

**NAME OF PROJECT:** *Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII*

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**LOCATION OF INTERVIEW:** Montreal, QC

**NAME OF INTERVIEWEE:** Vladimira Delle Vedove Tontini

**NAME OF INTERVIEWER:** Joyce Pillarella

**NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER:** Adriana Rinaldi

**TRANSCRIBED BY:** Krystle Copeland

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**ABSTRACT**

Vladimira's father was born in Friuli, Italy and her mother is from Pesaro, Italy. Her parents met in Sudbury, Ontario, and moved to Montreal to settle where they had their only child, Vladimira. Her father, Angelo Delle Vedove, was arrested on her 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, June 10, 1940 and the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) would not allow him to stay for her birthday cake when her mother made the request. Before her father's internment and while he was away, Vladimira lived with her mother, grandmother, and her step-grandfather. Vladimira, along with her mother and grandmother, visited her father Angelo at Camp Petawawa about a year after he was interned. Vladimira describes the experience of seeing her father in the camp, what he was wearing, and also talks about the other interned men around the camp. Her mother, grandmother, and step-grandfather were all classified as enemy aliens and forced to report monthly, despite the fact that they all had their citizenship papers. The period of her father's internment was especially difficult for her mother, as the family had started to build a house and only the excavation had been complete. Her mother was forced to work three jobs in order to pay the rent at their current home while completing the basic construction of their new home so that they could move in. Angelo's brother, Emil, changed his name from Emil Dalle Vedove to Emil Dalle in order to avoid a similar fate and discrimination. Vladimira explains that she did not face too much discrimination herself, but that she noticed subtle things at school such as not receiving 100% on a test with no errors. She does explain that her grandmother faced discrimination in some French-Canadian shops; however she would stand up for her while speaking French or English.

#### **INTERVIEW**

**VT: Vladimira Dalle Vedove Tontini, interviewee**

**JP: Joyce Pillarella, interviewer**

**AR: Adriana Rinaldi, videographer**

[Title screen]

[Fades in at 00:00:10]

JP: Okay, it's June 23<sup>rd</sup>. And my name is Joyce Pillarella. I'm interviewing Vladimira Dalle Vedove Tontini. Hi Vladi. [Laughs]

VT: Hi.

JP: Uh, do you want to start off by first telling me, uh, when you were born, where, and about your family, where they came from in Italy?

VT: Well, my, uh, my father was, uh, from Friuli. And, uh, my mother was from Pesaro. But they met in Sudbury. And, um, when they married, they married in Ottawa. But then they went back to live in Sudbury. Then somehow they come—they came to Montreal, but don't ask me how or when, uh, all I know is that I was born in the, um, at the, um, at the, um...the hospital here, what is it? [Laughs] The M—

JP: You were born in Montreal?

VT: Yes, yes.

JP: Okay, what year were you born?

VT: Pardon me?

JP: What year?

VT: Oh, 1930.

JP: Nineteen-thirty.

VT: Uh hmm.

JP: And, uh, where did you grow up, where was your first home in Montreal?

VT: That I remember—

JP: That you remember.

VT: —was on Marquette. Uh, Marquette or Garnier, I forget [looks up and shrugs back and forth.] Those two they were side by side. Yeah. [Nods]

JP: What neighbourhood was that?

VT: Pardon me?

JP: What neighbourhood was that?

VT: Oh, that's, uh, that's what they call Montreal North, but it's really not Montreal North now. At that time it was called that, you know. Yeah, because it was east of Christophe Colomb and west of Papineau. You know, so it was in between.

JP: And, uh, your parents came here it would have been around 1900, 1910? Uh, do you have an idea?

VT: Uh, I don't know because my father—they met in Sudbury like I said. Uh, my grandfather was here...on my mother's side. And, uh, my grandmother told my mother, "If you, uh, want to know your father, I think we have to go to, uh, to Canada. Because I don't think he'll ever come back." He liked it here, you know. So that's when they decided to come over. So, uh, I have an uncle, my mother has a brother and [unclear] so the three of them came over. And they went to Sudbury.

JP: And do you know why they came to Montreal?

VT: Well, it must have been for, uh, for [shrugs] I don't know, work I guess. I have no idea.

JP: Do you have brothers and sisters?

VT: I?

JP: Yes.

VT: No. [Shakes head]

JP: So, you're an only child?

VT: Yes, I am.

JP: Okay. And, uh, what are some of your memories growing up when you were a little girl? Of your, uh, in your neighbourhood on the streets, uh...

VT: Well, there weren't too many people, uh, on—in that area at that time. I had, uh, a couple of friends. Uh, one family was Di Cesare and the other one D'Amico and in front of me was the Catucci family. [Gestures with hand] And that was it. There were two families on, uh, one on—you know, and then there was, there was Bélanger[?]. [Shrugs] That's all there was.

JP: And, um, what about school, when you started school, what school did you go to? What—

VT: Well, my mother wanted to send me to French school, but they didn't want me, so then she brought me to English, uh, Protestant schools, uh, Peace Centennial. They took me there. And I was there a couple years. My mother was very happy with it. But you know, seeing that were, uh, Catholic my mother said, "It's better that she should go to a Catholic school." So that's when I went to St. Dominic's for a couple of years. And, uh, oh at that time we lived...facing a park. I'm trying to think of...not too far from Papineau, anyhow, it's a couple of streets in. And then when we moved to Papineau, then I went to Holy Family. And that was, uh, on Berri Street I think, eh, near [unclear].

JP: And what happened with the French school, how come they—did they give you any reason why they didn't want to take you?

VT: Yes, because I couldn't understand anything.

JP: Did you actually end up going to class at the beginning and...

VT: Did I what?

JP: Did you go to any of the classes—

VT: No, no they just wouldn't take me. [Shakes head]

JP: They just wouldn't take you at all.

VT: No. [Shakes head]

JP: And what about on the street, who did—who were your friends?

VT: Well, like I said, we were three families on that friend—on that [laughs and shakes head]—no, there were not very many people there. I used to go to a park that was across, uh, Bélanger and there, uh, my grandmother used to come and, uh, watch me of course 'cause I was young. But, uh, there were all kinds of, uh, young people. But that's also where I met a woman that I am still friends with. Her name is Gloria. I met her there in the park and then we became friends and we still are friends. I see her all the time. Yup.

JP: What year were you born?

VT: Nineteen-thirty.

[00:05:02]

JP: So, you were a little girl during the, the years of the depression here in Montreal?

VT: I never realized that we were poor. Never. [Shakes head] Because my mother, uh, sewed and my grandmother sewed. And I still remember some of the comments. [French phrase]  
[Laughs]

JP: Who would say that?

VT: Oh, that was this Italian girl down the street. She didn't like me very much. [Laughs] Yup.

[Nods]

JP: Did you wear a uniform to, uh, school?

VT: Oh, yes, at Holy Family we had a uniform. Mm hmm. It was navy blue and it had a little white-collar sort of thing, in winter. And in summer we had a midi[?]. With the, you know, with the, uh, the little...

JP: And, um...

VT: And then when we were warm we would roll down our socks down to here, you know.

[Motions rolling down leggings] Our stockings. Yeah. [Nods]

JP: So, in your house you had your grandmother.

VT: [Nods] Grandfather.

JP: Your grandfather, on your mother's side.

VT: Yes. My grandfather was my step-grandfather.

JP: Okay.

VT: 'Cause my, uh, my mother's father died when I was, uh, four. He fell down the stairs on Christmas Eve. He was coming to wake me up for Christmas. And he took the wrong door and fell down the stairs. Hit his head, and that was that.

JP: And—that's so sad.

VT: Yeah. [Says with a serious half laugh] Christmas for us for a long time was, uh, not very happy. [Shakes head then nods]

JP: And your parents and you. So you were five people in the, in the home—uh, at home and then, then you were four.

VT: Well, we were, uh, when my father was in concentration camp. It was only, uh, the four of us.

JP: Right.

VT: Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: Um, what did your father do for a living?

VT: My father was in const—in, uh, construction for a while. Then when he came out he was a presser. Then he was back in construction. And he worked for Francon.

JP: So, you're growing up, you're a little girl, it's the 1930s, uh, you're going to English Protestant school at first, then you were switched to English—

VT: [Nods] St. Dominic's.

JP: Um...your father's working in construction. Your mother is sewing at home.

VT: No, she was not, uh—

JP: For work or just—

VT: She we—we—my mother went to work.

JP: Oh, she did?

VT: Mm hmm. She went to work.

JP: And, um, then...it's June 10<sup>th</sup>—

VT: Mm hmm.

JP: —nineteen forty.

VT: Mm hmm.

JP: Can you tell me about that day? What made that day—how—what happened that day?

VT: Well, I don't remember if I was home, or if I was out with friends or something. All I know is that when I was in the house, these two tall men—to me they were very tall, of course I'm 10, you know, uh, for me. They were tall to start with, uh, these RCMPs, you know. And, uh, they,

uh—one of them, I still remember this; one of them touched my head because I had nice blond, curly hair, you know. And my mother told me, "Go to—into the room." [Laughs] She didn't want me to have anything to do with them. So I went into the bedroom. Yeah. And then they waited for my father. And when my father came in, my mother said, "It's my daughter's birthday. Could he come just to cut the, uh, the cake, you know?" And they said, "No." They took him away and that was that. And they said, "Well, it won't be for very long." [Shrugs] So.

JP: So June 10<sup>th</sup> is your birthday, you were turning 10 years old that day.

VT: Yup. [Nods]

JP: And your father was coming back from work?

VT: Yup. [Nods]

JP: Did he come straight home or—

VT: But, no, he didn't come straight home. He had heard, I don't know how, that Mr., uh, Silvio Monti had been picked up. And Mrs. Monti was, uh, not the type like my mother, my mother was a [motions being tough], you know, but she was always dependent on her husband and this and that. So my father [unclear] he would go there to talk to her, you know. But, uh, I don't know what happened there. I know that she had, uh, two sons. There was, uh, Tom. His real name is Attilio. And there was, uh, the other son, you know and, uh...

JP: So your father—

VT: Oh and they had a daughter. She—they had a daughter that came from Italy as a, as an adult...adult 16, 17. Yeah.

JP: So your father had stopped by to see Mrs. Monti—

VT: Yeah.

JP: —because he had heard that Mr. Monti had been picked up.

VT: [Says at the same time as Joyce, nods and says with a smile] Had been picked up. But how he found out, I don't know. I have—I can't tell you that, I have no idea.

JP: Because you were—at that, at that point you were 10 years old. You, you didn't see any kind of, uh, any kind of—you didn't feel anything different the week leading up, if there was any change or anything in the community? You didn't feel any tension—

VT: Well, the community I was in at that time was, uh, you know, quite a few Italians and, uh, and French people. It was, uh, pfft [makes sounds with mouth], no, there was no difference. [Shakes head no] Nobody ever treated me any differently or, uh, anything like that. And in school there was, uh, there was one teacher, Ms. Sullivan, this tall English woman who was extremely nice to me, all the time. I remember one thing. We were supposed to have, uh, you know, we had the sewing classes. We were supposed to make a slip, you know. And my mother says, "*Con tutti questi stupidaggine...*" [Gestures with hand] You know, she didn't fi—she say she didn't want to bother with, you know. This lady bought me the material to make a slip.

[00:10:31]

JP: This is while your father was interned that she—

VT: [Nods] Yeah, yeah. Mm hmm, mm hmm. But I never heard any comments from anyone, uh, any derogatory comments, you know. No.

JP: That day—so I just want to go back to June 10<sup>th</sup> if you, if we could. You ca— these two men came in.

VT: Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: Did they—I gue—you didn't know who they were so—

VT: No. They're, uh, no. I didn't know.

JP: There was no way of knowing if they had identified themselves as to who they were?

VT: Oh, I have no idea.

JP: Right.

VT: I have no idea.

JP: And—

VT: But I'm sure that my mother made sure that they identified themselves.

JP: And the birthday cake was on the table.

VT: Yes. [Nods]

JP: Your father walks in the men were waiting for him.

VT: Yup. [Nods]

JP: Do you remember your father's reaction? Did he...

VT: Well, he was flabbergasted, eh. He didn't realize at first. And then, then of course he realized that the same thing's happening to him that happened to Mr. Monti, you know. But, uh, they said, "Oh, it won't be for long." Uh, you know, this type of thing. [Shrugs]

JP: Did—was he—did he react scared? Did he rea—was he with anger? Did he—was he calm?

VT: N-no. I don't—no, he wasn't scared. He was put off, but he wasn't scared. [Shakes head]

JP: And your mother's reaction? 'Cause she—you said that she—

VT: I ha—I don't rea—

JP: —she wanted, she wanted your, your father to at least have a piece of birthday cake with you.

VT: Yeah, well she was upset of course. But to tell you that I can remember exactly what, uh—the only one that was, uh, most emotional was my grandmother because she was softer person. She was a, uh, you know, an older, you know. And she was worried. You know. Uh, could—you know, what's gonna happen to us sort of thing, you know. So.

JP: Was she crying?

VT: I don't quite remember. [Says while looking up]

JP: So they asked you to go in your room?

VT: Mm hmm.

JP: But you still continued to listen to what was going on?

VT: Well, I could just hear them saying that, uh, he wou—he'll, uh, take him for a, for a while and that they have to ha—questions. And, uh, it might be a week or two before he can come, can come home. You know.

JP: You don't know if they actually handcuffed him or they just—

VT: Oh, no they didn't handcuff.

JP: So he—

VT: He walked out between the two men. And that was that.

JP: And right after that happened did you come out of your room? Did you speak to your mother? Your grandmother? Did you—

VT: Well, after I came out, I mean I don't think I had a chance to talk. Everybody was talking. My, my grandmother, my, you know, huh, my grandfather was telling them, uh, not to worry. You know, things like that. I mean that, ah...

JP: Did neighbours come over?

VT: No.

JP: Did anybody else come over?

VT: No. [Shakes head]

JP: It was a family—

VT: [Nods] Yup.

JP: It was dealt within the family.

VT: Mm hmm, mm hmm.

JP: The next day, what happened? You went to school?

VT: Oh yes.

JP: And did you talk about it? Did you—

VT: No, I never talked to anybody about it.

JP: Why?

VT: I was like that, I never told my business to anyone. [Says with arms outstretched] I never—I still don't. If someone asks me something... [Shrugs]

JP: As time went on, in the subsequent weeks, um, did any—did you find out that any other girl that you knew—

VT: Yes, sure. [Nods]

JP: —had their father interned?

VT: Yeah. [Rocco] Salera. There was a girl, her name was Salera. Uh, she had a brother and two sisters in the same school. And one was in my class. Irene was in my class. Yeah. Mm hmm.

JP: And she, she came and she told you? Or you just found out, word of mouth? How was it—how did—like, how did the information get—move around at that, at that time?

VT: [Laughs] I don't, I don't really know. I don't remember. I should remember perhaps, but it wasn't that, uh [shrugs]...it didn't bother me that much. The fact that people knew or didn't know. Because as far as—well, oh, I remember this much. You know how we used to say, "The beads at noon?" Okay. [nods] So one day, I forget which teacher this was...I don't know if it was a nun or a teacher, because we had both, you know. She said, uh, "We're going to say the beads for Vladi's father today." I got up and I said, "My father didn't do anything wrong." [Says with anger] And I sat down. And that took care of that. They said the beads and I sat down. [Pause] 'Cause I didn't feel that my father had done anything wrong. [Shakes head] Eh. 'Cause I used to

go with him at *la Casa D'Italia* all the time and he'd play bocce. In fact, he played so often that they used to call him "Bocce." [Smiles] "Hey, Bocce!" You know. [Shrugs] Yeah.

JP: What other activities was your father involved in that you may h—did you know if he was involved in any of the fascist groups in Montreal?

VT: No. Not that I know of. [Shakes head]

JP: No that you know of, okay.

[00:15:19]

VT: No.

JP: And—

VT: But when they were dances at *la Casa D'Italia*, we always went.

JP: As a family.

VT: Yup. And Mr. Dieni was there, uh, Gentile Dieni. I don't know if you know that name or, uh, you know. A lot of them were [shrugs], uh, were there. Yeah.

JP: And—

VT: And you know I was young. And you know at that time we'd go to the dances and all that and then everybody, uh, had kids. And the ones that stayed a little longer, well they would put

chairs together and the coats and we'd lie down on the coats. And we'd wait for our parents to take us home. It was a family thing, type, you know.

JP: What about the, um, processions and the events, the Saint days, the *Sant'Antonio* and things like that? Did your family participate—

VT: I—well, we never live—we didn't live close to the church, eh. We were—the church is Notre-Dame-de-la-Défense and we were on Papineau. Eh? You know.

JP: It's quite a walk.

VT: It's quite a, you know.

JP: Yeah.

VT: So we used to go—I used to go with my grandmother sometimes. But we were never a very religious family. No. [Shakes head]

JP: And in your home did you have, um, things that were Italian, a flag? Did your father have a black shirt?

VT: No, no. [Shakes head]

JP: Did, uh, uh...

VT: No.

JP: A picture of [Benito] Mussolini?

VT: Oh no! [Says with a laugh]

JP: [Laughs] There, there wasn't any, uh—

VT: No, no, no. We never had anything like that. [Says while shaking head]

JP: Any of that stuff in the house?

VT: No, no, no, no, no. [Says quietly while shaking head]

JP: So, your father—

VT: The only thing my dad had, he had a little pin. [Measures an inch or two between her fingers]

JP: Oh, yeah.

VT: He had a little pin. [Nods] Yeah. Now how he got that, or why he got that, or where...  
[Shakes head and shrugs]

JP: Can you describe the pin? What it was, what it said?

VT: Uh...can we stop this a moment and I'm going to see if I can find it?

JP: Yes.

[Fades out at 00:17:00]

[Fades in at 00:17:01 to show Vladimira holding a small, round pin with the colours, green, white and red, and something located in the centre in her right hand towards the camera.]

JP: Tell us about the pin, Vladi?

VT: I have no idea. All I know is that, uh, I don't remember when he got it, all I know is that he got it from, *la Casa D'Italia* wherever they, uh, they met. [Looks at someone moving around off-camera]

JP: And that was the only thing—that's the only memory you have of your father—

VT: This. [Points down to pin beside her off-camera]

JP: —from this uh, era.

VT: Yeah. Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: So—

VT: But they all had that. [Pause] Just like, uh, you know other, uh, nationa—other things like Sons of Italy or something, they have an emblem or whatever. [Motions to placing pin on sweater] Well, they had that.

JP: When you grew up, did you feel, uh—up until the time when your dad was interned—did you feel Italian or Canadian?

VT: I always felt Canadian-Italian. I always felt Canadian-Italian and I always do. I always have and I always will.

JP: So, you feel that you could have du—this dual identity was very comfortable for you?

VT: Oh yes. [Camera zooms in slightly]

JP: Being both. And at home what did you speak?

VT: Italian. [Nods]

JP: And you spoke—

VT: And in fact, uh, with my grandmother, uh—my father never spoke his di—his dialect. Never. But my grandmother and my mother always spoke their dialect. Eh. So I learned how to, uh— and while my father was in concentration camp, that's when I learned how to write in Italian because my mother, my mother said to me, you know, "You're going to write to your dad." And I started writing in English, and so she said to me, "Wh-wh-what do you mean in English? Write to him in Italian." You know. So then I started writing Italian. But in the house I always heard Italian. Always. And like my step-grandfather, he spoke Italian. Not his dialect, because he was *Abruzzese* and I, I don't [shrugs], uh, we would not have understood him. Eh. Because my mother and father and my grandmother spoke a beautiful Italian. It's just, uh...

JP: So you grew up feeling Canadian-Italian. Uh, did you have, uh, any conflicts up until that point, before your father was interned, with any of the English or the French kids? Was there any conflict or any kinds of problems—

VT: [Unclear] *italienne*, or things like that. Oh, I guess there was. I have no idea I don't really...uh, those things never really bothered me because I was a big girl, nobody really bothered me very much if I didn't want to get bothered. I mean— and besides if I went home and my grandmother came out [puts hands out and laughs] that was that, you know. She, [laughs] she looked after me like you won't believe. [Laughs]

JP: And even walking to school, you never had problems, uh, up until that point? Like when you were younger or when you were—

VT: No.

JP: Six, seven, eight, nine years old?

VT: [Shakes head] Oh, when I was young like that my grandmother walked with me. And came pick, and came pick me up. And in fact, the nuns used to be upset because she used to walk to school to bring me a, a hot soup at noon. [Bites lip and nods]

JP: How nice.

VT: [Nods with lips pursed]

JP: Why, why would that make the nuns upset?

VT: They—well, I was being pampered.

JP: Oh.

[00:20:05]

VT: [Laughs]

JP: So, once your father was picked up...

VT: Mm hmm.

JP: ...what happened in the family home a-after that point? Um, how, how did your mother have to reorganize what went on? How did she deal with the fact that the breadwinner was gone?

VT: Uh, you know, you're asking me things, I was 10 years old. I mean. [Shrugs]

JP: But did your mot—did you see your mother go to work for example?

VT: Oh, yes. She had to go to work. [Nods with a sarcastic laugh]

JP: So she had to get a job and she had to start working.

VT: Yes, she, uh, she was a good, she was a good worker. She could get a job anywhere at all. My grandmother had also worked at the same time. They at one time, both of them worked for Lombardi. But then my mother had to find a job because that's peace work type of thing. But

then my mother had to find a job that was, uh, steady because she was the only breadwinner and the money had to come in. And so she went to, uh, work for Friedman[?] and, uh, she wa— they made her a forelady, which she hated. She hated giving people orders. But, uh, she took the job because that was, uh, you know. And she was—I still remember this, she was—there was like two big desks and she was on one, she was in charge of the women and there was this man here, who had the same kind of job as my mother and he was in charge of the men, but you know. And his name was Johnny B[?]. This, uh, German fellow. Hmm. And he's the one that bought me my first ski boots. And he asked my mother, uh, permission. He says, uh, "Do you think your husband will mind if I, uh, you know?" And my mother wrote to my father, and I got ski boots. [Laughs] Its funny how life is, eh, sometimes.

JP: You said you were, you were writing to your father, the correspo—you, you—

VT: In Italian.

JP: —correspondence then, the, uh, the—between your father and your mum and yourself, it was all through correspondence the communication, right? You didn't, uh—for how long?

VT: Well all the time he was in camp. [Nods]

JP: All the time. And, was it often, or...did you write often, did you receive letters often?

VT: Well, I, I don't remember that very much. I don't remember that. All I know, is that sometimes when we got our letters, there were things that were blacked out.

JP: Really?

VT: Yeah. Mm hmm. [Nods] I remember that. I remember my father, uh, wrote things and they were blacked out. [Nods]

JP: They were censored.

VT: Oh, they read everything. [Nods] Mm hmm.

JP: And...did you ever get news from other people? Uh, did your mother find out news from other women who had been—or had their husbands interned and then she would pass that news onto you? Did you ever, did you—like for example did you know what your father was doing at the internment camp? Did he have a job there? [Unclear]

VT: No, he, he didn't have a job and he always liked to do things. [Nods] So he asked permission if he could work, uh, with wood. And, uh, he's the one that got a gang together and they made a wooden arch at the begin—at the entrance of the camp. [Motions an arch with hands] They made this wooden arch.

JP: Wow.

VT: Yeah. And he used to work in wood all the time. He sent us all kinds of things. In fact, he even made a pair of skis once. And he sent us a, a woman—a statue of a woman about this high. [Demonstrates height of statue with hand] Uh, he had, uh, a dish that was written, "*in vino veritas*," you know. All kinds of things in wood. He was very, very good, you know. Yeah.

JP: Were these things that he was sending to you while he was in camp?

VT: [Leans forward to signal that she can't hear]

JP: Was he sending you these items while he was in the camp—

VT: Yes.

JP: —as gifts?

VT: But my mother had to go and pick them up and she had a couple of jobs just to make—to feed us. So finally she told him, she said, "Don't send me so many things because when I go and pick them up, I have to pay."

JP: Oh.

VT: You know. So. [Laughs and shrugs] Yeah.

JP: And eventually, um—at what point then—what happened 'cause—did your, did your father—you were telling me earlier that your father wanted to build a house?

VT: Yeah. [Nods]

JP: And this all happened around the time that he was interned?

VT: Yes. [Nods]

JP: So can you just go over—

VT: Well, before he was interned, they had excavated and they had made the foundation.

[Gestures with hand] And so the first year, my mother I don't know how she scrimped up the money, but we covered it. [Motions hand over surface]

JP: So, they—he had excavated—this is the house that he was gonna build on what street?

VT: On Papineau.

JP: Okay, so this was a brand new house he was gonna build.

VT: Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: And it was the hole.

VT: Yup.

JP: They pick him up, the hole is there.

VT: Yeah. And, uh, we can't leave a hole like that. So they had to, uh, cover it, uh, so they had the foundation made. And they covered it with, uh, with wood. You know.

[00:25:02]

JP: But—

VT: And then—

JP: —who told your mother that they couldn't leave it that way during the war?

VT: Oh, it's not only during the war, at any time you can't leave a hole—

JP: No, I know but at—okay, but at that point—

VT: Oh, uh, somebody—well, there was an Italian man, and I don't know his name, that worked for the city. And sometimes he used to come and talk to my mother. In fact, he's the one that told her, "If you don't hurry up"—because it was supposed to be a one storey house. Okay. But then the law changed, and it had to be two storeys. Well, we didn't even have the money for one storey. So my mother, uh, heh, you know... [Shrugs] I think that's the only time I saw my mother cry. When she didn't know more, anymore what to do, you know. And then this man told her that, uh, uh... [Shrugs] So what they did was they put up the frame for the second floor. And we had a stair going up. [Motions a winding staircase with finger] Because if you didn't put it right away, then the, the law had changed and you would have had to have, you know these homes that have the like, like a little check[?] and the stairs are inside?

JP: Mm hmm.

VT: So, anyhow, so our stairs were outside. But they didn't lead to anything. [Laughs and gestures up with hands] They just, you know, it was just, uh...

JP: The facade.

VT: That's all.

JP: Of a two storey house.

VT: Yeah.

JP: But inside it was really just the first storey that—

VT: And the first storey—our house, downstairs—in, in our home the floor, I don't know what the floors are made like now, but at that time, there was only—there was a first flooring that is on the bias. [Measures slabs in a slant with hands] You know, it was like that. Well our floor was like that. And we had the two by fours that divided the house. And the two by fours, well, you could see right through. So we had no privacy. So, you know the, the tar paper, the black tar paper. Well, there is, uh, paper like that that's beige. Well, the whole house was divided with this beige paper. And we had no, uh, bathtub. We had, uh, uh, one of those deep sinks in the kitchen. That's where we took our bath. [Laughs] Because we had nothing else, you know.

JP: So, how did your—what happened? How much did it cost your mother to cover the hole?

VT: Oh, who knows, I don't know.

JP: It must have been a lot?

VT: I don't know what it—I don't know what anyone—they never, never discussed anything, uh, that was, uh, bad like in front of me. Never.

JP: And this is while—your mother had to deal with this issue while your father was being—was in, uh, the camp.

VT: Yes. My mother had to, uh, uh—my mother faced all the issues. All of them. Because my father in camp, uh... [Shrugs] And meanwhile he was, uh, telling us he'd like some food. So we used to send him food. [Laughs]

JP: What did you send?

VT: Oh it was, I don't know, a pieces of salami, cheese, uh, you know, things like that. [Shrugs]

JP: So, your mother had to deal with, making money to feed the house...

VT: Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: ...the, the—feed you and take care of, uh, her grandmother, and—I mean her mother rather.

VT: Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: And her father was still alive at this point?

VT: My mother's father?

JP: Your grandfather was he still alive?

VT: Well, this is my step-grandfather.

JP: Your step-grandfather.

VT: Yes, oh yes, he lived with us. [Nods]

JP: Oh, yeah, he lived with you. She had to take care of putting food on the table. She had to take care with—of the construction, the hole.

VT: Yup. [Nods]

JP: She had to pay for that.

VT: Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: She had to pay for rent.

VT: Mm hmm. Mm hmm. And that's why they decided to go and live in this house even though it wasn't finished 'cause at least they spared the, uh, the rent. My mother used to work all week, and then she used to work on—at, at, uh, she used to work at Friedman's. And then on the, uh, weekends, she used to work at Gold and Son.

JP: She was always in the textile business?

VT: Always. [Nods] She—actually my mother was a tailor. Eh? [Shrugs]

JP: My God. And she had to send the food to, uh, Petawawa.

VT: Yeah, yeah. [Nods]

JP: So how did—what was your mother's impression about this whole thing, with the war and your dad being there, and her having to just get in—start working and everything? Did your mother ever—

VT: Well, she found it very difficult. That's for sure. But to say that I heard any, uh, you know...I can't say, uh...I mean, like I said they never discussed any of the, uh, whatever they thought let's say of the Germans, or the Italians or something. [Gestures with hand] They never discussed that in front of me. Never. No.

[Long pause]

[Fades out at 00:29:38]

[Fades in at 00:29:39]

AR: Now talk.

JP: So, um, no, I just want to continue on about your mom and your grandmother, then the jobs that they had to do in order to maintain the family—

VT: Oh, yeah, well—and, and then, uh, like I said, my mother worked, uh, and she had the, uh—worked on Saturday as well. And you know. And then, I don't know how this happened but she brought home work and my grandmother used to sew at home. You know.

JP: Peace work.

VT: Yeah. So that, uh... [Shrugs] And then she would bring it in on the Monday when she went back to work, you know.

[00:30:15]

JP: So she worked during the day, she worked on the weekends. Did she also work at night?

VT: Oh, if she had to finish something yes, otherwise well, you know, she had me to look after and food and everything else in the house, eh, as well. Mm hmm.

JP: And as far as, uh—and she had all these debts to deal with. The house—

VT: Oh yes. And, uh, I remember this lumberyard; I don't remember exactly where it was, but I can picture it, because I, uh, every week my mother would pay so much and sometimes she wouldn't be able to go, so I would go with my bicycle. Today she would never have let me go with the traffic, but at that time—and I used to bring the money, you know. And the man was, uh—gave my mother credit. You see. So, uh, but then when my father came out [shrugs], my mother said, "Well, now you have to go." I mean he's the man in the family, you know. And when he got there the guy said, "I don't know you." He said, "I don't want to give you credit. I don't know you. Your wife I know will come and pay me." [Laughs] My father was upset.

JP: So, even though he knew that it was the husband of the—

VT: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

JP: —credit to, he wouldn't give it to him?

VT: No, no. I don't know if it was a joke or what, but my father was insulted. [Says with a laugh] But, uh, this man was extremely, extremely nice with my mother. My mother used to bring— but mind you, but my mother was the type of person that if she owed you a nickel you could be sure you had your nickel. And you had it on the day that you—she said you would have it, you know. So, uh, there was never uh—

JP: There must have been a lot of credit extended in those days. To—

VT: Perhaps, but not to us.

JP: No, eh?

VT: No, because we didn't look for it. There was one lady, one—no, one family, their name was Ariano. My mother borrowed money from these people and she used to pay—they were on Papineau, we were on this, on this side of the park and they were on the other side. [Gestures to right and left with hands] And, uh, they borrowed money from this la—my mother borrowed money from this family. I don't know how they knew each other, I can't tell you, all I know is that, I think it was three thousand dollars. And a little bit at a time, my mother paid it all off.

[Long pause]

JP: Did, uh, did they—I don't know—did you have money in a bank account or did they, they close the bank account—

VT: I have no idea.

JP: You don't know that, eh?

VT: I have no idea. I doubt that we had much money.

JP: So, what was your mother's, uh, impression of this whole thing?

VT: Of the, of the war?

JP: Just of the war and, and the internment. Did she ever make a comment about it?

VT: Well, she made a comment, uh, that life, uh, for them was easier than for the women, uh, that were out of camp.

JP: The men had it easier.

VT: Yeah, because they were fed and looked after and, uh, you know, uh.

JP: And the women?

VT: And the women had to, to struggle.

JP: So the war was on the, on the streets.

VT: Yeah, you know. [Says with a half laugh] It was, uh...

JP: And then how long was it before you actually visited Petawawa?

VT: I think we were not allowed to go right away. I think it was a year later. And, uh, my grandmother, my mother, and myself we went. And I still remember this, we were on the train and from the train it was 26 miles and we took a taxi...from the train to the uh... [Points from left to right] And I remember my mother saying to me, "Now listen, when you see your father, it's a little while he's in camp. He might be thin. He might look, uh, not too well. I don't want you to make a comment or anything." Eh? She says, "Don't forget now, you're a bit girl, you understand." We get there, he looks like a flower. He's [puffs out cheeks and motions spreading

petals around face]...just great. And he has a big mark here, you know, a big scab. [Points to right elbow and forearm] So my mother said, uh, "What happened to your arm?" [Says with concern] You know. "Oh," he said, "we were playing fr—rugby," he says, "and I, and I, I fell." [Slaps legs and sits forward with scowl on face] My mother said, "*Per la Madonna...*" [Laughs] She says, "Here I am in three jobs, working, everything and they're you know..." [Nods]

JP: Did they give you, um, a private place to meet with your father or—

VT: No, it, it was a big hall.

JP: —public space—

VT: It was a big hall, but there were tables. So we sat at a table. He was on one side and we were on the other side.

JP: Was there a fence in between or...

VT: Between us?

JP: Were you allowed to touch your father?

VT: No. No. There was no fence. Uh, when you walked in, there was a fence around. And there were, uh, soldiers walking around. And I still remember there were German, uh, soldiers also walking around. But they were officers. Our, our, uh, soldiers looked like nothing with their uniforms. You should have seen these German officers. Oh ho! You thought they owned the camp. You know. Mm. [Nods] And, uh, one of them asked permission to touch me. He asked my mother if he could put my—and he put his hand on my head like that because I had curly blond

hair. And he had a daughter in Germany with—that looked like me. And, uh, and then we went in and, uh, there was another, uh, another fence. And then we were in, in the camp. But not in the, uh, not in the barracks. Outside, eh. And there were tables. And we...

[00:35:57]

JP: But was it a barrack specially made?

VT: No, they—that's all of them—

JP: For the, uh, meeting. Or was it an outdoor, uh...

VT: No, we were outdoor.

JP: Oh, you were outdoor.

VT: We were outdoor. Yeah, yeah. [Nods]

JP: And it was like a, a table or a picnic bench—

VT: Yup, yup. [Nods]

JP: —that type of—

VT: That's right. [Nods]

JP: —look?

VT: Like that kind.

JP: So you were able to hug your father?

VT: Oh yes. [Nods] But then he had to sit on one side and we had to sit on the other.

JP: They wouldn't even let you sit on his lap?

VT: Oh no, no, no, no, no, no. [Says quickly in pattern and shakes head]

JP: And you were watched by, um...

VT: Oh, all the guards. [Mimics a stern-faced guard holding a rifle]

JP: With their guns. With their rifles.

VT: [Nods] Mm hmm. [Says quietly]

JP: How long was the meeting?

VT: We had an hour.

JP: That's it. [Says in shock]

VT: [Nods] Mm hmm.

JP: You travelled—how long did it take you to get there? From Montreal?

VT: [Breathes in deeply] I don't know, I don't know, but it took a long time. Mm hmm.

JP: And you—all that for an hour.

VT: Yup. [Nods with lips pursed]

JP: And how did that—what happened at that meeting? Your, your dad spoke with you, with your mom?

VT: Yeah, uh, with my mom. And, uh, you know, the...my father wanted to know how my mother was, uh, how it, [shrugs] you know, how everything was going. My mother told her—told him not to worry, that everything was fine, that she was looking after everything. She would never have said anything differently. [Shakes head] And my father kept complaining about the food. [Laughs and smiles]

JP: Oh yeah.

VT: Yeah. And there were—so like I said, there were some Germans there, but you know Italian people with their food. *E questa non fa, e quello non fa...*and this one was complaining and the other one was complaining. So finally, the Germans got sick and tired. They put all the Italians out of the kitchen. *Piazza pulita* [sweeps hand across] And the Germans cooked. And then whatever was cooked, people ate. Not another word. [Laughs] That took care of that.

JP: What else did he tell you about the—did they, did they—what did you remember seeing around you?

VT: Around, in that place?

JP: Yeah, at that camp. Like just when, when you looked around—

VT: Oh, I just saw a lot, a lot, a lot of people and a lot of people were calling my name.

"Vladimira! Vladimira!" Because they knew me from, uh, *la Casa D'Italia*. From the fact that they, uh, my father must have, uh, shown pictures of me or something. But there were a lot of people that were at the fence. You know, how they... [Motions hands up on fence looking out] And they were saying... [Shrugs]

JP: Oh, because the area where you could meet your father was outside of the fence where the internees were—

VT: No, I was walking towards, I was walking towards the opening. See there was the fence. [Gestures to walking down a road between two fences]

JP: There was the main fence you come in on the grounds.

VT: Yeah. But there was—

JP: And then?

VT: The fence came like this. [Demonstrates layout of grounds with arms] And we were walking towards the door to the fence, uh, you know. And all these people were at the, uh, corner and they were calling my name, "Vladimira! Valdimira!" You know, that type of thing. Yeah.

JP: What, uh, what was your father wearing?

VT: Oh, he—it was, uh, their uniform with the red stripe. [Gestures to stripes down sides of pants] And the big red circle in the, in the—on the—in the back. [Shows size of circle with hands]

JP: How did that hit you when you saw him and—

VT: Well, we knew that. My mother had prepared me for all these things. You know.

JP: Your mother sounds wonderful. She...

VT: Oh ho, my mother...my mother should have been the man. [Giggles and smiles] Yup. [Nods]

JP: She was—so when you got there, you were prepared, you weren't shocked.

VT: Oh, yes. [Nods] I was prepared. The only thing that bothered me was that scab. And my mother too. "*Come hai fatto?*" You know. Oh, he says, "We were playing, uh, *il pallone, il calico*, there," and he says, "and I fell." Uh, and my mother says, [slaps leg] "Oh yeah, *bella roba.*" [Laughs] Yeah.

JP: And, were there other families at the time that were meeting people? Or—I'm just trying to get an idea—

VT: Perhaps. I'm not sure. I don't, I—

JP: —saw them walking around?

VT: Oh, I don't remember that. I don't remember that. I remember the going to where my father was and being there. And then when it was time to leave, we took the taxi back again. And that was that. Yeah. And, uh, and my father saying, "Oh well, now it won't be long. We'll be home." You know. [Says with laugh] Yup.

JP: They knew how long they would stay?

VT: No. Well, not everybody stayed as long as my father.

JP: Your father stayed for how long?

VT: He was there, and then he was in Fredericton. And, uh, so... [Shakes head]

JP: And when he went to Fredericton—

VT: I never went there, to Fred—we never did. We never did. That was too far and too expensive. [Nods]

[00:40:19]

JP: What was the ride like, back to Montreal, after you saw your father? The spirit between you, your grandmother, and your mother?

VT: I don't quite remember.

JP: Okay.

VT: I don't quite remember because like, like I say, I was 10, you know. But you can be sure that, uh, my mother and...never did anything to make me feel bad. Never, never. [Shakes head] Uh, she worked all day—uh, all week and she worked on Saturday, uh, she used to stay and wash the floor at Gold and Son for two dollars more. But on Sunday, she always had a little bag with some green, green grapes or something and she would take me to the mountain and we'd walk around. She always had something or, uh, you know—we had bicycles from before, you know. So then we'd have the bicycle on Papineau, uh, past, uh, Jean-Talon it was, uh, uh, just earth. And we would go all the way down to [unclear] and come back and she always found time for me. Always.

[Long pause]

JP: She wanted you to maintain a very—

VT: Normal and, and, uh, and average, uh, yup. Mm hmm, mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: And, um, did you know when your father was going to be released?

VT: No, we got a, um, a, uh, a telegram saying, uh, I, I don't remember exactly, but let's say it was on—we received it on Monday and on Thursday you see your father's coming home. And that was that.

JP: Oh, so it was very sudden.

VT: Yeah. [Nods]

JP: In that time period did, um, did your mother ever have any, uh, help in terms of, uh, the relief agencies or the church? Did they give you anything? Was there anything at all that was given?

VT: Well, there was for some people, uh, but my mother was not the type to stand in line for, uh, for something. Uh, we didn't bother with anything.

JP: And the church, the nuns, they did nothing—

VT: Oh no, no, no, no. There was one priest that came to see, uh, my mother once. Uh, to bless the house and to, and to talk to my mother and, uh, but that was that. Nothing else.

JP: And when your father was released do you remember that day? Did he—did you go and meet him at the train station? Did you—did he just come to the house directly?

VT: I don't know. I don't know. It's funny, eh, you're saying that and I don't remember. I know that I didn't go to the train station. I'm sure my mother must have gone. But I didn't. I was at home with my grandmother.

JP: And did he talk about it when he came home?

VT: Oh, never said very much. Then a little bit at the time, they would, uh—then some other men sometimes used to come or he'd meet them and they would talk about what was hap— what had happened or what, uh, but only years later I remember they would joke around with [Giuseppe] Frascadore. Do you know that name? I don't know if you know. In Frascadore's house, there was the father and all the brothers in camp, all of them. [Laughs] But Joe was the one that, uh, that we used to talk to after and he said, "*Ti ricordi...*" you know and they would laugh. You know and then...

JP: So they were telling stories, but it took a while before you heard them exchanging stories.

VT: Oh, yes. Oh yes.

JP: It wasn't—

VT: No.

JP: [Unclear]

VT: At first I never heard anything very much.

JP: It was quiet.

VT: That doesn't mean he didn't tell my mother or, or something, but, uh, not, not me. He never said, uh...

JP: And was your mother considered an enemy alien? Did she have to go and report once a month?

VT: Of course! And my grandmother and my grandfather.

JP: And your grandmother and your grandfather.

VT: Yeah. And I had—I went, uh, once or twice myself. [Nods]

JP: And who was Canadian here?

VT: Uh...

JP: Who was Italian? Your father was Canadian when he was arrested? Or Italian?

VT: Well, they all had their citizenship paper.

JP: Okay.

VT: All of them. [Shrugs]

JP: Even your grandparents.

VT: Everybody.

JP: And you still had to report once a month.

VT: Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, oh yes.

JP: You went with them once?

VT: Oh, I went a few times. When they went down the, uh—who would they leave me with?

[Shrugs]

JP: Right.

VT: See. So, uh...

JP: And that was just a question of reporting once a month to the office?

VT: Yup. [Nods]

JP: And then—

VT: They'd stamp a book or something or other. [Uses hands to motion stamping a book with a stern look on her face, then throws hands in the air] And, and that was that.

JP: And when did that stamping end? Did it end after your father was released or before?

VT: You know, I think it was after. I think it was when my father came out.

JP: That was it.

VT: [Nods] Mm hmm. I think. [Frowns]

JP: Because you don't remember—you wouldn't—

VT: I don't remember that.

JP: —know if your father—

VT: That was not important to me.

JP: Yeah. What was important to you at the time when your father came out?

VT: I wa—when my father came out?

JP: Yeah.

[00:45:00]

VT: Well, I found it difficult because I was used to my mother and my mother was a very, um, uh, you know she was the type of person that she could, she would quietly say yes, or quietly say no. And what she—when she said yes she meant it and when she said no she meant it. And that was that, there was no arguing. Okay. My father was the type of person, that everything was no. [Says angrily and waves hand to dismiss] Everything you asked him it was no, no, no. [Says in short choppy statements] Well I wasn't used to that. And I'd go to my mother and my mother would say, "Oh, Vladi, eh, you have to give him some time. You know, he doesn't know you anymore. You don't know him anymore. Uh, he's a different type of person." But that's the way it was. You know. So I found it difficult at first. I always used to go and ask my mother. [Joyce speaking in background, unclear] And my mother would say, "Your father's home now, you have to ask him." [Smiles]

[Long pause]

JP: And how was the relationship with your dad after? You, you must have been—

VT: With my dad? Oh, my dad and I got along fine. Except that like we were like cat and dog. Because we loved each other very much, but if I said something, I was wrong. [Waves hand in dismissive manner] And if he said something I'd say to myself, Offtt...you know. [Makes sound with mouth while looking over shoulder and waving hand as if to brush off what is being said]

[Laughs] You know, it was funny, eh. It's be--and now that I think of it, it's because we were very much alike...in a way. You know.

JP: When he came back, uh, was he able to work right away in construction?

VT: Uh, no. He had to find himself a job. And, uh, it was this Italian fellow and I don't remember his name, who found him a job at Francon.

JP: Which is what kind of a...

VT: Oh, uh, uh, he—they did paving and stuff like that, you know. It's... [Nods]

JP: In construction.

VT: Well, paving.

JP: Okay, so he, he got a job, but it was through, it was through an Italian Canadian company.

VT: Yup, mm hmm. [Nods] With Francon.

JP: And is that where he stayed?

VT: Oh yes. He stayed there for a long time. Then he became, uh—he was in charge of a gang. You know, like when you see these men working on the road. Uh, uh, he was in charge of, uh, of a group like that. Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: Your father was tri-lingual? He spoke English—

VT: Well, his English, his English was accented, and his French was accented. But he understood all, uh, English and French. [Nods] Yup. And his Italian was beautiful. [Nods]

JP: And did your mother stop working after your father came back?

VT: Oh no, no, no, no, no. [Shakes head]

JP: She continued?

VT: They all worked. [Laughs quietly and nods]

[Long pause]

JP: Um... [Long pause] So, going back to the relationship with your father...because he came back he had been gone for over, over two years.

VT: Yes. [Nods]

JP: [Unclear]

VT: Three years I think.

JP: Uh, pardon me?

VT: I think it's three years.

JP: Yeah, because if he had gone to Fredericton, he had been there for quite a long time. [Clears throat] Uh, how long did it take him, uh, to, to readjust to—I mean, how did he—

VT: I don't know.

JP: Do you know if like—did you as a family—

VT: You know what he, I, I remember this much. Uh, our house on Papineau, uh, we had, uh, the garage in the back and you know we have on the side of the house where you, you can go in with the car. And he was building those pillars and things, you know, at the side. And I remember him saying [says while raising finger], I don't know who he was talking to, but he says that he found that the, like when in camp there was always someone behind you. You went to the bathroom, there was someone behind you. There was always someone. He says that was the thing that he found, uh, uh, the funniest. That there was no one looking...after, you know, after you sort of or looking to you, or, or watching you, you know?

JP: Afterwards, when he came out.

VT: Yeah. [Nods] He found that was very strange. That he was free, you know in a sense.

JP: Right.

VT: Yeah. Because, uh, when you were there, no matter where you went, there was a guard, or there was, uh, someone, uh, with you.

JP: He had to—yeah. He had to adjust to the fact that he wasn't watched.

VT: Yeah. [Nods] He found that strange at first.

JP: Was, did he seem changed, like did he seem quiet...afterwards? Or did he—

VT: But my father was always quiet.

JP: Oh, he was.

VT: My father was not, uh, exuberant in any way. He was always very, uh...

JP: Did you participate in Italian events after he came back, whether it was Casa D'Italia or um...

VT: We went to dances. We went to the dances at the—

JP: You continued—

VT: At *la Casa D'Italia*? Yeah, sure we went to the dances. [Nods] But there weren't very many because during, uh, during the war, Casa D'Italia was taken over by the, uh, by the soldiers and the fl—I still remember this [says with hands up] the floor in *la Casa D'Italia* was like a mirror when, uh, when the Italians looked af—when they were in there with their boots and everything... [Throws hands out and laughs]

JP: It was all dirty.

VT: That was the end of that I mean you know. I don't think there was very much after that. So we didn't uh...

[00:50:18]

JP: Because afterwards, I'm just trying to get an idea of what was the Italian community like afterwards because we have this great—

VT: Oh, I don't know.

JP: —impact of this, this event.

VT: Yeah, mm hmm, yeah, yeah.

JP: Did it make the community come together after or, or—

VT: Well, we were never, never part of the Italian community. The Italian community let's say were around, uh, *la Casa D'Italia* or the Italian church or something. We always lived further away. [Waves hand away] My mother never liked to live where there were all the Italians. She said, "They're too nosy."

JP: [Laughs]

VT: So we always lived further, farther out. We were always, uh, between all kinds of people, uh, English, French, uh, German anything. But not where there was an awful lot of Italians. Never.

JP: So, your mother was, was quite integrated into the community at the time. Did she ever have, uh, before that—I forgot to ask you, sorry—did she ever have any problems of, uh, discrimination with the—whether it was, uh, going into a store or being served or when—

VT: No, my grandmother.

JP: [Unclear]

VT: My grandmother did.

JP: Oh, your grandmother did. What happened?

VT: Yeah, but I used to be with her. I used to go with her. And, uh, a few of the little French stores that we used to go to for butter or sugar or things like that, uh, they were a little bit, uh [waves head back and forth to signify unease], you know. But I was there and I would speak to them and I spoke very well French. And I wa—and my English was fine. But they—their English was not fine, you know. [Laughs] It was more French. So when they saw that I spoke up, uh, things changed, you know.

JP: But for—like, uh—what kind of, uh, situations would—

VT: [French phrase]

JP: Oh.

VT: [French phrase] [Gestures with hand]

JP: And you understood.

VT: Oh, of course.

JP: But this was during the war, so I guess during the war there was a bit of, uh, the way the ethnic groups looked at each other, the way they looked at Italians, uh—

VT: But I never looked Italian.

JP: You didn't, that's right.

VT: So I ne—I was never involved, uh, I... And my grandmother was never the type that had the little black hankie, never. [Motions tying hankie over head] I mean, you know. [Says with a laugh] So, we weren't the, the typical Italians. Never. [Shrugs]

JP: So that—that's interesting, so your appearance—because they were, they were judging people according to their appearance—

VT: Oh, of course. Of course. Of course. [Nods]

JP: So if you looked Italian...

VT: I guess you would have had a harder time. [Nods]

JP: And you not looking Italian, in terms of what their image of an Italian was—

VT: Yeah, mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: You were able to, um...

VT: Well, I guess we got away from all this, uh, nonsense that was, you know. Yeah.

JP: Did your father, when he came back, years later as you got older, did your father ever talk to you about this? How did you learn about it? The whole internment issue?

VT: Oh.

JP: Did he ever bring it up, did he say anything—

VT: Well, sometimes when the, uh, the men used to uh, uh, uh—there was Mr. [Archangelo] Nieri also, there was Mr. Nieri, there was, you know, people like that, if they got together sometimes and they used to speak, “*Ti ricordi quando abbiamo fatto questo... Ti ricordi...*” You know, you know. And, uh, once they put on, uh, uh, a play.

JP: Oh.

VT: *Città senza donne*. You know, whatever that was, I don't know, but apparently, it was a big success. You know, things like that. They spoke about those things. [Nods]

JP: So they—you remember them speaking about activities that they, they organized themselves?

VT: Well, they played, uh, soccer and, uh, yeah. They played soccer.

JP: So the stories, the stories you—

VT: And they—and other thing, they asked permission to work in the, in the, uh, in the woods. So they kept cutting wood and things like that. Yup.

JP: Were they paid, do you know?

VT: I think it was something like 21 cent. So my father said it paid for his cigarettes.

JP: They had a canteen, they could buy things.

VT: Yeah. [Nods] But we had to send him things too. [Shrugs and adjusts glasses on nose] Yup, yup.

JP: Yeah. And so later on he never—did you ever ask him about any of these, uh, these—did you ever ex—like did he ever tell you stories about, uh, internment?

VT: No. [Joyce speaking in background, unclear] If it came, if it came, if it came out that, uh, they talked about something then I would ask, uh, you know. But otherwise I never, uh, really made, uh—because they—he was very open about this time there. He had lots of things to say to my grandmother, my mother, uh, you know, uh, you know, "We do this or we would do that." Or, uh, you know. So I never—I, I listened all the time you know.

JP: How—did—was your father—how did he feel about Canada? Was he very happy to be living in Canada?

VT: Oh, he—they both loved Canada.

JP: They did, eh.

VT: Oh yes, oh yes. [Nods]

JP: How did he feel about being an Italian was he, was he uh...

VT: Being Italian?

JP: Yeah.

VT: Very proud of being Italian. As I am still.

JP: So at that time, it was possible, or it wasn't possible to be a proud Canadian and a proud Italian at the same time? Was that possible?

VT: Well, we thought it was. We thought it was. Yeah.

[00:55:41]

JP: [Long pause] It's true. And the stories that your father, um, shared with you and your mum...it's interesting because you were telling me, like you remember the laughter and the stories. So it seems like he looked at it afterwards, with time, he was able to look back at that experience and...

VT: I remember one thing he said that, uh, the—some of the men in there were, uh, afraid, eh. They didn't know what was going to happen to them. A lot of them were worried about their families. There was, you know, their wives had never worked in their life. Uh, you know, some people had, uh, big worries. My father wasn't worried in that sense because my mother, uh, could work, my grandmother could work, my, you know. He worried about us, but it's not the same thing. Like Mr. Monti didn't know what his wife was gonna do. I mean, he had two grown children. He had a boy that was at, uh, university. And, uh, they wanted him on a special

committee. I remember this much, and Tom says, "You want me on that committee? And you have my father in camp. You want my help?" He said, "No." So, uh, they put—they took his father out and then he went on this special committee because he was a brain this man, you know. Yeah. [Nods] It's funny how uh...

JP: It's interesting because from what you said, it makes me realize that some people who, who felt, proud to be Canadian and Italians, like your family and I'm sure there may—there were others as well.

VT: Sure.

JP: But once the—a family member was interned...

VT: Yeah.

JP: ...then the—there was this conflict. Right?

VT: There was this conflict [Joyce speaking in background, unclear], there was this conflict in the minds of people outside. They would look at you and say, [points with one finger] "*L'italienne.*" You know, this type of thing. I never—nobody ever called me *l'italienne*. [Shakes head] You know. You know what I'm trying to say? We, we didn't feel that way. We listened to the Italian news, and we would listen to, uh, during the war there was a short wave. We had that on. And we would know what was going on in Europe, you know. But, uh, besides that, uh, we lived here. This was, you know, my mother worked here. We made our living here, and, uh, that was that. And I find that—well you know, English people, maybe not now, but at my time, they were more *più superbo*, you know, you know, they were more, uh, you know. So the

people who had more to say and bothered us more were the French. 'Cause they gabbed more, you know. But uh...

JP: Yeah, it's a different time period then.

VT: Yeah, but I always went to English school, so...

JP: You switched school then after, when you moved to, uh, Papineau, you went to a different school, right?

VT: When I, when I lived Papineau, I went to Holy Family. Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: And you're still friends with, uh, some of the girls from that school?

VT: Well [looks up frowning]...not really. I don't know, uh, what happened to all those girls. But, uh, the, uh—there were two—I—there was another one, there was a, a De Luca [counting on fingers] and, um, the Salerno, that the bo—the men were in camp. But they were not my best friends or anything like that, you know. Not Salerno, Salera, you know. And, uh, I remember going to the Salera's house a few times.

JP: This was after your father came back?

VT: No, that was while my father was in camp.

JP: [Unclear] father was interned.

VT: Mm hmm, mm hmm, because she lived just down the street. And when I walked in the house, you know, they li—they talked with a different accent, with a different, uh, dialect. “Ah, *questa la figlia...*” You know, this, this type of thing, you know. And, uh, you know. [Shrugs]

JP: How do you think that whole experience shaped who you are today? That, uh, having come from a family—

VT: Oh, well I—

JP: —seeing your dad—like how do you celebrate June 10<sup>th</sup> and your birthday? Do, do you—does that—

VT: Well, June 10<sup>th</sup> on my birthday when I was younger, was not a very happy, uh, but now I mean, I, I never even think about it. I don't, uh... And in my mind, it always has been and always will be, my father was interned because it was war, but he didn't do anything wrong. [Shakes head] I mean, he never did anything wrong. He never belonged to anything that, uh, that meant, you know what I mean. To start with...people that are involved in some things that [clears throat], uh, excuse me. You have to have, uh, brain, and you have to have, uh, some sort of intelligence. My father wasn't that type. He was a happy go lucky, he did his job and then that was the end of that. I mean he had, he could never have been a spy. [Laughs] I mean, you know.

JP: Was your husband, uh, educated up until what point? With you, how much education did your husband have?

VT: My husband?

JP: Yes.

VT: My husband was educated. [Nods] Yup.

JP: So he was able to speak and write and...

VT: My husband?

JP: Yes.

VT: Oh! My husband was Vice President at Cadbury's. [Points to her left] [Long pause and looks to her left and someone says something]

VT: He was?

JP: Okay. And, um, oh I'm sorry I made a mistake. I meant to say your husband and I sa—uh, your father. That's my fault.

VT: Oh, my father!

JP: Yeah, no it's my, it's my mistake Vladi. I said your husband instead of saying your father.

VT: Oh my father. No, my father had a grade five education. [Holds up palm with five fingers showing]

JP: Oh, from Italy?

VT: Yup. [Nods]

JP: Which was quite...

VT: It was a grade five. Yeah. And when he came here, and he was in concentration camp then, he started reading a lot of things and writing a lot of, you know. He got—he had an education in camp.

[01:01:50]

JP: Yeah, I heard that.

VT: Oh yes.

JP: There were courses being given at the camp—

VT: Oh, yes, yes. Yes.

JP: —and men were learning languages and, uh, culture...as well.

VT: Oh yes. Oh yes, yes.

JP: He told you the—about that?

VT: Oh absolutely. He used to write to us and even when we went to see him, uh, oh yeah. Mm hmm. [Nods] And it was uh, [Adrien] Arcand, I don't know if you know that name?

JP: [Unclear]

VT: Adrien Arcand. Okay?

JP: Yeah. He was a *Québécois*?

VT: Yeah. Mm hmm. But he was more fascist than some of the fascists. [Laughs] But, uh, they were, uh, very, uh, you know, they were, uh, talking in French and in English and this type of stuff. Yup. [Nods]

JP: And, um, did, did he ever talk about his barracks, where he was? The other people that he shared it with?

VT: Well, he said that they were all, uh, one after another, you know. And some of these men at night used to cry.

JP: Hm.

VT: And, uh, and the barracks at some times, at the beginning, were locked at night, you know. And they were all made of wood. And sometimes there, there was lightening, and, uh, they were afraid it would take fire, you know. And they had a little stove in there. Anyhow, I don't know how it came up, but they went to talk to, uh, uh, someone in command, and then they were not locked in anymore. They were guarded, but not locked in.

JP: And, were they, they were heated with, uh, the stoves and...

VT: Pardon me?

JP: Did he tell you whether they were heated, uh—

VT: With, with the stove. [Nods] Yeah, yeah, they had the stove, you know. Yeah.

JP: And for entertainment did, uh—'cause I heard that there was, there were some people that were musicians, and there was a sports—

VT: Oh yes. Oh yes, oh yes.

JP: Anything else? Like you said the play—

VT: Yeah.

JP: —that they did.

VT: I don't remember if I have my, uh...could you wait a moment?

JP: Sure.

VT: I just want to look for two, for my, uh...

[Fades out at 1:03:45]

[Fades in at 1:03:46]

JP: Okay. Uh, Vladi, we're just gonna go back to the period of, um, while your father was interned in Petawawa. At home—did, uh—were you—was your family, first of all, given any justification as to why this man was interned? Did they ever, during, afterwards—did you ever know why?

VT: Well, uh, because he belonged to *la Casa D'Italia*.

JP: Did they—is that what they told you—

VT: Yeah. [Nods]

JP: —or was that what you assumed?

VT: Well, I'm sure that's what they told my mother. Uh, my mother must have asked.

JP: And so—

VT: And because, uh, you know, they were both—they both had, uh, citizenship papers. You know.

JP: And your grandmother and your step-grandfather, um, what was their reaction towards, towards this and how did they feel about being in Canada? They come to Canada and then this happened.

VT: They couldn't believe that this was happening. Because, uh, you know they had never done anything wrong in their life. They never belong to anything, uh, subversive. They never did anything, uh, you know. So they couldn't understand why my father was taken away. And they felt very, very badly because of my mother and me. And they helped as much as they could. Eh. Yup.

[01:05:10]

JP: So, there was a lot of difficulties. People didn't really talk that much—

VT: No.

JP: —amongst themselves within the community.

VT: No.

JP: The organizations really weren't there from what you—

VT: We were always very far away from all the other Italians. Always. You don't look at Papineau and Bélanger now.

JP: Right.

VT: Eh. 'Cause when we were there, we were three families...on the whole street.

JP: It really sounds like you, you, you had to suffer, but you suffered in isolation.

VT: Oh yes, we never, uh, bothered anybody and nobody ever bothered us. [Shakes head]  
Nobody.

JP: Looking back on it now, today, and realizing how you, you had to go through it, pretty well alone within the family unit, from what it sounds like to me, 'cause I mean I realize you were 10 years old at the time, so it's not as if you can judge it as an adult. Um, that must have impacted it even more on your mom, and your, your grandparents?

VT: It must have been what?

JP: It must have been more of an impact because you were going through it by yourself.

VT: Well...

JP: Or, or...it didn't really make a difference.

VT: To me or to them?

JP: Yeah, to you, to your family, the fact that you were going through this alone.

VT: Well, we were always, uh—I was always, uh, brought up that I had maybe one or two friends and that's it. I mean I didn't, uh, you know. And then, uh, these people, like Mr. Monti, we used to see them once and a while. You know. But then, uh, my mother didn't drive at that time and, uh, the men weren't around, so she would talk to them sometimes, but not, uh, anything, you know. [Says while shaking head] We never felt isolated because we ne—we were never with—one that had, uh, you know, a slew of friends. We never, uh, you know. [Shrugs] And my mother always worked, so she had no time to go, uh... And like I said, on weekends, on Sunday, she always, always found time to take me out to the mountain, uh, to a park, or to something. And she—we would have a little bag with some green grapes, a cookie or, uh, something or other. Uh, and then we'd go home for supper and, uh, and then she'd get ready to go to work on Monday. I mean, you know, that was her life.

JP: The time that your father was in the internment camp, did he miss any special events that were in your life? Like he missed your birthdays, was there anything else that at school or

something that you did, uh, maybe there was an event held at school for the kids that you would have said, "Oh, I wish my dad was here with me." Was there anything—

VT: Well, I—

JP: —that was missed?

VT: I always felt, I wish my dad was here, because we were such a small family. And we were always together. You know. But my—

JP: And in school?

VT: In school people were very nice to me, there was nothing—no one ever said anything wrong. Not to me.

JP: No, I mean—

VT: One person said something once, I don't remember. I don't remember what was said. All I know is that the first thing that happened was that I was on top of her and I was punching her out. But not why or what, uh, for what reason. But it was because they had attacked my mother or father. That was only once. [Lifts one finger]

JP: You were a tough little girl.

VT: Nobody stepped on—I never started anything. I never started anything. But don't step on my toes. And I'm still like that.

JP: You got that from your mom though.

VT: [Nods and smiles] Yup. Yeah. You don't put up with things that are not necessary.

JP: Was your grandmother like that too?

VT: My grandmother was like that, but she was a different type again. My grandmother had tears in her eyes very often. You know. Uh, she was felt badly she would, uh, cry or she would, uh—not my mother. [Shakes head] I saw my mother cry once. [Lifts one finger]

JP: How long did it, uh, how long did it take to, uh, fix up the house after on, uh, in Papineau, on Papineau street, until it was to the condition that it was—that your father wanted it to be?

VT: Oh, when my father came out he couldn't believe the way the house looked with the, the, uh, with the slats and the paper and, "You lived like this? And you— this is how you lived? And my mother said, "Yeah, we managed. We're okay." She didn't complain.

JP: Because you moved into that house while he was in internment camp. While he was at the camp, you moved to that house.

VT: Oh yes. [Nods]

JP: So he was shocked. When he came home—

VT: He was shocked.

JP: —he came into a different house.

VT: Yes, but he was shocked at the condition of the house we were living in. He couldn't believe that we were living in a house like that. I mean, you know, there was a floor up for the second floor, eh, but it was only the first kind of floor and the pipes go up, eh. So, uh, uh, there's a whole around the pipes that, uh, go up there. You can see, you can see and—[laughs] I still remember this. [Leans closer] When finally my father and mother started, uh, having the people, uh, uh, uh, you know start doing something to the house, that they had a little bit of money and all that, you know, well, there was a guy upstairs working on the pipes because he was connecting the, the water. And I was a little girl I had to go to school. My grandm—my grandma was there. And I said to my grandmother—and I had to—and I used to walk to, uh, to, uh, Holy family—“I have to go to the bathroom.” “Well go to the bathroom.” But, I says, “Mom...” [Points up to signal that the man is up there.] She comes out with this black umbrella, and I had my pee. [Laughs and pretends to hold an open umbrella.]

JP: How creative.

VT: And then I went to school. [Says with a laugh] So you see, nothing was unse—  
insurmountable.

[01:11:16]

JP: Yeah.

VT: We never felt as though we needed, uh, people's help. Or we never went to priests or anybody, uh, my mother always looked after everything that needed to be done. And when my father came out it was the same thing. At first it was hard to find a job, eh?

JP: Why was that?

VT: Well, [shrugs] he, uh, there weren't that many jobs. And my father is, uh, you know my father wasn't my mother. He wasn't as *debrouillard*, as they say, you know. And finally, uh, when this opening started at Francon, it was in, uh, it was gonna be in, uh, in Ottawa. You know. So my father comes home and he says, "So and so called me," he says, "but the job is gonna be in Ottawa." He says, "I don't—I'm not gonna go." My mother says, "You're not gonna go?" [Sits forward and points finger and says "you're" with emphasis] "All these years that I went to work and you were in camp, and you're not gonna go to the job?" She says, "You take the *valise* and you go, or you—that *valise* goes to Ottawa or it goes out the house." He went to Ottawa. [Laughs]

JP: And he took the job in Ottawa.

VT: Sure, and it didn't last very long. He came back. Francon, uh, needed him here. But, uh, oh no, my mother, uh, what was right is right and what was wrong was wrong. You know. [Chuckles] Yup. So that's the way I've been brought up. You see. You face things. You know.

[Long pause]

JP: These are ways that—what other ways—that whole experience—it sounds to me like your personality was already geared to take care of situations that were extreme, from your mom and yourself and what you've been telling me. But in what, uh, what other way has that experience shaped your life and shaped who Vladi is today?

VT: Changed me?

JP: Yeah.

VT: Oh! There's not very much that impresses me. You have to be a really, uh, it's not money that impresses me, it's not anything like that. To me, people that are nice are the ones that I like. But that I'm impressed with people because of this or that or I carry on [shakes head]...never.

JP: And the whole—the, the fact that the government took away your dad...

VT: Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: ...during that period...

VT: Mm hmm.

JP: ...never gave you a rationale as to why?

VT: Well, no. I understood why.

JP: You understood then?

VT: Well, yes. I understood it was because Italy was at war.

JP: Okay, and you were okay with that?

VT: No, well I wasn't okay, because my father didn't do anything. But I knew that that was the reason. So—and there was nothing we could do about it.

JP: So...it wasn't that you were, you were okay with it, but you understood that this was war, war times and these were things that had, that had—that occurred during the war.

VT: That's right, that's right. [Nods]

JP: And so you adapted to that...

VT: Mm hmm.

JP: ...in order to get through it.

VT: Yeah.

JP: That, that must have made you an even stronger lady though. Even—having to live through that and watching your mom just take charge. I mean—all that—

VT: I would never, um, argue with my mother. Never because I could see that whatever she said, whatever she did made a lot of sense. And she'd explain it. "Vladi, this, this, and this, because" and she'd give me the reason. And that was okay with me. And that has always been okay with me. But you have to tell me why. You know. Whereas my father was the opposite, him, it was always, "No, no, no, no, no." He doesn't even know the reason. It was, "No, no, no, no, no." Well, I wasn't used to that and I'm still not used to that now. I mean that's not me. You know. So.

[01:15:12]

JP: Did your parents go back and visit Italy afterwards?

VT: Oh yes. [Nods] Yes, I have pictures in the album of them, them. Because—

JP: [Unclear]—

VT: He has—he had four brothers. There were four boys, and he had four sisters. All the sisters were in Italy. And the brothers were all here. Yup.

JP: None of the brothers were arrested? He was the only one—

VT: No, just my dad. And in fact, the oldest one, Emil, his name was Dalle Vedove and when my father went in camp, he changed his name to, uh, Emil Dalle. [Laughs]

JP: He was, uh...

VT: He was afraid. [Nods]

[Long pause]

JP: I heard about that people changing their names.

VT: Yeah.

JP: Was there any—and, and what about the other brothers that were here?

VT: Oh, they weren't here then.

JP: Oh, they weren't—

VT: They came in—only after, uh, oh, much, much later.

JP: So, it was only Emil that was here.

VT: [Nods]

JP: And he changed it to Dalle.

VT: Hmm. [Nods]

JP: [Clears throat] Were there any other things that were done? That people changed, like changing their name. Was there anything else that you remember? Uh, any changes in stores? Grocery stores where you used to go buy things? Where any—

VT: People refused this, uh—

JP: —tried to hide their Italian?

VT: Oh. [Shrugs] I don't know. All I know is that there were these Italian shops and we went there. And, uh—

JP: And—

VT: —well, we went anywhere that we wanted to because I spoke both English and French, so it didn't matter. Uh, my grandmother had a hard—a little bit of a hard time. Even though she understood, you know. But I was, uh, I was always there. So no matter where she wanted to go, uh, that was that. [Starts to laugh] The only thing, uh, this church, St. Arsène, I used to go there

on Sunday with, uh, my grandmother because it was closer than going to the Italian church. And this priest one Sunday, at the—on the sermon, he says, uh, "*Aujourd'hui [unclear] priez pour nos Canadiens français!*" My grandmother took me by the hand and we walked out. And that took care of that. [Laughs]

JP: Why? Why did he say that?

VT: Well, I don't know. I guess he was pro-French Canadian.

JP: I guess he was referring to the soldiers or to the general population?

VT: I don't remember what he was referring to. But he said that and my grandma picked me up and we walked out. We never went to that church again. [Laughs]

JP: She walked out because—

VT: Because he says—and she says, "And who—and what are we?" We're going to pray for the, the others, you know. [Laughs] Oh yeah, little things like that, you know.

JP: If you look back at that period, and you, you could ask a question that, maybe you have a question that's been, uh, on your mind that you never had answered, what would you want to know, about that time, that was never answered for you?

VT: Uh, I don't think I—there was no—there was anything that was not answered for me. Anything I wanted to know, and I asked my mother, I always got an answer, always. Yeah. And even in school, I had a, uh, Mrs. Sullivan, who was extremely nice that lady. There was a Mrs. Bollangero[?], which I didn't like at all, but there was nothing wrong with her, it was just her

personality. She had red hair and she had a, uh, the type of, uh, fiery, uh, you know—I didn't care for her. But Mrs. Sullivan was very, very, very nice. And, uh, she was my teacher while my father was in camp. And she was the one that bought the material to make my slip. While he was in camp. People were very nice to us.

JP: Is there anything you would want to have known about your dad and what his life was like there with the camp, that you found out?

VT: What his life was like over there?

JP: At the camp, yeah, that you never knew.

VT: At the camp, well, no, we knew what his life was like at the camp. It was really nothing, uh, uh—no one really—they were not mistreated. The only thing is they didn't have their liberty. But they were not mistreated.

JP: Did—

VT: But they had their laws, I mean at certain times the lights went out. At certain times, uh, you know.

JP: Did he ever talk about Fredericton versus Petawawa? The difference between the two?

VT: Uh, he may have, but I don't remember that. He was not in Fredericton very long, because that was the end of the war. [Shrugs] So.

JP: And do—were you aware of any of the, um...the, um, the programs or any requests from—  
on behalf of the Italian Association's groups, individuals, uh, for some kind of a retribution,  
some kind of a recognition—

VT: No.

JP: —from the Canadian government after this?

VT: No, I'm not aware of that. I'm sure there must have been. There must have been some  
people that were, uh, you know, but I don't think my mother wanted to get involved in  
anything. That was the end of it. She'd had enough. And I'm really not aware of, uh—

JP: And did she—after that—'cause she really sounds like she—*si voleva staccare da questa*—

VT: From?

JP: Just from the whole Italian community a that—

VT: Oh no. No, our Italian friends were still our Italian friends.

JP: They were still—

VT: Oh yes. And—

JP: So who maintained the, the rapports and the—

VT: Just like before. Just like before. I mean, uh, you know, we had, uh, these families, uh, Nieri, [Marquis Julius] Lupi, uh, people like that. Uh, Mr. Lupi was in camp actually himself, you know. So, uh, you know, Mr. Nieri was for a while, so it's all people that we knew, and, uh, yeah. The Montis.

[01:20:56]

JP: When you were a little girl did you go to um, the um, the ba—the, the, the Italian school...

VT: No.

JP: ...or, um, the little groups that they had, the—for the Italian children?

VT: No. [Shakes head]

JP: Nothing.

VT: No, no. I was in the English school.

JP: No, but on Saturday morning for example, they had—

VT: [Shakes head] Oh no.

JP: —or at night they had, um—

VT: No [says very slowly].

JP: —Italian lessons.

VT: No, no, no. They had Italian on Saturday. Eh, didn't they? Yeah. Uh, I think my grandmother brought me a couple of times, and the teacher told her that I didn't need it. And that took care of that. [Laughs] Because you know, the people there were saying, “E questo and quello...” [Says in dialect] You know, and we never spoke like that. I mean we always spoke Italian the way it was supposed to be. So, I, I didn't need it.

JP: And—

VT: But I loved the dialects.

JP: Yeah.

VT: I loved them. [Smiles]

JP: Yeah. What do you think should have been done for the families...that had somebody interned? Do you think there should have been any kind of, uh, recognition? What would you like to see happen?

VT: Well, I would have liked to see some monetary, uh, uh, help. Given my mother. I would have loved to see that. [Nods] Yeah. So that she didn't need, uh, three jobs instead of [laughs and gestures with head], you know.

JP: And today, what do you think people should know about that time period? About the internment. What lessons—what, um, need to be passed on?

VT: Well, I don't know what to tell you because that was during the wartime. Now it's not wartime, eh. So as far as I'm concerned, uh, that should be just forgotten. It's, uh, [shrugs and waves hand away] you know, there's nothing, uh [shrugs]. I don't think anybody ever brings it up. Not that I know of anyhow. Because even the older people that I—we were—I have in my pictures [unclear], when they were, uh, alive, you know, they'd bring up the odd thing that happened, “*Ti ricordi, ti ricordi* this...” and you know, this. But I mean when these people die, then their children... [Shakes head and shrugs] They don't care anymore. They don't uh, you know.

JP: And do you think it's important to remember?

VT: Oh, I remember alright. Of course I remember.

JP: It's important for other people to remember and to know...what happened?

VT: Well, I don't know if, if it's that important. I would say, yes. It was a—uh, so that they're aware, you know, uh...that this can happen. And has happened. So.

JP: Is there anything that I've missed that you'd like to add? About, uh, your family or about, uh, yourself or about what happened...during that time period? Is there any anecdotes, any stories? That, um—is there something that you want to add that I didn't ask you?

VT: Uh, I don't quite, uh...I don't think so. I...

JP: Today, what do you feel? Canadian or Italian or both?

VT: I still feel Canadian of Italian decent. And even though I don't look Italian and people don't think I am, and when I say I am, and then when I speak to them, they're all very [opens mouth in surprise], you know. But I'm very proud of being of Italian decent.

JP: Do you—

VT: I always have been.

JP: Do you ever go back to your old neighbourhood just to look?

VT: Well—

JP: [Unclear]

VT: —there's nobody there that, uh, that I know. Sometimes we pa—we pass on the street and I'll say, "Well, this is where I used to live." I, you know, sometimes Allan and I go for a drive and I'll say, "This was, this wa our house." You know. [Shrugs] But, uh, we don't.

JP: Well, that's—I can't think of anything else, if there's anything you want to add? That's it.

VT: No. [Smiles]

JP: Okay. Thank you very much Vladi. Thank you so much.

VT: [Laughs] You're very welcome. [Smiles]

[Fades out at 01:24:58]

[Fades in at 01:24:59]

AR: [Unclear]

JP: Okay. We're back with, uh, Vladi Dalle Vedove.

VT: [Laughs]

JP: Um, do you want to tell us a little about the women at that time, what they were like, uh, how they worked? In the home, outside the home, what happened during the—

VT: [Puts hand up to stop her] Well, you have to remember that I was 10.

JP: Right.

VT: Okay. So, all I know is, uh, the people that worked with my mother. Uh, you know. And, uh, what can I say? [Shrugs]

JP: Well, when they were interned for example, when the men got interned, there were some Italian shops around. And...what happened to the shops if, if a man was interned, what happened with the, the stores that they had?

VT: Uh, the women turned—took over. Because the women always helped...in the shops. Or, or no matter what it was.

JP: So for example like at, uh, Monaco he had a bakery.

VT: Yeah.

JP: So, when, when, uh, the men were, uh...

VT: [Nods] The wo—

JP: ...interned.

VT: —the women, the women took over. And, uh, the son-in-laws or whoever, uh, you know. [Gestures with hand in a back and forth sweeping motion] Everybody pitched in and, and everything continued.

JP: And, um, you mentioned something about they were still able to get their supplies from, uh, wholesalers, they were able to get all their goods, they didn't—

VT: That I don't know about that because I—we never owned anything.

JP: Right.

VT: But they all seemed to be able to do, uh, what they had to do. When we went to a store, nobody ever told us there was something missing because they were not supplied. [Shrugs]

JP: Okay. And what about in your home, uh, because you had this big construction job that had to be done.

VT: Yeah.

JP: And your dad wasn't there, and you were in the middle of—you had to move. Uh, do you remember what year you actually moved into that lot?

VT: God, you're asking me something...

JP: To that spot. Well, it was before your father came out, right?

VT: Oh, yes.

JP: So, the work that had to be done in the house, the construction work and all that. How did that unfold?

VT: Well, then when my—when—that's like I said, we put that paper up, so that it made all the divisions.

JP: Who's we?

VT: My grandmother, my grandfather, my mother, and myself.

JP: So, you were all working in construction...

VT: Well, we, you know—

JP: ...on the home.

VT: —we put this white, uh, it's like a tar paper, but it's white, uh, you know, beige-y white, you know. And, uh, we tacked it up with, uh, thumb tacks. So we made the corridor, and we made the rooms, and the, and the kitchen and, and the, uh, bathroom.

JP: And, uh, once the work had to progress to, uh, you know you had to put on a roof and you had to put up walls, uh, this all happened after your father came back.

VT: Well, the roof had to go on before my father came back.

JP: So, who put up the roof?

VT: [Shakes head] I don't remember the name, the name of the company, but, uh, my mother, uh, managed to get someone, and we paid a little bit at the time. She always managed to, uh, to work something out where she paid monthly.

JP: Okay.

VT: Or, I forget if it was monthly or weekly. Whenever she had the money this much went to pay the bill. [Gestures with hands]

JP: So she had to make debts.

VT: Oh no. She didn't have any debts. She—oh yes. [Points with finger]

JP: She had to borrow money—

VT: She borrowed from this family, the Arrianos[?]. She borrowed 3,000 dollars.

JP: And was your grandmother involved in any of the work in the house?

VT: Oh yes, she did everything in the house.

JP: What did she do, like when you were actually working in the house?

VT: She did, uh, all kinds of things. She, uh, she didn't, she didn't go up on the roof. But she would be up on a ladder, handing us things. Uh, you know what I mean, oh yeah. And at the same time, she's the one that was cooking. So you know. [Laughs]

JP: So it was basically a spoon in one hand and the two by four in the other.

VT: And that's just about it.

JP: [Laughs]

VT: And my, uh, and my step-grandfather that was my step-granddad, because my, my grandfather died when I was four and a half. And, uh, quite a few years later she remarried this man. And he was very supportive, very supportive. His name was, uh—my father's name was Angelo and this man's name was Angelo. But his name was Angelo Bruno. So we called him Bruno and Angelo was my father. You know. So, I, um, but he was a nice man. My God, you know. Yeah. [Nods]

JP: The women at that time the responsibilities that they had in 1930s and early 40s, um, the women really worked hard.

VT: Well, in 1930s I was born so I don't, uh—

JP: But in that time period women were not, uh—

VT: But from—but 19—

JP: —lazy from what you, you've told me.

VT: I never knew any women that was lazy [unclear] except, uh, maybe Mrs., uh, Mrs. Monti who never did anything. But, uh, she wasn't lazy, she just never did anything. And she never did.

JP: Different personality.

VT: So I don't know if she was lazy or not. When, uh, she never had to do anything. [Shakes head]

JP: But the work was hard, is what, uh—I guess what I'm trying to get at is when you were describing the work that they did in the homes it was hard labour?

VT: Oh yes. Oh yeah, yeah. [Nods] Do you—I don't know if you know the name Lupi?

[01:30:21]

JP: I've heard that name.

VT: He was Marchese Lupi. He was in camp also. He used to, uh, I don't know what he did before, but then when I, uh, was aware and that he would come to our house every week because he had, uh, chickens and he would bring them into town and then he'd stop and, and see us, you know. Well his wife, Elena, she was English, uh, but she spoke Italian like we did, you know. Broken a little bit, but you know. But, uh, these were all people that I met because, uh, of the concentration camp, you know.

JP: And, um, did your grandfather or your father have a garden?

VT: Not my father. My grandfather. Yeah, mm hmm. We lived—like I said, we lived on Papineau, uh, between Bélanger and Jean Talon and his garden was on Papineau near, uh, near Villeray lets say. You know. There was nothing out there. Yeah.

JP: And did your mother sew clothes for you?

VT: Oh yes. Everything I had was, uh, sewn by my parents. Mm hmm. [Nods]

JP: And, uh...what type of things? You had a coat you were telling me about.

VT: Yes, it was a black coat that belonged to my grandfa—uh, to my grandmother. And while my mother was cutting it for me, she was, she had tears in her eyes, she says, "A young girl wearing this black coat, you know." [Shakes head] Anyhow, then she found this piece of, uh, of fur that was from something else. I don't know where she got it. So she stuck it, uh, you know, [motions to collar and hits mike while gesturing] so she and made it a little bit, uh—but they didn't want to see me in black you know. [Shrugs]

JP: And what, what happened when you went to school with that coat? With the, the—

VT: Oh, they, uh—[laughs] the teacher came down, well Mrs. Ballangero[?], not the others, but she was, uh, came and she fingered my fur. [Reaches to her collar and pretends to rub the fur between her fingers] [Laughs and then smiles]

JP: What did she sa—tell you?

VT: Oh, nothing.

JP: But she checked it out.

VT: Oh yeah, oh yeah. [Raises eyebrows and smiles]

JP: [Laughs] And did—when you were in school, uh, did you ever have any problems with other kids or, um, did anything happen between you and, uh—

VT: Uh—

JP: —the French or the English girls?

VT: Uh, I, uh, I don't remember the incident. All I remember is that once, once, someone said something to me about, uh, the pen that was different because that my father came and said that was my pen and that was the end of that. Uh, I got it. But, uh, someone said something, uh, to me and, uh—

JP: You told me something about your father gave you two cents?

VT: Yeah, to buy the pen. See, so he came to school and told the nun that, uh, [nods]—actually the teacher. He says, uh, I think it was Ms., Ms. Sullivan, he says, uh, "I gave her two cents this morning for a pen, so that, you know, has to be her pen." So, I [shrugs], there was no, uh...no argument. You know—

JP: But there was another girl who said that that was her—

VT: Hers. Oh yeah, Bernice Marie. Mm hmm. Yeah. [Nods and smiles] Yeah.

JP: And, in, in yo—in your opinion, do you think that they would have given her the right had—

VT: Oh yes. If—

JP: Why?

VT: Well, Bernice Marie and Vladimira Dalle Vedove is two different things. Right? [Says with eyebrows up and nods]

JP: Right.

VT: [Nods and smiles with pursed lips]

JP: So there was a bit of a difference—this was already before the war—where, uh, Italians were Italians and—

VT: Oh yeah, we weren't that—

JP: —Italian names—

VT: —see we weren't that many Italians, eh. So we were overshadowed by, uh...so—well, for instance, I never had—my English was very good in school. My compositions were very good. My literature, everything, but I never got a 100 percent. Never. Other people got 100 percents, but, uh, but I never got a 100 percent. But I never had a red mark saying that there was a mistake.

JP: Oh.

VT: You understand? There was a little bit of discrimination. But not all the teachers were like that, like I really don't even remember who it was that used to do that to me.

JP: But already as a young girl...

VT: I knew.

JP: ...you were being judged for who you were—

VT: Oh yeah, yeah.

JP: —in small little ways.

VT: Yes, yes.

JP: You were starting to become aware of that.

VT: Oh, yes of course. I was aware of that. Especially because I would go to—with my grandmother to the stores. Eh? They would sort of [unclear] her off, and then I would speak up. And then they saw that I could speak and everything, well then things changed, you know.

[01:35:11]

JP: Do you remember how you felt at the time? Noticing like that you wouldn't get 100 percent even though there were no red marks indicating any errors or—

VT: Well, I al—I always felt that, uh, they discriminated against me. You know. But not to the point where you, uh, that it, that it became unbearable, you know. But there was always a little something. Though, you know, uh, you know, like I used to go to, uh, ballet classes and, “Ha! You don't know your catechism, but I bet you know your ballet.” Da-duh-bah-ba-buh-ba. [Says in a sing-song way] You know, and things like that, you know. But when it was the fat—uh, the priest's, uh, birthday and they had a show I had to dance. You know what I mean. [Nods then laughs] [Long pause, then laughs]

JP: Did you, uh, you, you were telling me about the processions that you remember. As a little girl your grandmother took you to the processions.

VT: Yeah, well those were the Italian ones in the Italian school. We were never in those; we would just go as, uh...

JP: Just to watch.

VT: Yeah. [Nods]

JP: What did you see? What were the processions like?

VT: Oh, you would see all the young girls dressed up like angels, and, uh, the statue being carried around, you know, and all the Italian people. And then my moth—my grandmother would bring me into, uh, I don't remember what it was called, where Alati is, you know, and we'd have a cup of coffee. Not for me [hand on chest], I'd have hot chocolate or something, a pastry and then we would walk home. You know.

JP: And was there a band?

VT: Oh, of course, always. Dieni, the band of Dieni, eh, my goodness.

JP: Do you also remember the [Emanuele] Cosentino band?

VT: I'm not too sure about the Cosentino band. I remember the name, but I don't remember—I remember the Dieni band, but Cosentini band, I can't say that I really do.

JP: And when the men were in the procession did they wear blackshirts?

VT: No. I don't remember that. Maybe they did? Maybe they did, but I—it's... [shrugs]

JP: As a little girl, right.

VT: It didn't hit me, I guess or something. I don't know.

JP: Do you remember *Giovinezza* or *Faccetta Nera*?

VT: I remember *Giovinezza*...you know, I remember *Giovinezza* and I remember *Faccetta Nera* that, uh, uh...that's at *la Casa D'Italia* you used to hear that. *Faccetta nera, bell'abissina* [starts singing], da-da. I remember that, yeah, I remember that. [Nods] But I don't, uh—I can't relate it to something. You know what I'm trying to say?

JP: Do you remember Italians being called *fascisti*?

VT: By other people?

JP: By anybody.

VT: Um...

JP: At that time, did you ever—do you remember hearing that word? Uh...

VT: Uh, no. I don't, uh, maybe the French, maybe. Maybe, but to say that I really remember being labeled like that [frowns], you know.

JP: Did you go to Casa D'Italia around Christmas time? Did they have uh—

VT: Yeah, when they had their parties or whatever for, sometimes for children or something, my, uh, my mother—not so much my mother; my grandmother would take me. My mother would not get involved in so many things. But my mother would—my grandmother would take me.

JP: Did you get gifts at the, uh—

VT: Yeah.

JP: —*la Befana*?

VT: Yeah, well, the priests used to hand out the, uh... [Motions handing out gifts, nods and laughs]

JP: Do you remember, uh, Father [Benedetto B.] Maltempi?

VT: I remember him, yes. [Nods]

JP: How would you describe him?

VT: Fat. [Smiles and laughs] But, uh, happy go lucky. Red cheeks, you know. [Puffs out cheeks and chest with air] You know, yeah.

JP: And he was always around.

VT: Oh yeah, of course. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JP: He would attend events at the Casa D'Italia?

VT: Oh yes, he was always at the Italians. Always, always, always, always. Mm hmm.

JP: Do you remember Camillien Houde?

VT: Of course. [Nods]

JP: Any stories about him?

VT: Well, yes, I can tell you something. When he was brought into camp, he was very fat. There was no uniform that would fit him. So they took two blankets and they sewed it together, and that's what he wore until they got him a uniform. [Laughs] I remember my father telling us that and we were laughing like, like hell. Yeah.

JP: Did your, uh, did your father ever keep contact with him after?

VT: No, I don't think—

JP: Never, uh, talked—

VT: No, no.

JP: —about that.

VT: No. [Shakes head]

JP: [Laughs]

VT: No. [Laughs]

JP: Um...what about...the Italians. When this whole thing happened was there any fear in the community?

[01:40:06]

VT: I don't know. I was—like I said I was very young, eh.

JP: Well, fear, like I guess it would have been people, uh, maybe not wanting to use an Italian name, like you said, your uncle had shortened his name. Was there any other uh—

VT: Well, I'm sure some, I'm sure some people were like that. I'm sure. But, uh, you know, I lived in an Italian community even though we were only three on the street. And—

JP: What about shame? Was there any shame in the Italian, uh...about being Italian?

VT: I, uh—

JP: Like even as a little girl, did you feel any shame?

VT: Me? [Puts hand on her chest and half laughs] Never. Never.

JP: What kept you so strong?

VT: Well, I think it's the way I was brought up. My mother was the type of person that, uh, you did not step on her toes. She didn't step on yours, but you didn't step on hers. And I was brought up like that. And I rememb—oh, I remember something that was funny. [Gestures with hand and laughs] I think I was four or five years old and I was, uh, and I was out, uh, you know, you'd go out and play, you know. And I'd come in and I'd cry because someone hit me or something, you know. And my mother would say, "What did you do?" I says, "Nothing!" [In an upset voice] But she'd just say, "Go out and play again." So I'd go out once, twice, my mother would say, "Look, if you come in here and tell me that somebody hit you, and you did not hit them back, I'm going to hit you." Eh. So, I went out, and somebody hit me. I hit everybody.

JP: [Laughs]

VT: Everybody. And then I come home and I says, "You know mom, I hit everybody." She says, "That's not right either." Ju—you—[laughs] but, uh, you see, this is how I was brought up. You don't bother people, but if they bother you, you don't stand for it. [Shakes head]

JP: Defend yourself.

VT: Yes. Don't come running home, defend yourself. [Laughs]

JP: That's wonderful. Um...

[Long pause]

[Fades out at 01:42:17]

[Fades in at 01:42:18]

VT: —hired and, uh, and she says, "Next time there's a war, they should put the, the women in and have the men have the, uh, the jobs. So like then the women they would have an easy time." Hmm.

JP: That totally reverses everything we think about.

VT: Yeah. [Laughs]

JP: Because after, when your father came back, did it give your mother a bit of a break, or she just had to keep going?

VT: Oh, she had to keep going because they were building a home. But then there was support. My father, uh, started working for Francon so then there was money coming in from there.

JP: Right.

VT: You see? And then of course they had to pay back the 3000 dollars which they had, uh, uh—she—which they did. You know because, uh, my parents never had any debts. That was 3000 dollars that was, uh—and that's it. You know.

JP: And...when your father came back...uh, uh...I guess he, he, he felt just as Italian and just as Canadian as he did before, or did anything change for him?

VT: Nothing changed.

JP: Nothing changed.

VT: If, if anything he was reinforced in his thinking of being Italian and proud of being it. We were, we were always like that.

JP: Did he, did he ever get a trial at Pembroke?

VT: Not that I know of. [Shakes head]

JP: [Unclear] Fredericton, or did he ever try to get released?

VT: [Shrugs] I don't remember.

JP: You don't know that. Okay.

VT: I don't remember. [Long pause] I know that, uh [shrugs], they all tried to get out. I mean that's, uh, that's for sure. You know. I think my mother, uh, got in touch with someone. And that's when that man said, uh—well no, that's when she, uh, when, when she went to see—wanted to see her husband. And he said, "Why?" And she told him, she said, "For the same reason you go home to your wife every night." I mean, uh, you know.

JP: That was, uh, somebody from the government, uh—

VT: Yeah. [Nods]

JP: —official. When she made the request...

VT: Yeah.

JP: ...to go and visit him in Petawawa.

VT: [Nods] Mm hmm, yeah. It was downtown that she was—she used to go to. I don't remember what the building was. But I used to go with her sometimes.

JP: And the man asked her, "Why do you want to see your husband"?

VT: Yeah, "Why do you want to go to, uh, Petawawa to see your husband?" [Laughs] I mean you know. That has to be the most stupid question. Uh...right.

JP: If your father had been asked by the officials who arrested him whether his loyalty was the Canada or to Italy, how do you think he could have answered that question?

VT: If his what?

JP: If his loyalty was to Canada or to Italy?

VT: He would have said to both. [Nods] He would have said to both. He was very Canadian. He was very happy to be here. But he also was Italian.

[01:45:19]

JP: Why do you think the government had a hard time accepting that these men had a dual identity and a dual, um, loyalty to two countries? Why was it difficult—

VT: I have no idea why. We could never—I could never understand that. Because it seems to me, uh, you know, that if you come from another country—unless it's because Italy was in, in the war against England and France and uh... [Shrugs]

JP: But they didn't create the war, the men that were here.

VT: No. Of course—

JP: They didn't ask for it.

VT: There was nobody smart enough to be a spy either. I mean, you know, you've got to know what you're doing. [Nods] Yeah.

JP: So...the government in your opinion, did they act correctly in terms of creating, um, a sense of security for Canadians that they were arresting, arresting enemy aliens? Or did they act overzealously in arresting these Italians and not checking out whether they had done something against Canada?

VT: I think it was Italian people that gave a list of the Italian men that were going to *la Casa D'Italia*. It was Italians that did that. That gave the government a list of the names of all these people that used to go to *la Casa D'Italia*.

JP: And how did you learn about that? Did you learn about that—

VT: Well, that always comes out, that always comes out, eh. Yeah. [Nods]

JP: Were any names mentioned?

VT: Oh, I'm sure they were. I don't remember them, but I'm sure they were. I'm sure that, uh—these people are all dead, these, uh... [Shrugs]

JP: Yeah.

VT: But if they'd be alive they'd be able to tell you. I'm sure.

JP: They felt that there were—

VT: And that's, and that's—that—those were the Italians that were afraid. Right? So they thought they'd ingratiate themselves with the government by giving a list of, uh, you know.

JP: To cover them—

VT: [Shrugs] Yeah.

JP: —themselves, to help themselves.

VT: That's right. [Nods]

JP: That must have caused a division also though, amongst people.

VT: Oh, I'm sure it did. I'm sure it did. I'm sure that there must be some Italians that, uh, just couldn't stand others. Yeah.

JP: It happens anywhere.

VT: I suppose. Mm hmm.

JP: But, um, that, that having that sense of suspicion after—'cause if you're thinking that—

VT: Someone, uh, ratted on you or something. [Nods]

JP: Yeah. Then you're living with suspicion.

VT: Yeah, yeah. But we weren't a family that had, uh, so many friends. We had, uh, a few family friends and that was that. And those [shrugs], those were always our friends and they, they remained our friends. You know what I mean, we not—we weren't, uh—we knew a lot of

people because you know you go to Casa D'Italia, "Eh, Angelo. *Qui Angelo. Là...*" [Says in a deep voice] You know. But that didn't make us friends.

JP: Did you know, uh, Mario Duliani?

VT: Of course.

JP: And what did you know of him?

VT: Well—

JP: Did you know him personally or of him?

VT: We knew that he, uh, was a writer. We knew that he was in camp. [Shrugs] We knew that he used to write things in the newspaper. I mean, you know. And...

JP: And after?

VT: And then when his second wife, well his, uh, she was French I think, eh. I'm not sure. Uh, she used to say something that was very funny. [Looks around the room trying to remember what it was] It was an Italian word. She used to speak Italian. But there was some, some word that she said that was very funny. And she kept repeating it all the time. You could hear it on the radio. And we used to laugh, you know. But there was nothing wrong with her, I mean, uh... [Shrugs]

JP: Yeah. Did you know, um, the, the *Dottore Mancuso, Dottore* [Antonio] D'Anna?

VT: Absolutely. Dr. D'Anna. Dr. D'Anna was our doctor, our family doctor.

JP: The husband or the wife?

VT: The husband. Yeah. And, uh, we knew Dr. [Ferdinando and Salvatore] Mancuso.

JP: What were they like?

VT: They were very nice as far as I'm concerned.

JP: Did you know the Consulate?

VT: Uh, the Italian Consulate?

JP: Yeah, the Italian Consul?

VT: Um...

JP: [Giuseppe] Brigidi.

VT: What was it?

JP: Brigidi.

VT: Yeah, Brigidi. I remember the name now that you've said it, but I don't remember him. No.

JP: What about, uh, Antonino Spada?

VT: Oh yeah, I remember Spada.

JP: From parades, uh, or just...

VT: Oh, you know, they would all get together at *la Casa D'Italia*. There were dances, there were, you know, things like that.

JP: Uh, Camillo Vetere?

VT: I don't know that name.

JP: Okay. Dieni, uh, Gentile Dieni, you knew.

VT: Oh. [Raises hand as if to say "of course"]

[01:50:02]

JP: How did he come across?

VT: With me he was wonderful. "*E che bella ragazza! Ma guardaci gli occhi!*" And then, uh, this and that. Oh yeah, he loved me. You know. And he had a restaurant downstairs. And when I went down he'd say, "*Vieni prende un caffè.*" You know and I, I wouldn't. I said, "*Più tardi, più tardi.*" You know and, um... [Smiles]

JP: And who else was there at the time? Um...in Mile End, in Papineau?

VT: I don't know. [Long pause]

JP: Did you ever—af—after, um, when your father came back, did you ever go visiting his friends with him, *va fare la visita*? To people's homes?

VT: We went to see—uh, we went, I remember this very well. We went to see [Adrien] Arcand.

JP: Really? [Says with surprise]

VT: Yeah. We went to see Arcand.

JP: What was that like?

VT: And he lived if I'm not wrong, in, in Lavaltrie, I think. We went for, uh, a drive, and, uh...Joe Frascadore, my father, uh, myself and the, the two wives, we went to see Arcand. Yeah.

JP: That's—that was a friendship that he made at the camp.

VT: Yeah. [Nods]

JP: So there were some friendships that continued or some contact with people—

VT: Oh, well no, after that we didn't see him never again.

JP: Yeah.

VT: But uh...

JP: And [Guido] Nincheri?

VT: Well, Nincheri was a different story. Nincheri was always, uh, involved in some place or other because he was, uh, you know, an artist eh, so.

JP: What did you think of the fact that they had covered up the Mussolini, uh, fresco at the church?

VT: Oh, that was so stupid. It was so stupid because when they took the cardboard down, it was beautifully clean, and the rest was dirty. So that stood out. I mean, uh, you know. [Mumbles in Italian] That made me laugh, you know.

JP: That's true 'cause that was protected underneath the cardboard. [Says while half laughing]

VT: Imagine? Imagine putting the cardboard there. [Shakes head] Just like children, you know. It's like I said, they took it off and it was nice and clean. *Si vedeva* Mussolini beautifully.

JP: *Anche meglio che prima.*

VT: That's right. [Nods]

JP: [Laughs]

VT: That's right. [Shrugs]

JP: Were there—okay, well it's too hard to know at that time if there were people walking around from the RCMP in the neighbourhood.

VT: Could be. It could be.

JP: [Unclear] watching—

VT: I could be except that, uh, it could be except that, uh, they had not very much to watch. Around my place to start with there were very few Italians there. Secondly my mother worked all day. My grandfather also. My grandmother looked after me. So they could have watched me morning, noon, and night. [Shrugs with a laugh]

JP: There was nothing—

VT: Who cares, you know. They could waste their time if they wanted to. It's not as though we were involved in anything. And that we, uh, you know. It's—it wasn't like that.

JP: [Long pause] Okay. I think that's it. [Laughs]

VT: [Laughs]

JP: Thank you. I just wanted to add that... [Says as camera fades out]

[Fades out at 01:53:18]

**[End of Interview]**