to you as much harm as you can do it to yourself. An army cannot harm you so much like you can harm yourself.

INT: Yeah. So you're saying that the Jews really are...

MORRIS: The Jews are their own worst enemy at this point if they want to preserve the Jewish culture. (pause) And it's not only happening here. It's a world phenomenon or something. In Israel we have the same problem; they are going away. That country was built on a different foundation. Now it became too much realistic and it's not the same thing.

INT: Do you think that they were influenced in that direction by the United States?

MORRIS: Yeah. (laughs) Sure.

INT: What do you think the future is of Israel?

MORRIS: Oh G-d. (pause) I'm not a politician. I cannot tell.

INT: No, I didn't ask you as a politician.

MORRIS: I wish, I wish, that's all what I can tell you. The way it's going, who knows. It's not for the Jew; it's the other side that became so powerful.

INT: The Arabs?

MORRIS: The Arabs, the...

INT: Fundamentalists?

MORRIS: Fundamentalists. That became threatening. That's the danger now.

INT: Are you optimistic or pessimistic about Israel?

MORRIS: Optimistic. They made so much progress in a short time, in my lifetime.

INT: So you're pessimistic about the United States but optimistic about Israel.

MORRIS: They **have** to. There is no other way for them. There is no if or but, you know, that's it. They have only one choice. They cannot lose their first war because that's going to be the last one.

INT: Do you think they're more realistic about their situation than we are?

MORRIS: Of course they are. They are more realistic and they worry about it. We talked about it; they don't take it lightly. But I talked to my nephew, a very bright kid. I was looking at him to see what he meant when he said, "You know, we almost had the third Bas Hamedrash in '73."

INT: They almost had the third Bas Hamedrash in 1973?

MORRIS: Bas Hamedrash in 1973. You know what he meant by that?

INT: You tell me.

MORRIS: You know, we had the Bas Hamedrash, and we had the second Bas Hamedrash, and in '73 we were so close to losing Israel.

INT: Oh, I understand. Okay, I thought you were connecting it with getting Jerusalem.

MORRIS: No, no that's my nephew; we were talking and he said, "Do you know what happened?" He said, "We almost lost the third," that's the way he put it. Then I caught what he meant.

INT: Well, I don't know how you're going to answer this but, how have you made sense out of life; whether there are some things you've predicted; how much is just random? What do you think?

MORRIS: No, life is unpredictable. Life is very unpredictable. There is no such thing you can make plans. If it works out your way **half** of the time, then you're lucky. Well life is unpredictable. There is no way you can predict what's going to be tomorrow. Who knows? You cannot make decisions for yourself, somebody makes your decisions, somebody makes decisions for you.

INT: What do you mean?

MORRIS: Oh the whole social structure the way we live now.

INT: So is that what you mean, that there's a lack of control that people have over what happens to their lives?

MORRIS: Yeah, they don't have no control, yeah, that's right. People don't have no more control of their lives.

INT: And that's the way you feel. Do you feel that way about <u>your</u> life?

MORRIS: That's the way I feel. Yeah, yeah sure, anybody. Whole society, the whole society is built this way. You have no control.

INT: You don't feel that you have control of your life?

MORRIS: No.

INT: Why not?

MORRIS: Because I don't know what's going to happen in an hour from now.

INT: Do you think that's because your wife died and you're...?

MORRIS: No, no, no, no, of our social, of our political system the way it's set up. Our government has so much power they can destroy you in one minute!

INT: You really feel that way about **your** life?

MORRIS: Yeah, very much. Yeah, anybody's life.

INT: Sitting here in Roxborough you think....

MORRIS: Sitting here in Roxborough, yeah. Tomorrow, I don't know. Crime is so bad. I don't know if somebody is going to break it. I'm not secure. I'm too afraid. And there is no protection now. We're paying so much for everything. We're paying so much and we have no....

INT: You have nothing to show for it.

MORRIS: Nothing to show for it, no protection, nothing. Only the criminals -- the criminal has every right, all the laws, and the people, the people who are paying the bills have no rights at all. The government can come down, the law can come and destroy you for no reason, for no good reason.

INT: Do you know of anybody who has had that happen to them?

MORRIS: Yeah, sure.

INT: Well, you came here...

MORRIS: Now we have, we have an organization over here, they call it the IRS. They are the most destructive people here. I can compare them to KGB, to any organization which had... It's almost a Gestapo! They have all the rights and the people have no rights.

INT: Do you know somebody who was hurt by the IRS?

MORRIS: Yes, I know about, oh yeah. See it's, see now you asked me a question about personal safety. There is no such thing to a person because you have no control over your life now.

INT: And you think this is different from when you first came here?

MORRIS: Of course, completely different. It's not the same, it's not the same country. The last fifteen, twenty years, things are just going, going the other way.

INT: Now would you say that one of the happiest moments was when you heard you were coming to the United States.

MORRIS: Yeah.

INT: Now this is, how long are you here?

MORRIS: Forty-five years.

INT: Okay, so my question is: Did the United States turn out to be what you hoped it would be or what you...

MORRIS: It was for a long time, but the last few years it's just, just gone the other way. I mean I don't feel we are a democracy anymore. It's not the same country anymore. I don't recognize it; it's not the same thing. We live too much restricted. Our lives are being controlled by too many. There's no freedom the way we were used to having it. In a lot of ways, I compare it to the old country, to the other system, that you cannot do anything; the government has to tell you how you should live, what you should do.

INT: So this is the way you would describe how you feel right now.

MORRIS: Yeah, and you become hardened.

INT: Hardened. Let me ask you if somebody said to you, "Morris are you an optimist or a pessimist in your general life," what would you say?

MORRIS: A pessimist.

INT: You consider yourself a pessimist?

MORRIS: Yeah, lately, yeah. Just opposite the way I was when I came, when I was younger and I came; just the opposite. (pause) And maybe because I worked so hard for everything that I had.

INT: Would you consider yourself a trusting or a suspicious person?

MORRIS: Suspicious. Very much. (laughs) Maybe too much.

INT: In what areas are you most suspicious? Do you trust, do you question people's motives or...?

MORRIS: People's motives, yeah.

INT: Is this something that's changed over the years?

MORRIS: I don't know. It's my nature, my own voice.

INT: Your voice?

MORRIS: Yeah, I'll listen to you but I'll do what I think is right. People are selfish and you don't know with some people if you can trust them or not, you know.

INT: How do you decide whether you can trust somebody?

MORRIS: How do you decide that?

INT: How do **you** decide?

MORRIS: How do you decide. You use your better judgement, that's all. You can tell. I can talk to you and I can, I can tell, I can read your mind.

INT: Oh yeah?

MORRIS: Yeah, I can tell, I can tell when a person is sincere or not.

INT: Well are there more **sincere** people than...?

MORRIS: Oh yeah, there are good people.

INT: What's the proportion?

MORRIS: I don't know.

INT: How many good people are there? How many bad people bad people? Fifty/fifty, sixty/forty, what do you think?

MORRIS: The way I think, there are more good people. Of course, there are more good people! G-d forbid! We wouldn't be able to live in this world if everybody was bad people. Of course there's always good people. People by nature, I think people are good people.

INT: By nature.

MORRIS: By nature, sure. You know you have people that you have to...[be careful of]. You can tell. I can tell.

INT: Would you say that you're a worrier by nature?

MORRIS: Yeah, I would say so. Oh yeah.

INT: Yes? Have you always been a worrier?

MORRIS: Oh yeah, that's my nature. Even for no good reason, I still worry.

INT: So if you didn't have something to worry about you'd worry about the fact...

MORRIS: I'll make it up, I'll worry about I don't have what to worry about.

INT: Was your wife a worrier?

MORRIS: Just the opposite; absolutely 180 degree difference, completely. She didn't have any worries at all. No. Just the opposite. That's why we got along pretty good, because she had a **completely** different philosophy in life, completely different than me, absolutely different. Nothing was too hard, nothing was too much, "I'll be all right," always optimistic. Just the opposite, just a different nature than me. That's what I'm missing the most now.

INT: So when you were down she used to be up?

MORRIS: She used to always pick me up.

INT: So and now that she's gone you don't have her...

MORRIS: No, I don't have this, I don't have this, I'm missing her more. There's nobody to pick you up, you know. She'd say, "I'm sure everything is going to be all right. We went through more than this. What do you worry about? This is nothing."

INT: Would you describe yourself as somebody who gets depressed?

MORRIS: Yeah, I don't think anybody in my circumstances wouldn't be. It's no fun. It's no fun, and I think loneliness is the worst enemy. Nothing can destroy you more than loneliness. And at my age now you cannot start building, change everything around. You cannot do this. And you have too many good memories and it's very difficult, even to talk about it is hard. That's **my** problem now and there's nothing you can do about it.

INT: So if somebody asks you what your plans were for the future, what would you say?

MORRIS: Now?

INT: Yes.

MORRIS: What plans? What kind of plans can you make? Live today and tomorrow and who cares? I'm seventy-five years old, what's to plan? My life is gone. You can't look backward. To make me go on is just to look backwards not forwards. To keep me going...

INT: And yet you plant a garden.

MORRIS: Huh?

INT: And yet you plant a garden.

MORRIS: Plant a garden, it's a hobby and it takes the time. You know, it keeps you occupied.

INT: But people plant a garden and grow food because they anticipate being around to enjoy it.

MORRIS: No.

INT: No?

MORRIS: Last year I had a garden, I didn't even touch anything. People came and I told them to take everything.

INT: But this year you were planting a garden.

MORRIS: Who needs it? But I'm used to doing it and many times when we both used to work in the garden, and she used to say, "If something happened to me, it's the thing I'm going to miss most." She started and I got so used to it. I work in the garden, I think about it a lot of times, you know, what she said: "Who's going to take care of the garden?"

INT: So you take care of the garden for **her**?

MORRIS: Well in a way. You do it because you used to do it, and it keeps your time occupied, and it's a good hobby and a little of the memory, her memory -- all together. But you asked me what do you think of your future? What plans? There is no such thing.

INT: How would you like your children to remember you someday?

MORRIS: Nothing special. I don't know if I'm going to be forgotten.

INT: Really? But you didn't forget your mother and your children keep in touch with you. What do you think they're going to remember about you personally?

MORRIS: It's not the same thing. I don't know. I don't know what they think of me.

INT: Do you see anything that your children are doing that is reflective of you and your personality?

MORRIS: No, no completely different. They've lived different lives, so maybe it's from the culture. You cannot compare. It's a different world we live in, a different world, different time. Nothing.

INT: But your sons keep in touch with you.

MORRIS: They all keep in touch with me, yeah.

INT: That was a family value that you had and that's important to you.

MORRIS: Their mother passed away a few months ago. I don't see that... they never talk about it.

INT: Oh, they don't talk about your wife, and that's really the most important thing on your mind.

MORRIS: My mind.

INT: Do you ever say anything to them about how much you miss her?

MORRIS: No. Well they know, they know.

INT: Maybe they're afraid to talk about it.

MORRIS: They know, maybe they're afraid to talk about her. They saw, they were here the whole summer, practically, in the end, and they saw the suffering she went through. Maybe in their minds, it had to happen, and she's better off because what she went through was indescribable, you know, it was a painful death. It took about three-and-a-half months.

INT: Yes, so they felt by that time that it was a blessing already.

MORRIS: And maybe they felt it was already a blessing because that suffering, it was unbearable to watch.

INT: But they don't talk to you and you don't talk to them about what it's like for you being without her?

MORRIS: No, well they tell me I should do more travelling, I should go out more and try to make the best of it.

INT: Do you think that they understand what you're going through?

MORRIS: Yeah. Oh yeah. But what, there is nothing they can do about it. They have their own, you know they have their own families and their own lives, problems. What can you do, you know, you have to accept it. And I realize it too, there's nothing I can do, her time was up. But my life is difficult.

INT: What were Anny's wishes before she died in terms of a funeral? Did she tell you?

MORRIS: Anny, yeah, we talked a lot of times. She knew already years ago, she planned what she wanted.

INT: And what was her desire?

MORRIS: Desire?

INT: Uh huh. What did she want to happen after she died?

MORRIS: She wanted no, no crying, no carrying on. She practically said it in those words. "Try to remember me the way I was when I was healthy." In other words, when I'm gone, that's it. I've had my life and no carrying on.

INT: So what happened when she died?

MORRIS: She made her arrangements about three years ago before when she started feeling sicker. And so we called him and then the man came over to the house. She was in bed already, bedridden; made her arrangements, she paid for it.

INT: So she pre-planned.

MORRIS: She prepared everything. She paid for it and everything, whatever she wanted.

INT: And what kind of a service did she want?

MORRIS: She didn't want nothing.

INT: So she didn't want a service.

MORRIS: She didn't want nothing. She said, "I don't want anyone to call anybody. After they will find out."

INT: So what did you do? What did you do when she died?

MORRIS: What I did? Well I couldn't take it, so I talked it over with my friend, Steve. I can abide by her wishes but, I still want to have **some** service. Steve, I talked with him, and we decided we're going to make a service. I was confused. I didn't know what to do myself. On one hand I wanted, I wanted to keep her wishes and on the other hand, the way I was brought up, I felt it's not right. I wasn't, I wasn't used to something like this, so we found a compromise. It worked out very good.

INT: And were your children all there for the service?

MORRIS: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

INT: You were comfortable with the way it was done.

MORRIS: I was comfortable, I was very pleased the way it worked out thanks to Steve because he helped. Steve, G-d bless him, I lived all my life, I didn't meet people so dear, so devoted. In my hardest times, when I was in real need, he stood by me.

INT: So there are good people.

MORRIS: There is no word to express how much I cherish this friendship. They are very good people. This whole family is just exceptional.

INT: So it made you feel better to have that kind of funeral.

MORRIS: Finally Steve helped me arrange it; he found a rabbi and but I didn't know nothing. You know, I figured to do what she wanted and that's it, you know, I'll keep my memories. That's it. Steve helped me to solve the problem, so I was happy and everybody, and all my friends they were happy.

INT: So it made everybody feel better.

MORRIS: We had here, for a few days, three or four days we had people.

INT: You sat shiva?

MORRIS: Huh?

INT: You sat shiva?

MORRIS: Not especially.

INT: No, it was just an open time and people came?

MORRIS: Just open time, people could come and all the friends come from far away; from Florida from New York and all over people were coming.

INT: So it was a way of...

MORRIS: I didn't even know we had so many friends. It made me feel a little better because, I don't know. And that's what she wanted and that's what she believed in, and she didn't want no crying. She said: "Please no crying, no crying!"

INT: So did people cry?

MORRIS: No.

INT: How could you not cry? (laughs)

MORRIS: I mean not to **carry on** because you know she...

INT: Oh, oh.

MORRIS: We used to go to funerals and she saw what was going on. And then you went when they sat shiva, and she didn't believe in this, she didn't want...

INT: So she didn't want anything unseemly, yes.

MORRIS: I think she said it's all what? She took it a different way. It's all...

INT: Did she think it was all showy?

MORRIS: She thought it was all show. People having a good time, they come in there, you know they don't even talk about the dead one. In shiva, they're having a ball and so that's the way it was here, you know what can you do? And I feel every person has a right, I feel strongly that every person has a right to his personal life, to do whatever is comfortable for him.

INT: Uh huh, whatever is comfortable for them. Well now we've talked for a number of hours and I'm finished with my questions and I want to know is there anything that you would like to add to what we've said? Is there any...

MORRIS: After all this conversation what could we add? Just the hope, I hope my pessimism will be wrong, it turned the other way, and life is going to go on. You have to make the best of it, but it's difficult, especially with my nature. I know I'm, I have a big part to blame on myself.

That's just me, I cannot change the way I am. Just hope for the best now. The future, what future? To live. Who knows? One thing I wish, if my end comes, I won't have to go through what she went through. See this is my wish. I saw what that means.

INT: So you would like to go peacefully.

MORRIS: When my time comes, I would like... G-d forbid. Because she had somebody to take care of her. I was with her to the last seconds. I was devoted to her. There's nothing too hard for me. Who's going to do? Who's going to take care of **me**, G-d forbid that something happened? I was there for months, for years I was right there, whatever it was. There was nothing too hard for **me**. Now who's going to do it for me? So, that's my wish.

INT: To end things on a positive note, I want to personally thank you for being willing to share so much of your history and your thoughts and I just feel that I've learned so much about you, that much of your story now becomes part of my memory and I thank you for everything you've contributed.

MORRIS: Well it was good to share because very few people...In normal life, I don't have nobody to listen even, and for me it's a therapy. You say you're thanking me, but for me, for me it's a therapy. At least I have somebody to share with. Of course you cannot remember everything, but the most things, I tried to remember those things which stay with you for the rest of your life.

INT: You have a wonderful memory. All right, thank you very much.

[End of tape 13 — Side 2] [End of Interview]