



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

DATE OF INTERVIEW: October 19, 2011

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Montreal, QC

NAME OF INTERVIEWEES: Mary Monaco and Michael Monaco

NAME OF INTERVIEWER: Joyce Pillarella

NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER: Adriana Rinaldi

TRANSCRIBED BY: Melinda Richter

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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 has not edited this transcript for errors.

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ABSTRACT

Mary and Michael Monaco are the children of Georgina (née Donatelli) and Donato Monaco. Their father owned a bakery and delivered bread to clients around Montreal. Mary started helping out at the bakery when she was a teenager by looking after the books. The family lived above the bakery.

During the Second World War, Donato was interned. He was arrested at work along with his brother, Antonio, and both were taken to Petawawa. Mary and her future husband, Leo, and with a bit of help from her mother, took over the bakery during Donato's absence. Mary had the opportunity to visit her father at Petawawa while he was there. Eventually, the Monaco brothers had trials. Donato was found innocent of being involved in fascist organizations and was sent home on December 26th, 1940. However, Antonio admitted to being in the Sons of Italy and was detained for two years. Mary and Michael suspected that Minister Bersani had given the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) a list of people to arrest. They were given archival evidence before the interview which confirmed their suspicions. Mary and Michael talk about how their father never discussed his time at Petawawa and how they feel angry that there is nothing left at Petawawa to commemorate what happened there. They also said that their father never expressed himself well; they knew that he loved them but he never said it or expressed it explicitly.

INTERVIEW

MaM: Mary Monaco, interviewee

MiM: Michael Monaco, interviewee

JP: Joyce Pillarella, interviewer

[Title screen]

[Fades in at 00:00:10]

[Text: Mary Monaco and Michael Monaco. Children of internee Donato Monaco]

JP: Today is October 19—

MiM: Mmmhmm.

JP: —2011. Um, my name is Joyce Pillarella and I'm interviewing M, uh, Mary Monaco and Michael Monaco. So.

MiM: And—

JP: Um, first of all, uh, is it okay if we, uh, mention your ages?

MiM: No.

JP: Okay.

Mim: I mean, I got nothing to say against that.

JP: Okay, how old are you, Michael?

MiM: 81.

JP: 81, and, uh, Mary, how old are you?

MaM: 93.

MiM: [laughs] Well—

JP: And you are both the children of, uh, Donato Monaco—

[MaM and MiM nod]

MiM: Right.

JP: —one of the men who was, uh, interned, uh—

MaM: Yep.

JP: —picked up June 10—

MaM: Yes.

JP: —1940. Um, before we get talking about the internment, I just wanted to talk about family life in the 1930s. I think, Mary, you might be able to talk about this perhaps a little more because, uh, of your age, but what was life like at home and, uh, on the streets and at the bakery and in the schools?

MaM: This is before the, uh—

JP: Before the internment. Yeah, what was—

MaM: Well—

JP: Just give me what the neighbourhood was like, what family life was like.

MaM: Our family was, well, let's say it was, you know, a probably a get together. We always—Oh, we used to argue between ourselves. Believe me. [laugh] Uh, mother had a, a great job raising all her children, but she did it willingly and, uh, I had my education. I, I went up to tenth grade. I was going into eleventh then my father says to me, “Mary, you've got to come down and work in the office.” Mary does what her father said because my father taught us to respect everybody. So I went down but I wanted to finish my education so I told my father. He says, “Okay, Mary. Where do you want to go?” So I went to a commercial, uh, school, but I didn't last long because he needed me at the office. So I went back. I did only two months of commercial. I did a bit of bookkeeping, bookkeeping, which I hate. I did typewriting. Shorthand: Mmm, Mary wasn't too good at that, but she did it. Anyhow, I went back to, uh, the, the, uh, the, the office and I—Then they didn't have a store because I was, I was young yet. They only had to sell bread and I took care of the office. But I only took care of the books when the drivers brought in the bread and the money. That's all I did. Because the bookkeeping, I didn't do it. I kept that for a while and, uh, then I start getting interested with my husband. He was doing the bread. So we went for four years but this was during the war. Anyhow, it happened in 1940. I was downstairs in the office. [camera zooms out] My father was in the bakery. And I see, like Mikey said, I saw my uncle, you know, coming down the street. [MiM nods] With the—

MiM: That's right.

MaM: —with his wagon. But these RCMP came in. They weren't in uniform, just in plain clothes. They says to my father, no, they says to me, “Where's your father, Mr. Monaco?” I says, “He's inside.” “Mr. Monaco, will you come here?” My father was a stickler for the law. He, he went to it. Believe me, when there was something to do, he did it. So he comes in the front, so they told him, “Come with us,

Mr. Monaco." My father says, "Why?" "You're going to come down downtown. Don't argue." My father went. So then my uncle was coming in, my father was going into the car. [dish noise] So he comes in. He says, "Where's your father going?" I says, "They took him." So then they start with him. My, my, my uncle, you know, he says, "Why? Why?" You know, he was afraid. So then they took him too. I was left, you know. Everybody was stunned. At the back he says, my husband, then, Leo, he comes to me, he says, "Mary, what happened?" I says, "I don't know." This is when it started. Then they told us he was arrested because they thought he was in the, uh, fascist movement. Then things start piling up, you know? My mother comes down. "I don't believe it." I says, "Yeah, Ma. They took him." "But, why? Why?" You know, a mother, she had four children. Was it five, Mikey?

MiM: [thinks]

MaM: Five, eh?

MiM: Uh, three, four, five.

MaM: Five.

MiM: Yeah. There were five.

MaM: There were five children. And she depended on me and says, "Mary, find out what it is." "I don't know!" Anyhow, I found out later that he was arrested because he was a fascist. So my mother, she didn't know what to do. I says, "Ma, calm down. I'm nervous as it is." She says, "Okay, Mary, I'll listen to you." So then they tried to help me, you know? I says, "What am I going to do?" So I, as it is, I had to be careful for the office, sell the bread. Then, it happened that they, they nobody to check the

bread when the drivers took it in the morning. So I got up at 5:30, went downstairs and count the bread that the drivers took. But they were good drivers. Eh, Mikey? [MiM nods] They were—

MiM: Yeah, well—

MaM: Sensitive to our, our—

MiM: Mmm.

MaM: So, I went down, count the bread and then I gave them the bags with their money and they started off. But then it was only two, eh? That was left?

MiM: It was—

MaM: Or was it only one?

MiM: Who? Uh, it was only—

MaM: Anyhow—

MiM: The drivers, I know, well, there's some parts I don't remember.

MaM: Yeah. There were two. They left. So then I, you know, I had to do something and my mother was after me. So I kept going. You know, I did what I had to do. I got up in the morning. I do this and that. Then I'd come down and I'd work in the, in the front. Then [laughs] they came to me and they says,

“You can visit your father.” I says, “Yeah?” Okay. So they took me one day, I don't remember, and they brought me down, uh, to Petawawa. That's when I saw my father. He says to me, “Mary, don't just talk. I'll ask you questions and you answer me.” So he sat on the table in the corner and he says to me, “Sit on the chair.” “Okay.” He asked me, you know, how everything was and you know, “Everything is going right?” So I says, “Not too bad, Daddy.” I says, “We have, uh, the drivers.” I, I says, “Um, mom is a little worried, you know.” I made it lighter than it was. So I talked for half an hour then they says, “Time is up.” “Mary, be careful. Take care of yourself, do what you can.” That's what he told me. So I came back home. I started, I don't know if it was a day or two after, they come back and they say, “Come with us. You're going to court.” To court! [points to herself]

JP: Who came back?

MaM: I—

JP: The RCMP? The police?

MaM: Yeah, the RCMP and they brought me—I says, “Court?” To me it was something, it was, I was going to, you know, I didn't know what court was. Anyhow, they brought me down there. [laughs] You know, a girl of what? I don't remember. I was 23? [looks at MiM] 22.

MiM: 22, 23.

MaM: I go there. I sit on the chair. So, you know, I, I didn't know what to do. I was getting nervous. So the judge says, “Don't worry, my dear. I'm just going to ask you a few questions. Don't worry. It's not something big.” So I don't remember what they asked me. They asked the important question: if my

father was, uh, in a, a group, you know, under, uh, fascism or this. I said, “No. My father doesn't belong to nothing.” The only thing he belongs to, he was a patron of a church near us, because my father used to help, eh? [looks at MiM and MiM nods] St. Bethany[?]. That's all.

MiM: He was an elder.

MaM: In his church. He belonged to the church. He says, “Okay. Don't worry dear. Okay. You can go home.” Mama mia. That was really something.

MiM: I didn't know that.

[00:09:43]

MaM: But as I think of it today. I says, “You know, they did what they had to do.” And I says, “If I go into court today, I know what it is about.” It's not the same. I was 22. I never knew what it was. But, you know, things kept going. We tried our best but like Mikey said, you know, things were not going too good with the bread. You know, people heard that my father was a, arrested. And they believed the worst, I suppose. I don't know.

MiM: Well—

MaM: But then we heard that he was—I, I don't remember very much. He came out six months after, right? [looks at MiM]

MiM: Uh, yeah. He was, uh, stopped in June. He was let go in 26th of December. Right after Christmas. He showed up and my uncle Vincent, I'm not sure if they let him out the same day or after—

JP: They did.

MiM: They did?

MaM: Yeah, it's right after.

MiM: And my uncle Tony, well, he stood in it until further date. When he came in, he was in the house, all the family came over the step, 'cause some people knew us. And their husband was still in, in the concentration camp. And my father, the first thing he says is, "How's the business?" I didn't listen much but he listened to my mother. And I'll tell ya, the next day they were on the road back again. And yet there were some customers on the French side that didn't want to accept my father anymore because he was brought into a concentration camp. He lost a few customers that way because they think he belonged to the, the, thought they he was with Hitler. My father says, the son says, "I—" One of the sons says, "I understand you, you're not. But my parents don't see it that way." So we lost about two or three customers but he would take the bread through his sisters. Instead of taking, the sister taking just for herself, she would take for her brother and the family and the mother, the mother used to take the bread from, through her sister, through her daughter. And he says, "My husband doesn't know. He won't give in. But," he says, "he's still eating your bread." [laughs] So, but, uh, it took them at least two, three years to get back on their feet. And they, they, they reproduced and they did a good, a good, uh, a good thing with the business.

[fades out at 00:12:18]

[fades in at 00:12:19]

MiM: I was about ten, ten, ten or eleven give or take.

JP: So what is your memory?

MiM: And, uh, I remember—I don't remember my father being taken in but I remember my un—
waiting for my uncle. He came down the road with his wagon and the horse and that's where he was
told to get out and they, they took him and they put him in a car, but they took his, his purse off and
his money bag and I think he still had his hat on, I'm not sure, and he went away. They drove away and
we had heard that there was going to be a war but we didn't think what had happened, dur—that
Mussolini went with the, the Germans and that's where they were all picked up, thinking they were
something to do with the war. But my father wasn't in, in no kind of, uh, association. Then we had to
change everything around so for the company. That was longer and, uh, how you say, her husband was
with the bread. Her husband's brother, he's the one who took care of the horses and wagons and I
was too young to handle that. But I did it later in life and that's one thing I didn't like. [laughs] 'Til
about '56, that's when we got rid of the horses. And, uh, well, I was ten years old, eleven, like I told
you and there's certain things I heard and certain things I didn't. The customers, we all had them, but
[shrugs]—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —they weren't talking—

JP: Did you—

MiM: They weren't talking much during the war. It was after the war they start talking.

MaM: No. They wouldn't.

JP: What do you mean, the customers? Was there a difference between the Italian customers and the French customers, because you mentioned you lost a couple of French customers.

MiM: Yeah. Uh—

JP: Did you lose Italian—

MaM: Well, no.

JP: —customers?

MiM: No. No. Italian customers, we kept them all. And from what I heard, we had all the customers, but like anything, the husband wasn't there to pay the bills, so it was—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —credit on us. Our credit was gaining up and up and that's where the money wasn't coming in. But the customers, we had them. We had, we were lucky. The flour mills gave us credit. Then when they came out, well, that's the first thing they did, was clear up the flour mill and so forth and it turned out good.

JP: And the credits that you had with customers, afterwards did the cust—the Italian customers come

back and pay up?

MiM: Yes. They paid up and they, we kept them all.

MaM: Sure.

MiM: What you gotta do? That's—[shrugs]

JP: Michael, you were telling me the story about, uh, one of the customers that died—

MiM: [looks confused]

JP: —that, uh, put it in the will?

MiM: Oh yeah. There was a customer my father had. She used to live on...exactly, near, uh, just a minute now. It was on St. Andre Street, this woman, and she was good. She would do me sometimes, when it was very cold, she would make me a hot chocolate or something. And when she died she owed my father some money. Then when she died my father couldn't get ahold of nobody. The husband was gone and the children, well, they were never there. So he says, "Well, we lost a dollar and a quarter then." And in her will, we find out about...four of five years after, my father was in the shop—He wasn't around. I was at the store when we had a store in front. [looks at MaM and she nods] And this guy walks in, he says, "Mr. Monaco, *es-tu ici?*" I says, "I'm one of them." He says, "A *pain?*" I says, "*Oui. N'y poicette[?]*." And he says, "Well, my mother was such and such." And she says, "In her will she said she owed the baker a dollar and a quarter." She came back and she paid it. I says, "Thank you very much." And then I told my dad. "Oh my God," he says, "I never thought she would

pay me that dollar and a quarter.” And that's the way it was and I was, you know, the customers were good. But there were some, during the war time, that because they thought he was a fascist, they wouldn't take, they wouldn't take his bread but, like I told you before, they would it indirectly through his daughter. [laughs]

JP: [laughs]

MiM: And that's the way it was. Then we came, then I started working permanently with them when I was about 16, 17. And then I started delivering bread, pizza. Then the pizza business went up and, uh, I started working with them. Then they got me a brand new truck in 1947.

MaM: [laughs]

MiM: 'Cause I was running around with an old '27 Chevy. Oh, that—I, I, I'm sorry I let it go. I wish something to keep. Anyhow, I drove and then I've been with them all my life. As a—

MaM: Mikey, what you liked was you used to go to, uh, Villamar and go for that hamburger.

MiM: Oh.

MaM: Oh my gosh, that hamburger.

MiM: Oh yeah. That was my lunch. Or I'd eat two hotdogs and a Pepsi at the Metro Pool. That was my lunch.

JP: He—

MiM: And then I would have six or seven cups of coffee. Every place I would stop the girls would give me a coffee.

MaM: [laughs] He was good—

MiM: That, that, I enjoyed—

MaM: He had a good personality. He joked with them all the time.

MiM: Oh yeah. I joked.

MaM: And he honest with them.

MiM: Oh yeah.

MaM: Because if you're not, you're not a customer.

MiM: Well—

MaM: You'd have to.

MiM: —I don't know if this is maybe anything but when I was on, doing St. Laurent Street, near, near St. Catherine, I'd get all these, um, people that were poor or working on the side line and they would

come to me and says, "Hey, it's cold." So I says, "What do you want me to do?" "Let me sit in your truck. It's warm." I says, "No, I'm not." Then a fellow that delivers beer in the area he says, "You be nice to them." He says, "They're going to keep your truck and they won't, nobody'll touch it." I says, "Okay." I had this old, elderly gentleman, he was on a wheelchair. I used to give him a small bread [shows size with his hands] every second day. He says, "You go and do your customers and nobody touch your truck." And nobody did.

JP: Wow.

MiM: Nobody would touch my truck. The guy with the beer he says, "That's what you gotta do. Or give—What he do is give him a bottle of beer." He would take care of their truck and nobody was able to get near their truck. He had a dog and he had a cane. [laughs]

JP: [laughs]

MiM: And nobody would get near my truck. Sometimes it was very cold. I used to let the truck run. "Don't worry. Nobody touch, nobody touch." That was life. And then I—

MaM: Uh—

MiM: —went to Villamar—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —the loafs.

MaM: Oh.

MiM: Then I reached, I was serving stores in Boucherville, NDG, all over the place.

MaM: Oh yeah.

MiM: That was, uh, you had to go get your customers.

MaM: It was, it was, uh, a comfortable life. You know? Uh, families were big families then.

MiM: Oh yeah.

MaM: But—

MiM: Christmas parties.

MaM: —we never had, uh, like today. You know what I mean? It's not the same. There's no more family life, period.

MiM: Oh yeah. We had a family life is right.

MaM: Ask my mother, with her home upstairs, it was her joy. After my father came in she did everything she could to help him.

MiM: She—

JP: I just want to clarify, uh, for people watching this, you lived upstairs from the bakery 'cause when you're talking about upstairs you're talking about living upstairs from the bakery—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —right?

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: But, you know, then, when the holidays came or birthday or whatever—

MiM: Oh, Jesus Murphy. [puts his hands on his face]

MaM: My God. [sighs] That house. She had a big family. They had children. The dining room, she had to put planks. What she served. She used to make her own pasta. You know because then you had to do it. Today you could get it. She made what, Christmas was it? Or Easter? When we ate all those raviolis?

MiM: At Christmas.

MaM: Christmas. She got up—

MiM: Oh yeah.

MaM: —at 5:00 in the morning and she told us, the three girls, says, “You come upstairs and help me.”
We wanted to help her because we were about 15 or—15? [looks at MiM]

MiM: Oh, I don't remember.

MaM: Anyhow, we were a big c, crowd. And she, we made the raviolis from 5:30 'til 9:00. She made a
hund—250.

MiM: The raviolis, either they were two inches in diameter or they were four inches in diameter.

JP: [laughs]

MiM: And there was a contest one day between my younger brother—

MaM: [laughs]

MiM: —which he was about—I think he was about 13 or 14 then—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —and my brother-in-law, Catelli, Peter Catelli. Who ate the most?



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MaM: Oh.

MiM: Joanne?

Joanne: Yes.

MiM: Who, which one ate the most?

MaM: Uncle Mike. Mikey. Mike. Mike.

MiM: Who ate the most raviolis that time?

MaM: Mike. Mike.

MiM: Uncle, uh, my brother-in-law. I think he ate one or two more than my brother.

JP: That's amazing.

MiM: And, uh—

MaM: He ate—

MiM: Uh—

MaM: —that I think was 15 or 20—

MiM: Oh yeah.

MaM: —raviolis.

MiM: —and uh—

MaM: And they were like this. [shows with her hands]

MiM: Some of them were big. I was—

MaM: I says—

MiM: My mother didn't look at the size. She just did it. Stuffed it up. I used to run around for the cream. The rag, the rag—whatever she used inside.

JP: The ricotta.

MiM: Ricotta. I used to go and get a big piece there and she'd bring it home. [sighs]

MaM: It was a happy life. You know, we were—

MiM: Our meals—

MaM: Anything happened, we were all there to help.

MiM: —antipasto, ch—uh, antipasto, spaghetts, salad, then there was a turkey. We cut up the thing. We started at 12:00, we got up around 3:30, 4. And then we have a competition between the peanuts.

JP: [laughs]

MaM: Oh Mike, Mike, Mike.

MiM: And the table. [shows with his hands] Big d—big stacks of peanuts. And then at supertime, a piece of ham, a piece of salami, prosciutto would go on the table with bread and fix yourself up.

JP: When your father—

MiM: We walked out of there—

JP: When your father was interned did your mother send food to, um, Petawawa?

MiM: No. She didn't send nothing. 'Cause she didn't know what, how it worked or what. She didn't send, that I remember and we had no Christmas tree. We had no gifts, no nothing. That I remember.

MaM: She took it seriously.

MiM: She took it very seriously.

JP: I—

MiM: She was discouraged.

JP: I'm curious about, um, 'cause there's a lot of questions I have. But, I just want to start a little bit before he was interned. Mary, maybe you would be able to answer this better, I'm not sure, because you were older at the time, but, leading up to June 10th, when, uh, the arrests occurred, was there any feeling in the air? Because Michael, you mentioned something that was a feeling that maybe there was a war coming—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —on. Was there something that you remember noticing in, uh, on the street, in the homes or in the shop, people talking about, you know—

MaM: They, they were—

JP: —fear.

MaM: Eh, Mikey? [looks at MiM] There was something going on. Like there was, uh, how can I say? Not a friction but something's bothering them. Because they knew there's a war going on there.

MiM: Uh, yeah.

MaM: But they didn't think that would happen something here. But there seemed to be a, a coldness, you know? People were thinking about it.

MiM: Yeah. They were thinking about it but they never thought that, uh—

MaM: They knew there was something on the other side—

MiM: —people would be interned for it. Like, the Japanese were and the Italians.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: They never thought of that.

MaM: Yeah.

JP: But you did feel that there was—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Yeah.

JP: And, uh, there was—

MaM: There was something—

JP: There was something in the atmosphere—



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MiM: Yeah.

JP: —that changed.

MiM: That changed.

JP: —the week leading up to it—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —or like no—

MiM: Uh—

MaM: Something was going on. They people were taking it—They don't believe what was going on over there because they didn't think it would come here. But still there was—

MiM: The react—

MaM: —change in the—

MiM: The reaction—

MaM: —quiet down, you know?

MiM: When—

JP: Do you have an example of how you read that feeling? Because you said there was a quietness or there was just, you felt there was something—

MaM: Yeah.

JP: —that was in the air. How, can you give me an example? Would it happen in the way somebody would come into the store and didn't have a conversation? Do you rem—Do you have an example of what something gave you that impression?

MiM: Well, I got an example. I got an impression that one of the salesmen my dad was doing business with had mentioned to him about three weeks to a month before he was arrested and he told them, “There's a war declaring.” And he says, “You better watch it.” He said, “There's a lot of stuff that we weren't able to get during the war.” So he says, uh, meaning, “Watch it,” and that's it. But that's where I heard it and that rem, that remained in me and when my father and uncle, they start picking up people, that, that's when it came back to me.

JP: But you were—Oh, 'cause you heard the man tell, the salesman—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —telling that to your dad.

MiM: Said that to my dad. And my dad says, “Oh, nothing's going to happen.” He says but, I, I could see my dad was worried about something.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Yeah, he was worried about the business because—

MaM: He seemed to be—

MiM: —you see, it's in 1932 and—

MaM: —different.

MiM: —that happened. He was starting to know about it in '39, '40. And that's when the whole thing sort of, let's put it this way, discouraged him, I think.

JP: How did you—

MiM: But he still fought, still fought and he—Well then during the war, we were limited to a lot of stuff.

JP: Right.

MiM: But we had everything we wanted for the bakery. For the food and stuff we had all the—The

ingredients, we had no problems there.

JP: How did you notice it? Do you remember any examples, Mary, of how people were reacting differently? 'Cause obviously this impression has remained with you.

MaM: Yeah. Because—And then, when we used to talk, uh—

MiM: The war would come out.

MaM: —we were always talking about, “Is it going to happen to us? Is it going to come to us?”

MiM: Yeah—They were scared—

MaM: You know—

MiM: —that the was was going to come—

MaM: They all—

MiM: —to America.

MaM: Eventually they all talked about it. Not all of them but the Italians...

MiM: Yes.

JP: They were starting to talk about the possibility—

MaM: The Italians more.

JP: —of the war.

MiM: And the husbands being—

MaM: And—

MiM: —in the concentration camp.

JP: No, I'm talking before the arrest.

MiM: Yeah. Before.

JP: Was there any—

MiM: Well, uh—

JP: —feeling in, uh,

MiM: —some people—

MaM: And then the Italians are worried because it already had started there and they had, you

know—

MiM: Relations.

MaM: —they had families there—

JP: Yeah.

MaM: —that didn't come over. And he says, “What's happening?” And some of them had, uh, mothers and fathers there. So they were worried. They talked about it.

MiM: They were worried.

MaM: And—

MiM: And they sort of, uh—

MaM: —but they couldn't do anything.

MiM: —upsetting my father a bit too.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: He had a sister and he had a brother-in-law in—

MaM: Mother too.

MiM: A mother—

MaM: She did—

MiM: She died in '4—Uh, right after the war. See that, he was worried about that.

MaM: Yeah, of course. It was.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: There was a change.

MiM: But we still kept going.

MaM: There was a change.

JP: There was a change.

MaM: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

JP: And did you feel it, um, 'cause you participated in, um, dances and social functions at times at the Casa D'Italia or maybe things involved with your church, did the social activities start slowing down before? I'm not sure if that's a fair question to ask. If you remem—

MiM: I don't remember. I've got to be honest with you, I don't remember.

JP: No, I thought maybe Mary would remember because you were the middle—

MiM: No. Yeah, but she, she wasn't the one to go out dancing.

MaM: Eh?

JP: She was the store.

MiM: I was the one to go out dancing.

JP: You were the one.

MiM: I was the one that—*Pyoom*. I used to dance. I used to go out.

MaM: It didn't, uh, it didn't affect us at the beginning, you know? Uh, only when my father was interned but, I mean, before, it didn't affect us.

MiM: No.

MaM: I went to church. I went to the girl guides. I was in the choir. I loved it but that the only outing.

JP: What girl guides group were you in?



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MaM: Mmm?

JP: Which girl guides group were you in? Was it the one with the, uh, Protestant church or was it—?

MaM: Protestant church.

JP: They had a—

MaM: Yeah.

JP: Was that a, were you, uh—

MaM: First—

JP: Did you have a uniform?

MaM: The girl guides?

JP: Yeah.

MaM: Yeah. We had—

JP: What was the uniform like?

MaM: Uh, they were khaki or brown or light beige, I don't remember. And then they had the, uh, you know, that, that—

JP: The strap.

MaM: —that band there. [motions across her chest] And we had our little caps. I was proud of it.

MiM: She—

MaM: You know, I was young and I loved the girl guides because that was the only outing we used to do.

MiM: You see me?

MaM: And then I used to go to choir. I loved, I loved choir.

MiM: Oh, she used to play—You used to play the piano.

MaM: Eh? [laughs]

MiM: You used to play the piano.

MaM: Ah!

MiM: And—

MaM: The organ.

MiM: And the organ.

MaM: I played an organ that I had to peddle with my feet. [laughs]

MiM: Oh yeah, the one that you pumped.

MaM: And—

MiM: Oh.

MaM: And now I forgot everything. But I love music. I love music.

MiM: Oh yeah. We used to buy a lot of records during the war. Eh, Mary?

[00:30:00]

MaM: [looks at MiM and laughs]

MiM: And after the war, oh, it was something else.

MaM: We had a happy life before that, you know what I mean?

MiM: And then, uh—

MaM: Everybody had it.

JP: And what—

MaM: We weren't rich.

MiM: But we were—

MaM: There were a lot of poor people. Because, you know—

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: —there was the Depression after that, before that. But my father, when it was the Depression, he had the bakery. Just beginning then. [laughs]. My, I laughed. I says, “Why is he doing that?” The men were coming and were sitting down in front of the bakery. They were crying. They wanted bread. They had no money. You know? So he used to take the bread that—If he found some left over he used to cover them. Eh, Mikey? He used to take the bread and give them some each. Every day he saw men sitting down near the street there.

MiM: There was—

MaM: They had families—

MiM: —instead of throwing it out or—

MaM: They needed something.

MiM: —something, we—

MaM: That was—

MiM: I, I never threw—

MaM: I was young.

MiM: Yeah. Well, he helped.

MaM: So—

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: There was times, you think about it. But those times, [shrugs] to us it was nice, happy. We used to go to [laughs] to picnics. [looks at MiM]

MiM: Oh, Jesus.

MaM: A little car. I don't remember the car. Do you remember, Jerry? [points off screen] I told you?

MiM: Yeah. An old Ford '34.



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MaM: A what?

MiM: 1934 Ford.

MaM: We were five kids, eh? [looks at MiM]

MiM: Uh...

MaM: Leonard wasn't born then.

MiM: No, Leonard wasn't born. We were the five of us and that's how—

MaM: We used to have—

MiM: Sometimes we have your two sister-in-laws, two cousins there.

MaM: Oh yeah.

MiM: Oh my God.

MaM: We used to go, you know where?

MiM: Oka Beach.

MaM: Oka Beach.

MiM: In the—

JP: I remember Oka Beach. I went to Oka Beach.

MiM: In the Indian Reservation on top.

JP: Yeah. I remember that.

MiM: We used to go there.

MaM: And, you know, we, that's the only place we went.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: And I said to my—

MiM: My father at 3:00 in the afternoon, “Okay, come on. We're going home.” “But why?” “We save the traffic.” [shrugs]

MaM: You know, it, it was something different.

JP: Did you participate in anything at the Casa D'Italia when you were children?

MiM: No. Nothing.

JP: Did you go to any, uh, dances—

MiM: No, no, no. He wasn't, he wasn't very keen on that, my father.

JP: But your father worked—

MiM: Oh yeah.

JP: —all day, I would imagine.

MiM: Yeah.

JP: As a baker—

MiM: Seven days a week.

MaM: Yeah. Oh yeah.

MiM: Seven—Uh, 5:30, 5, 5:30 in the morning—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —'til about 7, 8:00.

MaM: And sometimes go up until 9:00, eh?

MiM: Yeah. Depends. And there was something broken at night he had to, he would go back down and repair it. Like—

MaM: And we used to have wagons.

MiM: —we used to do with the trucks so sometimes.

JP: So the only association that your father had time for was the church and you said, was he in the Sons of Italy?

MaM: [shakes her head]

JP: Also? No.

MaM: [looks at MiM] No, no.

MiM: What's that?

MaM: Only Uncle Tony.

JP: Was your father in the Sons of Italy?

MiM: No, no, no. None of us were.

JP: Just the, just the—

MiM: My uncle, my uncle Antonio, he was in the, the—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —the thing of the Sons of Italy. But we weren't in—We used to furnish them with bread. And then when Mr. Dieni had the restaurant downstairs I used to furnish them with bread.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: We kept them for as long as he was alive, until I sold out. Then—

JP: There was something that had come up about, uh, the deliveries of the bread to the Casa D'Italia? Do you want to tell me about that? You were telling me, uh, earlier how, um, they had found one of the receipts from Corona Bakery.

MiM: Yeah. They had found a receipt in the Order of the Sons of Italy. My father had sold some bread. And they thought he belonged.

MaM: Yeah. They thought—

MiM: And when he went in front of the judge and the judge says, “What are you arrested for?” They

says, they told him, “Because we got a receipt that he sold some bread. We thought he belonged to that.” And he said, he says, “No.” And the lawyer says, “No. They, that's their line of business, baking bread and selling it.” So the judge says, “There's nothing wrong with that. You don't belong to that?” “No!” “Do you belong to this?” “No!” He says, “That's it! Goodbye!” That's when my Uncle Tony said different. He says, “No, yeah, I belong to the Sons of Italy.” “The Order of the Sons of Italy?” he says, “Back in you go.”

MiM: Yeah. Oh he went—[looks at MiM] He stayed in two years, eh?

JP: When did you find out why your father was arrested? Did you find out right away? When the policemen came, um, were they in uniform?

MaM: No.

JP: They were plainclothesmen?

MiM: Plainclothesmen.

MaM: Plainclothesmen.

JP: And when they arrested him, uh, what was your father's reaction?

MaM: [inhales]

MiM: Oh, I don't remember. I—

MaM: You know, I was there but—He was stunned, you know? He says, “Why? Did I do something wrong?” He says, “No.” You know, they were—They don't shout out you. When they talk they talk quietly. He say, “No, Mr. Monaco. We just want to talk to you.” “Where am I going?” “You're going downtown.” That's all. My father, they took him by the arm. They didn't force him. He says, “You come.” When they saw that they took him by the arm he went slowly but his face came down. You know? He was so surprised that [motions with her hand across her face]

MiM: Surprised.

MaM: He didn't know what to say. So he went. That's it.

JP: And, and when you saw that, what was your reaction?

MaM: Me, I says, “Why? What's wrong with my father? He doesn't do anything.” But I didn't talk. I couldn't speak because I was, I was afraid of those two men.

JP: And, um—

MaM: [coughs] Then I know, then we got frightened.

JP: Did they search your house?

MaM: No. No.



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MiM: No.

MaM: No.

MiM: Nothing.

MaM: Nothing.

MiM: That I remember. Nothing.

JP: And who broke the news to your mother?

MaM: [laughs]

MiM: I think she saw it when sh—

MaM: She saw cars in the front.

JP: It was more than one car that came?

MaM: Uh, I think—

MiM: No, because I think—

MaM: It was two, eh? [looks at MiM]

MiM: No. I think it was one car but was a commotion and mostly the employees were out—

JP: Talk—

MiM: And they were talking and they were waiting for my uncle to come down.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: There was people around. I guess she must have watched it, seen it from upstairs and—

JP: She came down.

MiM: Uh, I don't remember.

MaM: What?

MiM: I'm sorry. I don't remember.

JP: That's fine. Do you remember if your mother came downstairs, Mary?

MaM: No, I don't remember but I think she—I don't know what. She must have seen a—because there was a stamp on the, uh, car, okay? The stamp of the RCMP—[looks at MiM]

MiM: I don't know. I—

MaM: —on the car, yeah.

MiM: —don't remember, Mary.

MaM: So—

MiM: I was too young. I don't remember.

MaM: —she was, I suppose, looking down from [MiM coughs] the balcony up there. So she comes down and she says, “What happened?” I don't know what to do. I didn't want to tell her but I had to.

MiM: I th—

MaM: I says, “They took Daddy.”

MiM: I think they had an idea—

MaM: Eh?

MiM: —that something was going to happen.

MaM: No.

MiM: But—Yeah, uh, because the rumour was around. I heard a rumour then that they were picking

up certain people from the war, for the war—

MaM: [coughs]

MiM: —figuring...they were the—they belonged to the Order of the Sons of Italy, which they didn't. Then they got all mixed up there. I think that's where they made their mistake. That's where what's his name, made a mistake.

MaM: No.

MiM: Which my father wasn't in there. I know a lot of people that wasn't in there that were in, in the war.

MaM: See, they couldn't search him because they didn't know what—These people are sent, you know, to pick them up. They don't know what's going to happen to them. So all we were order to bring 'em downtown. So they took him. So when my mother heard that and then, you know, uh, I said, “Ma, don't worry. They just—”

MiM: The problem was—

MaM: “—took him. They want to talk.” They had—

MiM: The prob—

MaM: I didn't know what to say.

MiM: I think the problem was that they picked them up and nobody knew what for.

MaM: Yeah. We didn't—

MiM: That, everybody were stunned. “Why? What did they do wrong?” [coughs]

MaM: But you couldn't—

JP: Do you have any idea—Did you expect your father to be back the next day or later that night?

MiM: Uh, we, I figured in about a week or two at most he would be back.

MaM: Yeah, that's what I thought too. You know, I said they're going—

MiM: But when the months start passing and the, the months and everything I said, “Oh.” And I remember that Christmas like I told before, I got up and I don't know, no Christmas tree, no nothing. But next day, I don't know. I think I was gone to, I don't know where I was. I come back, my father's home. “Oh,” I says. I saw all the people in the parlour. Everybody was around him. Next thing he was back at work, the two of them.

JP: When your father came back did you find a difference in him?

MaM: He was, how can I say?

MiM: More quiet?

MaM: You know when you go through something like that? You come back, you're more older or more—

MiM: More mature.

MaM: You know, you feel something more of yourself. But he was so glad to come home that to me, I didn't have time even to look at him. Because he, he wanted to go upstairs, you know? But I think Mama heard, eh, about it? [looks at MiM] That he came back?

MiM: I don't know—

MaM: I don't know for sure. That I'm not sure.

MiM: —I remember Mama vaguely in the parlour with him and everybody came around.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Some neighbours from across the street, I tell ya.

MaM: They all went through it.

MiM: They all came around. I remember one of them says, "Can I go up?" I says, "Oh, go up. Mmm. Go see him." Me, I was outside. I says, I saw him, "Hi, hi." And that's it.

JP: People must have come over that had their husbands still at the internment camp.

MiM: Yeah. Yeah. They were asking about—

JP: Try to get—And did he give them information?

MiM: I don't know. I don't remember.

JP: Do you remember, Mary? Did he—Did he ever talk about the camp?

MaM: No because we never got close enough with each other because the brothers, the only two that stayed together were middle, Vincent and my father.

[00:40:05]

MiM: Oh jeez.

MaM: That one was very private. Uncle Antonio was very private. He thought of his family and his church.

JP: But did—

MaM: But then I didn't even know he had that, uh, Sons of Italy, you know, I didn't know. But he was quite well. He wasn't maltreated. Oh no.

JP: Did you ever ask your father, “Daddy, what was it like?”

MiM: No. We didn't, we didn't have a chance. We were too scared of him.

MaM: Oh no. You didn't do it.

MiM: We were too scared of him.

MaM: He didn't want to talk about it.

MiM: He was a man—

JP: How did, how did you know that he didn't want to talk about it? Was it actually said or was it implied?

MiM: It was implied.

MaM: Yeah. Yeah. I think it was that.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: Because father, my father had a lot—

MiM: He was—

MaM: —of pride.

MiM: A lot of pride and he would do things on his own. Even if it was right or wrong he would do it on his own. And he wouldn't let you know.

MaM: Yeah.

JP: Now, would he ever talk about it if other men came over, friends of his or even men that he had been interned with, let's say a few years—

MiM: Maybe they did, but—

MaM: But I—Not around us.

MiM: —I wouldn't, I wouldn't, I wouldn't hang around, I wouldn't of, uh, have gotten in between him. 'Cause sometimes he would talk to certain people on the road while he was delivering bread but I—

MaM: But I don't think so—

MiM: —I don't think, I wouldn't bother to get into it.

MaM: I don't think so because—

JP: What was—

MaM: —he was afraid that something would happen to him, you know what I mean, if he talks about it.

JP: Do you think he was living in fear even after he came out?

MiM: That I don't know. I never talked to him about it.

MaM: Nah.

MiM: And he never mentioned a word about it.

MaM: No.

JP: He never talked about the—

MiM: No.

JP: —camp?

MiM: No.

MaM: Never.

MiM: Just said that—

MaM: All he said, "We were will treated."

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: "We weren't abused. We weren't maltreated."

MiM: Uh, he says, "You listened to the guard and they would give us what we wanted."

MaM: "If you did what they said, you're okay."

MiM: "Never had one problem. We ate as much as we want." So I says, "Well, they were well treated."
And I passed there once, oh, about ten years ago, in Petawawa.

JP: Mmm.

MiM: And I stopped at the guard, at the door. It's a, it's a big, huge camp. I said to him, I says, "Is the, the shack still there of the people that were interned during the war, beginning of the war?" He says, "No. All you're going to see in the fields are pillars of cement. That's all you're going to see. The houses are all un—They're all demolished." "Oh." He says, "The government after the war says, "Take everything down."" Maybe the government feels they did something wrong or what, we don't know. They, we never got the truth out of it.

JP: How do you feel that there is nothing there? How does that make you feel?

MiM: Makes you feel that they made a mistake.

JP: Why does that make you feel like they made a mistake?

MiM: Because if it wasn't, uh, to me—

MaM: It's true.

MiM: —if it's demolished that means they don't want you to know what mistake they made. But if it was something good they did, they would have left it there and showed the people as an exhibition—

MaM: That's true.

MiM: —or an amusement park to get people to visit. And I got the impression that they took it apart because they made a mistake.

MaM: Yeah. That's right.

JP: What do you think, Mary?

MaM: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

JP: What signal is that giving you?

MaM: I—

JP: What—

MaM: I was angry.

MiM: I was angry too—

MaM: Angry.

MiM: I says, “He doesn't do noth—“ Okay—

JP: You know—

MiM: It's like, like, I know the system of the RCMP. If they do something it's because it's a written order. My son-in-law is that. He's a superintendent and he says, “If we go after something, it's got to be written. Then we go. We don't like it but we gotta do it. We could be wrong but we gotta do it.”

JP: That's right. That's their job.

MiM: So I know some people never liked the RCMP. But you try and explain that to some people. They don't want to understand that. They, like the French guy that didn't want to see my father, his son-in-law said that, his son said to my father, he says, “I know you were taken in by mistake but,” he says, “my father doesn't see it that way. And I can't get him to change.” So he says, “Okay. No argument.” He says, “I'm sorry to lose you.” “No,” he says. “You're going to leave the bread at my sister's place.” “Okay.” So I used to leave more bread there and travel by the back and put the bread into the house.

[laughs]

MaM: Yeah. No.

JP: You were saying it makes you angry. What makes you angry, Mary? Was it, we were talking, I was just talking with Michael about how there's nothing left in Petawawa and you said, "Yeah, that makes me angry." Um—

MaM: Yeah, because it's like he said, uh, why? Why was he—

MiM: Why did—

MaM: You know?

MiM: Why did they dissolve everything?

MaM: But then, like today, when they take you in, but they go through you, eh? They do everything, from top to bottom. They have to know what's what. But then they took him right away like that because they had a list from someone, you know, that wanted—

MiM: That's what I had heard but I couldn't prove it.

JP: Okay, well, I showed you today some of the, um, archival evidence—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —of, um, Father Bersani. Uh, no, Minister Bersani.

MiM: Minister Bersani.

MaM: Oh yeah. [rolls her eyes]

JP: Who was a minister at your church.

MiM: Yeah, United Church.

JP: Your, you both know the man, I believe, right?

MiM: I do, anyhow. I never agreed with him but—

JP: Okay and you, you had mentioned—

MaM: I—

JP: —you had met him, Mary? Minister Bersani?

MaM: Yeah.

JP: Okay. Well, because Minister Bersani had, had made lists. And the, uh, authorities were aware of these lists.

MiM: Yeah.

JP: Your uncle was on that list, for example.

MaM: Yeah. That's right.

JP: Um, what, what do you remember? Like, your father had mentioned that to you didn't, you weren't sure.

MiM: Uh, he didn't mention it to us.

MaM: No, not to us.

MiM: But he was talking to a flower salesman and some friends, some Italian friends that was with him in, in jail, in the concentration camp, he would meet them. Sometimes they would come and because they wanted manure for a garden in the Spring. So they would come and see my father. He says, "Okay. I'll put you on the list." And then they would start talking. And then they, the one of them said, "Do you know who reported us?" My father says, "i think I have an idea but—"

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Then he says, "The minister." So my father says, "Well, what are you going to do? Where is he?" He says, "He's gone to the States," the other guy said. And I heard all that. Then I finally, about a year or two after I heard that he was dead. Now, where? Somewhere in Boston or Pennsylvania,

somewhere in there.

JP: Hmm.

MiM: But he died. He did, uh, died maybe four or five years after? Give or take.

JP: How do you remember Bersani, Mary? What kind of a man was he?

MaM: Well, you know, I—We were young then, you know? He was a minister. But there was times [laughs] I, I didn't like him, you know? I don't know why. Maybe it was his preaching or it was his personality. Because he had a heck of a personality. [looks at MiM]

MiM: Well, I don't remember him. I used to go to Sunday school—

MaM: To me, you know—

MiM: I used to jump it often— [laughs]

MaM: —you take a priest, a minister, whoever it is, it shows that he likes what he does, eh?

MiM: yeah.

MaM: But to him he used to do it just as if it was a homework, you know? Just preach the word and that's it. You get it, you get it.

MiM: Yeah, well, you see there's was another thing there because he was doing something else in behind.

MaM: Yeah. Sure.

MiM: Which was—

MaM: But to me—

MiM: I don't know—How did it feel?

MaM: Not—

MiM: Oh sorry.

MaM: Yeah. But he gave me scalera[?]. When he preached, I didn't know his background—

MiM: Oh yeah.

MaM: But when he preached you knew what he was preaching about.

MiM: Well, that's where the argument started and my father separated from the—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —church. My Uncle Vincent stuck with United and my father went with Presbyterian. And the other minister took over.

JP: Which other minister took over?

MiM: DiPiero, I think it was. Was it? [looks at MaM]

MaM: Oh, Mr. DiPiero. We had—Oh he was nice too.

MiM: There was another minister that my father went to see, DiPiero.

MaM: Yeah. He was—

MiM: He was—

MaM: He was our first minister that we went into the Protestant church.

MiM: Yeah, into the Presbyterian and he had a church built by a certain family out in Westmount.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: They built, they built the church and everything. And he was—

MaM: Very nice.

MiM: That you could say he was a real minister. He didn't think of, uh—

MaM: Anything outside of the church.

MiM: It was just the church.

JP: I'm just curious and I realize this is a difficult question, but when your father was interned considering what we all know today and it's public knowledge about Bersani, having had, having worked as a paid informant, did, was there any rift in the church during that time? What happened? What was the, uh, the mood like at the church?

MiM: Well, he was gone from the church.

JP: 1940. Like after your father was arrested, the, the following Sundays—

MiM: Uh, he wasn't there. He disappeared.

JP: Bersani disappeared.

MiM: Yes.

MaM: He—

MiM: The church because they had to get another min—



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JP: He was here just prior to the internment? Do you remember, Mary? I'm asking just 'cause you're older. You may have remembered. Uh, before your father was interned, before the war, was Bersani still—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —operating at the church.

MiM: Before the war, yes.

JP: And it was just that—

MaM: Yes. He was.

MiM: Yeah, after they, after they started, uh—

JP: Arresting?

MiM: —arresting the people—

MaM: Yeah.

[00:50:00]

MiM: Bersani disappeared.



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MaM: Then he was doing queer things, you know, we noticed it.

MiM: Uh...

MaM: He used to miss.

MiM: Then he disappeared.

MaM: Yeah. He missed, he used to come in.

MiM: And that's when he caught on. He disappeared. Why?

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: And then, I don't know how they found out and then the rumour started that it was him that gave everybody the names.

JP: And this was found out before the men came back.

MiM: Yes.

JP: Spread already to the—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —Italians.

MaM: He—

MiM: Yes. He had to get another minister during the war.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: They, and that's where we split up there and my father says, “Now, we're going to the—”

JP: Does come in during the war?

MiM: I don't remember.

JP: Do you remember, Mary? Because you remember scalera[?]. Was he there?

MiM: I think it was after the war.

JP: Oh, after. But not during—

MaM: No.

JP: —internment.

MiM: Yeah because they built the church, I think, '46 or '47.

MaM: Yeah. No. It was after the war.

MiM: After the war.

JP: Okay, so during the war, as soon as the arrests happened—

MiM: Mmm.

JP: —what happened, what happened to the church? Was it able to stay together?

MiM: Oh, I don't know. That, I can't answer you.

JP: Do you remember? Do you remember still playing the music there, the organ?

MaM: Well, when I—

MiM: During the war?

MaM: No, they were, they were separated. Yeah.

MiM: They were separated?

MaM: Yeah, we were United with Bersani.



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MiM: Yeah, but we—

MaM: And then, no.

MiM: No Bersani, Bersani opened—

MaM: No.

MiM: —a different church, Mary.

MaM: And he, Uncle Vincent was the, uh, not, uh, United, eh?

MiM: Bersani, I think was United.

MaM: Presbyt, Presbyterian.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: So when Bersani, we were Presbyterian.

MiM: No, we were United, Mary.

MaM: No.

MiM: Yes, Bersani was the United.



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MaM: Are you sure it was Bersani?

MiM: Now wait a minute. I'm lost here.

MaM: No, no.

JP: Okay, but in any case, uh, there was a division.

MiM: Yes.

MaM: Yes, oh yes.

JP: It wasn't like—

MiM: Yes, it was—

MaM: Yes.

MiM: Yes.

JP: There was a division.

MiM: There was a division, right.

JP: And what, what about, uh, during that time while your father and other bread winners were away was there any kind of relief being given to the community?

MiM: No. Unless—

JP: Do you remember like other people, 'cause maybe you said your, your, your mother had to work at the bakery.

MiM: Yeah. Well she, she didn't work but she had to look after most of the money when she had a deposit. She did most of the work. And then my mother, uh, could see what was going on. But my mother didn't know nothing about the business.

MaM: Yeah. She took the cash that was coming in.

MiM: You see she—

MaM: I used to—

MiM: She didn't, she didn't know nothing. Uh, we had our Leo, her husband, then they had his brother taking care of—

MaM: But the finance, she took care of it.

MiM: Well, to pay the bills and everything my mother was there a bit but my mother didn't know nothing about the business.



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JP: There must have been a very difficult time for your family—

MiM: There—

JP: —and especially for—

MiM: Yes.

JP: —your father.

MiM: Yes. Very hard time.

JP: Uh—

MiM: It was very hard. It was almost—

JP: You were living on credit.

MiM: Oh yeah.

JP: You were extending credit—

MaM: Yeah.

JP: —to Italian families who couldn't pay for their bread.

MaM: Sure.

MiM: That's it. You had to.

MaM: But, you know—

MiM: That's the only way to keep the customers.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: And even if they paid, certain customers would have paid us, where was the money coming from? If they were living—

MaM: Yeah. That's right.

MiM: —they were all, most of them were all workers, daily workers. And, uh—

MaM: There was quite a difference.

MiM: —some of them had business but some business guys were in jail.

MaM: yeah.

MiM: The children or the wife was running the store or a butcher shop or whatever it was.

MaM: Yeah, you used to help out.

MiM: And right after the war that's when it started picking up and he came back—

MaM: 'Cause my father bought—

MiM: —got the credit back going. Some people already, some other people already got out of the concentration camp, they start working and I guess maybe with time—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: The debt was paid off.

JP: Mary, did you tell people that, uh, your friends, or even you, Michael, at school, did you discuss it with your friends that your father had been interned?

MiM: No. Not me. I—

MaM: Well—

MiM: I don't know about her.

MaM: —sometimes they'd ask me. They says, "How is your father?" I says, "He's doing fine." You

know? “Did he have a hard time at the, uh, camp?” I says, “No. He was well treated.”

MiM: Oh no, they were well treated.

MaM: You know, I mean, uh—

MiM: I don't—

MaM: —you had to do what they say but he said, “No.”

MiM: Unless some of them—excuse me—Unless some of them—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —didn't listen to the guard or something. When my father says, this I remember him saying, “You listened to the guard and you got everything.”

JP: And when he was picked up, uh, the next, the weeks that followed, did you talk to any of your friends, for example asking them questions like, “Was your father picked up? Did you get any news?”

MiM: Everybody, everybody knew.

JP: Oh you didn't—But didn't—Did you talk amongst your—

MiM: No.

JP: —friends?

MiM: No.

JP: Did you have friends who's fathers were also picked up?

MiM: Oh yes.

JP: So—

MaM: Yeah.

JP: —within those friends—

MiM: No. They didn't talk—

JP: —was there any—

MiM: No.

JP: —sort of assistance or—

MiM: No.

JP: —help saying, “Don't worry...” or—

MiM: No.

MaM: The only t, time we talked about it was the family because we were so worried. We didn't know what was happening. But the friends—

MiM: Didn't talk—

MaM: No.

MiM: Neither of them wanted to talk about it.

JP: Why was that?

MiM: I don't know. I guess they were, they were too surprised. In my opinion is—

MaM: I—

MiM: —a lot of them were, were, sorry—

JP: No, no. Go ahead. Finish, Michael

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: A lot of them were arrested and never thought it was going to be them.

MaM: Yeah. No—

MiM: You see my dad was, was told by salesmen that, “We're, we're going to war.” And maybe the other, some people probably never admitted to themselves that they were at war and they probably were scared at what they already pass in their country—

JP: Hmm.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —was it, is it going to come here to Canada?

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: That's—There's things I found out about ten years ago about Newfoundland that I never knew about. There was German subs in the entrance of the port of St. John. And they're, they're buried underneath the ground, underneath the water.

JP: Wow.

MiM: German submarine. And you should have seen the cannon they had, just the length of this house. A can—three cannons they had. They go up, they aim them and they fire and then bingo, the cannon would fall into a box. And the R—the Germans could never see where that fire came from.

That was explained to us in, in Newfoundland. And they said there's maybe a dozen submarines are sunk at the bottom at the entrance of the port. I never knew that, so the war was near.

JP: Mary, why don't you think the girls didn't talk about it with friends? Why would you not have thought about talking about it with friends even as a—

MaM: Well, I—

JP: —as a way of helping each other, cope.

MaM: Maybe I was, I was afraid or—I don't know. Maybe they thought bad about us when my father was picked up. I don't really know. All I know that there was like a, a coldness, you know, between the, uh, not—

JP: A coldness?

MaM: Yeah. Not the Italians.

MiM: The French people.

MaM: The Italians used to talk about it but I didn't like about it because I, I'm a proud woman. I'm too proud. But—

JP: The Italians talked about it amongst themselves—

MaM: Yeah. They talked to—They wanted to talk about it. Because they—

JP: They—

MaM: They were in it. You know.

JP: Wait a minute. I'm sorry. So I don't understand—

MaM: And to us—

JP: The Italians who wanted to talk about it—

MaM: Here.

JP: —were the ones that were, uh, were the, were the wives and the children of the men that were interned while they were interned or they wanted to talk about it—

Man: While they were interned or even when they weren't interned. They wanted to know what happened to my father, how we were, you know. We used to talk about it. But the others that had families over there. You know—

MiM: Oh yeah, during the war—

MaM: —they didn't talk much about it.

JP: Was there any kind of discrimination, uh, that was occurring? You gave an example, Michael, uh, that happened after where they still wanted your bread—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —but that man was using it as a way of making a statement. Um, while the men were interned was there, did you notice any kind of discrimination with, uh, uh, either French or English friends? Or even for that matter Italians staying away from families who had someone interned.

MiM: Well, there, there was some—

MaM: Some, not all.

MiM: —some italians that were not arrested. Why not them? There were a few that weren't arrested. Why not them? So that's what used to bug me. I was young and I said, “Why not him?” Maybe he knows something or maybe he was friendly with somebody that his name was—

MaM: That's, that's it.

MiM: But then when I found out, when I overheard that the minister had given the details of the list out to the RCMP, I says, “Oh boy. Now we know why.” And that was it. But I could never have confirmed it until now when you told me it was written in a report.

JP: Yeah. Mary, did you have, did you have any kind of discrimination growing up around here?



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MaM: No.

MiM: No. Not here, we were—

JP: Everyone got along?

MaM: I didn't have time to think about it.

MiM: No. There was, uh—

MaM: I didn't have time to think about it.

MiM: —there was a lot of families—

MaM: I had so much to worry about.

MiM: Eh, Mary? There was a lot of Italian families before.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Because the front was not developed and this house was not built—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —as—Maybe there were about five houses on this street.

MaM: Yeah.

JP: Empty lots.

MiM: Empty lots. They were all gardens.

JP: Gardens.

MiM: And, and on the other side, the old homes were all Italian people.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: One or two Polish. And they would keep quiet. They wouldn't say a word.

MaM: But we had a lot of French people out at the back of us.

MiM: The back part, yeah. The back part we did.

MaM: A lot.

MiM: And they were come and get our bread and everything.

MaM: Yeah.



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MiM: No arguments.

MaM: No. They never talked about us.

MiM: They were never talked—

MaM: No.

MiM: We never denied, they didn't.

JP: Did your father write letters to your mother?

[1:00:01]

MiM: Not, not that I know of.

MaM: No. Because my mother didn't know how to read.

MiM: But—

MaM: She didn't have much schooling.

MiM: —don't gyp her in money. Oh no. You don't gyp her in money.

MaM: [laughs]

MiM: Oh no. Once I tried it. [laughs] She says, “You give that money back.” “Ma, that's what the price.”
“Give it.” It was only three cents.

MaM: Oh yeah. She was like that.

MiM: It was only three cents. But he says, “You'll learn what that is.”

MaM: But she grew up a family.

MiM: Oh, she—

MaM: She was proud of them.

JP: What's your mother's first name?

MiM: Georginda.

MaM: Georginda.

JP: Georginda.

MaM: Georginda Donatelli.

MiM: That was her original family name and—

MaM: Eh?

JP: She was also from Ohoulli[?]

MiM: No.

JP: No?

MiM: She was from, uh, where's she from? [looks at MaM] I don't know.

MaM: Abruzzis.

MiM: Abruzzis.

JP: Abruzzis.

MiM: Yeah. My father was from Ohoulli[?].

MaM: She was—My, my father was—from Lalineia[?].

MiM: Yeah, yeah.

MaM: Lalineia[?].

MiM: But my father's story goes back—

MaM: But their parents, his, his parents came from Ohoulli[?].—

MiM: Yeah, but his original—

MaM: —then they—

MiM: Yeah, but his original parents way, way, way back in the—

MaM: Oh.

MiM: —1700s, they came from, they crossed over from Albania to Italy.

MaM: Yeah. They came from Albania. But then, you know, they had to get so work they, they went from one country to another—

MiM: They came over and there was a name there, Del Monaco, there in that place and they took the name Monaco—

MaM: Yeah.

JP: Hmm.

MiM: —when they crossed over and that's where they continued because there's a lot of people today—There's a car dealer up, uh, [points] that sells auto parts on Gerry[?] Street, you look at him and you look at my father, it's the same characters.

MaM: You know where—

MiM: He's got the same as me and I says—

MaM: You get the, uh, the heritage? All the, uh, where we started with the name Monaco?

MiM: Hmm.

MaM: Our cousin, Mike, uh, what's his name there, that died, our cousin gave us. Our name came from a cardinal from France.

MiM: Oh yeah. Way back in 1700s.

MaM: Monaco and—

MiM: It was a cardinal but you see—

MaM: —you know, the Italians mixed up—

MiM: —as far as the 1700, they couldn't go back any further because the, they were in Albania. And it

seems they had a lot of children and they moved all over the place. That's why the name Monaco goes—Like, today it's a lot of people—

MaM: I'm proud.

MiM: You look at the, this car dealer that sells pieces, you look at him—

MaM: I have a cardinal in my heritage.

MiM: —and, uh, I says to myself, “Eh, you look like my father.” He says, “Well, I got the name the same as you.” So when I walk in I says, “Good morning Monaco.” He says, “Good morning Monaco.” Everybody looks at us, “Eh, [Unknown] .” I says, “No.”

MaM: No. The—

MiM: Maybe, maybe we are but very far back.

JP: Right.

MiM: So, what are you going to do?

MaM: Yeah, a woman asked me, “*Vous-etes popalati avec la Pies[?]*” “*Quelle Price[?]*”

MiM: Oh yeah.

JP: [laughs]

MiM: They ask us that. I says, “No. Far from it.”

JP: When um—

MaM: Y—

JP: When you father, uh, came back after the internment, you said he went right back to work right away because obviously there had been the debts—

MaM: Oh sure.

JP: —and was very concerned with, uh, paying off the debts—

MiM: Uh, yeah. He was concerned about the business.

JP: And, um, as time went on did you see, you said he didn't have time to talk about it. Why do you think he never shared his experience with his children and his family?

MaM: No. Not to me.

JP: No, just—

MaM: No.

JP: Why do you think he never—

MiM: He never, he never—

JP: What was your guess?

MiM: He, well, to her [point to MaM] or?

JP: Well, both of you.

MiM: Alright, he never was a man to talk about his affairs.

MaM: No. No. He—

MiM: My father would teach, my father would say to me—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —“You know how to drive? You know where the shifters are?” I says, “Yeah.” That's the first time when I started, I used to shift for him.

MaM: My father never—

MiM: He used to drive. Then one day he says to me, “Get on it.”

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: I says, "Why?" "You're going to drive. You know how to shift?" I says, "Yeah." "So drive." "But how do I do it?" "You I—You watch me? Do it."

MaM: That's—

MiM: That was it. He went away to Italy once for about a month. Comes to me a week before, he says, "Take over." That was—

MaM: But mother, though—

MiM: I was what? 22? 24? He says, "You can run it." I says—

MaM: You were the first one.

MiM: My, I had his brother, my uncle, he helped me. I didn't—He was a man that way that—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: He never would tell his business to nobody, keep it to himself and when he wanted something out of you, you do it. *Puh!*

MaM: That's it.

Mim: Take it.

JP: Did your father, um, didn't speak about it because possibly he was afraid of talking about it or possibly he didn't want to think about it or possibly was part of his character? How do you read it? What do you—

MaM: I think that—

JP: What's your guess, Mary?

MaM: No, I think it's more that he went into something that he didn't belong or that he didn't expect that what it took to him because he was a good man. So to him he says, "I went to there. Why?" I mean, to me it wasn't a, a, a good experience, to him it was a bad experience. So I think that's what's happening. He kept it into him. He didn't want anybody to know—

MiM: How he—

MaM: —what happened to him. You know what I mean?

MiM: He never talked about it.

MaM: He was that kind of man.

JP: Considering that your father never felt he did anything wrong and being interned unjustifiably

being put on the list even more unjustifiably—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —what kind of affect do, do you imagine that had on him after?

MiM: Oh, I wish I—

JP: I'm realizing it's, it's a just a guess that you can do because you never discussed it but—

MiM: He's a guy—

JP: —your dad, what do you think he, what do you think the camp did to him?

MiM: I think it left a bad impression inside of him.

MaM: He knows more.

MiM: I think if left a bad impression on him.

MaM: Oh it did. It did.

MiM: He never expected, like she said before, he never expected nothing and he never thought he'd, he'd get to that point. To him the RCMP were a very strict police force. And when he got arrested by them...[nods] And he didn't know then that that's what I wanted to be.

MaM: No, he was strict.

Mim: He looked at me, he—

MaM: He taught us to respect—

MiM: He says, “Take my business.” I says—

MaM: And to help my mother. My mother was, she was expecting at four years after, eh, or no, [looks at MiM] seven years after she gets another child. She was 42 years old.

MiM: Yeah. No. She was, uh, yeah. Leonard.

MaM: You know.

MiM: She was pregnant—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —right, right after, I still got another brother.

JP: How do you think it changed your father, this experience, Mary?

MiM: He—

JP: How did it affect him? Did, uh, do you think that he, he was carrying pain with him? Do you think, uh, he was actually able to let it go?

MaM: I, I can't tell you that because—

JP: No, I—It's just a guess just based on how you saw your father.

MiM: Mmm.

MaM: I don't know. I can't, you know, because he didn't express himself to us. He never—He was a man that—

MiM: We never sat down with him and, and discussed—

MaM: You know—

MiM: —our problems with him.

MaM: He had—To him—

MiM: He—

MaM: —he had that. He had his business, he had his family. If we sat down at the table he would never—

MiM: Talk.

MaM: —you know, give us a conversation.

JP: What did you speak at home, did you speak Italian? English? French? Albanian?

MiM: Uh—

MaM: No, to us he'd speak in Italian—

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: —at home.

MiM: At home he would speak to us in Italian and us we would speak English between us.

MaM: Between us was English.

JP: And did your home feel Canadian or Italian?

MiM: Canadian.

MaM: [laughs and shrugs]

MiM: Canadian.

MaM: I think it was English more, eh?

MiM: What could he—

MaM: I think two or more—

MiM: We—

MaM: —you know?

MiM: We—

MaM: Our mother it was Italian.

MiM: My mother, she spoke French, spoke English—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —spoke Italian. We didn't—When she didn't want to listen she would just not answer us. “Ma! Why aren't you answering?” She's look at you. I mean, ask in Italian. I used to ask her in Italian—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —because I know what's going to happen. If I leave early you're going to forget all your Italian and she was right.

MaM: And that—

MiM: I got to admit she was right.

MaM: —speak Italian, it was—

JP: Did you feel—

MaM: —good for us.

JP: Sorry, Mary. No, you're going—Sorry.

MaM: [laughs]

JP: I walked over what you said. You're glad that she spoke Italian to you. Did you feel Italian or Canadian growing up?

MaM: [shrugs]

JP: Or both?

MaM: Both.

MiM: Uh—

MaM: Eh? [looks at MiM]

MiM: ...We were never close to him so—

MaM: No.

MiM: —it's hard to say. We were never able to sit down and discuss things with him or talk—

JP: No, you personally.

MiM: Personally...to me—

JP: You felt Italian or Canadian or both?

MiM: I felt Italian...

MaM: [laughs]

MiM: I don't know, to be honest.

MaM: [laughs]

JP: Did you—

MiM: I'll, I'll be honest with you. I can't answer that. I don't know.

JP: Okay, no problem, no problem. That's, that's fine. It's just a question 'cause I'm trying to understand. Like, your father, your father, did he come across as an Italian man or a Canadian man? The reason I'm asking you this is, here he is being arrested for fear that he may do something against Canada but your father had a business here. He was firmly planted in, in, uh, Montreal society, Canadian society. Do you think it was possible at that time for somebody to feel both Italian and proud of their Italian roots and to feel proud to be Canadian at the same time?

[01:10:12]

MiM: Well, I can't answer you that. I don't know. I'll be honest.

JP: No.

MiM: But I do know he never wanted to go back to Italy.

JP: Hmm.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: All at once I think in the '50s he said to me, "I'm going away for a week." And, um, eh, I says, "No." And my mother didn't want to go by plane.

MaM: No.

MiM: She says, "I'll go by boat to begin with but I come back by plane." 'Cause the boat was too long. He says, "Okay." He went to Italy, he came back and he says, "Nah. I don't want to go there anymore."

MaM: No.

MiM: "Italy's changed completely," he says, "I'll stay Canadian here." That's all I, that's all it was.

MaM: But she fell sick, eh?

MiM: Eh?

MaM: She fell sick—

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: —when she went. You know, because those homes are made of—

MiM: Uh—

MaM: —cement blocks. You know, cement blocks?

JP: It's, uh, cement—

MaM: When she used to go into bed—

JP: —blocks.

MaM: —she said—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: The humidity.

MaM: —the sheets were humid.

JP: Yeah. That's right.

MaM: So she was losing weight and she couldn't eat because, you know, she was always cold. So what the doctor told my father, he says, “Mr. Monaco, take your wife and go back home. She's going to die here. We are used to it. But she isn't.” She came back. I says, “Ma, what happened to you?” “Don't talk about it. [MiM laughs] I'm not going back.”

MiM: [laughs]

MaM: “The place is nice,” she said. “But when you sleep in those beds...” You know about it, eh?

JP: Yeah.

MiM: Oh you've been. You've been there.

MaM: Terrible.

JP: Yes.

MaM: She lost so much weight.

MiM: That's—

MaM: We prayed for her.

MiM: That's one thing I never went—I never went to Italy. And I don't miss it. We have nobody there.

JP: Right.

MiM: We had an auntie but we lost her.

JP: That's, uh, Marietta.

MiM: Yeah.

JP: Your aunt.

MaM: But, you know, my niece, Susan, she went to Italy. They love it. Because, you know, it's such a beautiful country. They travel but they don't, you don't go into private little homes, you know?

JP: Right.

MaM: That they have the—She has a, a, a friend that they have, the parents had a home there but they took care of it. That girl, her friend, still has the home there. She's just not far from our mother. A little south of her. But the home is not the same—

JP: No.

MaM: —as those little huts, you know? But every time they go there they have a great time. But they travel.

JP: I want to ask you something because we were talking about Petawawa—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —and, um, I've been there also. And you're right, like Michael was saying, there's nothing there except a few posts.

MiM: Yeah.

JP: And you had actually been there. Can you tell me, as much as you can remember, Mary, from how, who you went with, how you got there and if you got there by car, by train and what you remember

seeing around you?

MaM: Frankly, I don't remember anything. All I know is that there were, uh, you know, big, uh, huts, you know, all in a row there. Like, they had camps.

JP: Did you go through guards?

MaM: Yes.

JP: You went through guards. Do you remember barbed wire, uh, gates around it?

MaM: No, I don't remember—

JP: You went by car or by train?

MaM: I went by car. They come and pick me up.

JP: It was who—

MaM: Now, who came and picked me up—

JP: You don't remember.

MaM: —I don't remember.

JP: And when you got there, uh, were there any soldiers in the room with any guns?

MaM: No.

JP: Did you see, did you see guns at all?

MaM: [shakes her head]

JP: And your father, what was he wearing?

MaM: Just a, like a, a khaki shirt. Something in a, you know, that colour. A blouse, you know, a shirt and, uh, the same coloured pants. That was it. No number. Nothing on him.

JP: And no—

MaM: No.

JP: —bullseye on the back of the jacket?

MaM: No, no.

JP: He didn't look like a prisoner?

MaM: No. To me, you know, I look at him and you know, my father, he says to me, "Don't talk too loud." Me, I wasn't talking. I wouldn't even whisper. He says, "Sit down." I says, "I'll, I'll talk," he says.

“Okay.” So he told me, he says, “Don't tell, tell your mother not to worry. Everything is fine here.” So he kept telling what he does.

JP: Did you believe him when he told you this? Did he look like he was, uh, being sincere or did he look like he had to say this?

MaM: He talked about his business.

JP: Pardon?

MaM: He talked about the business. He says, “How is it doing?” Then I told him, you know, my husband was taking care of, his brother. Then we had another driver.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: Something.

MiM: Uh, Krusto.

MaM: Yeah. Then we had another driver. I says, “Don't worry. The, the bread's going out.” I didn't tell him, you know, things were going up—

MiM: It was the finances.

MaM: —they were going down.

MiM: It was the finances.

MaM: I said, "Don't worry. We're all helping each other. I go too. I count the bread. I count the money." That's what he wanted to know. You know, the business. I said, "Don't worry." "Okay." But he wasn't, uh, a calm person. You know, you could tell that—

JP: He was nervous?

MaM: —something was bothering him or something was—Sure, he was worrying him. He kept, you know, fidgeting, you know, and going side by side and unclaspings. I says, "Oh my. He's worried."

MiM: Oh yeah.

JP: Because he's normally, he normally wasn't a man who would fidget and all this? He would—

MaM: [shakes her head]

JP: The way he was behaving in front of you, you remember his behaviour not being what it normally was.

MaM: No, he wasn't like that when he was normal. I mean—

JP: Like—

MiM: Wasn't—

MaM: —to me he fidgeted so much I says, “What's wrong with you?”

MiM: He put on weight didn't he?

MaM: Eh?

MiM: Didn't he put on weight a bit?

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Eh?

MaM: [nods]

JP: Were there other families present?

MaM: No.

JP: In, or you were private with your father?

MaM: Yeah. Nobody was there. Just a table and a chair. Or maybe two chairs.

JP: Big room or small road?

MaM: [shrugs]

MiM: Don't remember.

MaM: I think it wasn't very big, you know, I mean, it could have been the size of this [points around the room]. But you know I, I don't remember nothing. All I know that when I went in the guard was there.

MiM: She—I think she was so stunned—

MaM: And he knew—

MiM: —that probably—

MaM: —you were coming.

MiM: —she was lost there.

JP: Were you scared—

MaM: Oh yeah.

JP: —up there? Like, as you were going up there did you—

MaM: Oh! I was terrified.

JP: What was in your mind as you were going up there? What was, what was going on in your head as you were driving up to Petawawa?

MaM: [laughs] I don't even—I was so scared, I don't remember.

MiM: I think it took a while—

MaM: I was worried.

MiM: —to get there.

MaM: I says, “Where is this? Where is that?” It's not far, eh Mikey?

MiM: It's outside of Ottawa.

MaM: Is it far? [to JP]

JP: Yeah, it's, uh, it's just outside of Ottawa.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: It's outside of Ottawa. It's on the other side of Ottawa.

JP: But, I mean, for you to go there by car and you're given a half hour and you drive back another three hours—

MiM: Oh no, it's more than that.

JP: Four hours.

MiM: It's probably four hours.

JP: Okay—

MiM: 'Cause the roads were—

JP: —four hours.

MiM: I'm sure the roads weren't what they used to be.

JP: Not what they are today.

MiM: Not like today.

JP: Actually you're absolutely right.

MiM: Today, uh, two and a half hours I go to my daughter, I mean, it takes me three but back in those days I'm sure the 417 didn't exist. Probably used all the side roads.

JP: That's right. So, uh—

MaM: But there's no more Petawawa now?

JP: Uh, it's—

MiM: The army camp is there.

MaM: Eh?

JP: The army camp is still there.

MiM: The army camp is there.

MaM: Oh.

MiM: But where the—

MaM: —the people were

JP: [Unknown]

MiM: —huts were, all demolished. And that's when I say the government did a mistake there and they felt guilty about what they did and just destroyed everything.

JP: How do you feel about this today? Because this happened 70 years ago?

MiM: Yeah. To me 70 years ago.

JP: Yeah. All this. Uh, when you look back at it now how does it make you feel about, um, what happened? What do you think should have been done for these men, for your family? Um, how do you feel about the silence? How this has all been kept quiet?

MiM: Well—

MaM: You know, I was 22, eh? I didn't have much experience with the law or with, um, courts or anything. Uh, we were kept private, you know? So when this happened and now I think about it, I says, "Okay. There was a war going on in Europe. Now, why did they bother us here?" But they didn't bother us, not the, the government or, or the courts, it was the person that did the wrong for us. You know what I mean? That person knew that the war was there and he could make money out of the people that he knew that were in those, uh, committees.

MiM: The organizations.

MaM: You know? So he says, "I'm going to make money." That's what I get mad at, that priest or that minister.

MiM: Minister.

MaM: He wasn't even supposed to speak the word of the Lord. And there he had at the back of his mind that he made money out of my father? That's what gets me. But then, today, look what they do to you. They go from top to bottom before they arrest you and sometimes they even make mistakes.

JP: Hmm.

MaM: So that's what gets me, you know? Sometimes I think about it and I says, "Well, my father came out of it very well. You, you know, he had to work harder after that but he it, he made it.

[01:20:05]

JP: No, I'll ask after. Michael, what's your impression? Like, what do you think, looking back on it today?

MiM: Looking back on it today I say the government didn't do right, uh, didn't advise the people what was going on. They left the people in the dark.

JP: Hmm.

MiM: And that's where I said, like I said to you before, that's why they got rid of those huts because they made a mistake on something. They didn't let the people know exactly why they were arrested. We had to figure out for ourselves after, after they passed in court. That was almost, uh, six months to a year after. That's where I was mad. I can't be mad at the RCMP because they were given orders to, to arrest him.

MaM: Sure.

MiM: I get mad at the, the government for being in power and look what he did. Not only to us. It upsetted a lot of people. A lot of immigrants. Look what it did to the Japanese. They, a lot of them lost property and everything. That's my point of view. I says, the government didn't explain nothing to the people. And that's where I, I blame, uh, find the government goofed in that.

JP: You brought up a really good point, the lack of communication. There wasn't—

MiM: Wasn't said.

JP: What, how were you getting news, uh—

MiM: The only way you were getting news—

JP: You said you were reading your newspaper but—

MiM: —the newspaper and then we heard that they were, some of them were trying to pass in court.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: That's where we found out through people, “Oh, eh! So and so came out.”

JP: Because you're saying the court here in Montreal, you were going to the court in Montreal.



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MiM: Yeah.

JP: And you went, Mary, to the court in Montreal.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: I don't remember where it is but—

JP: No, no. That's fine.

MaM: No, but I mean that—

MiM: It's on, uh, Notre Dame Street. The old building it must be.

JP: Yeah.

MiM: Today it's a mus—It's a library or something, whatever it is.

JP: But, uh,, you—

MiM: Now, where, where was—That case must have been here in Montreal then.

JP: There were cases in Pembroke and I'm hearing there were cases like yourself that were being heard here in Montreal—

MiM: You see, we don't have—Because we haven't heard, [clears throat] I don't know about them, but I heard about a week or so before, maybe two weeks—That I can't be sure—that were some people were starting to let go.

MaM: Yeah. They were starting.

MiM: The immediately let go, uh, Germany went to the Americans then they started letting them out. But they kept the people in the dark about what they were doing. That's why the communication to the people wasn't good enough. They weren't letting the news out why they were arrested. Nothing. It hurt some families and some families got over it and they continued but some remain with a grudge.

JP: Can you blame them?

MiM: No, I can't blame them. That's what I mean. I can't blame them they remain with a grudge. But I know one guy, he went to see the RCMP. He says, “I hate them.” “Well,” I says, “You can't hate them.”

MaM: [laughs]

MiM: He says, “Why, because your son's in it?” I says, “No. They were given an order to do it. Same as the Montreal police.” I says, “You give them an order to a policeman, he's going to do it.” Now—

MaM: Especially in time of war.

MiM: I blame the government, the minister of war, whoever that was that was giving that order out.

That's my point of view.

JP: What do you say to people who will, um, that say, well, these men that were associated with fascist groups had to be picked up in order for C, Canada to portray that they were protecting—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —Canadian citizens.

MiM: That I would say, “Okay. The ones that are in the group.”

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: But leave the innocent one out. That I'm not against. If they're in, uh, something wrong, arrest them, pick them up. But I don't believe the one that's, uh, how many people of the whole gang were innocent? Maybe 60, 70%?

MaM: But there were a lot of people that were innocent.

MiM: Yes, that's what I mean. 70%.

JP: Yeah...

MiM: Those are the people those are the people that...you're stunned. And that—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —make the wife mad.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Made everybody mad. “Why was I arrested?”

JP: How did it affect afterwards, the families? Do you think in your family did you grow up feeling that you had some kind of um, a mark, a shame, *un envirigong*[], or something to be embarrassed of?
[MiM shakes head] Did you ever feel that?

MaM: No.

MiM: No. I, I never did.

MaM: No.

MiM: I never did.

MaM: No. No.

MiM: Because I, because when—

MaM: As I was growing up I had a good family, I was proud of them.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: And I was happy to stay in Canada in peace.

MiM: Yeah. That's why—

MaM: That's all I asked.

MiM: As I heard the people coming out of the court and they were let go, okay some of them were bad, were, like my uncle, Antonio. I say, “Good! For him, stay in jail.” But the rest of them were innocent, I'm very happy for them. But the ones that were guilty, stay in it.

MaM: But they—

MiM: That's my point of view and I still say today, I'll repeat myself, the government should have given information to the people what was going on.

JP: Should they, uh, to which people? The people that were arrested?

MiM: Yeah.

JP: They families?

MiM: The families of the people that were arrested.



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MaM: Yeah.

MiM: In other words, keep you informed—

JP: Exactly.

MaM: Sure.

JP: Make sure your father's okay. And hear some news.

MiM: Or have a newspaper guy pass by there and say, "He's okay."

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Maybe they were allowed to write letters but we never, we never, my father never would write.

MaM: No.

MiM: He would write but he'd write the, uh, it was impossible to understand.

JP: What do you think they should do for fam, for the families today? Or what should have been done?
Do you know there were some, some attempts made to, uh, bring up this issue years ago?

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: You know—

MiM: And what happened?

JP: Nothing.

MaM: [looking at MiM] Did you know Esther DeNoche?

MiM: Who?

MaM: Esther A. DeNoche.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: She came to me. Her, her, her parents were, they were alright. She says to me about, I think it was about five or six years ago, even later. Says, “Mary, did you ask the government for something for your father when he was interned?” He says, “I’m starting something because these Italians that didn’t deserve it, the government should give them something.” Well I says, “I don’t know. My father doesn’t want to believe in nothing, doesn’t care for nothing.”

MiM: No. He says, just didn’t want to know nothing anymore.

MaM: It’s finished, it’s finished. He says, “She shouldn’t. The government has the right to pay you for your father’s suffering.”

MiM: Who was paid?

MaM: She started something. I didn't see her no more. So I said, "Look, let it go. My father won't want to even talk about it."

MiM: Uh—

MaM: She was starting something.

MiM: Yeah, I, I have heard about that, about five, six years about. They wanted to ask because the Japanese have got some money out of it.

MaM: That's right.

MiM: They said, "Why not the Italians?"

MaM: They didn't want.

MiM: Oh, I says, "Look, in my opinion, let everything drop." Because my father was still alive then—

MaM: Yeah. No, he wasn't when she told me.

MiM: No?

MaM: No. When she said I could start something—

MiM: And I said to myself, “Look, he's gone. He's gone in peace.”

MaM: Yeah, let him go.

MiM: But I still blame the government for making that mistake. And that's it.

MaM: He wouldn't have wanted.

MiM: Like I told you before if they would have been ashamed, they wouldn't have been ashamed they would have built all the shacks. They would have left it there says, this is where the prisoners were. No. They destroyed everything. They just left the cement pillars.

JP: So your family never grew up with feeling any type of shame or anything [MiM and MaM shake their heads]—

MiM: No.

JP: —because obviously you—

MaM: No. No.

JP: —thought—



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MaM: No. No. No.

MiM: No. They know it. They says we—

MaM: We—

MiM: —we weren't in the Sons of Italy—

MaM: —we started, we started right away with our lives.

MiM: Yeah. As soon as he came out—

MaM: We wanted something going on.

MiM: We all went back to our own work and we—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: He came back in the business and that's where I started helping him on the, on the road.

JP: And the page flipped over and it was as if nothing happened.

MiM: Yeah. Exactly but—

MaM: You know, I mean—

MiM: —but first—

MaM: It's true. It's true. Because my mother, you know, she didn't like to talk about it because she knew my father—

MiM: And I knew my father, my father didn't want to talk about it.

MaM: Never. She thought my father went through hell, which wasn't true. I told her, “Ma, my father is well. He's got three meals a day...”

MiM: Yeah and he told us, he says—

MaM: “He does what he's supposed to do.”

MiM: Okay, locked up, not locked up indirectly. But he said if you wanted to, to jump the fence, you could have. It was just a plain, wire fence. It wasn't a very strong fence. He said, “Nobody wanted to do it.” Nobody. Said, “No. We're going to see what comes up.” Then they started slowly, then some of them coming out with them. And then my father was the day after Christmas. He was let out. So I guess they realized they made a mistake. That's why I say the government made a mistake and probably they realized it.

MaM: Well, now it's gone, Mikey.

MiM: Yeah. Forever.



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MaM: I don't want to know nothing about it.

MiM: [laughs]

JP: But yet both of you wanted to be interviewed.

MaM: Eh?

JP: Both of you had agreed and volunteered, actually—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: You, you approached me to do this interview.

MiM: Yeah, well, something—

JP: I guess now that asks the question, why do you think it's important to talk about it now?

MiM: Because you're doing an effort to look into the thing what was wrong when were, excuse me, what went on—

[01:30:01]

MaM: Yeah. It's true.

MiM: —and I gave you my opinion that I say they're responsible and they didn't let the people know enough—

MaM: I mean—

MiM: —what was going on. Some, some women—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —were really, were really discouraged. That's why they used to ask one another what's going on.

MaM: Uh—

MiM: And some of them couldn't read the, the French paper nor the English paper. And in the paper—

MaM: You know?

MiM: —there wasn't much stuff.

JP: Oh.

MaM: That's why. No. It don't want to—

MiM: And—

MaM: I don't even want to think about it.

MiM: —when they wanted dad, I says, “I'm going to tell her what I know and that's it.”

JP: Why did you agree? Why did you want to do it, Mary? Why do you want to talk about it today?
[MaM shrugs] Because you were saying, like your father said, “Let it go, let it go,” But now—

MaM: No. You know—

JP: My curiosity is why—

MaM: —to me, how can I explain it?

JP: Like, why is it important for you to talk about this now? What is it that we can learn from you?

MaM: What I learned through it is like he said, it was a mistake, yes, okay, but I don't want to talk about it because it brings back some memories that I don't like to think about. You know—

MiM: You don't want—

MaM: —memories that—

MiM: You don't want it to happen again.

MaM: It didn't help me and it didn't help my father. 'cause that time, those six months I tried to do my best to help my family. I was the only one because he was too young. He couldn't go in the front, you know and take everything. That's what got me mad. I tried to help our family, but I had to do it, uh, forcefully, you know. I mean, against my will because I could have done more. I could have done more, but I was 22. I didn't know nothing about it.

MiM: We were all caught off guard.

JP: So both of you in a way ended up not following, let's say, a, a path that would have led you to a different job, a different career.

MaM: No.

JP: 'Cause you were forced to stay and maintain—

MaM: No.

JP: —the business, right?

MiM: Yeah.

JP: That's what—

MaM: That's, that's, yeah. That, no.

JP: —uh—

MaM: That a didn't think about it. Because I had a job there of course. My father put me in the office and I stated there 'til I—Even after I got married, eh Mikey? I worked a few days, a few Sundays.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: I got married three years after my father, uh, passed, uh, came out. That's were the times that were starting to be happy.

MiM: Yeah. Right after the war—

MaM: Looking forward to—

MiM: The end of the war and it was—

MaM: —something nice.

MiM: —going good.

MaM: But, to me, let it go. I think of it sometimes. I says, “I don't believe this.” Because there's a war coming on there, there's a war. One more? There's so many. I says, “Oh, why are the people going into the wars? Why? What are they doing?”

MiM: Well the—



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MaM: To me—

MiM: —the Americans—

MaM: All the wars die is they destroy a company, uh, the people and the country. That's all they do. What do they get out of it? I don't know.

MiM: Well—

MaM: We didn't have the war. Okay. Thank God. But some of the people suffered for it. [laughs]

JP: How did this experience shape who you are today? Like how did it make you the person you are? This experience, having live, lived through this experience of your father being wrongfully interned, having to maybe—

MaM: Made me a better person?

JP: Yeah. In both of your cases you may have done something else with your lives or careers but you had to—

MiM: I thought—

JP: —put family first.

MiM: I thought my—

MaM: I don't know.

MiM: I thought my father was going to come out of that and talk.

MaM: Yeah. It—

MiM: But he never did talk—

MaM: It was a—

MiM: —about anything.

MaM: —helpful to—

MiM: When we would sit with him—

MaM: Oh sorry.

JP: Just get you—

MaM: Go ahead Mikey.

MiM: He would never sit down with us—



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MaM: No.

MiM: —and have a good discussion.

MaM: No.

MiM: Never. Him this is this and that's that.

JP: You expected him to talk after—

MiM: I figured maybe it's going to change him—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —make us feel better, more wanted.

MaM: Or maybe get closer—

MiM: We were scared of him.

MaM: —with the family.

MiM: We were scared of him.

MaM: He was a very closed person.

MiM: I wanted to go into—Oh.

JP: Sorry. Go ahead.

MiM: I wanted to go into the hotel business, motel. He says, “Why are you going into that for?” “Why?” I says, “That's what I like.” [shakes head] “You're taking over the business.” He didn't ask me I was going to take over the business. “You're taking over the business.”

MaM: Whatcha going to do, Mikey, eh?

MiM: Then I let go of that and said, “I'm going to go to RCMP.” “What for? Take over.” That's when I started working for him. I got—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —operated for an area and he says one day, I was walking around, he says, “Come here, I got an order for your to deliver. Can you deliver it?” I says, “Yeah.” I took a truck and I delivered it.

MaM: Yeah. Mikey—

MiM: And that's the way I started.

MaM: Eh?

MiM: Well, Larry didn't want it and Mario didn't want—

MaM: No.

MiM: —the business. My two brothers didn't want it.

MaM: No.

MiM: One it—Leonard, the youngest son he was in—He formed a business glass buildings. You know when a building's all glass and metal frames? That was his line. He did more work in the States and Ontario than he did in Quebec.

JP: Hmm.

MaM: That's it.

MiM: He didn't agree with the union of Quebec. My other brother works for GM—

MaM: It doesn't matter Mikey. You made something out of yourself.

MiM: My other brother worked for GM. He was a foreman on, on the floor. They all said I make something, yes. But...I would have like to have made something else. But I was forced to take the business, I made a business out of it. Then I helped—Then at the end I wasn't feeling good. That's when I got fed up. My marriage broke off. I was alone. So I says—Then I started feeling sick. And my

[unknown] he says, “Hey, you're working for nothing. Why don't you sell out?” I says, “Okay.” That's why I sold it. And then I felt sick. [shrugs] Travelled a bit. I was sick. Cancer. And that discouraged me completely. What do you want me to do?

JP: Mmm. Mary you also said that you felt your father—

MaM: No. You see—

JP: —you expected your father to talk?

MaM: —my father—Okay. He was like that, eh? He was. You couldn't change him. But then this is what I find funny, when we had, I had my daughter, and my sister had her son, so they were young. They were about what? Four or five years old? [MiM nods] They used to go upstairs and my father was the type that he liked vegetables, you know? He wasn't too crazy for meat but he did. He used to like La Chicoria.

MiM: Oh yeah.

MaM: He'd strip it up, put a bowl of oil, salt and pepper. Then the kids would go up, with them [claps] I don't believe it. He talked to them. He says, “Eh, you want something good? Take this,” you know, “Take this chicoria.” Not the curly one, you know, the other one.

JP: Yeah.

MaM: Yeah. “Take it, fold it, dip it in the oil and eat it with the crusty bread that we took from

downstairs.” Those kids were having a ball.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: And the soup—

MiM: And yet with us—

MaM: With us—

MiM: —he wouldn't talk.

MaM: He says, “First a born, *mange*. First a born, *mange*. You don't like it? You get nothing.”

JP: I thought—

MaM: It was one meal. You know, we don't like to date. This kid wants one. It was one meal.

JP: Ever happen to you that way?

MaM: He didn't like the panna cotta.

MiM: Made a panna cotta and cabbage. Grr, that's one thing I used to hate.

JP: But you, you expected, 'cause you said when you came back you were expecting him to have talked

more about—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: You think it would have been more therapeutic for, for the family? 'Cause you, you—

MiM: It was more—

JP: —mentioned something about, Mary, just a second, sorry Mike. Mary, you were mentioning that you expecting him that—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: Would you have felt better—

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —if he talked?

MiM: Yeah. He gave us what we wanted in food.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: But—

MaM: What we needed.

MiM: —in a person to say—

MaM: Not what he wanted. What we needed.

MiM: What we wanted is love. “I love you.” Or something. What is it to say?

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: That's what my daughter tells me sometimes—

MaM: Just—

MiM: —“Daddy, just tell me you love me.” And that's enough.

MaM: But—

MiM: But he never said it.

MaM: But Mikey, eh? If you had something wrong, what we went through this one.

MiM: Oh yeah.

MaM: And I had to take care, you know and go to—“Mary, *jambo ta door*[?].” Ah, okay.

JP: Yeah.

MaM: “Mary, make a [Unknown - Italian].” Mary had to run with him.

MiM: [laughs]

MaM: I was always running with the poor Mikey.

MiM: Seems I was very sick when I was young.

MaM: But, he didn't want to see his children—

MiM: But after—

MaM: —sick.

MiM: —I started working, I wasn't sick at all. I wouldn't even go see a dentist.

JP: [laughs]

MiM: I didn't go see a dentist for the first time in 19—when I was 35 years old. Then I went back ten years after. I had no sore teeth and at the age I am today I got $\frac{3}{4}$ of all my teeth yet and they say, “How

the heck did you—?” But he wasn't a guy that was, sit down at the table and we have a little discussion or a joking discussion. He—

JP: How much of that is that generation?

MaM: Yeah. He was like that. You know—

JP: But there was also that generation—

MaM: —what are you going to do?

MiM: Was your father that way?

MaM: He would talk with his—

JP: Yeah, my father wouldn't—

MiM: He wouldn't talk?

JP: No and, uh, no, my father would not express feelings and it was very difficult for that generation. And, and even other parents, uh, of my generation—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —like, that generation that came post-war, everyone knew their parents loved them but—



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[01:40:03]

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —they didn't say it.

MiM: I knew my father loved us.

JP: He didn't say it.

MiM: If we were in trouble he would offer me money. All the time. At the end I got so mad. I said, “I don't want your money. I wanted your love.” He didn't know what that was.

JP: I think that—

MiM: He didn't know.

MaM: He gave us everything we needed. He even went and buy me a pair of roller skates. It was the style then. You know four wheels? Two in the front, two in the back? He bought me that. He says, “Mary, the others have it. You're going to have a pair.”

MiM: That's the way he was.

MaM: I took those skates—

MiM: But he wouldn't come out to you and say, "I love you," or give you a hug. Never.

JP: Are there questions—

MaM: Yes, but he's like that. What are you going to do? You going to change it? You can't!

MiM: I know, but it's hard.

MaM: Eh!

MiM: It's hard.

MaM: Eh!

MiM: I gotta change now today with my daughter.

MaM: Oh, oh, that I—

MiM: My daughter—

MaM: You better do it.

MiM: My daughter calls me every night. And she says, "Now you're going to have to—"

MaM: You say, “Yes” all the time!

MiM: [cringes]

JP: [laughs]

MiM: Now, Mary, you're on TV. I hope you cut this part out, eh?

JP: Anything you want, Michael.

MiM: Eh?

JP: No, it's fine.

MiM: Uh, my daughter every night or every morning at quarter after seven, 7:30. “Hi, how are you?”
“Fine.” “What are you doing?”

MaM: Oh, that's nice.

MiM: “I'm having my coffee.” Then the other day she says, “Why you let the phone ring three times?”
“I'm in the washroom. I gotta tell you what I'm doing?”

JP: [laughs]

MiM: “Oh, okay.”

JP: Talk—

MiM: Then she says, “Everything okay?” “Okay. Goodbye.” “Goodbye.” Then I said to her—

MaM: You better.

MiM: I says to her, I says, “You get your tires, your snow tires.” She says, “Yeah.” I go, “What's wrong?”
“That little car's going to cost us \$1000, just the snow tires.”

MaM: Ha!

MiM: Yeah, she's got a little Fiat.

MaM: Oh, oh, sorry!

MiM: Then she says, “It's going to cost us \$1000.” I says, “Why?” “‘Cause it's got a sensor on the
wheel, special made for the, the Fiat.” You know about it?

JP: The rent flap, yeah.

MiM: I says, “Oh boy.” And she loves it. I think she, she's reached her 5,000 miles already.

MaM: Jerry, not sleeping yet?

MiM: I says, "What'd you do? It's only a month and a half you got it!"

JP: Really.

MiM: I says, "A month and a half. What are you doing?" She says, "Daddy, the other one used to cost us \$125 in gas. This one's costing us only 40. And I run around with it."

JP: [laughs] I wanna just go back to—

MiM: Okay, go ahead.

JP: No, no, no, just that we—

MiM: Sorry.

JP: No.

MiM: Sorry that we changed the subject.

JP: No, no. It's fine, it's fine. Um, is there anything that I didn't ask you, uh, that you remember or even something maybe you found odd or out of place that, or questions that you have about that time that you wish you had had answered?

MaM: No.

JP: You don't have any questions, Mary, about that time.

MiM: [shakes his head] No, because—

MaM: No.

MiM: We didn't know more than what we knew.

JP: But today, like, looking back, would you wish you had known what happened with your dad at the time?

MiM: Oh, oh yeah.

JP: Are you satisfied with what you know? Um, do you have unanswered questions?

MaM: Yes, we had some, eh Mikey? [looks at MiM]

MiM: Yeah, we had some but—

MaM: But—

MiM: —what we learned today is that we didn't get an answer and today I'm, I'm accepting it. I got no choice.

MaM: But then—

MiM: But, if it happens again, I would get after the government and would say, “Hey, busta, you give me—“

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: —“I’ll tell ya what you going to do.”

JP: And—

MiM: I might be firm but—

MaM: But to me—

MiM: —maybe it's just talking.

MaM: —what happened is happened.

MiM: But I don't wanna, uh—

JP: Do you think there's something—

MiM: I hope you cut off, eh?

JP: No, no. It's okay. Yeah.

MiM: No, I don't want to show that to everybody. [laughs]

JP: Oh, we can edit out. We can, uh, you can advise—

MiM: No, no. I don't mind. But I don't want to ma, ma, make myself a laughing, uh, joke.

JP: Well, no, uh, no you're not and I was saying, Michael—

MiM: Okay, go ahead.

JP: —you could advise—

MiM: Okay, go ahead.

JP: —uh, to edit any way you wish.

MiM: No, because we couldn't do anything better. The government wasn't giving us no answer. Nobody was giving us an answer. And the RCMP—Some people blame the RCMP. I says, “You can't blame them.”

JP: Is there anything today that, like, is there anything that I didn't ask you that you want to add to the interview that—

MiM: No.

JP: —I may have forgot?

MiM: Me, not me.

MaM: See—

JP: [Unknown]

MiM: And you gave us quite a few lot of answers when you read that paper.

JP: Okay, tell me something—

MaM: But I'm glad that she asked, you know?

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: It brings it out of, out of me. Because there's sometimes, not often, but I think of it. You know.

MiM: Yeah, but Mary, she gave us—

MaM: My father was like this, like that but still he went through enough.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: He's dead. God rest his soul. But sometimes I think of that. But today, no.

JP: So, how do you feel now, talking about it? It doesn't hurt you?

MiM: No. I didn't bother me.

MaM: No.

JP: And how did you feel when I gave you information about your father?

MiM: I felt good but, uh—

JP: Like, getting this information 70 years later, how does that make you feel?

MiM: Feel good because certain, like the ones that were the minister, I didn't know. I couldn't prove it. I heard rumours.

MaM: That's it.

MiM: But then when you told me it was written on a report, I felt good. I said, "Finally, my rumour is right."

MaM: Right. True.

MiM: I felt good there.

MaM: I didn't know either. We couldn't prove it, period.

JP: So learning information, even if it's 70 years later—

MiM: I don't care.

JP: —it makes you feel good—

MiM: Yeah.

JP: —to know.

MiM: To know that that way was right.

MaM: That's nothing.

MiM: And you know, what we went through—

MaM: I shouldn't say this—

MiM: —that's an experience. What she went through with the business, I was too young to handle it.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: I was older, I would have handled it like I did before.

MaM: Hey. I did it—

MiM: 22, 24 years old, I had to take care of it for a month.

MaM: Mikey—

MiM: Yeah, okay, okay, okay, okay. I talk too much. I know.

MaM: [laughs]

MiM: [laughs] Okay, it's—

JP: So what can you do?

MiM: What you say?

MaM: To me when I think of that man—

JP: You don't understand? [Unknown]

MiM: Don't, don't—

MaM: When I think of that—

MiM: —talk Albanian, will you?

JP: [laughs]

MaM: She talks Albanian.

MiM: Yeah, yeah but she practiced—

MaM: She was talking—

MiM: Louis—Mary, she talks with her mother.

MaM: Yeah, well, sure. And your dad passed away?

JP: Yes, ten years ago.

MiM: You see?

JP: But, uh, I, I only, I only understand the Albanian because I hear her—It's the only way I can get to know what she's saying about me behind my back.

MiM: [laughs]

JP: That's how I learnt as a child. [laughs]

MiM: [laughs]

JP: Um, is there—

MaM: But no—

JP: There's nothing else?

MiM: No.

MaM: Yeah.

MiM: As far as I know. No. Me, no.

JP: You're okay?

MiM: I'm okay.

JP: There's nothing I missed?

MaM: But every time I think about it I think of that man. Oh, and he preached out there.

MiM: Yeah.

MaM: He preached—

MiM: Well, it proves to me that he—

MaM: —that gets me.

MiM: —that he was true—

MaM: That gets me mad.

JP: Well, it's telling me that even after all these years you still have strong feelings about what happened.

MiM: Yes.

JP: And they don't go away. They just maybe suppress for a while but still—

MiM: Uh—Right. They don't go away.

MaM: They don't—No.

MiM: But you proved it to us that it was him. That what I—'cause that's what was bugging me.

JP: Does that validate you in anyway? Knowing that information that I brought you today? Does it give you any kind of validation about your father—

MiM: No.

JP: —about your life?

MiM: No. I don't—Not my father. I don't blame him because I say—

MaM: Ah.

MiM: You see, I knew something and I couldn't prove it. And that—

MaM: Ah.

MiM: 'Cause sometimes you hear a rumour and, you know, you say, “Oh, is that a rumour or what?” I wouldn't, I didn't go around saying it to nobody.

JP: Hmm.

MiM: But when my father was talking with a salesman after and I heard that I says—Then I realized that I says—And then when you produced the paper—

MaM: Oh.

MiM: —then I says, “Good, I was right. I'm glad. That's finished.”



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JP: Yeah.

MaM: To me, I always thought he was wrong.

MiM: Yeah. You were wrong, Mary. We could never prove it.

MaM: Ah.

MiM: I was scared to talk out of turns.

JP: I want to thank you so much.

MiM: Okay.

[fades out at 01:47:36]