

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

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NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: Trina Costantini-Powell

NAME OF INTERVIEWER: Francesca L'Orfano

NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER: Travis Tomchuk

TRANSCRIBED BY: Francesca L'Orfano

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PROJECT NOTE:

Please note that all interviews have been transcribed verbatim. The language in this transcript is as it was provided by the transcriptionist noted above. The project staff have not edited this transcript for errors.

ABSTRACT

Trina Costantini-Powell is the granddaughter of Giuseppe (Joe) Costantini who was detained on June 10, 1940 and interned on June 12, 1940. He was released on January 29, 1941. She has carried on the legacy that her father Rudy Costantini started when he tried to expose this dark secret in Canada's history. Rudy was a young child when the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) showed up at their home to arrest his father. Trina Costantini-Powell has inherited the two drawings from her father, of her grandfather drawn by artist Guido Casini, while they were both interned at Petawawa during the Second World War. These two drawings for Trina are both a tangible reminder of the family and community values that were passed down from Giuseppe (Joe) Costantini to his son Rudy and now to her, as well as a testament to the courage and strength to continue to persevere and expose this difficult time so it is never forgotten and hopefully never repeated.

INTERVIEW

TCP: Ms. Trina Costantini-Powell, interviewee

FL: Francesca L'Orfano, interviewer

TT: Travis Tomchuk, videographer

[Title screen]

[Fades in at 00:00:10]

TT: Okay.

FL: Alright, um...thank you for, uh, uh, giving us this opportunity to, to talk with you about, um, your family's experience. So if you could tell us your name and the reason, um, sorry, how you're linked to this internment experience?

TCP: [Nods] Uh, Trina Costantini-Powell and, um, my grandfather was Giuseppe, Joe, Costantini and I'm the daughter of Rudy Costantini.

FL: And Rudy was...

TCP: Rudy was the, uh, the youngest, uh, the youngest, uh, child, the youngest son of, um, of Giuseppe Costantini and Teresina Sabetti.

FL: Okay. Um...can you tell us in, in—because this is—you're going to be talking about your, your father telling us about, um—or your father's memories of, of the experience of his father.

Um, when did you first, uh, un—understand or when did you first learn about the fact that your grandfather, uh, that had this experience—how old were you and, and at the time and...

TCP: Um, I, I never knew my grandfather because he died in, in 1951, um, and that was the year that my, my parents got married actually; they got married a week after my grandfather had died. You know, so that was something that, um, you know, I, I guess that's hard on a family too, you know, or a young couple starting out, but, um, that went ahead. And, and so not knowing my grandfather, probably the earliest memory I can, can have is, is going to the, the family, um, home on, on Rochester Street, when, um, my aunt Kay still lived there. And, um, when they sold that home, I, I guess it was sometime in the mid-sixties, there were a lot of, um, I guess a lot of things that had belonged to my grandfather that maybe were still in the home. And my father in particular wanted these sketches. Um, the sketches that were done in the internment camp. And they were on, I guess basically, um, a drawing paper of some sort, an art paper. And I remember them being rolled up and they were brought home and they were stored away in a closet or under a bed. And, and it was only, maybe when I was in my teens, um, that I asked, you know, what they were and you know, he just said that they were, they were, from his father they were, they were, drawn by an artist in the internment camp. And that was probably the first time I ever heard of this and, and, Petawawa, because, when I would go to the, the homestead on Rochester Street, I would only be, um, well I, you know, I would only have been young. And, and when that house was sold I would only have been eight or nine. So you know, you don't really, you don't really know those things. But it was only, I guess when I was in my, my early teens, when I really found out about this.

FL: And what—your dad told you that this is where his father was—

TCP: Uh, he...

FL: —and then what, what else?

TCP: Well it was just, um, it was something that, um, you know, he, he mentioned that his father had been away for a period of time and it's only later that I found out it was, you know, close to a year, you know, nine, ten months. And, um, that it was, you know, you had heard, you heard, Second World War and Italy being at war with, with, with Canada and because Canada being part of the, you know, the Commonwealth and, and that. And, um, that, uh, th—that this took place and, and that's where his father had, had gone to spend some time. And you'd, you know, you'd hear the names of Mr. [Gino] Tiezzi and, and Mr. [Fred Rocco] Pantalone, because those were all, um, uh, family friends and that, that these men had, um, suffered the same hardships [dog collar noise, dog under table, Trina smiles]. And, um, so that, that's really when I can, you know, I—you come to understand. And it was something that—I guess my father was always very much interested in politics and in history and, um, as I am, but it was something that, um, you never, you never saw in any, in any, history books if you were taking a course on Canadian history. This was never touched upon. You'd learn about the war but something like this was never touched upon.

FL: So [pause], do you remember how you felt when you, when you first, when you, like when you—I'm going to ask about your dad too—but how you felt about when you, when you started to understand that this had happened to your grandfather?

TCP: Well I can, um, I, I can remember, uh, that, um—you almost feel—you know, you—I don't know whether you fully understand it, but you feel that this is something that never should have been, never should have happened to a family. And, um, you know, then you start hearing, as you get a little bit older, the, the broader picture [gestures with hands] and the broader ramifications of, of the whole, um, incident, and, and then you fully become to understand it a little bit more. And, um, so I guess, you know, as I say, as one gets older and one learns about this and, and then you start hearing about, you know, various federal government attempts to, to rectify this. And I think another point that, that sort of hit home with, um, with

me, because I remember my dad would come home and talk about it from work, from work—he was a federal public servant. He worked with a, a man, a very lovely man, who, um, was Japanese descent. And their family had been interned as well, out on the west coast. Um, but they had gotten compensation. And I think, I think this Mr. Shimizu, Ted Shimizu was his name, and I think daddy and, and Mr. Shimizu would often talk about the, the commonalities of, of both internments.

[00:05:48]

FL: Um, okay. So on that point, switching to your dad then, um...in terms of, you know, these conversations with, with, with, um—from, from this work relationship.

TCP: Mm hmm.

FL: So was your dad's—was he open about talking about it? Um, was it, was it, you know, when he told you about these drawings when you got that explanation? How did, how did he talk about his experience?

TCP: I think he was, he was very open, um, about it, because I think he considered it very unjust. And if there was something that, you know, was something that, um, he wanted an answer to, he, he was stubborn enough to, to pursue this. And I mean, you know, up until, up until he died, and that's now eleven years ago, this was something that, you know, you use the expression, 'stuck in his craw', and this stuck in his craw [says while nodding]. And I think just the whole aspect of it and, and what, what happened from it and, and probably what, what could have been. You know, the whole, if his father had of, you know, had of lived and, and what could be. And, and I guess to see a family just, um, altered so quickly. You know I, I think, I think those, those events have an effect on, on the children, for sure. And, and you

know, him being the youngest in the family, you know, only a young boy, uh, these things stick with you.

FL: Did, did he ever share, like, memories that he had of—was he home the day that...

TCP: [Nods] Yes he was, he was home. As I say, he was, he was the youngest. And you know, he, he often talked about, um, coming home from school and, um, you know, very, uh, very much the same story as, as the, you know, the other siblings had, that the RCMP came to the door and, and came in and they, you know, they had the certificates and so thus they had the power to be able to, to go through the house and take what they wanted. Uh, you know, uh, and you know, you—I guess when—as they say, you're, you're a child and you're looking up, the RCMP are an authority figure and I guess, Why are they at my door? And, Why are they coming into my house and taking things that belong to us? Why are they here? And you know, actually, Where's, where's my dad to protect us?

FL: Mm hmm.

TCP: You know because there's, there's no mom around because she's, she's passed away the previous, uh, the previous year or so.

FL: Mm hmm.

TCP: So, I, I think it, it would be very frightening.

FL: Mm hmm.

TCP: As, as a young child. And, and you have these young children in the house and wondering why, you know, why is this happening?

FL: Did your dad every share if, if, if—I mean, he had this experience, very frightening, um—did he share—did he try to talk to his—do you know, did, did he ever share memories of, of trying to talk to his dad or, you know, about what had happened, or was that also, you know, did that come later, or do, do you recall...

TCP: Not—I, I can't recall him ever, ever saying that [shakes head].

FL: [Speaking in background]

TCP: As I say, you know, um, uh, you know, I guess when, when my grandfather would have been released from the camp that would have been in 1941. And, um, you know, as, as my aunt Gloria had said, um, I mean, um...my grandfather was, was working. You know, and he got his job back at, at the Union Station and that. I mean that was his, his life there because he had to provide a livelihood for, you know, for his family and that. And, and then you have, you know, the kids are back at school. Or my dad was, was also very, very active in sports and that. So, you know, you're, you're teenagers and you're out playing hockey or playing, playing baseball and that. So, and your dad's working. So you know, I don't know if they would have ever gotten into it. I, I never heard daddy speak about that in terms of conversations he may have had with, with his father about that.

FL: But you mentioned these—your dad though when they sold the family home, he wanted these drawings.

TCP: He wanted these drawings [nods]. He—

FL: Do you know why? Like, was it...

TCP: Maybe it was something, maybe it was something that stuck with him [shrugs shoulders]. Maybe it was something that um, you know, a piece of his dad that he wanted to keep with him. Um, you know, it, it could have been that. I, I never really—they were important to him [nods].

FL: Okay.

TCP: And he, um, you know, in later years, uh, they were unraveled and, and he took them to, um, a frame shop and he had, he had it all, you know professionally mounted because this was something that he wanted, um, you know, he wanted to remember his dad by. And, uh, I think, you know, uh, you can remember, you know, you know, the children have values instilled in them by their parents and that, but maybe this was something tangible.

[00:10:22]

FL: Okay, okay. And then when you realized what was happening, it, it sounds like you and your dad had many conversations?

TCP: Oh we had many, many conversations about that [says while nodding]. And, and probably maybe because of my interest in, in history and, and you don't see it. You know, I never saw it in high school, uh, going to university taking courses in Canadian history, it was never in the, it was never in the textbooks there for sure. And, and so, um, you—you'd, you'd go and you'd find a little bit about it, or um, you know, you'd, you'd meet and you'd talk to Italo, uh, Tiezzi [gestures with hands] and, and Italo would, would often talk about it. But it was al—almost as if

it was just something that was under the surface and it never really wanted to wrap itself up a bit [gestures brushing something away with hand].

FL: Okay. And you mention that your dad, you know it stayed with him and, and then with these conversations with this, this, uh, gentleman who, um, whose family was Japanese and interned.

TCP: [Nods]

FL: What—did your dad participate in any way in trying to get some kind of compensation, um, for, um, for Italian Canadians or, or did...

TCP: Um, well I—you know, over, over the years, he was, um, he was approached. I think—I mean, the Costantini family and the Tiezzi family were very close and so, um, there'd be many conversations he would have had with, um, with, with Italo Tiezzi about, uh, you know, about the fathers, uh, this happening to the fathers and that. And I think my dad was always willing, um, if there were projects that, that were going to happen or if there was going to be some sort of government action, um, that he would be willing to partake in that. And, um, he did do, um, an interview in, uh, 1994 with, uh, CTV Sunday Edition, that, um—where he discussed that day and, and the effect on the family and his feelings as a, as a young boy. So I think anything that, anything that was, um, discussed, re: this incident, I mean, my, my dad would be willing to participate in.

FL: And, and did he ever sort of articulate, you know, you, you mentioned earlier that he thought this was wrong, um, but did he, did he articulate any other kind of, sort of how he, how he, you know, resolved it in his own...

TC: Um, I, I think it was basically this was a wrong thing to happen and there was always...there was always anger below the surface [says while nodding]. You know, it, it never, it never came out, it never manifested itself, but it was something that, that angered him. That this happened to a good person.

FL: Okay.

TCP: And a family was affected by it.

FL: And can—did your dad articulate when he said the family was affected, how, you know, what, what parts of the effect did, did he really feel, you know?

TCP: Well I think he talked about the, you know, the, the loss of, of livelihood, you know, with, with the, you know, with the father away in the camp. Um, you know, um, losing the job at, at the train station. And, uh, you know, fortunately being able to get that back, uh, when he came home. But the fact that, um, my grandfather had, had been a partner in the, in the, you know, Preston Hotel, now, now known as the Prescott Hotel and the fact that that livelihood was lost. 'Cause I can remember daddy saying that they would go down there as children, and they'd be only young children, sweeping the floors or carrying the dishes or... You know, and, and that was, that was gone. And, uh, this, this was a, this was an anger that I, I, I don't think that, that ever, that never left him. [Shakes head]

FL: Okay, okay, okay. And, um, just going back to your, your dad, I know you mentioned he, he didn't really talk about his, his memories, um, and as we were just, uh, speaking with, uh, your Aunt Gloria talking about, um, you know, sort of the, the community at large when, when his dad was interned. Um, did he, you know, as a child, did he, did he, did he experience anything in the community that, that, that also affected that anger that somehow like he did have some

memories that—or was it just when he understood it in, as an adult that, that he then processed it in a...

TCP: [Sighs] I th—uh, I mean I think, um, there were, um, friends of, of his, you know, the same age. Um, you know, when you think of, um, Italo, Italo's, uh, brother Silvio was a good friend of, uh, of my dad's and, and um, the, the Pantalone family. So there were boys the same age. And, and so, um, as Aunt Gloria had, had mentioned, that, you know, the, the teachers, I guess knew that something was happening at home with these children and, and maybe tried to protect them and shield them from, you know, from, you know, probably school yard, you know, bully threats, or, or different things like that, that we all know happen. But I, I think that, um—I, I guess the, the children were affected by it but they probably went about their own lives and, but knowing that there was some—something at home. And I believe, um, that my father did go off to live with his, um, his, uh, godparents for, for a while, *comare* and *compare*, uh, Manfredi. Uh, you know, he was very close, they were close family friends and he, he went to sort of live with them for a bit.

FL: During the time that—

TC: During the time, yes. [Nods]

FL: —that your grandfather was interned?

TCP: Yup. [Nods]

FL: Okay. And I'm, I'm—is that—was that because of the financial situation?

TCP: [Nods] Perhaps, perhaps. I mean, you—that never came out, but it's very possible.

FL: Somebody else to care of him.

TCP: [Nods] It's very possible.

FL: [Unclear] another mouth to feed or one less mouth to feed [says less with emphasis].

TCP: Yeah.

FL: Okay, okay.

TCP: And, and when you, when you think of it, you know the—in, in terms of the Costantinis [gestures with both hands parallel on the tabletop], you had two brothers, so my grandfather and, and his brother married two sisters. And so the, you know, the families were, were very, very close and, and I believe that, uh, Aunt Giovina was very [looks off to her Aunt Gloria off-screen], you know, very good in terms of, um, uh, helping, helping the family because, you know, she had—I mean this family had lost a, a mother and then now the father was away, so...

FL: Mm hmm.

TCP: I guess the, the community pitches in, you know, you do what you have to do to, to help this family.

[00:16:36]

FL: Okay. So that, that—there were positive experiences of the, of the—this is the Italian community?

TCP: [Nods] This is the Italian community. And, and I guess all—I, I guess—I'm not going to say all, but many families would, would rally around and, and, and help those and you know, may—maybe some wouldn't, you know. [Shrugs shoulders]

FL: Yeah, okay, okay. And, and when your dad finally, you know, sort of understood—and you talked about this anger that was on, on the surface—um, other than, I mean, that, that is if it was always there, right, and there was no sort of resolution. How, um—were there other ways that you feel that this affected your dad? Like, did it, did it—I mean you mentioned he was involved in politics, your dad?

TCP: No, my dad was—my dad would—I mean, he was always interested in politics, not, not directly involved in politics.

FL: Okay.

TCP: But he always had an interest, you know, on, uh, uh, sort of the goings on, on the hill and that. And, uh, you know, he would always, um, I mean, follow the news and, and that and, uh... Um, my father was a very gregarious, you know, person and, and knew a lot of people out there, but he wasn't, he wasn't involved directly in, in, in politics, you know. And I know he voted many different ways and that. But I guess he couldn't understand [long pause] probably why, um, [long pause] a Liberal government could come and do this to people who were close to the Liberal party. And I think this is a common sentiment. Because a, a, a lot of times, I mean, the newer immigrants tended to vote Liberal, because their, you know, the policies had brought them in and, and this is something that you see go on for many successive years. And this was something that, that was always disturbing to him.

FL: Okay.

TCP: But, uh, but, uh, so he was always awa—aware of it and, and, uh, you know, was, was always interested in it. And I know even when he, he retired—my dad retired in 1991 after, you know, 40, 41 years in the government—and he often went down to the, um, Library and Archives and did a little a bit of, you know, research on it, and, and followed this and, and that and, and had been approached, um, oh maybe four or five years before he died, um, by a couple of other projects that, sort of, I guess started in the community but I don't—they, they never came to an end. But he was, he was interviewed a few times by different people.

FL: Do you know if your dad talked about this with his siblings? I mean with your Aunt Gloria or—I mean he, he definitely talked about it with you and then with Italo and...

TCP: [Shakes head] I, I, I can't really say, I can't remember. You know, maybe in passing they talked about it. Maybe if they were together, you know. But a lot of the siblings were away too, I mean, as they, you know, I mean as they grew up and went their own ways. Uh, there were many living, um, outside of, you know, outside of Ottawa here. So whether he talked about it with the siblings that were here, I don't, I can't remember that. [Shakes head]

FL: Okay. And your dad went on to have a successful federal public service career?

TCP: [Nods] Mm hmm, mm hmm.

FL: So, um, this, this event that happened to his family didn't affect his education or...

TCP: It, it—when he, when he, uh, went into the public service when he was 19, um, when they did, I guess, the security check, um, this information was there and, um, uh, you know, he, I, I can remember him saying that he—and this is in later years that, that he thought that may have

affected his, his ability to get the job, because the information was on file that his father had been, um, you know, had been picked up.

[00:20:09]

FL: Oh...and so when you say it affected...

TCP: Well, in, in terms of his—you know, I guess when they do the security clearance and when they go back and whatever information is there. That information was there. And, uh, so they had to, they had to do a little bit more of a lengthy security clearance. I can remember him saying that and my mother talking about that, 'cause they were just, I guess that they were just newly married when he started in the, in the public service.

FL: But then—but he did get...

TCP: Oh he, oh no he did get the job. But I guess, you know, this, you know, this information was on record. And, and so if someone is picked up by the government and you're thought of, you know, having the fascist leanings and that. You know, here you've got a son of somebody and you know, what, what does that say?

FL: But then afterwards do you think that he got as far as he wanted to in the federal public service? Do you think that that kind of...

TCP: [Shakes head] No, I don't, I don't—it had, it had no affect on, I think, on his future.

FL: Okay.

TCP: [Shakes head] No, no.

FL: Okay. Um, going back to your experience now in terms of how you feel, like you've, you've accepted being, you know, interviewed and sharing your memories with us today.

TCP: Mm hmm.

FL: Um, you know, you found out as a teenager because of these drawings and, uh, and then your own interest in history—

TCP: Mm hmm, mm hmm. [Nods]

FL: —got you, you know, more involved. How do you feel? How—you know, has, has, has your—have your feelings changed over the years as, as you learn more and more? How do, how do you feel if you had to talk about this issue, um, you know, thinking of your grandfather, thinking of your father? Um, how do you feel about all of this?

TCP: Well I think it was, um—you know, you, you hear so many different things and you, you think about the fact that it was, um, it, it was unjust for this to, to happen to families. Because these men—you know they, they talk about enemy aliens and I, I know that's, you know, that's in the, the nature of this project—but these men were naturalized Canadian citizens, British subjects still, so they weren't enemies per se. And, and many of them belonged to the, the social clubs. And you, you know, you think, Okay maybe, maybe they did—I'm not going to use the word "revere", but you know Mussolini came, came along at a good time for Italy and made the economy, um, sort of vibrant and so people would look back on, look back on that and, and maybe that was, you know, they, they, they had a, a bust in the, in the hom—household and, and that, and, and so it was somebody that this was their homeland. And, and but, they came

to a new country and they became, you know, they became citizens and that. But it was, um— so, how could it happen, first off, to, to good hard working people who, who were out there just making a, you know, making living and raising a family and, and, uh, loving Canada for what it was worth. And so you think how, first off, How could this happen? And then secondly, um, when you're old enough to appreciate it, when it starts to settle in and you start to look at [long pause] the, sort of, the ramifications on, on the family and, and then when you start to research it a little bit more you see the common thread that runs, runs through all the families. And, and even, you know, you speak to work colleagues and they knew friends of friends and whether it was Guelph or whether it was St. Catharines and, and this happened to, you know, parents of kids they went to school with and, and, but nobody ever talked about it [gestures no with hands]. Or Mister so and so down the road, you know, we know he was, he was interned, but nobody ever speaks about it. And this seems to be the common thread. Whether it's the embarrassment, whether its, "I just don't want to think about it any more." It just is so, so common. But to me it's something that has to be remembered and, and that's what these projects hopefully will be doing, is, is being able to commemorate it. And, and being able to get the message out that this did happen. Because people will say [gestures with her hands], "Oh, I knew about the Japanese," and, and that, but, "Oh, I never knew the Italians." And even in the Italian community today, "I never knew this happened. I don't know anything about that."

FL: So in addition though to the—how do you feel about, uh, the issue of compensation? I mean definitely, uh, making sure that this is not, uh, forgotten, you know, this is, you know, sort of, acknowledging it, as you said it, you know, it seems to have been something that no one wanted to talk about, so at least this is going to be talked and, and people hopefully educationally they, they will know about this. Um, but how, um, um, do you, do you—have you given any thought to, you know, you mentioned that your dad did some research, was, was sort of sometimes involved with trying to deal with the issue of, is there something more that needs to be happening? Do you feel, in terms of you as the granddaughter of, you know, this family as

you said you now understand the, the bigger picture of how it affected your family but other families—have you thought at all about what—how you feel about the issue of compensation, the issue of some...

[00:25:11]

TCP: Well, I think, I probably—you know, you—I know daddy used to say, you know, um, it would be nice if, if there was some compensation, you know, to the families, but, you know, that will be a long time coming [nods head in upward direction]. So I, I think, in terms of compensation, as far as I'm concerned, you know, it, it, it's something that would be very nice, but I, you know, uh, I don't think it's, it's something that's going to happen. But, I think you come to the realization that if you can get that message out there that this has happened and should never happen again, um, and educate people as to this, so, you know, they, they know that this was a very dark secret in Canadian history, um, that's, I'm, I'm fine with that.

FL: Do you have any anger, uh, under the surface as your dad did about this?

TCP: Um, not, not perceived anger, but I think, I think, there's an anger within the family that there was a, a business interest that was lost and a business interest that is very successful to this day and that could have been something that, um, uh, that you could have been part of, you know, if it had of stayed in the family. Um, personally, I mean, uh, this business interest is something that [long pause] if I have to go there for a family function, I will, but to go out of my way to go there, I won't. You know, so there's that little bit of resentment.

FL: Um, now just to go back to your dad and your grandfather, you said you weren't—your, your grandfather died, of course—

TCP: [Nods] Yup.

FL: —you know your parents were married, uh, just shortly after.

TCP: He died in '51. [Nods]

FL: Okay. What do you remember your dad telling you about your grandfather, not necessarily related to the internment, just the kind of person he was? And some, some of the memories he had that because the grand—[unclear] your grandparents aren't there so. Do you, do you—you know, what, what were some of the things that your father told you about your grandfather?

TC: Well I think, um, in terms of, um, he was a very, like a very kind man. He was a very generous man. Um, a man that, uh, many people in the community would come to, you know, if they were in need of, [coughing in background] if they were in need of money, if they were in need of, um, advice, business advice, because apparently he was a very astute man. Um, he was a man who, I think wanted to see my father, um, go to university, um, but he never did. Um, but I think he was a, a man who—my father as I say was always interested in sports and I think, my grandfather wanted to see that interest generated more in school, not that my father wasn't interested in school, but he loved his hockey and he loved his baseball. And, um, you know, I, I don't know, and maybe, maybe Auntie Gloria would know, I mean I, I know my father, um, went to the point of, of being drafted, um, in, in the, um, the, the major, major league baseball and went to training camp down in, uh, Arkansas, for a major league team. And you know, so whether this went over well with my grandfather I, I really don't know. I mean, I'm sure my father enjoyed the experience but I, I, you know, just in years after that I, my father would often say, “My, you know, my father would have preferred probably if I had of put my interest maybe into going to university.” [Shrugs shoulders] But, you know, but I—he often said

he was just a very kind, you know, good family man and, and, um, just a very, very well respected person.

FL: And your dad, what do you remember about your dad?

TCP: Oh I loved my dad. [Becomes emotional. Starts to cry, wipes her eye and begins to speak with emotion] He was just a great person. [Nods] Just even watching that, um, DVD this morning just brings back a lot of memories. He was a good person, um, he was, he was good to his family. Um, nobody's perfect, you know, ups and downs and—but he, um, he loved his family. Yeah. [Nods]

FL: And, and this love for his family, part of this was, this, this, um, trying to deal with this past issue as well?

[00:29:44]

TCP: I, I think so, that was, that was a part of it. But I mean there were many other components, you know. He was, I mean he loved his siblings. Um, he, um, you know, he would often—uh, as I say he was very close to all his siblings. [Sniffing and rubbing away tears] Um, uh, his—you know his oldest sibling, his uh, his older brother Frank. Uh, Aunt Gloria and, and my dad, um, you know, made arrangements when Uncle Frank's sort of health was failing to, to bring him back to, to Ottawa from Montreal for his last few years. [Sniffles] And uh, my father just loved being around people, you know, people could come into the house, you'd be offered a glass of wine and you know, something to eat and talk about whatever. He was up on everything. [Gestures with hands] He loved, he loved his wine, he loved his scotch, he loved a good meal, um, he loved to go out to movies and...

FL: So definitely carried on the very social dimension—

TCP: Oh!

FL: —that Gloria talked about in, in the early years.

TCP: Oh yeah, oh yeah. [Nods]

FL: Okay.

TCP: Mm hmm. Yeah. [Sniffles]

FL: Thank you for sharing this—these memories with us today. Is there anything else that you feel you would like to share, um, about your dad or, or his memories of your grandfather, or... It does not have to be about the internment, but if there's anything else that you'd feel you'd like to, you know, share with the public having this opportunity?

TCP: Well I think, uh, just, you know, that it's, as I say, it's something that, um, uh, I'm glad I'm a part of in, in terms of being able to, to carry on sort of my dad's wishes and what my dad wanted to do. And, um, you know, I, I know that I felt very deeply, um, last year when I sat up in, in the, um, in the House of Commons [gestures with hands], up in the gallery, when the, um, the Bill was, you know, passed through to, you know, the, the Bill put forth by Massimo Pascetti [MP Montreal], um, when it got third reading. But obviously that Bill has died now. But it was, it was an honour that, uh, just to sort of sit there and, and recognize that it was a long journey to get to this point and that, um, hopefully as I say with these, these ongoing projects, um, that, uh, that struggle will be, uh, commemorated.

FL: Thank you very much.

TCP: You're welcome. [Smiles and nods]

[Fades out at 00:32:02]

[Fades in at 00:32:02]

[Recording of two drawings of Giuseppe Costantini done by Casini while both were in Petawawa and a discussion takes place between Trina Costantini-Powell, Gloria Giroux, Travis Tomchuk and Francesca L'Orfano.]

TCP: Ariella [DalFarra Hostetter] pointed out the date 'cause I was trying to think, this didn't seem to pertain to the time in the camp and she pointed out that it was the date from the time that [Benito] Mussolini came to power. The number of years after he came to power in Italy. So... Because that's what 14 years, right? No, not 14 years, but uh [long pause while translating roman numerals]...

TT: Nineteen years.

TCP: Nineteen years.

TT: Yeah.

FL: [Guido] Casini, right, is the, is the name?

TC: Uh, Glas—is it Casini or...

TT: Yeah, Casini has done some other portraits that we have seen at the office before. Now who, who are we looking at here?

TCP: We are looking at—this is my grandfather.

TT: Both of them are the same. Oh okay.

TCP: So, Giuseppe Costantini.

TT: Alright. [Dog shakes and collar makes noise]

FL: And this is what I meant about the, the weight change. [Finger points at drawings.]

TCP: Yeah.

FL: So whether in terms of the camp, right, and, and, you know, even before and after photos. I think those would tell a story in themselves.

TCP: Yeah.

TT: So, so the one on the left would be the earlier version then.

FL: I would, I would think so.

TCP: I, I, I've never been able to define that.

TT: Okay.

TCP: Whether or not. All I can remember—and you can see, I mean, even the two, the different shades of the, the paper, that, um, that was used, as the sketching paper.

TT: Mm hmm.

FL: Well this is a better quality paper [pointing to the drawing on the right].

TCP: Yes.

FL: So. Yup.

TCP: This almost looks like, almost like an onion, onionskin paper or something like that. But I can remember them being rolled up.

FL: This is kind of erased, eh. [Points to bottom of sketch on the left]

TCP: I think that gives his, his, uh, number...

FL: Phone number?

TCP: The prisoner of war number maybe, is there...

FL: Oh yes, yes.

TT: Oh the POW, yes.

TCP: Yes. Was it 189 I think or something like that?



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[Fades out at 00:33:43]

[End of interview]