

**THE WILLIAM BREMAN JEWISH HERITAGE MUSEUM  
ESTHER AND HERBERT TAYLOR  
JEWISH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF ATLANTA  
LEGACY PROJECT**

**MEMORIST:** JOSEF GOLCMAN  
**INTERVIEWER:** JOHN KENT  
RUTH EINSTEIN  
**DATE:** MAY 23, 2001  
**LOCATION:** ATLANTA, GEORGIA

**INTERVIEW BEGINS**

<Video 1 Begins>

**John:** Today is May 23, 2001. We are in Atlanta, Georgia. Could you start with your name—including your original birth name?

**Josef:** My name is Josef Golcman. J-O-S-E-F Golcman, G-O-L-C-M-A-N.

**John:** What was your name at birth?

**Josef:** At birth: Ephraim Josef [unintelligible; 0:23, sounds like “Santus Menanchiev”].

**John:** When and where were you born?

**Josef:** I was born in a place Leopoldow [Poland],<sup>1</sup> near Ryki [Poland].<sup>2</sup>

**John:** Poland?

**Josef:** Poland. Born in Poland.

**John:** What year?

**Josef:** March 18, 1917.

**John:** What part of Poland is that? What’s the nearest city?

**Josef:** [Unintelligible; 0:49, sounds like “Congat Pearl”], middle part, not far from Warsaw [Poland].

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<sup>1</sup> Leopoldow [Polish: Leopoldów] is a small village about 9 kilometers (6 miles) northeast of the town of Ryki, Poland.

<sup>2</sup> Ryki (also known as Riki in Yiddish) is a town in eastern Poland, 64 kilometers (40 miles) northwest of Lublin on the main railway line to Warsaw. In 1939, 3,000 of the town’s 4,500 residents were Jewish.

**John:** Can you describe your family? Who were the people in your family?

**Josef:** My family . . . we were a family of eight children.

**John:** Your parents' names?

**Josef:** [My father] was Jacob and my mother's name was **Fagalese**.

**John:** Can you describe your parents? How do you remember them?

**Josef:** Very nice. Very religious. Very good parents. Nice children. We were really loved very much. We miss them.

**John:** What did your parents do in the town?

**Josef:** They did a lot of things. We had . . . we made . . . pressed oil, hot oil, eating oil. We had another grocery store. A lot of business. My father was in business and my mother was helping the children. She had eight children.

**John:** What kind of standard of living did you have?

**Josef:** Very nice. We had one house and we were a family . . . My grandfather was living. There were three brothers. My father had two more brothers and we all lived together. Not together—each built a house for himself—houses one next to the other. So we had the cousins, the family very nice—together. Very nice, very happy . . . *Shabbos* [Yiddish: the Jewish Sabbath], *Yontif* [Yiddish: Jewish holidays], we were . . .

**John:** Talk about the Jewish upbringing in your family.

**Josef:** Jewish upbringing . . . very religious . . . Our business was closed on *Shabbos*, holidays. Rabbis . . . my father went to a Rabbi. We were Hasidic a little bit.<sup>3</sup> Religious. We didn't know other than religious. In our town, on *Shabbos*, we had . . . I came two nights in America. When I came to America I was surprised. I went to market. [In my hometown,] going to market on *Shabbos* was impossible. All the businesses were closed.

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<sup>3</sup> Hasidic Judaism [also sometimes called *Chasidim* (from the Hebrew word "Chasid" meaning "pious")] is a Jewish mystical movement that was founded in eighteenth-century Eastern Europe by Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov. It promotes spirituality through the popularization and internalization of Jewish mysticism as the fundamental aspect of the faith. It is a branch of Orthodox Judaism that maintains a lifestyle separate from the non-Jewish world.

**John:** What kind of a kid were you? What kind of a child were you when you were a young person?

**Josef:** I think I was good maybe. I don't know. When I was a child, I was with the group. We learned, we studied, we played. We had cold weather. When it snowed, we skied, and sleighed, or whatever.

**John:** What are some of your happier memories in the early days?

**Josef:** All the memories of home . . . were happy. We were loved. My father lived it nice. I mean, comfortable. Working . . . when you own your own business, children helped. Our children never go to a job. We worked at home, helping. There was always something to do.

**John:** What were the names of your brother and sisters?

**Josef:** My brother was Baruch, one was Herschel, and Shaya. That was four brothers. This one brother came with me here. He was in New York. He passed away.

**John:** And your sisters?

**Josef:** The sisters were Estheradel, Paolaya, Shankashadel—She is living here—and Gitala, and Havalong. Hava . . . all of them we called by names—Shayndel and Paolaya . . .

**John:** Describe the Jewish community in your town.

**Josef:** Community was very religious . . . in business . . . hustle. On *Shabbos* and *Yontif* . . . Atmosphere was so unbelievable. Everything here is so dry on the holidays, or *Shabbos*, or *Yontif*. Just because it's *Shabbos*, you come to *shul* or whatever.<sup>4</sup> But they was always even during the week. It happened to my father sometime when he was out on the street and met another one and they had a discussion about some kind of in the Talmud or something so they would argue maybe for an hour. I had to go out and look for him. Religious type. Nice type. There was a certain type that were not so [religious] but they were keeping kosher on *Shabbos*. Unless you done something [different or non-kosher] inside the house, nobody knows. Professor . . . You know [unintelligible; 6:15, sounds like Josef may be referring to Hillel] a little bit? Professing . . . we didn't . . .

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<sup>4</sup> *Shul* is a Yiddish word for synagogue that is derived from a German word meaning “school,” and emphasizes the synagogue's role as a place of study.

**John:** What kind of interaction did your family have with the Polish population?

**Josef:** Very good, but the last years were very bad when they felt the Poles were better . . . I don't want to jump from the beginning to the end, but when we were there, they needed the Jews because they went before their harvests. Before the spring, they needed money and came to the Jews to borrow money. Later, when they got the harvests, they paid back. We had a lot of them because we used to buy the seeds to make the oil. The farmers came to us, and they wanted to make their own oil or whatever. We done that. We were good. Sometimes we had some fights in school, but mostly we went to *cheder*.<sup>5</sup> We went a few hours to school mostly.

By the way, my father had a sister. My *zayde* [Yiddish: grandfather] got her a husband of caste<sup>6</sup>. . . He was sitting and learning, like *Kollel*<sup>7</sup> . . . They have the *Kollel* with the religious people, where they sit and learn. He was a *Kollel*. He would sit, and learn, and study with us. He went to [unintelligible, 7:59, sounds like “*Slavuski*”] *Yeshiva* and got a *Chossen-Kallah* [Hebrew: bridegroom].<sup>8</sup>

**Ruth:** Bridegroom?

**Josef:** Right. He was sitting and studying and we were learning. We were living in the house next to him. On *Shabbos*, we opened up the windows and we were all singing [unintelligible; 8:21, sounds like “*smilish*”]. It was nice.

**John:** What was your attitude towards the Polish population before the war?

**Josef:** I am afraid to say openly. If you cut off, I will tell you what I think about it growing up.

<interview pauses, then resumes>

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<sup>5</sup> A *Cheder* [Hebrew: room] is a Jewish religious elementary school for boys. Religious classes were usually held in a room attached to a synagogue or in the private home of a teacher called a ‘*melamed*.’ It was traditional for boys to start *cheder* at three or five years old, learning to read Hebrew from a primer and studying the Book of Leviticus. Girls did not attend *cheder*.

<sup>6</sup> The Jewish religion has a significant caste system that sometimes helps in tracing ancestry. It is a hereditary, paternal caste passed down from father to sons and based on which of the twelve tribes of Israel they are descended from.

<sup>7</sup> A *Kollel* [Hebrew: ‘gathering’ or ‘collection’ of scholars] is an institute for full-time, advanced study of the *Talmud* and rabbinic literature. It is like a *yeshiva* but the student body is virtually all married men, who receive a regular monthly stipend.

<sup>8</sup> A *Yeshiva* [Hebrew: sitting] is a Jewish educational institution for religious instruction that is equivalent to high school. It also refers to a *Talmudic* college for unmarried male students from their teenage years to their early twenties.

**Josef:** I would like them to feel like in Yugoslavia . . . to kill each other.<sup>9</sup> That's what I would like maybe most. They were worse than the Germans. Some of the Germans . . . when the Germans came into Poland, they didn't know which were the Jews and which were not. They showed the Germans where we were hiding. They tell them they kill the Gentiles that were hiding a Jew—the Gentile, and us, whoever they find there. They were very, very . . . in fact, all the concentration camps were in Poland.

**John:** Before the war, in the 1920's and 1930's . . .

**Josef:** Coming to before the war and the people worked for us. The Gentile they worked for us . . . whatever you needed. Until five o'clock when they worked for us, they went out later and had, “*Nie kupuj od zydu*. [Polish], don't buy [from] the Jew.” There was nothing you could do then. In the daytime he worked for us and at night . . . Before the war [and] close to the war, we were afraid in the daytime and afraid at nighttime. All the windows, we had outside [shutters] to close because they threw stones. It is painful even to talk about it.

**John:** What is your understanding as to why the two groups were so at odds?

**Josef:** I think the only thing is jealousy. Even here [it is] the same thing. Antisemitism is not because they don't like us. It is [because] we are more accomplished and we are more prosperous. We are doing something. They think that if the Jew wouldn't be, they would have it. That is my opinion and I see it. I see it here when I worked. I had contractors. He told me, “The Jews are my best friend.” Later, he would pat me [on the back]. He said, “If you ever want to retire . . .” and all kind of thing. You see . . . the same thing here. You see the antisemitism. The Jews come here from everywhere, and the Gentiles come here, and antisemitism comes here.

**John:** Were there any specific experiences before the war?

**Josef:** Yes, they killed my . . . I'll tell you an example. When a farmer was going . . . riding a horse and beat him too hard. There was a special, like here . . . the organization . . . The Humane

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<sup>9</sup> Josef seems to be referring to the Bosnian War, an international armed conflict that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995, after the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina declared its independence from Yugoslavia. The main belligerents were the forces of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and those of the self-proclaimed Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Croat entities within Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnian Serb forces, with the backing of the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army, targeted both Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) and Croatian civilians for atrocious crimes resulting in the deaths of some 100,000 people (80 percent Bosniak) by 1995. The Bosnian War has been described as Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II. It was the first conflict since the Holocaust to be formally judged as genocidal due to the war crimes involved, which included rape, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Society.<sup>10</sup> They give him a ticket, or they beat him up, or they put him in jail. The same. One time, they went out and killed my uncle with an ax . . . They killed . . .

**John:** Did you have any experiences of antisemitic actions?

**Josef:** Always—even in school. We had a group of young boys. We'd fight them. They'd fight us. Yes, sure. The Jew was always . . . We didn't mind. They pounced on us and we did the same. We didn't want to have nothing to . . . We came to school and they went home. We didn't associate much with the Gentiles. You had to be . . . Listen, you lived with them. You lived from them. They are customers and things, like here. The same thing here. There is nothing you can do. Whatever they think . . . We don't know what they think. We don't know what they are thinking and they don't know what we are thinking, but a fact is a fact—they don't like us. I wonder why that is . . . in my opinion, jealousy. Not because you should hate me—I do nothing—but he hate me because . . . When we came here . . . Maybe I'm not going in order. Can I?

**John:** Sure.

**Josef:** When we came here . . . Actually I came to New Orleans, [Louisiana] to Savannah, [Georgia]. The Jewish had good hearts. They made a school for English, to teach us how. They took in Gentile Poles. When we came together at night and we dressed a little bit better, the *goy* [Yiddish: designates a non-Jewish or Gentile person] came in . . . I'm embarrassed. He said, "You see? You are already . . ." I worked in a dry goods store when I came for six months, in a wholesale dry goods. He went on a farm and worked on a farm somewhere. The difference is . . . [He said,] "You see? You always do better!" In their mind . . .

**John:** As a young man, what were your plans for your future as an adult?

**Josef:** To go in business. My father went to business and business education. We were educated. You learned, you started . . . In fact, my father . . . we had one teacher who was from France. He taught us to play chess. I learned a little Esperanto but I forgot already.<sup>11</sup> People with education. I wouldn't say too high class but . . . thank G-d for religious life. [It was a] nice life. We have our own house, our own . . . whatever we need. We didn't . . . We lived nicely.

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<sup>10</sup> The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest and most effective animal protection and advocacy organization.

<sup>11</sup> Esperanto is an international auxiliary language devised in 1887 by Dr. Ludwig Lazarus Zamenhof (1859-1917), an eye doctor, to be a second language that would allow people who speak different native languages to communicate.

**John:** What was your opinion about Zionism?<sup>12</sup>

**Josef:** I was a Zionist. I was a *Mizrachi*.<sup>13</sup> I wanted to go to Israel after the liberation from the camp, but in camp I got married right after the war. We'll go back. We had a child, and they said we'll take you later. Now we can take you and later came time to go and we had to go to America. Later we said we were going to go to Israel. You know how it is and later became a year . . . I had papers. I had a friend of mine send me papers to Australia when I was in camp, but I didn't want to go there.

**John:** After 1933, what were you aware of that was happening in Germany? How much did you follow that?

**Josef:** We were aware of it. We were very educated about that. We knew about all the things. We knew about the Poles, but we didn't ever believe that Hitler was going to do what he did. Because when it came the time for the war in 1939, me and my brother wanted to immigrate, to go to Russia.<sup>14</sup> My father discussed, "Where will you go in there? Go to the Communist?" To be Communist was the worst thing. [We thought,] "Hitler, even if he comes . . ." The Germans come in in the First World War when there was the war in Poland. Germany occupied Poland that time, too. They took [my father during the First World War] to work, but they paid him whatever it is and at night they came home. I said, "This is [\[unintelligible; 16:30\]](#) . . . the war wouldn't be long and we will go . . . Why should you go to the Communist? We didn't go. I made a mistake. Who knows? That's what Hitler done. After when he came in, he fooled us. He made a ghetto. He said, "Make a ghetto to protect," and besides he said, "Make a *Judenstaat* [German: Jewish State]. The Jews will come together, live in one place, and we will make one place special for Jews."<sup>15</sup> They took them from one city to the other. We said, "Alright and each

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<sup>12</sup> Zionism is a movement that supports a Jewish national state in the territory defined as the Land of Israel. Although Zionism existed before the nineteenth century, in the 1890's Theodor Herzl popularized it and gave it a new urgency, as he believed that Jewish life in Europe was threatened and a State of Israel was needed. The State of Israel was established in 1948 and Zionism today is expressed as support for the continued existence of Israel.

<sup>13</sup> *Mizrachi* is a religious Zionist organization founded in 1902 in Vilna, Lithuania by Rabbi Yitzchak Yaacov Reines. *Mizrachi* believes that the *Torah* should be at the center of Zionism and that Jewish nationalism is a means of achieving religious objectives.

<sup>14</sup> World War II is generally considered to have begun on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland from the north, south, and west. As the invading German forces advanced east in September of 1939, hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees fled westward into Romania, Hungary, and Lithuania or parts of eastern Poland that were soon occupied by Soviet forces that had invaded from the east.

<sup>15</sup> The formation of a Jewish state is an idea that was promoted by Zionist Theodor Herzl's 1896 pamphlet, "*Der Judenstaat*," which argued that the best way to avoid antisemitism in Europe was to create an independent Jewish state. In the 1930's especially, the Nazi party explored several proposals and plans for establishing a Jewish state where European Jews would be deported, however, these were abandoned as World War II progressed.

will go there.” One of my brothers passed away when we were together. They took us away from one place to another. They are going to Lukow [Poland].<sup>16</sup> Not far. In Europe . . . ten cities in Poland was like here, one Atlanta, with counties all together. He went there to the city, but I didn’t go. He went in and came right back. We later find out those all go to a train and to camps.

**John:** Where were you when the war first started in September 1939?

**Josef:** When it started, we were home. Later we were in a ghetto, Ryki.<sup>17</sup> From Ryki, they took us to Deblin [Poland].<sup>18</sup> We went to Czestochowa.<sup>19</sup> What happened . . . we are lucky—not lucky, but lucky. I’m here, so I’m lucky. They had camps—*Arbeit* [German: work] . . . labor camps . . . work camps. They had camps behind the lines. Later, when the [Germans] started the war with Russia, they moved. Later they moved [us from] Czestochowa to [unintelligible; 18:37]. That’s why we weren’t [tattooed].<sup>20</sup> We didn’t have the numbers.

**John:** What was day to day life like in the ghetto before you were taken away?

**Josef:** In the ghetto, we somehow . . . they would leave us alone. In the ghetto, we could survive because the Poles . . . we had some friends who thought we had some money, so you buy something. You sneak out. A Jew always helped himself, but the ghetto didn’t last long. A lot of people . . . [The Germans] were very, very shrewd. They made *kapos* from Jews.<sup>21</sup> Some *kapos* got killed from them because *kapos* didn’t want to order around Jews. You find out. We had the

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<sup>16</sup> Lukow [Yiddish: Lukov; Polish: Łuków] is a town 90 kilometers (56 miles) northwest of Lublin and 50 kilometers (miles) northeast of Ryki. A ghetto was established for it’s 6,000 Jewish residents in May 1941. Initially, it was enclosed and Jews had some freedom of movement. Overcrowding made many leave for nearby ghettos despite later restrictions that forbade leaving the city. In October 1942, the Lukow ghetto was liquidated and some 4,000 Jews were sent to the Treblinka extermination camp.

<sup>17</sup> The Ryki ghetto was created sometime between January and March 1941. The ghetto was located in an area of town that had been most devastated by Luftwaffe bombardment during the German invasion of Poland. The ghetto’s small size forced an estimate of, on average, 40 families to share one structure. The poor conditions and overcrowding led to epidemic outbreaks of typhus and trachoma.

<sup>18</sup> Deblin [Polish: Dęblin] is a town about 65 kilometers (40 miles) northwest of Lublin and 10 kilometers (6 miles) southwest of Ryki. The Ryki ghetto was liquidated on May 7, 1942. Between 30 and 70 men remained behind in a labor camp, while the rest were marched to Deblin. In Deblin, about 200 young males were sent to work at a labor camp for the Luftwaffe. The remaining 1,500 to 2,466 Jews from Ryki were loaded onto trains and sent to the Sobibor extermination camp.

<sup>19</sup> Czestochowa [Polish: Częstochowa; sometimes also spelled ‘Czenstochowa’] is a city located about 200 kilometers (124 miles) southwest of Warsaw, Poland.

<sup>20</sup> During the Holocaust, concentration camp prisoners received tattoos only at one location: the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp complex.

<sup>21</sup> To assist in managing the large communities within concentration or labor camps, German authorities installed a hierarchy of administrative units under their control. A *kapo* was a prisoner in a concentration camp who was assigned by the SS guards to supervise forced labor or carry out administrative tasks in camps. The *kapo* system was designed to turn victim against victim, as the *kapos* were pitted against their fellow prisoners in order to maintain the favor of their SS guards. *Kapos* did not operate in ghettos. Rather, German authorities employed a Jewish Council [*Judenrat*] and Jewish police force to manage the ghettos.

*Junderat* . . . the same thing.<sup>22</sup> They came to the *Judenrat* [and told the members] he should pick the people to go to labor.<sup>23</sup> You know if he isn't there, you're not . . . He didn't pick his children. He picked others. Painful as it is it, but still [it is] your family. Nobody knew, so we were a little bit angry, but how can you be angry with them? Later, they went—same thing. They thought they were going to be saved. That's how they done it. They fooled the people. Right away . . . we thought would be entirely different. I don't know what the outcome of it would be.

**Ruth:** Did the *Judenrat* ask the Rabbis and the more learned people about their opinions about how to deal with this situation?

**Josef:** Wasn't opinion. I don't know if they asked or not, but the *Judenrat* . . . a lot of them didn't want to be *Judenrat* . . . They had to. Sometimes they picked the people—the Germans. A lot of them they went there to help people, but the same thing but they were disappointed. They thought they were going in there [and would be able to help] or whatever, but it was not . . . The governor, the Polish governor was just as [bad as] Hitler. He did the same thing. When he . . . in the beginning, the governor . . . he didn't even tell us there was a vote in Polish. He knew what all was going, because the Germans came to him to find out all. He was very good friends with my father. On Friday, he used to come in and eat fish and drink vodka . . . friends, neighbors. The first thing . . . we said, “What do we do with the house?” He didn't tell us even what was going on.

**John:** What did the Jewish leaders, rabbis, and so one what message did they have?

**Josef:** The message was to pray and to do the best and not to do violence when you going out. The mother and father . . . don't go there because . . . the same thing. We are all *machers* [Yiddish] . . . big shots when there's anything, but when it comes to the real thing . . . That's why I didn't want to go in, because I never wanted to talk about it. I'm sitting here and I'm telling

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<sup>22</sup> The *Judenrat* was a Council of Jewish leaders established on Germans orders in the various ghettos and Jewish communities of Nazi-occupied Europe. They were given the responsibility of implementing the Nazis' policies regarding the Jews, which included everything from the confiscation of electronics like radios and valuable assets like watches or jewelry to organizing forced labor details and groups for deportations. The *Judenrat* also administered the affairs of the ghetto and most tried to protect and support the Jews under their care. A *Judischer Ordnungsdienst* [German: Jewish Ghetto Police; also known as the OD], was also established by the Germans to keep order in occupied areas and often were responsible for rounding up Jews selected for forced labor or deportation. They were often referred them to as the “Jewish Police.”

<sup>23</sup> In January 1940, authorities had ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council and police force in Ryki. The first council chair, Shmuel Gutwajder tried to ameliorate the plight of Ryki Jews and did manage to successfully negotiate reduced SS-imposed labor quotas before he died in May 1942 and was replaced by Mojsze Wajsfisz. By the spring of 1941, about 370 Jews were sent out from the ghetto daily as forced labor. Another 300-500 were interned at labor camps just outside of the town.

about it, but when I was there . . . There's no person who wrote ten books or three books or whatever can imagine what happened. It is impossible to tell you when you are there. It is impossible. Everybody say, "I'm going to tell this, this, this . . ." You can't imagine. I think one scholar [said there are] three things nobody can imagine: love, pain . . . and music. When you go to a concert . . . when you come home, [you say,] "The music was so nice." You sit there and listen. You come home and another person asks, "How nice was it?" They can't imagine what you were sitting there feeling.

**John:** Did you have any contacts with Polish population during the ghetto period? Business contact?

**Josef:** In ghetto, yes. We had contact because some we had to . . . somebody bought some food.<sup>24</sup> We gave them . . .

**John:** Could you sense what their attitude was about what was happening? How did the Poles feel about the situation?

**Josef:** I didn't go to the Poles. I had a house. I have property there. In the beginning, Mr. Goffen, he was district attorney, he was my lawyer he wrote papers and about that time I could get about 100,000 dollars. I had to go to sign the papers. I didn't want to go. I didn't want it from them . . . to benefit from me one penny. When you go there, you have to buy a ticket, you have to buy food . . . I didn't want to go and I didn't go. People go there for "The March of the Living." I think they shouldn't. I wouldn't go. I wouldn't let even them because they are benefitting. They still don't like you. They hate you when you come there. They benefit from you. I have a friend who went there—to Krakow [Poland]—to see what his family, what is left . . .

**John:** What were the approximate dates of the ghetto period? Do you remember about what year that was?

**Josef:** It was in 1939 when they came in. After a few weeks after they started . . . they were very smart when they came in. It was just to look around . . . Later on . . . the Poles suffered. The Poles think they had some good thing but they suffered too, whether they were patriots, real Poles, whatever. But some of them got in right away and they helped. In the beginning, it was not bad. We used to work. I remember myself and . . . we saw that it was bad. Myself and a lot of . . . they took us to clean the station. We came there to the station. It was painful. They told the

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<sup>24</sup> Initially, the Ryki ghetto was not enclosed, but Jews were officially forbidden from leaving its borders without permission on penalty of death. The ghetto was enclosed in July 1941.

girls to take off their clothes, down to their . . . to clean the things. For spite. They did very bad things, unbelievable things.

What can I tell you about? The Poles . . . <shaking head> You want to know about the Poles. When we . . . survived and were liberated, I went to go to my town. A Pole told us . . . saw us. He was . . . a policeman . . . militia. First thing he asked, “*Wciąż żyjesz?* [Polish] You still alive?” My friend [that was with me] is now in Australia. He took off his machine gun and told us to lay down in the ditch. He wanted to kill us, but somehow . . . I think it was an angel. A Russian soldier walked from up afar and he saw him. He said, “A Russian is coming. You get up, because he is going to kill you.” He stood with a gun. We got up and went in the woods. I never went to the city. That’s Poles.

Later when we came to Zelechow—another city not far from there—whoever survived from all around came to this Zelechow.<sup>25</sup> Being there . . . we start to live nicely . . . we went and made some money. One day, about three or four of them from Warsaw came there because everybody looked to see if someone from his family survived. This was wintertime—snow. They went out about three miles from the city and they killed him. Later we found out we went out there. The snow was soaked with blood. It was terrible.

**John:** Can you talk about when the ghetto was liquidated, when everyone was transported away? When was that?

**Josef:** This was 1940 or 1941. They came in 1939, but exactly I can’t tell you. I already forgot the city and the street’s names. I know where it is, but . . .

**John:** Do you remember what season it was?

**Josef:** It was around . . . after *Pesach* or something.<sup>26</sup> I think it was around that time.

**John:** Maybe early summer of 1941?

**Josef:** Around early summer of 1941. Yes, that’s probably true.

**John:** What happened to you then?

**Josef:** We went there. We worked. I was hiding, too. I was hiding, but was scared. When we got liberated, I was with my sister and brother. We three survived.

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<sup>25</sup> Zelechow (also sometimes spelled Zjelechov) Żelechów is a town in central Poland, 85 kilometres (53 miles) southeast of Warsaw and 85 kilometres far from Lublin. It is approximately 20 kilometers (miles) north of Ryki. After the war, the town saw an influx of Holocaust survivors, with at least 120 Jews returning. All left after the Soviet Army had withdrawn from the area.

<sup>26</sup> *Pesach* [Hebrew: Passover] is an eight-day holiday that celebrates the anniversary of Israel’s liberation from Egyptian bondage.

**John:** Up until the summer of 1941, was your family still all together?

**Josef:** Yes, we were together. We came . . . when you were in ghetto, you worked and later came back at night. We tried to be <gestures with his hands indicating closeness>. Everybody [thought] tomorrow morning maybe you not . . . You didn't know. Every time they needed some hundred people and the next . . . you don't know when they are calling you. The *Judenrat* had to do it. We knew it. It is not . . . [They were] beautiful people. They were [in their] normal life from the finest people what you can't imagine, but came the moment when they called you and sent you a ticket, you had to go. You couldn't . . .

**Ruth:** This was Czestochowa at this time?

Josef: No this was Deblin. Czestochowa was after. That was the home—Ryki—we were talking about then. In Ryki, in the home.

**John:** When you had to leave the ghetto, were you able to take any belongings with you?

**Josef:** You think they will they let you? They wouldn't let you. Listen, what can they did? The German had that dog. He walked around and he thought . . . *mensch bei dem hunde* [German: man with the dog]. He called the dog . . . the *mensch*—a human being . . . bite . . . the dog . . . the Jews . . . It is hard even to . . . I don't know how you can . . . I don't know how different . . . Some people [were] different. I had one German gave me a bottle of vodka. He said, "*Ich bin [unintelligible; 31:35, sounds like "statt" (German: instead of)]*, I am not the same." That's what he said. He had to do it. He was a plain soldier. He wasn't the SS. The Ukrainers and the Yugoslavs . . . They were worse than the Germans, than anybody.<sup>27</sup> That's what in Warsaw happened. They started fighting there.<sup>28</sup> I said, "Kill them every day. I prayed they would fight.

<sup>27</sup> Many people in German-occupied areas collaborated with the Germans. Antisemitism, nationalism, ethnic hatred, anti-Communism, and opportunism often induced collaboration with the Nazi regime. In territories they occupied (particularly in the east), the Germans depended on indigenous auxiliary units (civilian, military, and police) to carry out the annihilation of the Jewish population. Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, and ethnic German collaborators played a significant role in killing Jews throughout eastern and southeastern Europe. Such collaboration was a critical element in implementing the "Final Solution." Collaborators committed some of the worst atrocities of the Holocaust era. During the German occupation of Poland, an auxiliary police unit composed of ethnic Germans, some Ukrainians, and Polish police exercised authority in Ryki. Hungarian troops were also quartered in Ryki prior to the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941.

<sup>28</sup> Two instances of resistance occurred in Warsaw, Poland during World War II. On April 19, 1943, the Warsaw ghetto uprising began after German troops and police entered the ghetto to deport its surviving inhabitants. The ghetto fighters were able to hold out for nearly a month, but on May 16, 1943, the revolt ended. Then on August 1, 1944, the Polish Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*; AK), a non-Communist underground resistance army with units stationed throughout German-occupied Poland, rose against the German occupation authorities in an effort to liberate Warsaw. The impetus for the uprising was the appearance of Soviet forces along the east bank of the Vistula River. The Soviets failed to intervene; the Germans eventually crushed the revolt and razed the center of the city to the ground in October 1944.

[Unintelligible; 32:01, sounds like “Clinton”] came in with the march. They were the worst. They wore black uniforms with red, the Hitler thing [indicating an arm band].<sup>29</sup> They killed Jews.

**John:** Where were you taken then in 1941? Where did you go?

**Josef:** We go to Deblin. Then later to Czestochowa.<sup>30</sup>

John: Those were ghetto situations?

Josef: Ghettos and all the camps. The ghetto was in Ryki. The ghetto when you went out from the ghetto, there was no . . . you just . . .

Ruth: Was it the Czestochowa ghetto<sup>31</sup> or Czestochowa labor camp?<sup>32</sup>

Josef: No, Czestochowa was after.

Ruth: No, after Deblin, when you went to Czestochowa.

Josef: Czestochowa was the camp. Zelechow was the after.

**John:** That was a labor camp also at that time?

**Josef:** Yes. I was in the woods, too.<sup>33</sup>

**John:** How did you manage to live in the woods?

**Josef:** You ask how did we manage? We went to Gentiles who we more or less trusted. Later they killed my two cousins. The last time, when we . . . What they done—the Poles—they tried to show you they were good for you. Whatever you came, you gave them a gold coin, or you gave them some money, or you gave them some whatever. They gave you something.

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<sup>29</sup> Certain branches of the SS, including the *Einsatzgruppen* (mobile units which followed the regular German army as it advanced east and were responsible for the deaths of a minimum of 1,000,000 Jews in the occupied East) wore black uniforms with red armbands that displayed the swastika or their rank.

<sup>30</sup> The Deblin ghetto was liquidated in October 1942. Those who were employed at the airport, where the Luftwaffe had established a work camp, remained until the Russians began to advance on the area in the late summer of 1944. The prisoners were then evacuated to forced labor camps in Czestochowa.

<sup>31</sup> In 1941, a ghetto was established in Czestochowa. In September and October 1942, deportations to Treblinka began and the ghetto was mostly liquidated. About 5,000 Jews remained. In June 1943, about 1,000 people were deported and the remaining 4,000 were sent to labor camps. By the end of the war, nearly all of the Jews from Czestochowa were dead. The city was liberated by the Soviets in January 1945.

<sup>32</sup> HASAG (also known as Hugo Schneider AG or by its original name in German: *Hugo Schneider Aktiengesellschaft*) was a German metal goods manufacturer that became a Nazi arms-manufacturing conglomerate and the third largest user of forced labor in German-occupied Europe. HASAG maintained dozens of armaments factories in Germany and Poland, with at least four factories around Czestochowa: HASAG-Rakow, HASAG-Pelcery (also spelled Pelzery), HASAG-Warta and HASAG-Czestochowianka. When the Czestochowa ghetto was liquidated, the factory sites became labor camps. In general, a policy of “extermination through work” was applied in the labor camps.

<sup>33</sup> It is unclear when Josef lived in the woods or if he joined any of the multiple partisan groups active in the area. Josef’s surviving sister (who later took the name Sarah and married a partisan named Charles Bedzow after the war) is described as a partisan in accounts of her life. It is also possible he escaped to the woods in December 1944 or January 1945, when the labor camps at Czestochowa were evacuated ahead of the advancing Russian army.

Eventually, when you feel sure, so they killed you. A lot of them they came. They killed my . . . three cousins . . . all three were cousins. They went out at night to get some . . . and never came back. It is hard.

**John:** Where was your mother and father at that time?

**Josef:** They took them away. You either had to go with them or . . . They would split you up.

**John:** Could you give us a general overview of what happened over the next couple of years until liberation? You don't have to go into it more than you are comfortable. Just a general idea of what happened.

**Josef:** I don't know. We looked every day. We talked to people, one another [and said,] "If something happened to me maybe you can bury us in the Yiddish, Jewish way." What can I tell you? It is hard to tell. Your life was . . . I was in the woods later on . . . We survived—me, and my sister, and my brother. Later I am going to go to [\[unintelligible, 35:20\]](#). After we came to Zelechow, each one . . . whenever he thought, I have people here . . . each one went to his location. Each one to a location to find maybe . . . to live on. I right away, I start a little business because we had from before . . . I went there to a *goy*, Gentile's place, where we stayed before we got moved out. We had a box where we put some *Sefer Torah*,<sup>34</sup> and some books, and shofars.<sup>35</sup> I had *Tefillin* too.<sup>36</sup> We buried it there. After the war, I came there to pick it up. I told him. I thought he would see me with [the box]. He was disappointed that I was living. I said, "I don't want nothing from you. I just want something over there." I wasn't sure that he was going to let me out. We went there and uncovered and took it out. I showed him and he started to get nervous. He had guns. They had rifles. I told him, "Listen, come help me and see what I have there." [He said,] "Oh, okay." I didn't want to let him away from my side because I didn't know what he was going to do. I had that experience. I opened it up and I showed it to him. [I said,] "See, it's religious things." He let me go. I took it to Zelechow. I was in Zelechow. Later, after a couple of weeks we were there. My wife came. I didn't know if she was alive. You didn't know. I knew her before.

**John:** When did you meet the woman who became your wife?

<sup>34</sup> A Torah scroll [Hebrew: *Sefer Torah*] is the holiest book within Judaism, made up of the five books of Moses. It is hand-written by a pious scribe in the original Hebrew and must meet extremely strict standards of production. Torah scrolls are routinely read aloud in all synagogues and are a core representation of Judaism itself.

<sup>35</sup> A shofar is an ancient musical horn made of ram's horn, used for Jewish religious purposes.

<sup>36</sup> *Tefillin*, also called 'phylacteries' are a set of small black leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the *Torah*, which are worn by observant Jews during weekday morning prayers. They are worn around the arm, hand and fingers and on the forehead.

**Josef:** I knew my wife from that big <indicates when they were small children> because her grandfather was living across. We knew each other, but she was a few years younger than me. Later in the camps, the women [were housed] separate and the men separate. We didn't know. That is why we made Zelechow the center point. If whoever survives . . . My wife came.

**John:** What was her name?

**Josef:** Bronia.

**John:** Her original family name?

**Josef:** Apelker. Her name is Apelker. Later came her [older] sister [Saba Apelker]. We were in **Zelechow**. Later came more . . . I think we had about a couple hundred people from all over were in Zelechow. We started to take . . . each one—Jews—took their [unintelligible, 38:42]. The *goyim* didn't like it. One night, they came and took out ten women at night, and with machine guns, and they shot all of them.<sup>37</sup> My sister-in-law was there by accident. They shot her. Was at night and they left. They were going to go over with the machine guns one more time, but one said, "Don't waste any bullets." Somehow she came to herself. The dew, or whatever . . . the air . . . She crawled over to a house and knocked. Believe it or not, she came to a Gentile's [a person of non-Jewish faith] house. Of course, she didn't know [whose house it was]. They didn't want to let her in, but somehow they got a little . . . took her in. They came right away and told us. We took her to Warsaw to the hospital. She was still living, but she was very difficult because of some of the intestines. After that, the next day, or two days later, or three days later, my wife came there too so we didn't get married. We weren't married. Somehow the Russians were there. I told them I wanted . . . I got some papers made out for five people—I think five or six people—to go away. No, I'm confused now a little bit. I'm going too fast . . .

We went away to Lodz [Poland].<sup>38</sup> My wife and my brother—my sister and sister-in-law were in Warsaw. In Lodz, I took two buildings. In Europe, people lived inside and the front were

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<sup>37</sup> In her account of post-war life in Zelechow, "My Tragic Night in Żelechów," Hanke Oszlak described a night in June 1945 when a group of Poles drug her and five other Jews out of the homes they were staying in. She reported that one pregnant woman, one young man, and one woman from Warsaw were shot. Another man managed to run away, Oszlak hid, and a third woman named Pegas Fajngezucht survived by pretending to be dead after she was shot. (See Yassni, W., ed. *Memorial Book of the Community of Zelechow*. Chicago, 1953. June 23, 2010. <http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/zelechow/zelp315.html>.) While this account may not be of the same incident, it is

indicative of the anti-Jewish violence that was common in the area at the time. Other accounts of survivors who returned to Zelechow in 1944-1945 also describe violent conflicts with right-wing nationalist groups and with local Poles who were angered by the preferential treatment surviving Jews seems to receive from the occupying Russians.

<sup>38</sup> Lodz [Polish: Łódź] is a large textile-manufacturing city in central Poland, about 120 kilometers (75 miles) west of Warsaw.

stores. I rented two stores, and I went into business. I was there a few months, six months, eight months and I did very good. Later a lady came in with two daughters. I told her if she wanted to help me out in the store.

Later, my brother . . . the Russians took him to the army—younger brother.

**John:** In what year?

**Josef:** In 1940? Wait a minute. This is prior to . . . two months between, six months . . . maybe 1941. No.

**John:** This is right after liberation?

**Josef:** No, this was in 1944 after the liberation. I'm talking about liberation—1944.

**Ruth:** You were liberated from Czestochowa?

Josef: We were liberated from Czestochowa . . . We came to Lodz and opened business. My brother came for furlough for ten days. [At the end of] the ten days I called in the lady and told her I'd give her all the keys with everything for the stores. [I told her,] "I'm leaving." I made a paper for five or six people. I forgot already to take with me to go to Germany.

<interview pauses, then resumes>

**John:** Going back to the time of liberation, can you remember how you reacted when you knew the war was over?

**Josef:** What can I tell you?

**John:** What condition were you in?

**Josef:** The condition [was] poor condition, but not bad—I survived. Right after I came to **Zelechow** . . . I was a guy what I wasn't lazy, if I can say so. Right away, we had ten to fifteen people ate in my house. Twenty people came. My wife came there—stayed with me and her aunt. In fact, the aunt got shot in . . . Her sister was . . . Everybody wanted to come. They wanted to eat.

**Ruth:** You said you started a business. What kind of business was it?

**Josef:** Delicatessen. I don't know. I remember I bought bread. I went to bakery, and bought bread, and got somebody else this . . . opened up a store. I think ice cream, too. You were selling anything—whatever you could. I . . . had help. I was running around.

**John:** Did you go back to your home after the war?

<interview pauses, then resumes>

**Josef:** Okay.

**John:** If you can, just outline again where you were and then your escape so we have it in order.

**Ruth:** You were in Czestochowa?

Josef: Yes. We were in Ryki, Deblin, and Czestochowa. Later, we were in the woods and then liberated.

**Ruth:** How did you find out you were liberated?

**Josef:** How do we find out? We saw the people. You find out in five minutes. We were going out. We listened. We saw the Germans running. When we were there, we thought we'd kill every German. Couldn't do it. We are Jews.

**John:** Where did you go after you knew you were liberated?

**Josef:** After, we went to Zelechow. Actually, we went to my home. We passed through. We went to Zelechow. The main thing, we said we—all of them—come there. People came, whoever looked for survivors. We met there and when happened . . . this thing . . . we went away. We went to Lodz. I took with me my *Sefer Torah* and went to Lodz. I was in Lodz.

Later, when I was in Lodz, I told you about my brother was in the army. He had ten days furlough. We heard about certain . . . the Russians were in Prague and Czechoslovakia. We had to go through the border. I got some kind of papers for so many people: me, my wife—who was not my wife yet, my sister-in-law, and my brother, and one more guy was there. We find where we want to go. We came to the border. We went by train.

The Russians stopped the train and they locked up all the train. What they done—they took one by one from the train to a checkpoint place to check whatever they done. I don't know. Later, somebody was checked and he was good and they let him in to the other side. I was inside. I was there. Soldiers were there. They watched. They came to our group. They took us off. We thought . . . My brother was illegal. He had . . . furlough, but he couldn't go away. We came in there. The Russians took in two soldiers and there was a captain. They took my valise. I had a special valise—suitcase. He put it on the table. When he opened it up and saw them, he said “[unintelligible, 48:38, sounds like “*brojinki*”]?” means “religious” in Russian. [I said,] “*Da.*” [Russian: Yes] He told the soldiers to watch us, to take us to the train, not to . . . keep an eye on us until we get to the other side to the German border. I thought this was a Jew—I think so—or an angel. We all would have gotten shot without any question because we were deserters.

We came over to Deggendorf [Germany].<sup>39</sup> I forgot, I think, I got married in Lodz.

**Ruth:** You think?

**Josef:** Yes. I married in Lodz after we arrived.

**John:** Can you tell what happened to your wife during the war?

**Josef:** Not much. She was able to work in an ammunition . . . factory . . . checking the bullets. It was hard. What can I tell you? In camp is very hard, very bad. They were . . . scared . . .

**Ruth:** Frightened?

**Josef:** Frightened.

**John:** Where was she? Where was that factory?

**Josef:** Deblin. The same thing. Later when Hitler started to lose, it was a little bit different. There was chaos already, but still they try to whatever . . . When we came to Deggendorf. It was entirely different. It was a DP [Displaced Persons] camp.

**Ruth:** In Deggendorf?

**Josef:** In Deggendorf. In Deggendorf, my wife had a child. From Deggendorf, we wanted to go to Israel.

**John:** Can you first talk about the Displaced Persons camp a little bit? What was life like?

**Josef:** In DP camp was different. First of all, it was free. There was a chaplain, a Jewish chaplain. I was invited . . . This picture <points off camera> was taken in Deggendorf. See the stamp on the side? I was in charge of the religious whatever. You could get kosher [food] and you'd get packages.<sup>40</sup> The UNRRA . . .<sup>41</sup> It was a religious organization. They supplied . . . I have somewhere a *seder* plate . . .<sup>42</sup>

**John:** Were you already married at that point?

**Josef:** In Deggendorf, I was married, sure. We were married 53 years.

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<sup>39</sup> Deggendorf is a town in southeastern Germany near the borders of Austria and the Czech Republic. After World War II, it was in the American-occupied zone and a medium-sized Displaced Persons camp was established there. The camp housed approximately 2,000 Jewish survivors—the majority of whom were former Theresienstadt inmates. Deggendorf DP camp closed on June 15, 1949.

<sup>40</sup> Kosher/*Kashrut* is the set of Jewish dietary laws, which dictate how food is prepared or served and which kinds of foods or animals can be eaten.

<sup>41</sup> The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was founded in 1943. Its mission was to provide economic assistance to European nations after World War II and to repatriate and assist the refugees who would come under Allied control. UNRRA managed hundreds of displaced persons camps in Germany, Italy, and Austria and played a major role in repatriating survivors to their home countries in 1946-1947. It largely shut down operations in 1947.

<sup>42</sup> *Seder* (meaning “order” in Hebrew) is a Jewish ritual feast that marks the beginning of the Jewish holiday of Passover. The *seder* incorporates prayers, candle lighting, and traditional foods symbolizing the slavery of the Jews and the exodus from Egypt. It is one of the most colorful and joyous occasions in Jewish life.

**John:** What was your wife like as a person?

**Josef:** Very nice lady. Very nice. Very intelligent. She was my bookkeeper. Very intelligent. We've got pictures there. <points behind him>

**John:** How did the two of you decide what to do next after the DP camp?

**Josef:** We didn't decide anything. Whatever I done . . . In the DP camp, we wanted to go to Israel. They didn't let us. Later, we told them we were going to New York [City, New York]—we, my brother, and his wife. In fact, my brother married her sister. Two sisters married two brothers, because we knew the families. They knew my family and I know their family. After something like this catastrophic you want family, nice family. We wanted to go, so I said, “No, we will go to New York. If you go to New York, later may be go to Israel.” We came to Bremerhaven [Germany]. I don't know who came. He called out my name, my wife's name, child's name that we should go off, that we can go with this ship.

**John:** You had a child already?

**Josef:** Yes, we had a child in the DP camp. When I came to the United States my child was two or three years old. My older daughter was born in the DP camp.

**John:** Her name?

**Josef:** Her name is Brucha . . . Berta, Bert.

**John:** What year did you come to America?

**Josef:** We came to America.<sup>43</sup> They left and we were staying . . . Later, came another ship and they took me to New Orleans, [Louisiana, USA]. I told the guy in New Orleans we want to go to . . . in Yiddish. [He said,] “Don't worry. You can go from over there to New York.” We wanted to be all together—survivors . . . From New Orleans, I was going by train and came to American agent because we were supposed to be . . . I don't know. The Joint was checking on us.<sup>44</sup> We got lost or we were late two days. I saw two people come in and I saw a gun. [He came] real close. He said, “You Golcman?” I said, “Yes.” I didn't know much English. I don't know good English now. He said, “Don't worry. We just checking.”

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<sup>43</sup> Josef, Bronia and Brucha Golcman arrived in New Orleans, Louisiana on August 14, 1949 aboard the USAT General Leroy Eltinge.

<sup>44</sup> The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (commonly called “the Joint”) is a worldwide Jewish relief organization headquartered in New York. It was established in 1914. After World War II, the Joint provided desperately needed supplies and necessities to survivors inside and outside of DP camps in Eastern Europe, Hungary, Poland and Romania.

We came to Savannah, [Georgia] going to New York. We came to Savannah. Rabbi [Abraham Isaac] Rosenberg and the Garfinkels—nice family—came out to the train.<sup>45</sup> They had religious . . . I carried my pots and pans because it's *treif* [Yiddish: non-kosher] in America we were told. They came up and they said, "Mr. Golcman, come to the house. Stay with us. You'll see later, if you don't like it . . ." I came there. I was there a few days and it was very nice. Savannah's a nice city.

I got a job in a wholesale dry good because I didn't want to work *Shabbos*. They told me, "If you go to New York and you want a job, you got to work on *Shabbos*," and all the things that scared me in New York. [In Savannah,] you didn't have to if you didn't want to. I don't want to tell you the price how much he told me, "I'm going to pay." I took it because I needed . . . wife, child. I started working. Every Friday, he gave me a raise [of] five dollars. Every Friday, I told him, "You give me too much money." Nice guy and little bit Talmud he discussed. He liked me.

After six or seven months, and I went out on the street. There was a business—a delicatessen. It was closed. It was a foreclosure. I went and called Mr. Garfinkel, he was the assistant district attorney and was a good friend. I got to know him. After a few months [you] get to know everybody and get friendly. I asked what . . . He told me that somebody went broke and the court took it over. I never worked for nobody. We always owned business. Here, I wonder . . . but Hitler . . . I don't want to go through the details. Should I go through the details how I got the money? I went to the bank to make a loan. He asked me if I had collateral. I didn't know what collateral is. I said, "I'm collateral." He gave me a loan. He gave me a loan, because—I didn't know—he had the lien on the fixtures. I came to get a loan . . . we collect the money. He gave me the loan and I opened account. Later, [he said,] "Mr. Golcman, let's discuss." I said, "What do you discuss? How much is it?" He told me three thousand, four thousand. [I said,] "What? I'm not going to pay that." He said, "How much are going to pay?" I told him twenty cents on the dollar. [He said,] "What?" I'm a greeno [new comer], so I got it for twenty-five cents. Then I got the business, and the business was a kosher market and delicatessen. Later, I bought a house. I bought the building.

**John:** What was the name?

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<sup>45</sup> Abraham Isaac Rosenberg (1912-1985), a native of Poland and descendent of a line of rabbis, first came to Savannah, Georgia, from Baltimore, Maryland in 1944. He served as rabbi to Congregation B'nai B'rith Jacob for over forty years and was an active community leader.

**Josef:** Savannah Kosher Market. Later came . . . my brother bought some property here [in Atlanta]. I came here.

**John:** Your brother was living in Savannah also?

**Josef:** My brother was in New York. You remember I told you he went on the ship to New York?

**John:** Okay.

**Josef:** I came here to Atlanta. I was here about three or four weeks. I bought two hotels. I had two hotels here.

**John:** What year was that?

**Josef:** That was the beginning of 1973.

**John:** The name of the hotels?

**Josef:** One is near Emory.<sup>46</sup> The other one—they took it down—was near Veteran’s Hospital.<sup>47</sup> There was a hotel.

**John:** On Clairmont Road?<sup>48</sup>

**Josef:** On Clairmont, yes. Later I bought apartments. That’s how . . . Thank G-d. America is a good country. One thing what I’m afraid of. May I say? Only one thing I’m afraid of: the *goyim* and antisemitism. Otherwise, if you aren’t lazy and you want to work, the sky is the limit. Whatever you do, whatever you do here you can make a living. If you are honest, straight, people trust you—no problem.

<Video 1 Ends>

<Video 2 Begins>

**Josef:** The people, I still remember—their hearts were bleeding. The people the Poles killed after the liberation.<sup>49</sup> They went through so much. They came in for no reason at all. They took them out and killed them. That is unbelievable. This is a nation—a country—and people are

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<sup>46</sup> Emory University is a private university in Atlanta, Georgia.

<sup>47</sup> The Atlanta Veterans Affairs Medical Center provides health care services to veterans. It is located on Clairmont Road in the metropolitan Atlanta city of Decatur.

<sup>48</sup> Clairmont Road is a major north-south roadway to the east of downtown Atlanta.

<sup>49</sup> After liberation, many Jewish survivors encountered manifestations of antisemitism, hostility, and violence from the local populations when they returned home. In postwar Poland, there were a number of pogroms (violent anti-Jewish riots). One of the most well known examples occurred in the southeastern Polish town of Kielce on July 4, 1946 when Polish civilians, soldiers and police killed 42 Jews and injured 40 others. While not an isolated instance, the massacre symbolized the precarious state of Jewish life in the Holocaust’s aftermath and prompted many survivors to leave Europe.

going there. I have a lot of things there I don't want. I told my wife, "I'm not going." I can't understand.

**John:** Did you have any interactions with the Poles after the war or before you left Europe?

**Josef:** I didn't have any interaction. Only at the beginning when I got out. I done a few interaction with them . . . when I do business with them because I done . . . When I came out of the concentration camp, the next day, I done business. I was selling anything because . . .

I was vile. We were not human. One thing I had in mind when we got out, we were liberated, that people will never be a war. People were hugging each other . . . There will be nothing but peace. Under the bombs—when they were bombing us before Hitler came in—we were scared.<sup>50</sup> People were killed. My uncle . . . people . . . blood . . . You can't even imagine what we saw there with the . . . Later, we going through a few years with the camps, there are things . . . You're an animal. I myself can't understand that I am so normal. I don't know if I am normal. I don't know. It is just indescribable. People come and ask you this and really . . . Everybody . . .

I start to tell you before the two things maybe three things—I told you music and love. You tell somebody I love you so much. You only feel . . . the person who loves you feels it and pain. When you have pain, everybody comes to you, "Oh . . ." When you've got the pain, you feel it. Nobody else. If you cut your finger, [someone] comes and puts a Band-Aid over it, but you feel it. Nobody else. What are you going to tell? It's very hard. I don't try to be a philosopher, but that's the truth. Now the same thing. I'm sitting with you and . . . I can tell you a million stories, but . . . Now it is the same thing you have with Israel or whatever because nobody . . . We are special people. They should love us, because we bring prosperity, we bring culture, we bring everything. Anyplace where Jews are you see something is different than with no Jews. They hate us and there is a simple reason: because [they are] jealous. That is it. I don't know . . . whatever I said, I think it. Myself, I wonder sometimes.

**John:** What efforts did you make to find out about your family after the war?

**Josef:** Yes, in letters, in paper, in things and we checked. Everybody tells everybody . . . We visited the *shul* all the time. That's why I didn't change when I went to take out my citizen papers. The judge told me to change my name from Golcman to Goldman and from Josef to

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<sup>50</sup> During the invasion of Poland, the Germans began bombing Deblin on September 2, 1939, before occupying it on September 15. More than 500 Jews from Deblin, and 180 Jews from the neighboring village of Ryki, which did not contain any military targets, were killed in the bombing.

[Joseph spelled] J-O-S-E-P-H. I stayed [Josef]. I was afraid if I changed and any of my family will survive, they wouldn't [know that I] changed the name. They wanted me Goldman and Joseph with a P-H. I said, "No, I am not changing my name." They said it would be easier. I wasn't American. I didn't know English. [I told them,] "No, I'm not changing my name." I didn't change it. That's the reason: maybe somebody will survive.

**John:** How did you find American culture and American people to be different from what you were used to in Europe?

**Josef:** They are different people sure—entirely. When I came here. I'll tell you a little story. I don't know if it goes in this. When I was in Savannah and I had to go to the job, the bus was ten cents. It was a lot of money for me in 1949. I got on the bus and I came and I sat down. As I sat down, a lady came down—the bus was full—and the lady came down—a black lady. We didn't know "black" or "white" in Europe. She was pregnant. She was standing there and had no where to sit down. I got up and let her sit down. The guy stopped the bus and said, "Can you read there?" Now I know what it said. Before I didn't know before. [It said] the blacks there and the whites here in the front. [The bus driver told her,] "You get up and let him sit down." I said, "No, I'm not going to sit down." I walked. I've went off the bus and never was on a bus—never. I wasn't on MARTA [Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority] yet. I wasn't on a bus here in Atlanta.

The *schwartz* [German: black] . . . When I opened the store, when I bought the store, *schwartz* worked for me. I didn't know. Now I know more or less how to deal with. We are human beings, but American people in general I think they are hiding or not. Some those they are . . . maybe they came in, like the same thing I told you before. We immigrate here; they immigrated. The *Hass* [German: hate], the hate comes with them. This is like fire. To get for free and to hate a Jew is the easiest way.

**John:** Did you have any experience of anti-Jewish attitudes in America towards you?

**Josef:** No, never. I only had like somebody told me, "Oh, if I had your money . . ." Other than that, I never had any experience. First of all, I treat people good. I had contractors . . . In fact, I had problems with plumbing today. I called up the guy who worked with my contractors. In ten minutes, he came and he fixed it. I tell you one thing: if you treat people right, people will treat you right. Some people want it, but they don't want to give it. That's the worst thing. Some people think they deserve everything. It is not so. You deserve what you got. If you don't treat

somebody . . . if you say, ‘Good morning’ . . . if not . . . Some people, they think . . . Two things you can’t force nobody—to love you and lend you money.

**John:** Did you continue with any education after you came to America?

**Josef:** Yes. I study now. I learn on the phone, too. I study with my nephew. He lives in Philadelphia [Pennsylvania] and I’m here. Every Wednesday night I have a [unintelligible, 8:40, sounds like “*blat kimullah*”] with him on the phone.

**John:** What are some of your images of Atlanta when you first moved here?

**Josef:** Atlanta was small, very small. Atlanta was a very nice city, very nice people, good people. I didn’t experience anything bad. They were very nice, absolutely. I don’t know if I come only to nice people but whenever I’m in the *shul* . . . I belong to three *shuls*.

**Ruth:** What year did you come to Atlanta from Savannah?

**Josef:** 1978. Actually, I’ve been here 28 years. I came here at the end of February 1973. First of March, I was already in the property. I came and after two or three weeks . . . You know the Rabinovitz? One hotel I bought from him and one hotel I bought from Shuman.

**John:** How many kids did you have?

**Josef:** I have three daughters—angels.

**John:** What are the other two daughters’ names?

**Josef:** Fran—Frances, and Bert, and Evie. Evie’s teaching at Hebrew Academy.<sup>51</sup> My older daughter, Fran, she was a dean at a college and Vice-President of a college. My other daughter was chairman of the board of directors of Georgia Board of Education. Now the two of them are at their leisure and one of them, Evie, is working here. She’s teaching at Hebrew Academy. All of them [worked] in education, educated, nice. I have nine grandchildren, two grandsons—one is married.

**John:** How much interaction have you had with survivors after you came to America?

**Josef:** I used to live in Savannah. We had the house with four apartments. We didn’t lock the doors. We’d just go from one to another. We were very . . . We are in touch now but you are getting older and each one is in a different stage. Maybe I . . . a little bit more, a little bit less. Otherwise, we come together. We’re together always. Friends all forever.

**John:** How much have you all talked about your war experiences?

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<sup>51</sup> The Katherine and Jacob Greenfield Hebrew Academy was the first Jewish day school in Atlanta, and was founded in 1953. As of mid-2014 the Greenfield Hebrew Academy (grades pre-K through 8) and Yeshiva High School (grades 9-12) merged into one college preparatory day school now called the Atlanta Jewish Academy.

**Josef:** We never. Sometimes we'll remind what a German said this or did this, or a *goyim* said this or a *goyim* did this. We hardly discussed it. We had enough. We don't want it. Good things here.

**John:** How about with your wife? How much did you ever discuss?

**Josef:** We didn't discuss at all. Sometimes we'd something with the children, but we didn't discuss. We in Jewish [Hebrew or Yiddish] sometimes we said something, but we tried not to. My wife's father died on the march . . . when they moved from one place to another . . .

**Ruth:** Death march?

**Josef:** Death march. He got killed. I had my sisters. Gitala . . . I had two sisters—three sisters—the older one had beautiful children. My father . . . My mother was an angel. <begins to cry> I'm sorry.

<interview pauses, then resumes>

**John:** You said that because you of what you experienced and witnessed that you are surprised that you are normal.

**Josef:** That's right.

**John:** How do you suppose that whole experience has affected you?

**Josef:** I think I am a better . . . I don't know I never was a bad person. I think I am better [person]. I see . . . Life is very . . . People don't realize how life is very precious. They have to respect life. Not just waste the time. To do and take advantage of it good and be good and doing good. I think I . . . since I came to America, I don't think I have anything to say bad or complain about a bad experience. In business the same thing, if I lost money it wasn't anybody's fault but mine. If I made a mistake, you learn by mistakes. This mistake I made up. I should never blame somebody because they or I . . . If you start to blame somebody else you won't accomplish anything.

**John:** How would you compare the Jewish culture and Jewish people in America to the people you knew in Poland? Were there any differences?

**Josef:** Yes, like I said at the beginning. In Europe, there came a *Yontif* or *Shabbos*, you saw on the street, you saw the atmosphere . . . people been to *mikveh*,<sup>52</sup> been to *shul*, the ladies got dressed specially and . . . smelling the [gefilte] fish. Here, you get the fish in the jars. It's an

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<sup>52</sup> A *mikveh* is a pool of water, gathered from rain or from a spring, which is used for ritual purification and ablutions.

entire . . . no comparison. Maybe now would be different, too. I don't know. Over there, life was . . . A wedding over there was always made by hand. People came—neighbors or family. They made 500 people. I married off my daughters for 700. In Savannah, my two daughters . . . Who do you invite? Everybody. But here it goes more whatever—little more formal and casual. I was raised by my mother when before we went out from the house, checked were we dressed nice. No one should say Golcman child are so and so. Here I see people coming into a bar mitzvah or gone to things, it's like he goes, 'Oh, to him I can go like this.' I'm still in tie because that's what we were raised. My children and my friends and Bert. Until the children got married, they didn't wear any overalls or dungarees or anything. I am old fashioned. They call it old fashioned.

**John:** What are some of the personal qualities you suppose helped you endure the war? Other than luck, what is about you that helped you get through it?

**Josef:** To get through it there was only one thing: *nekome* [Yiddish: revenge]. How do you say it in English?

**Ruth:** Revenge.

**Josef:** *Nekome* —Revenge. We wanted to live. If you are going to survive, remember: tell. Remember what you done. That is all it was—to survive. If I can't survive, he'll maybe survive. There wasn't any kind of jealousy. Whoever could . . . We knew we were going along every minute . . . our life is . . . All my years—I didn't expect it. We didn't expect it. Why should I be better than my father, or mother, or my sister? I was there. That's why I say I think G-d wanted it. I'm asking the question: why? Maybe something is the reason. There is a reason. It's not just I am some big shot or . . . smart . . . nothing.

**John:** You said you've been a religious man and came from a religious family. How does the Holocaust fit into Jewish . . .

**Josef:** It fits in because . . . I going to go to the Talmud. The Talmud compares Jews to a *matzah* bread.<sup>53</sup> You put in yeast and all the things and it rises. *Matzah*, you see when you make it, if you wouldn't roll it, would rise. That's a Jew. A Jew, you give him a pat. <motions to indicate being hit> A *goyim* come to remind him he tried to [rise] . . . In Hebrew, it's “[Unintelligible, 18:38, Hebrew phrase].” He said when somebody gets rich, he starts to think that's . . . The Talmud compares a Jew to an olive. If you want to get out the oil, you've got to squeeze them a little bit.

<sup>53</sup> *Matzo*, *matza* or *matzah* is unleavened bread eaten in memory of the unleavened bread prepared by the Israelite during their hasty flight from Egypt, when they had not time to wait for the dough to rise. Leavened products are forbidden on Passover and there is a commandment to eat *matzah* on the first night of the festival of Passover.

That's a Jew. That's what happened. Now I really see it. You got a little bit . . . you forget . . . we don't live in . . . You always should remember we are Jews, so be good. That's it. That's what happened. G-d comes and gives us our concentration camp. G-d said . . . "Listen . . ." and "Remember." That's all. That's what I think.

**John:** Even though you wanted to forget that whole period, what images come back to you anyway? Do certain memories or experiences still come back to you?

**Josef:** Yes, sure. It comes in dreams. It comes back. Like we say in modern . . . we all say it: don't forget. I think one thing in a way is a blessing—if a person wouldn't forget he couldn't live. You got to forget. It comes more when you remind yourself. The same thing when you lose a dear one, a parent, a wife, a child. If you wouldn't always have to mind, remember this, you wouldn't be able to exist. You have to forget. It is a blessing. G-d created a person so he knew what he was doing. You got to forget. When it comes to a moment like now, your mind . . . I have think to take out.

**John:** A part of big part Jewish culture traditionally is to remember and to tell the story.

**Josef:** Yes. The same thing, we have a special *Amidah* [Hebrew: prayer] not to forget what he did—the same thing about Hitler but the other way—shouldn't forget Haman.<sup>54</sup> You remember that. But still what happened: we come to *shul*, we sad, we play the *megillah*,<sup>55</sup> and clap the *grager*,<sup>56</sup> we remember Haman, but ten minutes later, we forget. We go back to . . . but nature . . . I don't criticize. G-d forbid, I am not . . . I think what I find in my experience, in my life, is to be what you go to be, to be nice, take care what you are for it. Don't mix it because if you wanted somebody to be like you or to do what you wanted, that's not good. Gentiles [unintelligible, 21:38] the same. That would be good, but if you wanted . . . The same thing with the Gentile . . . he don't like the Schwartz, he don't like the *goy* or whatever, he don't like the Jews . . . for no reason. If he would . . . You can't force nobody. That's the problem. If

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<sup>54</sup> At the core of the Jewish holiday of Purim is the Book of Esther or "Scroll of Esther" [Hebrew: *Megillat Esther*]. It is read twice in the course of the festival: on the eve of Purim, and during Purim day. It is read in the original Hebrew from a parchment scroll. It is a firsthand account of the events of Purim that relates the story of Esther, a Jewish girl who becomes queen of Persia. With the help of her cousin Mordechai, Esther thwarts plans by the king's advisor, Haman, to slaughter all of the Jews in the empire. Haman's ten sons were killed in the fighting that followed.

<sup>55</sup> Colloquially, *megillah* means a 'long, involved story or account.' Specifically, it originates from the Hebrew word for 'scroll' or 'volume' (used especially in the Book of Esther in the *Bible*, which is read aloud at the *Purim* celebration).

<sup>56</sup> The *grager* [Yiddish: rattle] is used during Purim whenever Haman's name is mentioned. Blotting out the name of Haman with noise, whenever it is heard during the reading of the Book of Esther is an ancient custom.

everybody would think . . . For me, it is a two way street. You go your way, my way. But if you try to stop, is not good.

**John:** Has anger been a part of your life because of the war?

**Josef:** No. I have to tell you . . . everybody wonders. I lived with my wife 53 years. We never argued. We'd have a disagreement about a movie or something else. Then in business, she gave me advice. It was good. [I'd say,] "Thank you," . . . was better . . . not bad but she . . . later we . . . but nothing, because . . . Even with the people . . . A lot of people had start argue with me. I'd go away. I'd say, "Thank you," or whatever. The worst thing in life if somebody comes and tries to aggravate you and you show them that you are aggravated, he has success. He has accomplished what he wanted. But if you [don't show you are aggravated], he stops. You is good and he is good.

**John:** What are some of the other lessons you would like to pass on to your children even if you don't want to tell them your stories? What would you want them to learn?

**Josef:** I want to learn one thing from here not from there. Not from what happened—now. Nice, good, what you can do, do it. What you can't, don't do it. Trying to do something, do it right. Treat people the same way you want to be treated. That's what I tell everybody and tell my children. We're not . . . We have [\[unintelligible, 24:04\]](#) that people would not place you. [\[Unintelligible, 24:10\]](#) different things. Then we will discuss about it. Now we live. You got to do, help.

<Phone rings 24:13 video stops>

**John:** Do you have any comments about Jewish life in Israel? Political issues and things like that?

**Josef:** I was in Israel a few times—three or four times. I think three. I enjoyed it and I love it. I think it couldn't be better and we have it, and G-d should help us. Very nice, very good. Accomplished nice. There are ups. That's the people. What I don't think if they can send their child with an explosive to get killed, to kill a Jew what can you say? I don't think . . . I wouldn't even . . . If I would be any leader there as soft as I am, I would make a stand. This is for you and that's for me. Because I don't think otherwise. I was there. I went with my family there to shop they told me when high ups when they ask you something you tell them. So I find out from those people it is impossible. Those people buy for 20 percent what they are asking. They haven't got.

I don't know anything about it. Jews thank G-d .I love it—beautiful, nice. Proud of it. I wish I had lived there, too. But now I'm a little too late. I wanted to go there.

**John:** What is important to you now at this point in your life? What is meaningful to you now?

**Josef:** Meaningful is to have *naches* [Yiddish: proud enjoyment] from the children. Jews to be nice. The Jews to live nice. No problems. Live my life whatever have you left Jewishly, and nicely, and that's all. Whatever G-d . . . I will do mine and He will give me a little more direction. I think Jewish people are nice people, good people. Sometimes a person is not so [good], but in his way he thinks he is. His life is his way. Most of the Jewish [people] are good. They are very, very important. The *goyim* don't realize how important the Jews are in any nation wherever they live. They give culture, they give prosperity, wisdom, everything.

**John:** Is there anything you can say about your wife? What do you suppose she would say if she was here?

**Josef:** If she would be here, she would say the same thing. I know what she would say. The same thing—nice, be good. I'm sorry she's not here. She was very smart. She was smart; she got me for a husband. She was very nice. She was a lady really. Same thing. A lot of her things are here. I didn't touch it.

**Ruth:** When your children were young and you were so new in America how did she help the children grow up to be American or did she want them to be more European?

**Josef:** No. We didn't . . . We wanted them to be American. We wanted them to be nice and be Jewish and [follow] tradition. That is the way we raised them. Only one thing . . . I never had any problem in school with my child. Whenever I went to PTA [Parent Teacher Association] meetings, they said, "Mr. Golcman, no complaints?" I said, "No, but my child came to me, 'Daddy the teacher the history teacher is so . . . I can't stand it. She's too old.'" [I said,] "Listen, you study and she will . . ." If a child complains for the teacher I know it is good. If a child doesn't complain about a teacher I know it is not good. You know why?

**John:** Why?

**Josef:** Because she is very easy. If a teacher demands, that is good. I know when I went to the *cheder* and the *yeshiva* and going to college and wanted to get away because when you are young you don't realize it but later on you're going to need it. Later on . . . that's why your parents . . . because we went through the same thing. We know. My children now when they have their children, they do the same thing what they done to them. If I wouldn't do it to them

they wouldn't do it to their children. Education, behave in education, be nice, good, say thank you, good bye, whatever it is. When you eat the same thing. You eat nicely. That's why we are parents. We learned from our parents. That's why a few . . . sometimes I feel . . . I hope you don't mind what I'm going to say now. I come some time in *shul* or . . . and the child goes over to the father and gives a [he indicates a punch with his hand]. They are playing. Respect is respect and playing is playing. Everything has a time and a place. When you go out in the backyard, you throw the ball. When you come in to people, the child should have respect for the father. But with the father with his child, they are buddies—not father and son. That's the whole problem. That's the problem because if you lose respect, you lose everything. The most important thing is respect and shame. If you are embarrassed, if you are a little bit . . . For me it is nice to do, but not to people. What are people going to say?

When G-d wanted to destroy the people that made the golden calf.<sup>57</sup> Moshe [Moses] said one thing [unintelligible Hebrew/Yiddish; sounds like “*looma . . . goyim*”], what the *goyim* going to say? G-d changed his mind. God killed your own people? What is it? Maybe you deserve it, but still the time. Later, G-d punished them, they got paid, but right away, [unintelligible; 31:55], what is the Egyptian going to say? They took him out from Egypt and now he killed them.

**Ruth:** You were saying earlier that neither you nor your wife discussed your experiences with your children when they were young?

**Josef:** What do you mean experience?

**Ruth:** Your Holocaust experience.

**Josef:** No. Very little. We didn't. Why would I make them feel . . . ? I know the children were very close to us. If we would tell them so much—my father suffered, my mother suffered . . . stop at this, look at that, they would feel sorry for us. I didn't want it. Why should they? They know more now because they read and this and they go in. They know anyhow bad things. In Europe, we had . . . whether it's a custom or not . . . if somebody passed away, you didn't tell right away unless if people find out. Good things . . . I think it says that in the Talmud somewhere. If somebody gets rich, tell them right away. The poor . . . bad things you don't say.

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<sup>57</sup> According to the book of *Shemot* (Exodus), when Moses went up to retrieve the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai, the Israelites began to worship the golden calf, an idol made from molten gold. Moses implored G-d to spare the Jewish people, but when Moses returned, he gathered those who retained their faith in G-d and directed them to slaughter the rest.

Good news, you tell. Bad news, it will come out later. For the same thing I knew they were going to find out. Once in a while maybe we said something because [other survivors] came at a house and we were together and the children came in and we discussed something. [The kids would ask,] “What?” We changed the [subject]. What would you do it for? It wouldn’t help.

**Ruth:** Now that they are adults do you talk with them at all?

**Josef:** “Daddy,” they come in, “Daddy, I saw . . . this so and so.” When they’re adults, you can discuss something intelligently. It is different when they were a little child. [Now I can tell them,] “I was in a camp, the Germans . . .”

**Ruth:** It has been 55 years since you were liberated. It is hard to believe it has been that long, but have your thoughts about that period of time changed as you have grown older or has there been any process to your thoughts about your experience over the years? Do you feel differently now than you did right after the war?

**Josef:** Sure, are different now. I feel different now, naturally, about talking about the situation. One thing I tell you—we shouldn’t be so sure, but I hope will never happen again. We have to be on the guard because will come back again because always will come somebody. Human nature when somebody comes I see it. I see it here with the presidency with Clinton. All the bad things what they talk about him. People elect him. People love him. I don’t know much about it, but Al Capone—another one—he had followers. When somebody would come a guy . . . anyone from the president is going to be elected and is antisemitic. He come out and said, “If we don’t do this for the Jews, we’re going to get this and this for the benefits . . . because they were doing this and they were doing that . . .” I bet you—I hope never happen—he’ll have followers and it will be terrible.

**Ruth:** So you are a realist?

**Josef:** I’m a . . . I don’t want to be fooled. That’s what it is. A realist—we all should be. We should do our things nice and be always on guard, because you never know who will come. The same thing with the Ku Klux Klan about the *schwartz*.<sup>58</sup> The *schwartz* work for him, but he beat him because of the *schwartz* . . . not because . . . he done good for him—but because everybody beat him.

**John:** What can Jewish people do differently now?

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<sup>58</sup> The Ku Klux Klan (or Knights of the Ku Klux Klan today) is a white supremacist, white nationalist, anti-immigration, anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, anti-black secret society, whose methods included terrorism and murder.

**Josef:** We got to be on [our guard]. The best thing what we can do is to all go to Israel and take away the Arabs. Let them live somewhere else. Would be good, but all the Eden can't go to Israel.<sup>59</sup> Israel needs us here to support them. They need us here. They are diversifying. Business is good when you [can trade back and forth]. That's simple. We can't fool ourselves. You know how much money every time it comes from this *yeshiva* and this *yeshiva* . . . It's a different . . . This itself shows what kind of people we are. The Arabs have camps there and had so much oil. With us Jews, somebody said all the Eden will . . . Now we have in Russia, and we have everywhere come in, and we help. We help and always distribute. Eden [unintelligible, 37:40, Hebrew/Yiddish term]. Eden's been merciful and . . . good people and good nature. It comes the same thing from one to another generation. To be a Jew is . . . without any question.

**John:** Is there anything else you would like to add that we have not asked about yet?

**Josef:** What can I add? Can I add one more thing? It is a pleasure to sit with you and talk to you. I hope whatever you do, you do good. We Jews are praying. We help G-d that he should protect us. G-d says, "You do and I will help you." A miracle can never happen if you didn't do something. If you do business or whatever you do, can happen a miracle, can happen a *bracha* [Hebrew] or blessing can come. If you sit like this [without acting], nothing can happen. Same thing with us. We got to do it. G-d will help.

**John:** Thank you.

**Josef:** You are welcome.

<Video 2 Ends>

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<sup>59</sup> Josef seems to be referring to Israel as the Garden of Eden and therefore as Jewish people being from "Eden."