

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

MEMOIRIST: LEO J. DRUM
INTERVIEWER: SANDRA BERMAN
DATE: MARCH 29, 2011
LOCATION: MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

<Begin Disk 1>

INTERVIEW BEGINS

BERMAN: Today is March 29, 2011. We are in Montgomery, Alabama, with Mr. Leo Drum, who has agreed to participate in the Esther and Herbert Taylor Oral History Project of the William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum. This is our second interview with Mr. Drum. I am Sandy Berman. I'll be interviewing you today. I wanted to thank you for agreeing to participate in this project. I would like to begin, actually, continue. We did a lot of family history the last time we were here, but we left off with some of your boyhood memories. I wanted to talk a little bit more about you growing up in Montgomery. If you could reflect back on some of your earliest memories of what life was like as a child, a Jewish child, growing up here in Montgomery.

DRUM: I would be glad to do that. To interject something for a moment, which I may have mentioned before, but I'm not sure. My great uncle, **Fred Hanau**, married a lady in Thomasville, Georgia. When he died, she moved to Atlanta [Georgia] and married Bill Breman. My great aunt by marriage, was Mr. Breman's second wife. Her name was **Blanche Steinerman Hanau**.

BERMAN: Are you talking about Max Breman, Bill Breman's, father?

DRUM: No, this was a man named . . . it might have been Bill. Was there also a Bill Breman?

BERMAN: There is a Bill Breman who was married to Sylvia [Goldstein] and then to Elinor [Angel], but Bill's father was Max Breman. That may have been the connection.

DRUM: I'm not sure. That could be. Is Bill Breman still living?

BERMAN: No. He passed away about 10 years ago.

DRUM: That wipes out the ability to verify the record.

BERMAN: We may be able to [verify]. We have a lot of papers from the Breman's.

DRUM: If you have anything from Thomasville, Georgia, on **Fred Hanau**, who is buried there, you might be able to pick up some information. At any rate, growing up in Montgomery as a Jewish child was not much different from growing up as a non-Jewish child. We walked to school. We went to a private school, Barnes School, which I've told you. We always stayed home [from school] on the High Holy Days.¹ No problems whatever. I never felt any prejudice, but I always felt constrained to be on my best behavior and to be modest in my demands and requests, far beyond what other children did because we didn't want to interject ourselves into a prominent position which might trigger some anti-Semitic feelings in some few people. At school, never anything of that kind. Unfortunately, we didn't have a lot of money, but we were an aristocratic Jewish family. I'll say that modestly. An aristocratic Reformed Jewish family from Mobile [Alabama], where my mother came from for several generations, and my family here in Montgomery, with the Lobmans and the Steiners. They were extremely prominent people. My grandmother being a Lobman. Alice Hart and I are third cousins. Our fathers were first cousins. They had a raft of first cousins. Three times a raft of third cousins, which Alice and I share. She has not put that in her materials you sent me, except for one side of the family. Growing up, we had one car in the family. Nobody had two. Open touring car. Fabric top. Wooden wheels. Walked to school. Nobody thought anything about walking. Walked to the movies. Ten cents if you were under twelve years old. A quarter if you were over. I think an adult paid 40 cents. Movies were a constant activity. I am very knowledgeable about movies, when they were made, who made them. All the movie stars from the silent era. The Barnes School was a military school up to the time I went. They discontinued military in my first year there, in the fifth grade.

BERMAN: Why did you go to Barnes and not the public school?

DRUM: Because Barnes was better and Barnes prepared people for college much better. The public school here was very good then, highly rated. A group of us went to a private kindergarten. Everybody in our social level went to this private kindergarten – Miss Gussie Woodruff's. It is now a historical memory. I'm on the board of the Montgomery County

¹ The two High Holy Days are *Rosh Ha-Shanah* (Jewish New Year) and *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement).

Historical Society. We have turned over all the annuals from Barnes and all these various places. It is playing a continuing prominent role in Montgomery. All the people turned out to be lawyers, doctors, engineers, so forth. When I went to Barnes, all the Weil children went. The Harpers [sp]. Everybody went to Barnes. I had some friends who lived further down the street from where I lived, so they picked me up every day. About 10 of us walked to school. We, Bucks Weil – Adolph Weil, Jr., and a fellow named Mike [Myron] Gerson, were fast friends. We called ourselves “the three brothers.” We ate . . . At Barnes School, you went in the morning. You went home for lunch. You went back after lunch and stayed until 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon. The three of us, Mike, Bucks, and me, went to each other’s house for lunch on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Tuesday was my day. Bucks’ day was Wednesday. Mike’s day was Thursday. We walked from my house to the school and back, and from Mike’s house to the school and back. But the Weils lived out in what was the suburb then. It’s the center of the city now. We used to laugh. When his day came, we were picked up by a chauffeured Cadillac to take us to his house to eat and come back to school.

BERMAN: Tell me a lit bit about the Weil family. They are a very prominent family. Are they not?

DRUM: Oh yes. They were. What is left of them, still is. Bucks Weil and his brother Bobby [Robert] Weil, were elected citizens of Montgomery for the year, once or twice, by the newspaper. They were well-educated. The Weil Brothers Cotton Company began in Opelika [Alabama] with Mr. Isadore Weil and some other family members. They moved their headquarters to Montgomery. It became a world-wide company, the second largest in the world, behind the Anderson, Clayton [and Company] in Houston [Texas]. They had offices in Asia, Europe, and everywhere. They still have those for many, many years. They just now are beginning to cease operations because family died out and some of the young grandchildren want to be lawyers, doctors, and things. They don’t want to pursue business in the cotton business. The cotton business has radically changed now due to all of our rather silly government economic policies. The Chinese have taken over the cotton, just like they have taken over everything else. And the Europeans are smarter than we are. The Weils . . . Isadore Weil [was] called “Pa.” They had three sons and a daughter. Adolph, Leonel . . . No, he had two sons, Adolph and Leonel, and a daughter, Helen. Adolph’s children were Bucks Weil - Adolph, Jr., Bobby [Robert] Weil, whom you have or will meet, and Buck’s daughter, Laura [Laurie Jean]

Weil. She is an outstanding citizen of Montgomery. She is on every board you can think of in this city. She is a prominent, smart, nice lady. <doorbell rings> There was Leonel Weil. It is interesting that his daughter, who visited just now, and Adolph Weil and Helen Weil. You met Leonel's daughter, one of three. Adolph Weil's son . . . His youngest son was Bobby Weil, one of four children. Bobby is the only one left. Alan Weil is sort of a different branch. Same name. Cousins. Helen Weil married a man named Lucian Loeb, who is a father of Jimmy [James] Loeb, who just died a year or two ago. His son is going to be the next president of Temple Beth Or² here in Montgomery. That really wraps up the Weils.

BERMAN: I wanted to ask you, since you mentioned Temple Beth Or, how important was the synagogue in your family's life?

DRUM: It was totally important. We went to temple on Friday nights. When I was a little boy, everybody went on Saturday mornings and, of course, on the High Holy Days. We never fasted. We would go to the night *Yom Kippur*³ services and in the morning but not any of the remainder of the services through memorial service in the afternoon. Mr. Isadore Weil, the father of Leonel and Adolph that we were talking about, gave prizes for best attendance records at Sunday school [and] academic achievements in Sunday school. I've got all the awards that he gave. I still have my Bible that he gave out as an award, and the *Union Prayer Book* that he gave out as an award. Everybody entertained the rabbi, occasionally, and his wife, for dinner.

BERMAN: Who was the rabbi then?

DRUM: At that time [when] I was growing up, there was a Rabbi [William] Schwartz, followed later on by Rabbi [Benjamin] Goldstein, who confirmed me, who left Montgomery. I'm sure we've talked about him. I'm sure you know who Rabbi Goldstein was. [He was a] very controversial man with the Scottsboro [Boys]⁴ case and others. A very smart, good teacher,

² Temple Beth Or is a Reform congregation in Montgomery, Alabama. The congregation was formally formed in 1852 and was known as Kahl Montgomery. In 1862, they completed a temple in downtown Montgomery and later changed the name to Temple *Beth Or* [*Hebrew: House of Light*]. It is listed in the National Registry of Historic Places and still stands today serving as a church. Due to the increasing Jewish population, a new house of worship was built in 1902 and again in 1961, which is the location of Temple Beth Or today.

³ *Yom Kippur* is Hebrew for 'Day of Atonement.' The most sacred day of the Jewish year. *Yom Kippur* is a 25-hour fast day. Most of the day is spent in prayer, reciting *yizkor* for deceased relatives, confessing sins, requesting divine forgiveness, and listening to *Torah* readings and sermons. People greet each other with the wish that they may be sealed in the heavenly book for a good year ahead. The day ends with the blowing of the *shofar* (a ram's horn).

⁴ In 1931 nine black teenaged boys were accused of rape. They came to be known as the "Scottsboro Boys." The boys were riding on a freight train with several white boys and two white girls. A fight ensued and the boys were accused of rape by the two white girls. The trial lasted 1-1/2 days and all were sentenced to death, with the exception of one 12-year-old boy. They appealed and the case was returned to a lower court with a change of

but a radical in every respect, not just civil rights. Everything else. [He was] caustic, sarcastic, demanding. His wife was the same. They had no social graces. Once at my house, my father or mother asked him how did he enjoy such sparse audiences at his temple services. His response was, “It didn’t make any difference to him whether he spoke to empty heads or empty pews.”

That is not an endearing statement, to say the least.

BERMAN: That is a great story.

DRUM: Growing up was fun. I lived in a neighborhood, where across the street was the editor of the *Montgomery Advertiser*, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his articles on the Ku Klux Klan.⁵ Around the corner was Professor [Elly] Barnes, who owned the school. Across the street, from the [Churchill] Marks [family], [was] a famous, well-known doctor. His family is still here. His grandchildren are still friends of mine. We lived in a duplex. On one side was a Jewish family upstairs and downstairs. The Sable’s [sp] upstairs. On the other side, the Schlosses. Becky Schloss still lives in Montgomery. They own Schloss and Kahn, a wholesale grocery business. It was sold to Sara Lee [Bread]. Their sons are still friends of mine here in Montgomery. They have children. They are all going to college now. One has graduated from University of Pennsylvania. Everybody is growing up, so, I’m old. That is why I remember all of these people. I’m very grateful that I can remember all these things.

BERMAN: You have such wonderful memories of your childhood and going to the synagogue. Do you recall any instances where you felt that you were an outsider?

DRUM: No, I never did. I felt as an outsider when I had to take off from school for the High Holy Days. For a long time, I felt rather funny about not being in school on those days and wondering whether the rest of the body, they had about 100 students, really understood that. It was kind of a funny feeling, but I’ve always felt that being Jewish, you have to do the best at everything you can do because you don’t want to be a sloppy one or a dumb one. You want to excel at what you do. That is something for life, not just Judaism. The name of the game is,

venue. The next trial was held in Decatur, Alabama. One of the alleged rape victims admitted that they had made up the story, but they were all found guilty again. In a third trial, the charges were dropped for four of the nine defendants. The rest were sentenced to life. Clarence Norris, the oldest defendant, and the only one condemned to death, was pardoned by George Wallace in 1976.

⁵ The Ku Klux Klan is a white supremacist, white nationalist, anti-immigration, anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, anti-black secret society, whose methods included terrorism and murder. It was founded in the South in the 1860’s and then died out and come back several times, most notably in the 1920’s when membership soared again, and then again in the 1960’s during the civil rights era. When the Klan was re-founded in 1915 in Georgia, the event was marked by a cross burning on Stone Mountain. In the past, its members dressed up in white robes and a pointed hat designed to hide their identity and to terrify. It is still in existence.

whatever you do, attempt to excel, whether it is business, whether it is life, whether it is a social activity. Do your best and never, never, never give up on anything that turns sour. You never give up. [Sir] Winston Churchill, one of my favorites, said, “No matter what, never, never give up.” That is a good moto to follow.

BERMAN: You mentioned Rabbi Goldstein with the Scottsboro case. We talked about that the last time as well. I wanted to speak a little bit more on the civil rights movement here in Montgomery, what you recall about it, and if there was any involvement with your friends and relations at the temple.

DRUM: All right. There was no involvement. I wasn't involved. None of my friends at the temple were involved. When the civil rights movement came along, we had two black domestics in our house. We never had any problems. They came to work as usual. That was my first taste of taking a rather trivial situation and turning it into a news-worthy activity far beyond the scope of reality. If you lived three or four blocks away from the Montgomery bus station during the civil rights movement, you wouldn't even know it was going on. This lady, Rosa Parks,⁶ who didn't give up her seat on the bus to a white person and was asked to move to the back and refused, triggered all this business. It was pretty much set up by some people, that they don't bring out now. They deified Rosa Parks almost nationally. We have Rosa Parks Museum here. It is visited by people who come to Montgomery as a local attraction. The civil rights movement started here with all this stuff, but it grew. It started small, and it grew, and grew, and grew, primarily pushed along by the media, television in particular. It did not affect my life, my family's life, nor anybody's life at the temple, one single bit. We still had our people who washed clothes. I took my cook home every night to where she lived in a black neighborhood. We walked the streets easily everywhere. There was nothing. The Selma march,⁷ where they

⁶ Rosa Louise McCauley Parks (1913-2005) was an American civil rights activist. The United State Congress called her the “first lady of civil rights” and “the mother of the freedom movement. On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, Parks refused to obey the bus driver's order to give up her seat in the black section to a white passenger after the white section was filled. Parks was not the first person to resist bus segregation. Others had taken similar steps. Parks' act of defiance and the Montgomery Bus Boycott became important symbols of the modern Civil Rights Movement. She became an international icon of resistance to racial segregation. At the time, Parks was secretary of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), an organization formed in 1909.

⁷ The Selma to Montgomery marches were three marches in 1965 that marked the political and emotional peak of the American Civil Rights Movement. Selma and Montgomery were the focus of black voter registration drives which were resisted on every front. The marches were to support voting rights for blacks. The first was on March 7, 1965 and came to be known as “Bloody Sunday,” when 600 civil rights marchers were attacked by state and local

had the police dogs on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, was blown sky high out of proportion. It happened, and it was wrong, but it never would have achieved national notoriety had not the national news picked up on it. The Selma to Montgomery march when our police and government system was segregated, they were wrong in that respect. They were wrong to attempt to stop what was an expression that the blacks wanted to use to walk to Montgomery. They should have allowed that. There is no harm in any of these things. But because the state was wrong and resisted it all, that really turned it into a big-time event. You ask about my life and my family life . . . The impact on the city, especially since we had the Southern Poverty Law Center here, run by a fellow named Morris Dees. A lot of courage. He was a watchdog for discriminatory actions on the part of all people, not just white on black, or the other way around, but all over the country. They made a movie about him. He has an Oscar. He had a big building here. He has an enormous budget. He just built about a six-story beautiful building downtown a couple of years ago. He is a fighter of injustice, and a good one. I guess that is about all I can tell you about that era. But, there was peace in Montgomery. We didn't have riots [and] things like that, that they had in other cities. In a very short order, the domestics who worked in our homes for many, many years, were older people. They didn't seek much, really, in advanced life circles. Even today, I have a housekeeper who has been in the family for 31 years. She is 86 years old. For many, many years, we had quiet peaceful times and good friends. I have sitters now, and they are more than sitters. They are good friends. We don't have any problems now. We didn't have any then. Where the problems occurred, were the poor whites, and that is still there. The very poor whites feel threatened to some degree by the blacks because the blacks get so many subsidies from the government because they are black and because they are below the poverty line. While some of the whites are in a similar situation, but they don't get all the same benefits. I know this to be true. I have a driver, who would fit that category. He is a white fellow. He's okay, but he comes from a poor, poor background. Born in a [public housing] project years ago. He is 69 now. He has a resentment built in from his youth that will never

police with billy clubs and tear gas. Several marchers, both black and white, were beaten or murdered over the course of the marches. The second march was on March 9, 1965. Martin Luther King Jr. led 2,500 protestors who were turned back after crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge. The third march started on March 16. The marchers marched along US Route 80 protected by 2,000 soldiers of the United States Army, 1,900 members of the Alabama National Guard under Federal command, FBI agents, and Federal Marshals. They arrived in Montgomery on March 24. The marchers in the third march were fed by women volunteers who cooked the food in the kitchen of the Green Street Baptist Church after which it was delivered to the gathering point for the march by truck.

change about segregation, blacks, and about this. He also has good friends that are black. It's just that the subsidies, the food stamps, the this, the that, the other, all the things that the politicians do to buy votes. That is what is happening in our country. Votes are bought by giving stuff to this group, that group, and the other group. Even Congress, the Democrats, bribed the guy in Nebraska to vote for the health care bill. I'm getting off the subject now.

BERMAN: How did you, yourself, feel about the process, the integration process?

BROOK: It didn't bother me any because my position in an old family . . . I'm a fourth generation American. I've been here a long time. Pioneer people in Mobile. Pioneer people in Montgomery. We were not threatened in any way by the elimination of discrimination. It didn't make any difference to me, whether blacks could eat in restaurants and all this stuff. I thought it was ridiculous to have "white" fountains and "black" fountains in Woolworths and all this kind of stuff that I regarded as completely asinine. I guess you could say that I believed in segregation to the extent that it interfered with my logic. When it did that, it lost. I didn't worry about it anymore.

BERMAN: Did you ever feel the compunction, the need to work toward integration?

DRUM: No, I did not. I didn't take any steps to eliminate it. It never amounted to that much to me. It didn't impact me. I was secure in my position. I didn't have to fight to maintain it, and I had a lot of friends. When I was a little boy, everybody had a nanny. They were all black. I had one named Irene [sp] who lived in a room at the back of our house on a porch. No, she lived in a house in our backyard for a while until my father bought her a house somewhere. There was a great deal of paternalism, you might say, in relationships. Irene was there when my folks went out of town. Irene ran the show. As I recall it, she made about \$3 a week and ate her meals at our house in the kitchen. I never really encountered any animosity from blacks. Nor did I display any towards blacks, nor did my family. Nor did the Weil's or anybody else around me. Jewish or non-Jewish. Didn't do that. The problem came from the poor working people who felt that the blacks were getting more government support, more this, more that, than they were getting. I have to laugh today because some of the poor white people got their hands out to the government, just like everybody else. Their criticism has had its foundation pulled out from under them because it's all the same, in my view.

BERMAN: You mentioned earlier some Klan activity here in Montgomery. Was it a large force within the . . . ?

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DRUM: It was fairly large. We had a mayor here, named Mayor [William] Gunter, who was a very smart man. I distinctly remember that the Klan came to Montgomery and wanted to march. Mayor Gunter said, “You can march all you want, but you are not going to wear masks. You are not going to wear hoods. You want to have a parade, fine, but you are going to let everybody see who you are.” So, they didn’t have a parade. He stood fast in this respect. We never had much Klan activity when I was growing up. But back about 1915-1918, 1920-1922, I guess . . . I was born in 1915, there was Klan activity here. As I grew up, 9-10, 12-15 years old, Mayor Gunter, who was mayor for many years, and other mayors, strictly eliminated everything that the Klan wanted to do. As I mentioned earlier, Morris Dees, founded Southern Poverty Law Center. They took on the Klan nationally. We had an editor of the paper [*Montgomery Advertiser*] who won a Pulitzer Prize for his revelations and articles about the Klan.

BERMAN: Who was that?

DRUM: Grover C. Hall.⁸

BERMAN: One other question about that aspect, kind of the underlying not so wonderful part of a lot of community’s histories. White Citizens Councils⁹ were very prevalent in the South during the civil rights era. Were any of your contemporaries involved or any of the congregants at the temple? Do you think any of them were involved in those activities?

DRUM: No. I knew some prominent Jewish people who were members of the White Citizens Council, but it was kept low key.

BERMAN: Something they probably didn’t want . . .

DRUM: They didn’t want it known. I had a good friend, a contractor, who didn’t want anybody to know he belonged to it. But he belonged to it because he wanted to get a business contract to build a building somewhere, and he wouldn’t give him the contract unless he joined. So, you have conflicts in people as to what they know they really ought to do and what they have

⁸ Grover Cleveland Hall, Sr. (1888–1941) was an American newspaper editor at the *Montgomery Advertiser* in Montgomery, Alabama. He garnered national attention and won a Pulitzer Prize during the 1920’s for his editorials that criticized the Ku Klux Klan.

⁹ White Citizens’ Council (WCC) was an American white supremacist organization formed on July 11, 1954. After 1956, it was known as the Citizens’ Councils of America. It had about 60,000 members, mostly in the South. It was opposed to racial integration during the 1950’s and 1960’s when it retaliated with economic boycotts and strong intimidation against black activists, including depriving them of jobs. By the 1970’s its influence had faded.

got to do to comply with the circumstances surrounding their business area. Not fair but it happens.

BERMAN: To get to some more uplifting subjects, were you involved in community activities that were non-Jewish? Were you a member of the Elks, the Lions, or the Kiwanis Clubs?

DRUM: My father was a charter member of Kiwanis here in Montgomery. I belonged to the Rotary Club for over 60 years. The original incorporators of the Rotary Club here were several Jewish people. The same with Kiwanis. My father was an Elk. He was a 33rd Degree Mason, a Shriner.¹⁰ All the contemporaries of my father and Carol Hart's father, and all the young men of that age here in Montgomery, Atlanta, and Mobile, always wore the Shriners diamond insignia [ring]. My father had his fez that he wore to the meetings. The potentate of the Shrine was a prominent attorney here and a Jewish man, named **Myer**. [He] became a 33rd Degree Mason, which is a highest rank in the world in Masonry.

BERMAN: His first name or last name was **Myer**?

DRUM: Last name.

BERMAN: Do you remember his first name?

DRUM: Yes. I'll think about it in just a second. He lived next door to us. I can't believe I can't do it right off the top of my head. He was a Massachusetts Mutual general agent. He had a son and a grandson. The grandson died recently. His granddaughter was married to a man in West Point, Georgia, for years. They are all deceased now. Let's move onto to something else, and I'll think of it.

BERMAN: I'd like to talk a little bit about the importance of the Standard Club¹¹ and the community's life. Who joined? Was its members just of the Reformed congregation or were all

¹⁰ The Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, commonly known as 'Shriners,' was established in 1870 and is part of the Freemasons. Now called 'Shriners International,' it has nearly 200 chapters around the world. It is best known for the Shriners Hospitals for Children it administers and the red fezzes that the members wear. A 33rd degree Mason is someone who has earned the highest honors in Freemasonry. When someone joins the Masons, he is given the rank of Entered Apprentice, which is the first degree. Masons can advance to the 32nd degree through their contributions to the lodge. The 33rd degree is only given to Masons who have performed significant services for Freemasonry.

¹¹ The Standard Club was formed in 1871 as a downtown Montgomery social club for Jews during an era when Jews were not admitted to other clubs. The club building was built in 1894 across from the Davis Theater. Members acquired the second lot in February 1913. The Standard Club maintained the dual properties for over a decade. In 1929, notable architect Frank Lockwood built the current clubhouse. Currently, the Standard Club property is a community of residential homes.

Jews in Montgomery welcome at the Standard Club?

DRUM: The Standard Club was formed by a group of German Jews. They controlled membership by invitation only for many years. The system continued. Only German Jews for many, many years. Then they began to let a few non-German [Jews] into the club. It was “the” social point in Montgomery. You belonged to the club. They had marvelous tennis, good food, plenty of good activities. The club started way back in 1871. Their first club building, you might say, was on the ground floor of a three-story building. Weil Brothers Cotton was on the top floor, later the second floor. Then, the Jewish community had a contract to build a magnificent three-story masonry building in downtown Montgomery, right next to the existing theater and across from what used to be the Jefferson Davis Hotel, a part of the Dinkler [Hotel] chain from Atlanta. I went to *purim*¹² parties there and all kinds of things. The managers had to live on premises in an apartment. That building was there for a long time. In 1929, they built the present Standard Club, which closed. The Standard Club closed about 2006 or 2007. I resigned about 2005. That is a long story of its own, which will be covered in what I’m going to write and give to you. I have a draft now that is not complete. I can make a copy of the draft for you, if you wish it.

BERMAN: I would love it, thank you. You were telling me that there were some poker rooms. Were there some big games there sometimes?

DRUM: All social games. They were not big money games. They had several groups of people that played poker once a week a certain night. They had also ladies that played Mah Jongg and different things like that. They had poker games and dice games, too. We didn’t have any slot machines.

BERMAN: A swimming pool?

DRUM: Yes.

BERMAN: A golf course?

DRUM: Sure.

BERMAN: What were some of the other amenities?

¹² A Jewish holiday that commemorates the deliverance of the Jewish people in the ancient Persian Empire from destruction in the wake of a plot by Haman, a story recorded in the Biblical book of Esther. According to the Book of Esther, Haman planned to kill all the Jews, but his plans were foiled by Mordecai and his adopted daughter Queen Esther. The day of deliverance became a day of feasting and rejoicing. Some of the customs of *Purim* include drinking wine, wearing masks and costumes, and public celebration.

DRUM: They had a nine-hole golf course with two sets of tees. They had a swimming pool. They didn't have a pool for years but then got it. The food was outstanding always. We had good management. In fact, the managers that were there for 30 years, the best ones we had, had run the Diplomat [Hotel] in Atlanta before they came to Montgomery. A German couple, the [Bernhard and Madeline] Schmitts. They became famous in Montgomery. The club was rented out frequently to civic organizations that would want to have meetings in the club. They would do that to get the money. On those nights the club members couldn't go unless they belonged to that organization. All the various companies that were owned by members of the club would have their company Christmas parties at the club each year. We had a fabulous New Year's Eve party for many, many, many years, 200-300 people. Black tie. Evening dresses, not cocktail dresses. Sometimes tails. They would have hors d'oeuvres and drinks starting at 10:00 on New Year's Eve, running through to a full-seated meal at midnight. Always an orchestra, dancing. My parents went many, many times, and so did I. It was the focal point of society. As time passed, things changed. When I came home from World War II in late 1945 and everybody began coming home, the club started picking up the young people that had gone to war. I found a Constitution that was six sheets of tissue paper. The initiation fee was \$100. Dues were \$25 a month. Anyway, that was all changed and revised a sensible Constitution. I got on the board in 1948 and was there for 18 years until 1966. I held every office multiple times. You could only succeed yourself one time in one office, so they swapped me back and forth from secretary to treasurer to something or another. I was president in 1953. Of course, prior to that, I was vice president, past president. We changed it to a sensible system patterned after the Piedmont Driving Club [Atlanta, Georgia], the Montgomery Country Club [Montgomery, Alabama], which was still, up until 1995, no Jews. The Standard Club up until 1993, no non-Jews. I headed a committee to get rid of the religious restriction, which we did. We went from tightly controlled Reform Jews as members to an invitation system to an application. If somebody wanted to join, we had a whole new system, an application form. You send in an application with your picture, your background. You had to have three sponsors. You went before the board. If you were approved, you were invited to join. The initiation fee got big. It got up to several hundred dollars. Everything went up as it did everywhere. So, we opened it up to non-Jews in 1993. In short order, there were more non-Jews there than there were Jews. We introduced a category for the clergy to pay no dues, just the minimum and a lot of innovations. I chaired almost every

major committee there while I was on the board.

BERMAN: When did the club start inviting or allowing Jews from the other congregations or the other communities to join?

DRUM: That was what I was just addressing. Some joined around the early 1940's, not many. By about 1950-1954, anybody, any Jewish person could apply from any congregation. Most of them were accepted. It had Jewish people from the Sephardics, Conservatives, and Reformed.

BERMAN: How was that? Was the change accepted by all?

DRUM: It was fine. The German Jewish people still controlled the presidency until about 1950's or 1960's when I and some others promoted a member of the Conservative congregation to be president. From then on, there were officers from everywhere. We had the first female president in early 2000's. All of this will be in the draft that I will give you.

BERMAN: Getting back to the differences between the three communities here in Montgomery, did the temple crowd associate with the synagogue crowd? Did the synagogue crowd associate with the Sephardic crowd?

DRUM: Sure. But not much socially, no. In business and civic organizations, yes. Then, the Sephardic group sent their children to Temple Beth Or, the Reformed temple, for Sunday school. Finances entered the picture some years ago. Everybody got old. Intermarriage enters the picture. A lot of the people didn't belong to other congregations. They now belong to Temple Beth Or. Some people, for many years, belonged to two. Some of the Conservative people. I call it a little bit less Orthodox than Orthodox in Montgomery. There wasn't much social mixture at all. Very few intermarriages. This, like everything else had changed. Temple Beth Or has a lot of people that used to be members of one of the other congregations. Etz Ahayem,¹³ the Sephardic congregation, dwindled to almost nothing. It had to break up. Some went to the Conservative group. Some went to Temple Beth Or. In fact, a lady from that group recently was elected president of the Board of Trustees at Temple Beth Or. Now, we have quite a few families who are Sephardic or Conservative, whose children and grandchildren are now at

¹³ Etz Ahayem was established in 1912 in Montgomery, Alabama by *Ladino*- speaking Sephardic Jews, particularly from Rhodes. Solomon Rouso was elected the first president of the congregation. Construction of its first building was completed in 1927. In 1962 the congregation moved to a new building, but by the 1990's it had dwindled, as children of congregants moved away from Montgomery, and the synagogue had difficulty finding rabbis to lead it. Etz Ahayem merged with another Montgomery congregation, Agudath Israel, in 2001 and adopted the current name of Agudath Israel Etz Ahayem. The synagogue combines traditions and rituals of the Ashkenazi and Sephardim.

Temple Beth Or. They have merged the Sunday schools again because they had so few children in one place. They had to combine them. They all meet at Sunday school at Temple Beth Or.

BERMAN: You must have seen numerous changes in Montgomery over the last 70 or 80 years. Do you like the changes you've seen? How would you assess what Montgomery is like today as opposed to the Montgomery you knew growing up?

DRUM: Montgomery in those days was small. Population was 40,000 to 50,000. A lot of people didn't have cars. Cars were an innovation. The city grew up. Segregation came along. The suburbs expanded mightily. They still are. We have huge shopping centers all over this place now. Big chain stores came to Montgomery. We always had Sears, J.C. Penney, and the Montgomery Fair [Department Store]. Now we have Costco, Target, Walmart, Sam's, and everything else you can think of. [They] all expanded out in the country. We have four or five country clubs, big ones, with residential developments around the golf courses. The town has expanded out of the town. The downtown in Montgomery now is empty, pretty much. They are trying to build it back. We have a lot of new restaurants coming in. We used to have department stores, one or two. Now we have a bunch of them. You have Stein Mart and different things like that for men's clothes. Talbots for women's clothes. Sophisticated stores as well as ordinary stores. You can buy expensive things in Montgomery now, which you couldn't for a long time. The city is trying hard to redevelop the downtown area. They have just opened a place called The Alley, downtown. They now have several restaurants that have opened up. Wensaltz from Mobile has moved to Montgomery. Montgomery now has about 230,000 population. Surrounding towns like Prattville, Wetumpka, Millbrook, 10-15 miles away, all shop in Montgomery. It's just grown from a tiny little place to a pretty good sized place. We have a museum, a Shakespeare festival and theatre. We have several good art museums and things of that nature.

BERMAN: Do you miss the old Montgomery?

DRUM: I don't. No. I do miss the intimacy that prevailed amongst many, many people where they were not out to compete for everything. Life is competitive now in every respect, far beyond what it used to be. I remember my father telling me one time way back in his day in 1920 or something like that, that they traveled selling dry goods for Steiner-Lobman [Wholesale Dry Goods Company] with a horse and buggy. One of his competitor's horse and buggy ran into a creek. The horse drowned, and the man lost all of his samples of dry goods. Steiner-Lobman

lent that man their catalogues until he could get back on his feet. That would not happen today. They would take delight in the fact that he was out of business. It's a cut-throat era now, as compared with a more genteel way of life. There used to be a lot of boarding houses around for people to stay in. No more. The automobile has brought in motels and better hotels. We have got probably 20 motels all around this city, scattered everywhere. You go 10 miles out on the road to [Shoppes at] EastChase shopping center with all these big stores. Bed, Bath and Beyond, Shoe Station, umpteen different fast food restaurants, ladies ready to wear places, big department stores. They have motels and gas stations all over everywhere. Sam's has its gas station. Costco has its gas stations, all over everywhere. Its greatly expanded and continuing to do so. Now the city is trying to rebuild the inner city. They are taking old stores and making lofts to rent to people to bring them back to downtown.

BERMAN: Is it working?

DRUM: It's working. Slowly. It is.

BERMAN: What do you see as the future of the Jewish community in Montgomery?

DRUM: It is declining. The temple annual meeting is in May, and finances are getting to be a real problem. The people who pay the most dues are old. They are dying out. When one of them dies that pays \$10,000 or \$15,000 a year, the young people are not coming on like they should. I visualize that sooner or later there will be a combination of the Reformed temple and of the Conservative temple because a lot of the Conservative people who came from Eastern Europe as opposed to the ones from Western Europe like the Germans and French. The third and fourth generations, they don't want to stay that way. As interfaith marriages take place, those old rigid traditions are rapidly disappearing. In order for the Jewish community to survive in Montgomery, in my view, which is shared by Ms. Weil <he gestures to a woman in the room> and her family, services are going to have to be combined into one. I think will be Temple Beth Or. You can't continue to have two rabbis, two choirs, two this, and two that. The Sunday schools are already merging together. We put out a temple bulletin. By the way, you can get on the mailing list for that if you wanted to, if you have any interest in it. By the same token, I think you put out a publication. You may want to put the temple on your mailing list. You can let me know. Would you like to do that?

BERMAN: Absolutely. Yes.

DRUM: We will swap bulletins. This would be a step in that direction. We have a big

endowment fund. They don't have any. We have a lot of things that we own. We own our own cemetery. They use the public cemetery. We bury people in sealed caskets. They bury them in . . . I don't know if they still have wakes or not. They put them in biodegradable caskets except where they have to comply with city laws in the public cemeteries. None of them are buried in our cemetery, only the descendants of the Germans. Now we have sold some lots . . . I run the cemetery . . . to some of the former Sephardics because they now belong to Temple Beth Or.

BERMAN: What is the name of the cemetery?

DRUM: Eternal Rest. It is the newest one. The city gave us the land years ago. It is part of the city cemetery, which is Oakwood. This is the Jewish section, called Eternal Rest. This is the second Jewish section. Way, way back, they had what they called the Hebrew section, called Land of Peace. I have all the names and everything about all the cemeteries here at the house as well as at the temple because I run it. When people die, I keep up with the records, as does Gina Friday at the temple under my direction.

BERMAN: I think on that note, we can conclude the interview unless you can think of anything that you have been wanting to say and I haven't covered. Are there any questions that I haven't covered?

DRUM: Have we covered my college days?

BERMAN: We talked about your college days, but we didn't talk about your military service.

DRUM: I would be glad to do that.

BERMAN: Okay.

DRUM: I started out as active duty as second lieutenant in April, 1941, at Craig Air Force Base in Selma, Alabama. I was post engineer and held several jobs. I helped build the base.

<End Disk 2>

<Begin Disk 3>

DRUM: We trained all the cadets. I built all the housing for them. We dammed up a little creek and built a lake for fishing. It was an advanced flying base for American and RAF [Royal Air Force] Pilots. I taught navigation in the school as well as being fire marshal and several other things. I went overseas in June, 1941. I landed in Scotland in July of 1941. In England, I was there two years until I went across the channel into France. In England, I had increasingly important jobs, in my view. As important as lower reigning officers can get because I got there

first. When you get there first, other people come behind you, and you get pushed up. I got to be a captain in 1943. I was on exercise with the Canadians. I got sick with the flu, followed by pneumonia, followed by hepatitis. I was in a hospital in Oxford, England, for almost five months. A really, really sick young fellow. I finally got out. I had to watch my food. No alcohol for years. I was privy to a lot of invasion plans. I was on a top-secret list of classifications, so I couldn't drink. I couldn't participate with the floozies like everybody did. Even with the affairs that people had, I couldn't do that because you might let out something that you knew. You couldn't do that. I got to be a captain in 1943. I went over from England to France in about a month or two after D-Day. D-Day was June 6, 1944. I got into Normandy about July or August and later was promoted to major. We moved into Paris the day after it was liberated in August, 1944. I stayed there, traveling through Europe, doing my job. I never had any combat. I was a staff officer working in the headquarters of the U.S. [United States Army Corps of] Engineers in Europe. I worked under the chief engineer of the entire European Theater of Operations for the war. At the head of our group was [Dwight D.] Eisenhower's¹⁴ deputy, General [John Clifford Hodges] Lee. I worked for him. In 1945, after VE Day [Victory in Europe Day], they sent me down to Marseille [France] to begin transferring troops to Japan, but the war got over before we transferred anybody. So, everybody wanted to come home. They had a point system. If you had "x" number of points, you could go home, so they said. If they wanted you to stay, you stayed. Points or no points. I remember vividly, there had been an all-American quarterback that played for [University of] Georgia, named Charley Trippi. He had about 45 points, way too few to get home, but they got him home in time for the football season. I wanted so bad to go back to England on VE Day, with all my friends there for so long, to be there in London when VE Day came, but I was sent south to Marseille. I stayed there until December, 1945. That was when I left to come home. I had way over 100 points. But if they regarded you as a little bit important, you had to stay. I stayed. After VE Day, we wrote histories. We worked with the Army of Occupation in Germany. Lots of things. By the time I got home, I was a lieutenant colonel. I got out in April, 1946, after five years in the army. I went from second lieutenant to lieutenant colonel, which I didn't think was so bad. In 1946 when I got home, I started in business.

¹⁴ Dwight David Eisenhower (1890-1969) was the 34th President of the United States from 1953 until 1961. He was a five-star general in the United States Army during World War II and served as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe.

BERMAN: Can we go back a little bit to your military service? Did you ever think of making the army your career?

DRUM: At one time. First of all, I was awarded a Bronze Star [Medal] for meritorious service in the Corps of Engineers in 1944. I have pictures of all of that. There was a lot of pressure. I shouldn't say pressure. There were a lot of inducements to attract me to stay in the military. But I had been in air conditioning work prior to getting into the army. My career was interrupted. I worked for an air conditioning company. When I got out of the army, I interviewed around for several consultant engineering jobs. Living in Atlanta, a famous firm there was Newcomb & Boyd. I was offered a job there. I was offered an opportunity to take over a big air conditioning company in Atlanta because the owner wanted to retire and would have given me umpteen opportunities to buy into that business. I have often thought about the fact that I could have gone back to date the girl that I dated before the war if she hadn't gotten married. I might have gotten married, lived in Atlanta, participated in Atlanta's <unintelligible> skyscrapers in the past 40-50 years. I didn't do that. But the military . . . when I came back home, the company you worked for was required by the government, to give you your job back. I went back to York [Corporation Air Conditioning] in Atlanta. They would give me my job back, but they wouldn't guarantee it would be in Atlanta. It might be in Minnesota. It might be Florida or somewhere else, traveling. I didn't want that. The military, for my rank, lieutenant officer, I could have gotten really good stations all over the country. I didn't want all the uncertainty. Military life in peacetime, I couldn't think of anything less interesting. So, I started my business in 1946 here in Montgomery.

BERMAN: We spoke quite extensively about your business career. I have a couple more military questions. One that we often ask people that were involved in World War II or served in World War II, was where they were when they heard that Pearl Harbor was bombed. If you could reflect on your reaction. Where you were.

DRUM: December 7, 1941, I was on active duty at Craig Air Force Base in Selma, Alabama. I had been given a weekend pass to come to Montgomery to visit my folks. I came on Friday and had to be back on Sunday. I played golf at the Montgomery Country Club with another officer who came with me. When we got home for lunch from the golf course on December 7, Sunday, my mother told me we received a call from Craig Air Force Base to come back immediately. Everybody was uptight. We had to get in the car and go back to Craig Air

Force Base, where all these precautions were taken as if we were going to get invaded tomorrow. Things tightened up a little bit. We couldn't have cars. We all rode bicycles at the time. The impact was horrifying. Craig Air Force Base was named "Craig" after a good friend of mine, who was a Georgia Tech [Georgia Institute of Technology] classmate, named Bruce [Kilpatrick] Craig, who was killed in an accident in Hawaii after the Japs attacked. That is how Craig got its name. I beg your pardon. He was killed earlier because it was Craig Air Force Base when I went. But, the impact of Pearl Harbor was a sobering, terrifying effect. Most of us could have seen it coming. We didn't know when, but the surprise attack that caught us flat-footed, just blew our minds. We were really, really worried. President [Franklin D.] Roosevelt put us on the right track immediately. A lot of people don't know this. You've heard of the Jimmy Doolittle Raid, I'm sure. Six months after Pearl Harbor, we attacked Japan with B-25 [Mitchell] Bombers led by Jimmy Doolittle off an aircraft carrier. We bombed Tokyo. Not much, but we showed our hand and built up from there.

BERMAN: That was wonderful. Any other recollections?

DRUM: In Europe, in Milan [Italy] and Normandy [France]. I was there when Cherbourg [France] was liberated. In Paris when it was liberated. My time in Paris was as an officer. I met a lot of French people.

BERMAN: When did you hear about the concentration camps and what had gone on with the Jewish people of Europe?

DRUM: Late. Quite late. After the hostilities. We began to occupy Germany. Then we would begin to see in the movies and the newspapers about "Ike's" [President Eisenhower] visits to the concentration camps. VE Day was May 8, 1945. By midsummer or fall before I came home, I heard about the concentration camps and how horrible they were, about the Jewish people. The first concentration camp that the Germans had at Dachau,¹⁵ outside of Munich [Germany], was for political prisoners and prisoners of war. It later became a concentration camp. Later, they opened up all these others. Not in Germany. They put them in Auschwitz

¹⁵ Established on March 22, 1933, Dachau was the first concentration camp established by the Nazi regime. It was located in southern Germany near the town of Dachau, about 10 miles northwest of Munich. Dachau became a model for other concentration camps and was used as a training center for SS guards. Originally, it was a camp for criminals, political prisoners, and other opponents of the Nazi regime. In 1938, in the aftermath of *Kristallnacht*, the Jewish population rose to 10,000, although most were eventually released after agreeing to emigrate from Germany. Over 188,000 prisoners passed through Dachau between 1933 and 1945.

[Birkenau]¹⁶ and these various places in Poland. They had them all over everywhere. Each was worse than the other one. After the war, my wife and I visited Munich in the 1960's or something like that. We took a train and went out to Dachau to what was the concentration camp. We saw first-hand the ovens and the terrible, terrible living quarters. The Germans had set up a tourist section to show films of the book burnings and films of different things. There was a story there of one minister. I wish I could think of his name right now. It was a long time ago.

BERMAN: [Martin] Niemöller?¹⁷

DRUM: No. Not him. I know who he was. I can't think of his name right now. Anyway, he saved a lot of the Jewish people. When you say a lot, it is not much compared to 6 million. A lot of people don't know that the Germans were equally harsh on Russian POWs [prisoner of war]. They didn't put them in concentration camps. They put them in cattle cars and sent them back to Russia, where nobody ever learned of them much again. The German POWs that were held in Russia, not many of them ever got out either. The atrocities that the German's put on everybody brought revenge by the Russians. In my view, we couldn't have won the war without the Russians, and they couldn't have won it without us. The difference is, the Russians paid the price. Twenty million dead in Russia. Twenty million people dead. We lost 500,000 in the war. The British [lost] 400,000 or 500,000. The Germans, 4 million. The French, about 500,000. But the German attack on Russia in June, 1941, when it started . . . the Germans were welcomed because people in the Ukraine had been starved by [Joseph] Stalin.¹⁸ But the Germans misplayed their hand. Displayed cruelty and harshness and attacked the Russians in their homeland. People will fight for their homeland. The Russians did it. They suffered hardships like you would not believe. Freezing weather. No food. Just bare necessities.

¹⁶ Auschwitz-Birkenau was a network of camps built and operated by Germany just outside the Polish town of Oswiecim (renamed 'Auschwitz' by the Germans) in Polish areas annexed by Germany during World War II. It is estimated that the SS and police deported at a minimum 1.3 million people (approximately 1.1 million of which were Jews) to the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex between 1940 and 1945. Camp authorities murdered 1.1 million of these prisoners.

¹⁷ Friedrich Gustav Emil Martin Niemöller (1892-1984) was a German anti-Nazi theologian and Lutheran pastor. He is best known for his statement, "First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out because I was not a Socialist ... and there was no one left to speak for me." For his opposition to the Nazis' state control of the churches, Niemöller was imprisoned in Sachsenhausen and Dachau concentration camps from 1937 to 1945. He narrowly escaped execution. After his imprisonment, he expressed his deep regret about not having done enough to help the victims of the Nazis.

¹⁸ Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin (1878-1953) was the leader of the Soviet Union from the mid- 1920's until his death. He is considered one of the most powerful and murderous dictators in history.

They moved all their factories beyond the roads so the Germans couldn't blow them up. There they built up their forces, their air forces, their armies, troops, their brilliance, and leadership of Marshal [Georgy] Zhukov¹⁹ and these other people. He held onto Stalingrad. The Germans had 90 percent of Stalingrad [now Volgograd, Russia], but they couldn't get the final 10 percent. In one day's battle at the beginning of the Battle of Stalingrad, 150,000 Russians were dead in front of that city – 150,000. In Leningrad [now St. Petersburg, Russia], where they barricaded it for a solid year, people were forced to cannibalism in the freezing cold and the snow. Stalin didn't send his people up there to help them, first of all, because he couldn't spare them. Mainly, he didn't like their independent attitude. He let them suffer longer than they should. Their trials and tribulations were horrible. The Germans were not equipped for the Russian winter. They died by the thousands. The maggots would go from one dead body to a live warm one. Horrible. [Friedrich] von Paulus, the German general in command of German forces going into Russia, surrendered against [Adolf] Hitler's²⁰ instructions. He had lost 200,000 dead people. So, he took the rest of them and surrendered to the Russians. Most of them never got out. They were wounded, or sick, or something. The horrors of all this on the Western front, where we were, which was horrible, horrible in itself, was nothing like the suffering that went on on the other side. In the Far East, our naval warfare against the Japs <interruption in recording> we had to go across 3,000 miles of oceans with everything to beat the Japs. After they went into the Philippines, they were just as cruel as anybody in the world. They stabbed and bayoneted our POWs [prisoner of war]. They starved them and drowned them. They laughed at them. They did everything. I have no sympathy whatever for the Japanese. Now they are on top of the world again. Same with the Germans. I may have told you in an earlier interview, my wife and I went to Munich before we went to Dachau. I was sitting next to a white-haired man, who was working a crossword puzzle in English. I started talking to him. He played a cello in the London symphony that was touring in Berlin [Germany] at the outbreak of World War II in September, 1939. They all toasted each other, the Germans and British . . . “This will all over soon.” Next thing he knew, he was parachuting out of an RAF airplane, airplane bombing over

¹⁹ Georgy Konstantinovich Zhukov (1896-1974) was a career officer in the Red Army of the Soviet Union, who became Chief of General Staff, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Minister of Defense, and a member of the Politburo.

²⁰ Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) was a German politician who was the leader of the Nazi Party, Chancellor of Germany from 1933 to 1945, and Führer (“leader”) of Nazi Germany from 1934 to 1945. As dictator of Nazi Germany, he initiated World War II in Europe with the invasion of Poland in September 1939 and was a central figure of the Holocaust.

Germany. He became a POW. Now he is back with the orchestra in England. I asked him a lot of questions. I said, "Do you think this could happen again?" He said, "It is going to happen again." He said, "When the Germans get on top and they find they have a less excellent economics, if they get pressure again, they will elect another dictator. They will follow him right down the line, "heil" whoever it is. If it isn't Hitler, it will be "heil" somebody else. They follow their Teutonic tradition. They will do it again. He said, "It's just built in them. When you take Germans and move them to America, or other places, they become wonderful citizens. But when they stay in this country . . ." Of course, this was back before the present era. He said, "They would do it again." Now, Germany has changed a great deal because it is economically powerful. His point was, if it is gets economically weak, they will follow the leader again. It's what they did before. It was very interesting talking with him. I told him we had visited Dachau, and we had long conversations. Back to Japan, they are probably the smartest people in the world, because up until a couple hundred years ago, they had no contact with the outside world at all. Our admiral [Commodore Matthew] Perry opened up Japan to the world. They soon proved that in 100 years, they adapted to world circumstances, power, economics, everything. But they still are solidly Japanese. They don't look like us. They don't look like Caucasians. You can always tell the difference. They look on Koreans, the Japs do, as dogs because the Koreans are a mixture of Japanese and Chinese. The Japanese invaded Manchuria in the 1930's. They slaughtered and raped hundreds of thousands of people, laughingly doing so. They've got their background too. It will surface one of these times unless they stay economically powerful. They are winning. The Chinese, Japs, and the Asians are winning now, and we're going down the hill, in this country, after 200 years. They've been there thousands [of years]. They will be there thousands more.

BERMAN: One final question, do you think it was correct for President [Harry S.] Truman to drop the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

DRUM: Absolutely. One hundred percent. It was simply a weapon of war. If the other side would have had it, they would have used it against us. We were confronted with invading Japan. That would have cost 1 million dead Americans. More than that, dead Japanese. It would have lasted at least three or four years, of slaughter. The fact that we were able to get it and drop it, saved countless lives – of Japanese lives and our lives. In my view, it didn't require a great deal of thought when measured against courage and alternatives for President Truman to

do this. I'm satisfied that General [George] Marshall,²¹ who was our greatest chief of staff, told us that was the thing to do. The Japanese people had been trained for a year to stave off an invasion. Look at how hard they fought for Okinawa and Iwo Jima. In those two island campaigns, we lost 16,000 dead people. Sixteen thousand dead people. And five times that many wounded, and those are off-shore islands. If we went into Japan, as we did in those places, the slaughter would have been horrible. It would have lasted for years. Every Japanese person, women, old people, everybody, had been indoctrinated with weapons, kitchen knives, everything, to fight to the death. That is their samurai tradition. We would have been in a slaughter house for years. This way, the bombs, the two atom bombs, killed a lot of people in a local area like Hiroshima. It's all built back up now. They have a section in there that is a shrine, but it's all built back up. You couldn't detect any damage. The same in Nagasaki, except what they preserved to show off museum qualities. A few people, say 100,000, died or were affected in Hiroshima. That is a skimpy number compared with what would have been. We didn't know how to treat radiation then. It was all a first-time event, but we learned. What came out of it was a nuclear industry for the world. We developed nuclear energy. Now, we're behind. We haven't built a nuclear plant in 30 years. The rest of the world is building everywhere. The Japanese have the world's biggest nuclear plant. We have 104 plants that produce 16 percent of our power. The French get 82 percent of their power, nuclear. They have nuclear plants all over France. They don't have any oil. Nuclear has saved them umpteen trillions to have to not transport coal, natural gas, and all this stuff. It made nuclear . . . It doesn't pollute the atmosphere. It doesn't do anything. It lasts for a long time. They have a system of disposing of the spent [fuel] rods that is the envy of the world. The French, of all people, have got this. The British are just building two nuclear plants. We can't build them. Environmentalists say, "No we can't do that." So what happens, we remain dependent on oil and coal. We have plenty of coal. We have plenty of oil. They won't let us develop it. We have to transport it across the oceans for millions, millions, millions of dollars. It's totally wasted. These plants in Japan, did not fail because of their nuclear reactor problems. They failed because they had an earthquake and a tsunami that busted them up and flooded them and put them out of operation and brought

²¹ George Catlett Marshall, Jr. (1889-1959) was an American statesman and soldier. He was Chief of Staff of the United States Army under presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman, and served as Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense under Truman.

on the nuclear threat of radiation.²² But it can be controlled. It will be. All the bad ingredients produced blow out to sea, in Japan. They blow across the world. They get diminished by the time they get far away. If we had a nuclear plant at Three Mile Island,²³ it wouldn't blow anywhere. It would affect our country, like Chernobyl [Nuclear Power Plant].²⁴ But Chernobyl was a primitive plant. No safeguards. We have two plants in Alabama, one in south Alabama, and one in north Alabama. Belonged to TVA [Tennessee Valley Authority]. It's been running for years. Nobody even knows they are there. The nuclear age came about because of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

<End Disk 3>

<Begin Disk 4>

DRUM: The Japanese have benefited more than anybody in the world from those two disasters that they suffered. They were pinpricks on the population of Japan and of the world. The benefits from the development of atomic and hydrogen bombs, if you will, and technology were marvelous. Oak Ridge, Tennessee, you know about that. It's an outstanding place, facility. It hovers genius. The people that built all these things for us were mostly Europeans. We didn't have any physicists. [J.] Robert Oppenheimer is the only one. You had [Albert] Einstein, Leo Szilard, Edward Teller, Lise Meitner, Niels Bohr. All these people were from Europe and most of them Jewish. You could say, if you wanted to be kind of silly, that the Jewish people really defeated Hitler because he ran all these people out. If they worked for him, we'd have bombs dropping here. But they came to this country where they had a chance to develop to be free to exercise their genius and help us and beat Hitler.

BERMAN: I was going to say, I think that is a great place to conclude because it is kind of like an uplifting finale to the interview - that these people came over here and helped to defeat

²² The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster was an energy accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant located in the Pacific Ocean in northern Japan. It is known for the March 11, 2011 accident that was initiated by a powerful earthquake which caused a massive tsunami. The plant suffered major damage and permanently damaged several reactors. The Fukushima accident is the largest nuclear disaster since the 1986 Chernobyl disaster.

²³ Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station is a nuclear power plant located on Three Mile Island on the Susquehanna River, south of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The plant is widely known for having been the site of the most significant accident in United States commercial nuclear energy on March 28, 1979, when it suffered a partial meltdown. According to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the accident resulted in no deaths or injuries to plant workers or members of nearby communities.

²⁴ Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant is a nuclear power plant located in the city of Chernobyl in Ukraine, then part of the former Soviet Union. The plant is widely known for the 1986 accident, the only accident in the history of commercial nuclear power to cause fatalities from radiation. It was the product of a severely flawed Soviet-era reactor design combined with human error.

Hitler.

DRUM: That is true. All them were Jewish. Niels Bohr was half Jewish. He was Danish. The British got him out of **pinomonde** secretly in an airplane to come out. Look at Huntsville, Alabama, all the people like [Wernher] Von Braun, who was not Jewish. But they came over here. They were all contemporaries. Von Braun had a degree from MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology]. I belonged to an engineering honor society. In fact, all of them at Tech had, so did Von Braun, Thomas Edison, and all kinds of people. I fear that Judaism is going to shrink due to our freedoms to marry who we wish. We even have President [Bill] Clinton's daughter [Chelsea] who is married to a Jewish man [Marc Mezvinsky]. Carolyn Kennedy is married to a Jewish man. This is spreading, and it is going to continue. It's going to go into other countries as well. I think, for the future, I wish I could stay around to see it. I'm going for 100 right now. I hope I make that. But I would love to be here 25-30 years from now.

BERMAN: And I hope you make it! On that note, thank you Mr. Drum. It has been a wonderful experience. I appreciate it.

DRUM: I appreciate what you have done.

INTERVIEW ENDS

<End Disk 4>