

ROCHESTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT (Rochester Jewish community 1924-1975)

Interviewee Robert Berman

Interviewer Nancy J. Rosenbloom

Date(s) of interview June 11, 1976 July 1, 1976 2 tapes

Setting (place of interview, people present, impressions)  
Mr. Berman and I talked at his home on Hillside Avenue. Mr. Berman's wife was also at home although she was not present at the interview. Mr. Berman had prepared some material on the early history of Camp Seneca Lake but after reading his statement we spoke very freely about his life in Rochester, his recollections of various people. Mr. Berman also prepared for the second interview and he corroborated his story with Mr. Reuben Goldman. Mr. Berman is a charming and very helpful individual. After the tape recorder was turned off Mr. Berman mentioned the conflicts between certain individuals at the old JY but was unwilling to openly name the people involved on tape.

Background of interviewee

Mr. Berman is a commercial artist. He was born in New York City but has lived in Rochester since his infancy. He studied at Syracuse University, 1917-1921. He has been active in the Jewish community since his youth and chose, early on, to devote the major portion of his energies to the Jewish community rather than the general community.

Interview abstract

Interview index (corresponding to tape numbers, sides of tape, and cassette recorder numbers)

\*\* Social history

\* Family

\* Demographic/residential

\* Economic

   Political/civic *NONE*

   Zionism/Israel

~~\*\*~~ Jewish community

~~\*~~ community relations

~~\*~~ Religious life

~~\*\*~~ Jewish education

~~\*~~ Anti-semitism

Interview log

- a) corresponding to tape numbers, sides of tape, and cassette recorder nos.
- b) including references to others in the Rochester community

--see following page(s) --

Robert Berman

Side A Interview 1

I. Prepared statement:

Mr. Berman wishes to discuss JYM&WA, Synagogue, Home and Infirmary, Family Service, Federation, Zionism.

Mr. Berman has held leadership roles at JY, Beth El, and Family service.

\*\*\*Mr. Berman began with a discussion of the JY in the early 1920's. His recollections of Aaron Rose as the Director at the Old JY. Mr. Berman was particularly active in the organization of the Scout Troup ( references to George Tech and Aaron Spector); in the camp at Lakeville (references to Manny Hirsch, Bellow Snyder and Buddy Baker); in the building of the Totem Pole (Boris Bittker) and in the acquisition and development of Seneca Lake Camp. The following points are the most interesting in the development of Seneca Lake camp: bought from the boy scouts and developed by Charles W. Markus who was the largest buyer of silver in the world for Kodak; construction of enclosed cabins for younger children and cleaning up of camp by campers and counselors themselves. This occurred during the chairmanship of Sam Philips.

II. Questions followed statement:

\*\*Philosophy of Seneca Lake Camp was to give Jewish children the possibility of living outdoors where they would be exposed to activities they did not get at home, for example nature study, tennis and group living. The religious aspect of the camp included Kosher food and Friday night services. Camper scholarships were available. Counselors were frequently post high school and at times industry was in competition for their services.

III. \*\*Family and biographical data

Recollections of B'rith Kodesh program of speakers included Maury Samuel and Philip Bernstein before 1917.

Berman was a member of the Young Judea along with Joe Goldstein. Recollection of Chertov, the English speaking rabbi on Leopold Street.

Residential patterns included Vienna Street to Andover, NY then to University Avenue, East High School, Syracuse University and back to Rochester. He was bar mitzvahed in 1913 at the Leopold Street Shul, attended no. 9 school.

Mr. Berman's parents were immigrants; his mother spoke Yiddish all her life. In his youth, Mr. Berman has a private Jewish tutor and then went to Rabbi Gordon's Cheder.

Mr. Berman became affiliated with TEMPLE Beth El because of a positive contact by Mr. Germlow.

Mr. Berman and his wife both taught Hebrew School at B'rith Kodesh. This was an unhappy experience.

Robert Berman  
Side A Interview 1

(2)

Mr. Berman was a roommate of Rabbi Bernstein at Syracuse and has several reminiscences of him.

Mr. Berman has 2 boys neither of whom live in Rochester; He has one grandchild.

IV Perceptions of anti-semitism in Rochester; only after '55 ; i.e. the social set. Awareness of quota system at UofR.

\*\* V. Family Service and the Problems of the Russian Jews.  
Side B At time of German refugee migration, Mr. Berman was a Board member.

VI. Sol Olinsky and Fight

V. Civic Life, nonJewish participation first but felt that Jews needed him more.

VI. Economic life, freelance has made his profession "easier."

ROBERT BERMAN

Nancy J. Rosenbloom

INTERVIEW 2

July 1, 1976

SIDE A

Prepared statement.

\* A. Beth El Personal recollections: Mr. Berman was the permanent secretary following Ben Greenstone. He referred to the leadership of Alfred Hart and Harry Harris at Beth El on Park Avenue. He remembered Cantor Rosenbaum's audition, in 1946. Mr. Berman spoke of the inadequacies of the physical plant of the old Beth El, of an attempt to expand by buying 2 houses from Mr. Ben Rosenthal, of the idea to move out to Winton Road under the enthusiastic planning of Ben Bernstein, Leon Sturman, Sam POze, Irving Norry and others. Opposition came from Mr. Harris and Mr. Rosenthal. Mr. Berman had recollections of the fire on Park Avenue and of choosing Percival Goodman as the architect for the new building.

B. The interview proceeded with more pointed questions from the statement:

Mr. Berman was President at Beth El during the building of the new plant, which is why his tenure ran four years.

(There is an interruption on the tape when Mr. Berman's wife announces she is going to the library).

Series of anecdotes include the Boy Scout Troup at Beth El, their problems with Kashruth, the changes in Sunday School effectuated under Stuart Rosenberg, Jay Stern, Abraham Solomon.

SIDE B

C. Organized Jewish movement: Personal opinions about the Conservative movement, Zionism.

Towards the end of the interview Mr. Berman was in a hurry to go to the library with his wife. He seemed to cut the interview short. Off tape, I did find out his cousin was Emma Goldman and that he <sup>has</sup> memories of her visit to Rochester, but, he was unwilling to have me come back and talk about that topic.

Interview 1  
Tape 1  
Side A

- A. I'm trying this now to see if we finally have found out how to use the machine.
- Q. Today is June 11. I'm Nancy Rosenbloom and I'm interviewing Mr. Robert Berman at his home on Hillside Avenue in conjunction with the Rochester local oral history project of the Jews.
- A. Miss. . .
- Q. Yes.
- A. Oh, I'm sorry.
- Q. Why don't you go ahead and tell us what you've written down?
- A. Well following the format of Rabbi Rosenberg's book, The Jewish Community in Rochester, 1943 to 1925, I sense that what we're after is an updating of the beginnings of institutions and happenings in those years and explore the development and their demise. Plus the additions which have taken place. This would include: 1) the JYMA; 2) synagogues; the Jewish Home & Infirmary; 4) the JEA; 5) the Jewish Family Service; 6) the Federation and Welfare Fund; 7) the Zionist movement and the birth of the State of Israel. And I think that. . . that completes the list. Now within this. . . within these will emerge the story or the story, yes, of the impact of the German refugees and subsequently the opening up of Russian emigration. Included will be the Hillel Day School, the large influx of Jewish students and teachers at the university and other schools of higher education, which led to new responsibilities undertaken by the Jewish community. This represents many . . . much participation by many individuals, while many wore many hats being particularly. . . being rather. . . being participants in all of

A. (Continued) these activities to a degree necessarily one. . . gave certain ones their maximum priority. And so from them we look for the information we're after. In my own case, it was the JY, Temple Beth El, and the Jewish Family Service, which drew my special interest. And having served in a leadership type of participation within them for many years, I can perhaps help best by reminiscing about them. I'm not good at remembering specific dates, but beginning with the JY, I can pinpoint the period of the early twenties because it was the year just after Edna and I were married and we moved to Rochester to live, that was in 1923. The Executive Director of the JY was a long-time friend, the late Aaron Rose. He can best be described as a person who liked people. And with this an enthusiasm for everything that he did. More important was his ability to transmit this to others and getting them to help carry out his projects. He sure did that with me. For example, he felt that the JY should have a scout troop. And I was his man. Not having been one as a boy, it was a total foreign subject to me. But he had the solution. The scout office was having a training program, and I should take it, which I did. That part was fun. But this is what followed. Here I was, recently married, and I was to give up every Saturday night to lead the troop. Why Saturday night? Because Jewish boys were busy with Hebrew school during the week and we needed the gym for our meetings. I recall George Tech and Aaron Spector who assisted me. Step two led to the participation in the overnight camping program, which was located in Lakeville on Conesus Lake. It consisted of a ghetto-like row of tents facing the water, a shack-like edifice at one end, eventually becoming the kitchen and mess hall. Across the main road was the activity area, baseball and so forth, and which was backed by a row of chemical toilets. That was it. Well, this description is stark and uninviting. It was really with airs of

A. (Continued) enthusiasm permeating throughout. It really was just the opposite in its operation and impact. Just talk to a present day grown-ups who now are professional men whose children in turn have gone to the JY camp, and . . . and you will learn that it represents to some of them . . . to most of them the fondest childhood memories of friendships and fun. While there, jokes on the counselors, midnight dips, shortsheeting the bunks, backwards day, the singing in the mess hall, and their first experience of outdoor living and being away from home. Together with that you must not forget many, many such as Manny Hirsch, Bellow Snyder, and Buddy Baker and their contribution to all this. Step three, Aaron one day decided that what the camp needed was a totem pole. An object which typifies the motif of its activities. Indian lore was then the background of the JYWA camp. Stop. Back again. It typified the activities of the camp. Indian names for various age groups, Indian crafts, and Indian draw . . . dancing. This was the period before the creation of the State of Israel, at which point Jewish influence superceded the Indian folklore with Israeli songs and games and other related activites connected with Jewish holidays and Jewish culture. So mine was now the job of creating and constructing a totem pole. In short, that winter in the garage and in the cellar with the help of Boris Bittker, now a law professor at Yale, there emerged a sixteen-foot carved and colored winged structure, which in keeping with the true function of a totem pole told a story of beginnings and activities at the camp. Like the clock in Midtown Plaza, it became the focal point, the meeting place around which all group activities took place, including Friday evening services. It's interesting that through care and a number of repainting jobs, it's still survived at the subsequent camp on Seneca Lake, acting as a backdrop for picture-taking on visitors day. At this point, let us turn to the

A. (Continued) acquisition and development of the new site of the overnight camp situated on Seneca Lake and purchased from the Boy Scouts of America, who had decided to locate in the Adirondack area. Also the emergence of a man named Charles W. Markus. I have before me a replica of a small . . . of a scroll presented on July 30, 1952. It reads, quote, "In grateful appreciation of the noteworthy contribution of interest and substance made by him to this campsite, we do hereby dedicate this camp as the Charles W. Markus Camp of the JYM&WA. We present this scroll to his beloved sister, Paula Markus, as testimony of their affection and to honor his memory." End of quote. I'm told that Mr. Markus was a longtime employee of Eastman Kodak Company, and except for the United States government, was the largest buyer of silver in the world for his company's use in photography. The Jewish community up to this point was quite unaware of his heritage. The . . . the exact story of his interest, whether it was the Nazi up. . . happenings in Europe or something else can best be learned by talking to Joe Goldstein and Phil Liebschutz whom his interests and generosity of considerable size was directed for Jewish children in the form of a camping program. Later this was. . . later this included the Markus Park Day Camp, and then the present new Jewish Community Center. The acquisition of Camp Seneca gave us many acres of woods with about four or five campsites, far enough apart for separations of age groups and boys and girls. Plenty of level areas for sports and a beautiful waterfront. The largest building was a kitchen and mess hall, plus an additional meeting room. There were a few reasonably adequate cabins for the help, but beyond this the camp was just. . . just what we bought, a scout camp. Facilities as to water, plumbing, electricity and access roads were strictly primitive. On a rainy day visitors were stuck in the mud as they drove into the camp, and the trucks kept busy

A. (Continued) pulling them out. Even between villages the truck, itself, needed a crew of helping hands to get going. At all times the paths leading to the waterfront were slippery slopes. Housing meant the placing of wooden floors, stored away during the winter, upon which rested the canvas tents of . . . the canvas tents, rather, were erected and then the cots. So step by step we . . . we tackled first things first, and the roads were spread with gravel and improvements made in extending an outlet of electricity to the villages. We added sinks for washing abilities and improved an isolated area for the sick. Because of accepting young children at about the age of seven, we soon realized that our type of camping was far too primitive. And the first major addition came about, the construction of two enclosed cabins for this group. It created great excitement, plus approval by parents. And we were very proud of our first permanent addition. Various projects were undertaken and executed by counselors and campers themselves. Aaron secured a load of old railroad ties and the slippery inclines to the swimming area now became a series of steps. The trick was to make it a fun project and not a job, and the kids loved doing it. So little by little as we could secure funds the rough edges of what we started with were smoothed from a basic form of camping to fit the needs of the children of various age levels. Not at . . . not that it compared with private, expensive camps, nor was that our function. Time passed. After Aaron came Sam Phillips and others who took over the camp responsibilities. My chairmanship of the camp committee was over. My visits there were fewer. Some years later, through money from the Markus Fund, a major reconstruction job took place, of which I knew of by hearsay only. Accidentally meeting Sam Soren one day, he said he was going to visit the camp and would I care to come along? Anxious to see the changes, I welcomed the invitation. It was way beyond

- A. (Continued) expectation. A complete new waterfront, tennis courts, target practice, craft lodges and permanent enclosed living quarters for all campers. Where we had once hoped for one indoor recreation area and a separate unit for the staff, we now had both in each village, plus separate housing for village leaders and their families. The closest adjective I could think of was, quote, a miniature Grossingers. The totem pole site was there, but the lack of tender care of those who . . . who . . . who conceived it was evident by the holes eaten by woodpeckers during the fall, because it no longer had been bedded for the winter but left permanently outdoors for the elements of weather to do its damage. At their request the staff gathered the children and asked me to tell of the pole's origin and purpose, followed by a description of early days of camping. The contrast to what now existed in physical facilities and more comfortable living. However, in conclusion I summarized to them by telling them that I sincerely doubted that it necessarily made for better camping than the time . . . than at the time when we had less, but rather the enthusiasm and fun of that period of anticipation and participation and most of all the joy and spirit that permeated all our activities. End of quote. I honestly didn't sense this atmosphere at the time of my visit. Perhaps time magnifies the memories of the past, and it is true that bigness has diluted many things, the synagogues and other groups, institutions or plain, everyday social living. The individual is being lost in the crowd. All . . . all set.
- Q. OK. Let me just go back and ask you a few specific questions on . . . on the Seneca Lake camp. And one of the things that I'm interested in knowing is just what the philosophy behind the camp was.
- A. Well, using the adjective philosophy, I mean, it really was an opportunity to give Jewish children who had never had this opportunity before of living

A. (Continued) out-of-doors among their fellow Jews, and being exposed to activities which they wouldn't get at home. For instance, the . . . most kids they like to play baseball. I'll tell you that they knew from nothing more or less, you see? So at camp they're exposed to such things as tennis which they didn't get, and they were taught a little of it, you know? Or, nature study, that certainly they never got in. . . in the neighborhoods they lived in. Or it was part of their lives, and if they did it was a very superficial way. Let's see, nature study, OK. And then group living with. . . with children of their own age, I think, was a wonderful experience. And. . . but main thing that I would stress was the. . . being exposed to things which they wouldn't get by not going to camp. Now I was very much. . . I was very much upset when one of the years some of our counselors came back and with a new theory of education in which the idea of free play was . . . was . . . came foremost. In other words, allow the kids to choose what he wants to do. Well, what does the kid want to do? You leave it to him, he'll read . . . read the funny papers, you know? So to me this was exactly the opposite we wanted. I think that. . . that we should insist that . . . that they participate in everything. They don't have to make a big deal out of it, and follow from that point on. At least they will have been exposed to it, and possibly get an interest in that subject in later life which they wouldn't have gotten if this hadn't taken place.

Q. In terms of its religious. . . the religious aspect of the camp, to what extent do you think it was. . . ?

A. Well, I think at our particular camp it was . . . it was quite rigid. You know, Aaron Rose who was the director came from a family who were most committed in Jewish life. I don't know whether you know. . . I was just reading somewhere or another, I think it was in Stuart Rosenberg's book,

- A. (Continued) the Hadassah was created in his home, Mrs. Rose's home. And the food was absolutely kosher, and it was a . . . that aspect was very thorough.
- Q. Who provided the food?
- A. Oh, it was ordered and sent in from Jewish butchers in Rochester, sure, everything was bought in Rochester.
- Q. Who . . . who were the children mostly that went to the camp?
- A. Well, we had . . . we had children whose parents could afford to pay, you know, what the cost was, plus children that were sent by the . . . I want to use the word charitable organizations, but the Family Service where there problems in the family and they felt it would be good maybe for one of the children to . . . for the child to be separated for a while from the . . . from his home. But he was sent to camp through a fund and so forth that . . . that was given. And but nobody knew who paid and nobody knew who didn't pay. And actually we even gave preference to this type of person, I mean, who wasn't . . . who was sent not because he could pay, because he needed it.
- Q. And as far as . . . in your opinion, do you think most of the kids mixed well? The children themselves mixed well?
- A. Oh, yes. Yes, I feel. . . after all, you know, with what from a seven year old to the teenage. . . till they became junior counselor. . . there were youngsters I would say. . . I don't . . . can't recall any problems about not getting along.
- Q. Let's see. Did you also talked about the expansion of the camp in terms of its being built up. Where. . . where did those funds come from?
- A. Well, the . . . I'll start backward. This largest transformation came from the Markus money. There. . . when they did this what I call this Grossinger set up. You know. . . previous to that I think I mentioned in my tape that

- A. (Continued) we had to do it little by little by any money that was left over from the camp. We could only do one little project at a time. And . . . and . . . and what I spoke of represented a number of years by which we got to supplant some of the . . . some of the wooden floors with more permanent base, and then, you know, the children's building and then maybe one or two other buildings and so forth and so on.
- Q. Other than Charles Markus you can't really think of any other names of philanthropists?
- A. Well, he . . . no . . . that brings up an interesting point. I remember . . . you know I speak about the . . . that we would have loved to have had . . . is it gone? No, it's still going. . . We would have loved to have had a building for the counselors, and we finally were given . . . offered such a building by, I won't mention the person's name, in memory of a son or something or another. And I remember Herman Cohen objected very strongly about this. He . . . he . . . that is to say, he would gladly get the funds but he didn't think we ought to make a memorial project of it and have names put up like they do in putting up various edifices, you know, in memory of so forth and so on. And we didn't get it. You know, my own philosophy is well I hate it and Beth El we've done very well about eliminating that type of thing all over the place. I felt for the greater good I would have just gone and done it, you know, the use of it was worth it.
- Q. Worth it, yea. Let me ask you something about the counselors. Who were the counselors?
- A. Well, you see, that . . . that's an interesting thing, too, in that it depends on the period. Now when . . . when things were bad there were kids that were glad to . . . to have a place to go for the summer and maybe . . . maybe they got a few bucks and so on and so forth. And then on the periods that . . .

- A. (Continued) that were more prosperous then we had a problem because you were competing with industry, and we had . . . we wanted certain counselors but they needed the money to go to school, so we couldn't afford to pay them. So, you see, . . . so you can't make a blanket statement as to about that.
- Q. Do you think they were mostly high school kids or already. . . ?
- A. No. . . they were. . . well, both. . . no I think I would say offhand that the high school kids were assistants. . . or no had another word. . . We had training, counselors in training. And the others were mostly college boys, I would say.
- Q. Was there any Hebrew emphasis at all, anything like Hebrew training or. . . ?
- A. No, I can't think offhand. We had the Friday night services, that always existed from the beginning. But remember I pointed out in there, you know, this Indian lore business permeated the camp. And. . . but after that we had olympiads, I don't know if that's the word or not, comparable to what takes place in Israel and so forth and so on. And we tied it all up in a Jewish context.
- Q. If you had. . . if you followed a blueprint for the camp, what was it there. . . was it like a YMCA camp or was it just something that . . . in. . . in the planning stages that you. . .
- A. Well. . .
- Q. Do you remember?
- A. Frankly, I don't know what a YMCA camp was. . . I know we had darn better food. I remember when my son went to that Boy Scout camp, and we visited once, and they had a hot dog and an apple or something for their lunch. So. . . and then, you know, after camping one of the questions you should never ask a kid at camp, how's the food? He'll always say it's lousy, you know. Well, actually we had the best of food there, but that's. . .

- Q. Did your son also go to . . . to the Seneca Lake camp?
- A. Oh, yes, both of 'em.
- Q. And they also went to Boy Scout camp?
- A. Yes.
- Q. In between?
- A. One of them did. No, no. . . let's see, Boy Scout camp came later. See at Boy Scouts you have to be twelve or thir. . . twelve or thirteen first. And he. . . they went out on advanced program.
- Q. OK. Maybe from here we'll leave camping just for a minute, and maybe try and catch up on some personal biographical data.
- A. Oh, fine.
- Q. Maybe you could just give me a brief overview of . . . of how long you've been in Rochester and. . . and where you've lived in Rochester, what your occupation is, just that type of general overview of your life.
- A. OK.
- Q. Chronologically, if it's easier.
- A. Well, no. I actually was born in New York City, I'm told, 'cause I was brought here as an infant. And we lived here up to the time. . . I lived here up to the time that . . . that I went away to college, which was in 1917. And I was away at Syracuse until 1921. But, you might be interested that, since you're interested in the Jewish phase of what we're talking about, I remember B'rith Kodesh used to have a marvelous program bringing speakers there. And I remember going there and hearing Maurice Samuels give a talk. And I was just thrilled to the core. Now here was a man, imagine he had been . . . I was gonna say Israel, but it wasn't Israel, it was Palestine, and . . . and it was all very exciting because at that time I remember he and Phil Bernstein were the only two people who had been to Israel. . . Israel. . . or

- A. (Continued) Palestine at that time, and would come and talk about it personally and what they saw there and what they did there.
- Q. Is this while you were in college?
- A. No, no. This was previous I would say, or even before.
- Q. Before 1917?
- A. And then also at that period my first interest in the JY was being a member of the Young Judea movement, in which I participated. And through Joe Goldstein and through our English-speaking rabbi, Chertov, at Temple. . . let's see, Leopold Street Shul, you know.
- Q. Shul. . . OK.
- A. And, oh, I loved working in the Young Judea program and later years when Lou Beunice was alive we kept it going by creating many clubs. And we even had a paid worker to oversee these Young Judea clubs and so . . . I mean just to show you the. . . the beginnings of my interest.
- Q. When you moved to Rochester where did you grow up in Rochester?
- A. Where did I grow up originally?
- Q. Originally.
- A. Well, I originally lived on Vienna Street and that. . . that . . . that was in that era. And then from then we, oh, we. . . we. . . when I was a teenager. . . no, less than that, we moved to a small town called Andover, New York where my father bought a factory and. . . and. . . which was not a success, and we lived there about a year or so and then we came back, and we lived on various places, mostly on University Avenue, from which point I went to East High School. And then as I say to Syracuse and fine arts. . . and my work. . . I took up art work, which I was very much interested. . . did a lot of it in high school and so forth, and I. . . I didn't know till the last minute that I was able to go, you know. It wasn't easy. In money

A. (Continued) terms today it would sound like peanuts, but it was a lot of money in those days. And I worked all the four years I was in college myself.

Q. Doing what?

A. Oh, all kinds of things, but mostly waiting on table and the work in the Jewish restaurants, and then other. . . other clubs and so forth and so on, so that when I got out of college, needless to say, I didn't want to have anything to do with a kitchen because I'd had it.

Q. Let's see, when you lived on Vienna Street were you members of the Leopold Street Shul?

A. Oh, no, no. It never. . . never existed at that time. Well, now wait you're wrong. . . I'm wrong. I was Bar Mitzvah that would be in 1913 at Leopold Street Shul. And my grandfather and we occupied a bench there at that time. And, you know, nights when I can't sleep I. . . I. . . I think back to that period, and I try to remember where each person sat, you know. And it's fun. And along Joseph Avenue, No. 9 School, which I attended, of course, before that. And I can. . . I can remember every store that. . . both sides of the street.

Q. Let's see, well when you came to Rochester then in that area. . . are your parents. . . were your parents immigrants to America?

A. Oh, surely.

Q. From. . . from. . . would you just tell me a little bit about your father and mother from. . . ?

A. Well, I really can't tell you. And I often said well I should have gone and we should have delved into it further. But I still have one oldest sister living, and I suppose she could tell me certain things about it. But I had . . . I had a grandfather who was quite a guy. He looked exactly like Santa Claus. He lived on the corner of Kelly and Hanover Streets. And I

- A. (Continued) loved going over there because he was a very cheerful, happy guy, jokes. And he . . . it's also very interesting in connection with Jewish life, his, too, was a sort of a central gathering places for a people who came from the other side and he would give them advice and help them or lend them money and things of that kind. And I always look back fondly to that era.
- Q. Is that your mother's father?
- A. My mother's father.
- Q. So that's probably why you came to Rochester because her family was here? Is that. . .
- A. You mean why they came to Rochester?
- Q. Why your parents came to Rochester.
- A. Well, I would guess. I know there were a lot of families in Rochester, eventually, and they probably at that period, too.
- Q. I . . . I guess one of the questions that I'm interested in is. . . is the way immigrants themselves learned English and became accustomed to living in America. Do you. . . as you were growing up was there largely an immigrant and first generation . . .?
- A. Oh, sure. Absolutely, although my father read English very well, but. . . and my mother. . . my mother didn't. In fact, my mother talked Yiddish all the time at home, and I used to be quite a Jewish. . . a Yiddish linguist. But, as you know what happens when you don't use it, and I . . . that always brings up the fact that in a later period when I went to Israel and I went to visit some friends of Rabbi Karp, and he. . . you. . . you know, to give 'em some things that he'd sent there and they talked Yiddish, and boy I . . . I wrestled and wrestled. Oh, I got along, but it didn't come easy like it used to.

Q. What kind of a Jewish education did you have when you were a child?

A. Well, I went to a private school. . . not a priv. . . no that isn't right. I mean I went to an individual. . . that was. . . that was a method in those days. There was a Talmud Torah on Baden Street, which many went to. But, most others had their private teachers, the same as Rabbi Solomon at our place had his seder, he taught kids. So I went to a seder with Rabbi Gordon I think the name was. So that's where I got my Jewish education. And then when we moved to a small town, and I was young, my brother taught me because there was no other way of getting any. . .

Q. That was all before you were Bar Mitzvahed?

A. Yes, of course.

Q. And after the Bar Mitzvah?

A. After the Bar Mitzvah then. . . then you. . . as you were saying, I attended Leopold Street Shul, and oh I. . . I felt that Chertov. . . that Rabbi Chertov was terrific. First of all, it was unique to Rochester to have an English-speaking rabbi. Incidentally, my grandfather when. . . whenever he'd get up to speak he would leave, you know, he didn't want to hear anything but. . . But anyway he taught me my Bar Mitzvah, and he. . . he was instrumental and spent a great deal of effort in the Young Judea program. And we had programs at the JY with the groups from other places and we had plays. And I would say that he was a great influence in my life.

Q. Let's see, after your affiliation with the Leopold Street Shul, then what was your next affiliation?

A. The next affiliation was . . . that's right I was away at school, I came back in '21, and then somebody from Beth El called on me, in fact it was Mr. Germanow, and he asked. . . and he said, why don't you join our temple?

Well, before that on the holidays I would go to Leopold Street Shul and be

- A. (Continued) with my folks, you see. That was only a comparatively short time. And then so he urged us to join, and an interesting sidelight, I just . . . see, you know, I'm starting and I don't know whether I can spend any more money for temple or anything. He says, never mind, Bob, he says, I 'll see that you get enough work to pay for that, and he did.
- Q. Yea, yea.
- A. Very interesting.
- Q. Then you were already married?
- A. Yes, I was married in. . . that's only mine. . . all right. I'm gonna change my tape, why don't you turn yours now.
- Q. OK. let's see. . . OK. We were talking about when you got married. You. . . you. . . your new affiliation. . .
- A. Oh, yes. We came to town, both my wife and I taught Sunday school at B'rith Kodesh, and this came about because Phil Bernstein was a roommate of mine at school. And . . . and we were very close. We. . . we knew his wife, Sophie, before they were married. We were at camp together, religious camp, up in the Adirondacks. And he said that we'd go and see Rabbi Wolfe, who was the rabbi at that time, and oh they were glad to use us.
- Q. What kinds of things did you teach at B'rith Kodesh?
- A. Well, the usual Sunday school classes of . . . some of the rich bitches who were around, and didn't care much what was going on and came when they felt like coming and so forth and so on.
- Q. All in English and. . .
- A. Oh, at B'rith Kodesh? Oh, boy. And when. . . if you read Stuart's book or other material you know what B'rith Kodesh was in those days, it was. . . a unitarian church would be putting it mildly.
- Q. What were some of the things that they . . . they met on Sunday and. . .

- A. Yea, we found it very cold, we didn't like it. And after we finished being . . . teaching there we didn't consider becoming members.
- Q. And then you joined Beth El?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And maybe would you like to talk a little bit about your affiliation with Beth El, or. . . ?
- A. Well, I thought I'd cover that the next time we get together because. . .
- Q. OK.
- A. . . . I'm putting my thought on this rather than that.
- Q. How about recollections of Rabbi Bernstein? Is that another topic you'd rather think on?
- A. No, I could talk extemporaneously about that. Well, you know, Phil came to Rochester during that period, the JY period. He was part of that group. They. . . they came from New York City, and he was. . . and Phil is exactly one year younger than I am. And we participated in these Young Judea clubs, and. . . and other things. When we went to college we thought we'd join the same fraternity, and so forth and so on. But that earlier period, our courses ran reasonably parallel. And we've been friends since then. A coincidence being that. . . well, I've been married a number of years longer than he, we were both married on the same day of the year, so that we get together. But the day is today, incidentally.
- Q. Oh, happy anniversary.
- A. And. . . thank you. And Phil and Sophie are in Israel, where as you know he's being presented. . .
- Q. The award. . .
- A. . . . with an award. Yea.
- Q. Let's see, as long as we're talking about family. You have two sons?

A. Two boys, yes.

Q. Still living in Rochester?

A. No, neither of them live in Rochester. One lives in Washington, D.C., and one in Houston, Texas.

Q. And grandchildren also?

A. One.

Q. One grandchild.

A. Just Bar Mitzvah.

Q. Just Bar Mitzvah. Let's see. That's interesting 'cause your sons did move outside of Rochester. Did you. . . you wanted to come back to Rochester, obviously.

A. Not only did I want to I can summarize it best as saying that after my wife and I lived in New York, which was so foreign to us never having lived in a big city like that that we could think of bringing up children. . . we used to sit on the sidewalks and to see the type of life, then I finally said to. . . we said to each other, I said, look I. . . I want to go back to Rochester even if I have to drive a streetcar. I just won't have this.

Q. Is your wife also a native Rochesterian?

A. No, my wife I. . . I got with my diploma at Syracuse.

Q. OK. Let's see. Let's see. So. . . so from. . . I've got you living on. . . I know that you lived in the University Avenue section. Are there other jumps in residence, in neighborhoods, that you moved. . .?

A. No, we always lived on this end of town. In other words if I go on the St. Paul area, I'm lost because I never lived in that area or had much activity, same as the ones that lived there feel maybe the same way about this end of the city. And then from there we lived on Crosman Terrace, I think 32 years, a long time. And this is the final. . . the. . . where we've

A. (Continued) lived for the last 11 years.

Q. OK. I'm . . . I'm jumping in my own head, but you were talking . . . I'm wondering about changing from . . . from services like that went on at the Leopold Street Shul to services at Beth El, whether or not you feel as comfortable with the differences in ritual, whether you, yourself, are an observant Jew and have remained as observant through the years, and . . .?

A. I thought we were writing a history of the Jewish in Rochester? OK.

Q. Well, if. . .

A. I'm at random one of them. Is that it?

Q. Yes.

A. Well, in the first place, the services at . . . at Leopold Street Shul was like every other Orthodox shul. And I, personally, don't think that Beth El is that far removed from what it was there. There may be an elimination of a half a dozen prayers that were said, included, together with what we have now. But I would say that we are definitely a very rightest . . . right of center congregation, and there isn't that big a difference.

Q. Yea. That's interesting. And in terms of kashruth and . . . and all the rituals, you would say. . .?

A. Well, look, you see I always put it this way, in those days everybody lived in a . . . in a comparatively small area, in every city, you know, the Jews. And everybody lived alike in that everybody kept kosher, everybody did the things that were expected more or less because there. . . I think as Rabbi Karp always expressed it, he says, it's posnit, you know, not to. I don't know if you understand Yiddish or not, but it wasn't the thing to do, you know, to do otherwise. So if you're talking about kashruth, you can't compare it with today, see? I mean, you can ask that question yourself if you were to hazard a guess as to how many people in our temple of 1250 families

- A. (Continued) more or less keep a . . . a kosher house, well you're guess is as good as mine, but it's not that great.
- Q. Right. When you speak of neighborhoods, Jewish neighborhoods, that brings me to another topic, a little bit remote, and that's perceptions of anti-Semitism in Rochester. Or in terms of. . . I can even pinpoint it more specifically. When the JY was first built or. . . or conceived in the 1920's, was that an action. . . would you say that was a reaction to feelings of anti-Semitism or more of a positive. . . ?
- A. Well, I wouldn't say so. I wouldn't say so. Well, Jews are more comfortable among Jews. I, myself, have been in business in Rochester all my life, and my customers, who are practically all non-Jewish, However, I must admit that I never. . . I never forgot that I was a Jew. I always felt that it was. . . they were. . . they. . . I always felt that they knew I was a Jew and they were talking to a Jew. I mean, it probably was an unfair attitude on my part in many cases, but as far as pinpointing actual anti-Semitism I. . . I can't say that. . . I can't say that that was a. . . a factor. Oh, it may have been. I mean one never knows when a happening happens what the motive behind it was.
- Q. Have you ever observed anti-Semitism, not necessarily in your own experience, but heard about it from others, that. . . did they feel they were discriminated against?
- A. Well, you see, that, too. . . a. . . a person who has been wronged and who may have been wrong himself is apt to say, well, this happened because I was a Jew and he didn't like me, you see? So, that if you're going to. . . if you're going to approach this secondhand, I don't think it's quite fair.
- Q. Yes. I'm thinking of. . . of one. . . of something that I've read about maybe Irish and Jewish relations in Rochester not being that cordial in the

- Q. (Continued) 1920's or whether that's just one person's perception?
- A. No, I couldn't answer that at all. In fact, I wasn't here until '21, I was gone from '17 to '21, away at school. And then, you know, in school. . . you see, the. . . the younger you are the less you . . . the less this part of your life. It's only. . . it's only when. . . in the social programs after five o'clock as they say when. . . when the anti-Semitism rears its head, when you're not invited among non-Jews or, you know. . .
- Q. What about things like. . . like the quota at the U. of R.? Was there a quota?
- A. Oh, yes. Oh. . . oh. . . we know there was. I mean, that is not only common knowledge, I mean, that can be. . . that can be spoken for by many of our professional people who are around us today. We know that, I think, two . . . two admittants a year for medicine, and as far as the general admittance program there was a sprinkling of. . . and certainly not the number of professors at the U. of R. now and so forth and so on. Oh, the anti-Semitism at the university existed without question.
- Q. Do you think in your own experience you might have thought of going to the U. of R.?
- A. No, well I couldn't. They didn't have the course that I was. . . wanted.
- Q. That's what I suspected because you're a commercial artist.
- A. Yes. Yes.
- Q. That's what I suspected. What about the Jewish Defense. . . the Jewish Defense League, I'm thinking of in the early 1930's, Rabbi Bernstein speaking out against what he feared would be the destruction of European Jews. Is that something you recall?
- A. No. You. . . you mean. . . well, you mean before the war or during the war?

Q. Before the war. The early. . .

A. I don't recall his participating in that fashion before the war. He was always outspoken and did a fine job as far as opposing what we stood for and all the rest of it, talking before the City Club. I remember things of that kind, which was an open forum that reached a lot of intelligent people. And he always was ready to write to the paper to correct any misinformation that was given out in the community, but I can't recall any specific period of . . . it was necessary. . .

Q. When do you think Rochester Jews became aware of what was going on in Europe in terms of. . . of Hitler and. . .?

A. Well, you know, Rabbi Karp has done. . . done this in depth. I remember a number of his talks where he had gone to look at the Jewish Ledger or the equivalent of the Jewish Ledger at that time, and he put this. . . he tells of this and this society had a dance here and something that. . . while all this was going on in Europe, and nothing was said about it and so forth. But I think that. . . that was not only in Rochester, I think the world at large knew very little. You know, the story is that . . . that Stephen Weiss tried to get Roosevelt to do something about it here, and got nowhere until almost the end of the war. And I think where they established a camp up in upper New York somewhere where a few Jews were. . . came, you know.

Q. Do you have recollections of the immigrants coming after the Holocaust? Began to come or how they were received in Rochester? Or. . .

A. Well, I. . . I do. I mean, as I say, I've been connected with the Jewish Family Service and this has been their job. And we had one employee, Mrs. Shifrin, Stella Shifrin, . . . not Stella. .. was it Stella or her sister? One of the Shifrin girls, whose whole job was devoted to refugees. And, you

A. (Continued) know, getting jobs, getting them to learn English, we're going all through that again right now with the Russians, you know? We had a meeting yesterday and plenty of problems, even more than they claim than before.

Q. What were some of the problems? Maybe, if you don't want to think of the Russian Jews, maybe the Holocaust started. I mean, in terms of . . .

A. Well. . .

Q. . . . getting adapted to Rochester?

A. Well, I. . . I don't know. I think I would. . .

Q. Wait, we'll. . .

A. Yea.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A (Interview I)

Interview 1  
Tape 1  
Side B

Q. Today is June 11. This is Nancy Rosenbloom, and I'm interviewing Mr. Robert Berman at his home for the local history project of the university. OK, we were talking about. . .

A. Well, about the refugees. Well, at that time I was merely a board member and I. . . I don't recall too many specifics about the German period. But, I'm. . . I'm really more acquainted with the Russian situation because it's current, and we just talked about it yesterday and other subsequent meetings. And the. . . the feeling of. . . of our staff is that it's much more difficult handling the Russians. They. . . they're not workers like the Germans were. You know, Germans were notoriously workers at what they did, and on the part of the Russians we have. . . we have difficulties of: (1) they don't follow through on taking English lessons, which we are furnishing them. And how you gonna get 'em a job if they can't. . . don't talk English? And. . . and some. . . and then when. . . when jobs are offered to them, I'm just generalizing, I don't say all of them, they don't want them. They're not good enough. They're. . . they're more highly qualified than to do a job like this. Or somebody else they heard of was getting fifty cents an hour more, things of that kind. And they have exaggerated ideas of what they think we should do for them. And we even had a case of one here. . . here the Jewish community's supporting them and suddenly find one of 'em bought an automobile. Well, we don't have funds for things of that kind. So, actually what we did yesterday is go over all this thing and sort of tighten the screws so that our workers over there who are going nuts will have the. . . the. . . behind them the board to enforce whatever's necessary, such

- A. (Continued) as cutting down on money that is being given to them weekly and so forth and so on.
- Q. Where did most of the Russian Jews settle or were located?
- A. Well, there. . . when they first came they were in a few apartments down. . . off of . . . of St. Paul Street, the St. Paul Street area. But now they're practically all of them in one area, oh what do they call these apartments, they're on. . . I don't know. They're up in here off of Winton Road, where that big tank is, you know.
- Q. Right.
- A. You know. . .
- Q. I think on. . .
- A. You know that. . . that group there. So they're off. . . most of 'em are in there. It makes it easier because for teaching and a lot of things that they do. And then they've. . . some of them are destructive of their property inside and we've had to pay for fixing them up. And well anyway you've got a picture of what some of our problems are.
- Q. Do you still have a lot of volunteers from the Jewish community that work with the Russian Jews?
- A. Yes, yes we do. And they're doing a marvelous job, marvelous.
- Q. What about in your recollection, do you see when volunteers eventually became replaced with professional social service workers? Is that something that you're aware of in the Jewish Family Service?
- A. Oh, well the volunteers cannot replace a trained worker. And, of course, we're. . . we're restricted in this way. The Family Service is a. . . is a. . . we're red feather organization, right? But, they don't. . . they don't give funds for our Jewish work, this is for our general family relationship, adoptions and all the other aspects of the. . . of the. . . the agency. So

- A. (Continued) that particularly right now, since we're talking about right now with funds being what they are, we have. . . we have to go to the Federation and ask them for funds, of which they've been very generous, but there's just so much you can do. So that we try to lean on the volunteer wherever possible, but the Family Service is unique from other Jewish organizations in that among other things their work is secret. In other words people won't come there if they know that around town it's gonna be blabbed that they're having problems with their children or with their husband or with their. . . whatever it is. So that the. . . the. . . the professional worker discusses these things with the. . . with the board in an abstract way, in a general way, without, you know, being too specific, making it a general problem, and we give whatever advice we can. But basically it falls back in the hands of the professionals. So that the. . . the volunteer, OK, they can help visit these people and help them get added furniture that they might need and, you know, things of that kind.
- Q. One of the things I was thinking of historically is when the Jewish Children's Home was eventually phased out and replaced by social. . .
- A. By the placing of children in private homes.
- Q. Do you recall. . . were you involved in that?
- A. Well, on the periphery only.
- Q. Do you have any recollections? Did people assume that the Jewish Children's Home was closing or. . .?
- A. No, I mean it was. . . of course, as it kept getting. . . as I recall, I'm not saying this with too much professional knowledge, it kept getting smaller and smaller. Plus the fact that the thinking among. . . among social workers was that this group plan was not as good as having them individually placed in homes, and they were able to do that. Whether they could. . . today it's

- A. (Continued) very difficult. I don't think family life is such that many families are interested in . . . and certainly the amount of money they get for it is no. . . doesn't pay taking in. . .
- Q. You mean taking in a child. . .
- A. Taking in foster children. And so that's what happened at that point. We dispersed them among various homes, and oh that was. . . many of those children have grown up and they've had sons, sent them to college, and it's been a most successful operation.
- Q. I guess one of the things I was curious about is whether there was opposition between the Jewish community and the social. . . social workers in general when they. . . when they wanted to close the Jewish Children's Home?
- A. I wouldn't know if that's part of the background. I wouldn't know about it, no. I wouldn't know about that.
- Q. OK. Maybe we'll leave this area for a moment and there's another major area that. . . that we're exploring, and that's your reaction as a Jew or not as a Jew to the riots, '64 riots, the Sullivan Street fight, the changes that have gone on on Joseph Avenue.
- A. I don't think that I can say anything that would be of help in any way. I don't know. I don't think it. . . in the first place it isn't easy for me to answer that question. I mean, I don't think my feelings would be any different than any other person's feelings. I mean, how one feels about the blacks or any other minority is a personal thing, you know. Some are very hot about and some are very, you know, just the opposite.
- Q. I guess I wondered whether there was any sense of, oh I don't want to call it anti-Semitism, it's not anti-Semitism, but specifically anti-Jewish

Q. (Continued) behavior on the part of the blacks. And, for example, what happened to Mr. Schaeffer or. . .

A. Yea.

Q. . . . that whole. . .

A. Yea. Well, I think that's been explained because that a lot of the blacks have had to do business when neighborhoods which were run by Jewish ownership, and when they wanted to express their venom, I mean, these were the people that were closest at hand and it's understandable why they would, you know. . . . But on the other hand in the bigger picture, why they should be against the . . . the Jews as a group, that is very unintelligent to say the least in that the Jews have been in the forefront of. . . of trying to do. . . do things for. . . for the colored people.

Q. And don't you think that would be ironic?

A. Well, what? Because he was a Jew?

Q. Or don't you think that people even thought of. . . ?

A. Well, maybe. . . maybe among a "wasp" who doesn't like Jews, when he hears a name with a "ski" on it, his reaction would be just that. But whether it made a difference the fact that a Jew was in the forefront, huh?

Q. Well, yea.

A. Well, I think it just happened. But, although that typifies the statement I made previously that many Jews were in the forefront of . . . of working for the betterment of the colored group.

Q. Not in Rochester?

A. No, I mean, you know, across the country. . .

Q. Nationally.

A. Nationally.

Q. Yea. Let's see. Oh, here's a. . . here's another segment of questions. Are

Q. (Continued) you al. . .also active in civic life, non-Jewish participation?

A. Well, I'll tell you about that. When I. . . when I first came here I worked for a big printing company, at which time I. . . I was a captain in the Community Chest drive and various other civic activities through having worked there and so forth. But as time went on I figured in my own mind that the non-Jew has many. . . much. . . a bigger reservoir to draw from and that we. . . we need all we can get to help our own cause, and I think that's what influenced me to. . . the work that I could do anything in the Jewish area.

Q. In terms of. . . were the Masons a big thing in Rochester?

A. Oh, it was when I was a kid, I don't think it is now. I know very little about it. I have a brother who is a Mason, but. . . well, that. . . that's out of the picture as far as the Jew.

Q. Well, yea. Yea, I think it has phased out. The Chamber of Commerce. . .

A. Yes. The Chamber of Commerce, too, you know, which was a place where we used to go to hear these speakers. Now all you have to do is flick the switch and you'll hear 'em on the T.V.

Q. Yea.

A. So that it's a different world. I mean, that's all there is to it.

Q. How about ward politics? Did you ever get. . .

A. I have not participated in politics. I. . .

Q. All right. OK. Oh, I. . . this is a personal question, but do you work on Saturday?

A. Yes.

Q. What about. . .

A. Well, I. . . I. . . see when I had work to do, but I mean is. . . I. . . I

A. (Continued) never was a Sabbath observer, if that's what you mean.

Q. Right. Do you own. . . let's see, commercial artist. . .

A. Yea, I was free lance except for a. . . for the first period I worked for myself.

Q. OK.

A. But I had the privilege of working or not working.

Q. And on the high holydays?

A. Oh, yes. No, obviously I don't on the high holydays. Because it's. . . to go back to my previous statement, no matter how I felt it's poshmit.

Q. Right. Right. Let's see. This is another historical epic in terms of economics, I guess also in terms of the Jewish community at the time of the Depression. Do you have anecdotes about anything during the thirties?

A. Well, the Depression? I was very lucky. I worked for the printing house and the. . . and the Depression to me was. . . was not like it was to most people. I had my job, and I was not deprived in any way, so I really can't answer that at all.

Q. OK. In terms of the Jewish community, did. . . was the Jewish community organized to help?

A. I don't. . . I can't answer that either.

Q. OK.

A. Actually you're asking some questions that predate the 1925, yes.

Q. Well, all right, yea. Could we maybe go on to Zionism?

A. Yea, you know, there's a whole. . . there was a whole era there where a group of us worked for the Zionist cause, and it would make an interesting thing to talk about. Why. . . why don't we do it next time?

Q. OK.

A. I'll think about it and get some material together.

Q. OK. And we're gonna talk about Beth El next time.

A. Yes, that I can give you.

Q. Can I maybe ask your reaction to specific events. . . if you want to talk about this next time we can do that, too. I was gonna say like your reaction to the United Nations, the United Nations' position on Israel, that type of thing. Would you. . .

A. I. . . I think we've done enough today, but. . .

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE B (Interview 1)

Interview II  
Tape I  
Side A

Q. Recorder you want to . . .

A. All right. Shall we stop and check? Now the chronological history of Beth El is available and quite complete within our files. Mine will, therefore, be some personal recollections as my memory permits during a fifty year period. For many years I was the permanent secretary, following in the footsteps of Mr. Ben Greenstone, whose book of careful and beautifully written minutes we have in our archives. I must explain that the office was an on-going one, not to be elected with other officers each year. And, therefore, it covered many years and administrations. My personal scrapbook with newspaper items rounds out the picture. Now the early days of Beth El on Park Avenue with its smaller membership was necessarily a closeknit group with most members not only in more frequent attendance, but involved in some phase of its activities, which made for friendship and togetherness which unfortunately is quite impossible in today's bigness. We not only knew one another, but their families as well. Their absence and the reasons thereof were soon noted and acted on. As we grew the Park Avenue building facilities became tighter and the multi-uses of each room multiplied. The high holiday services became two separate and parallel units, with the upstairs assembly hall, basketball court, scout room and Sunday school areas becoming a sanctuary called the auxiliary service. This entailed securing of an additional rabbi and cantor each year, arranging for their hospitality, renting chairs, borrowing carpeting, and for a temporary orinkodish. In a democratic fairness the visiting functionaries alternated with our permanent staff on successive days of the holidays. I digress momentarily to recall

A. (Continued) a period on a kolneder eve as the opportunity for the raising of needed funds at a time of greatest attendance. At each pew was a personal card, scored to designate various sums. An officer or a lay person, a knowledgeable one, member rather, spoke just before the sermon as to our financial needs. The school always being the culprit, not only true, but lending itself as evoking the greatest response. One then folded back his offering and the cards were collected. The original mainspring of lay leadership one must designate being Mr. . . . Mr. Alfred Hart and Mr. Harry Harris. As a sidelight of that period I recall being at work and the phone operating. . . operator announcing that two men were waiting to see me in the reception hall. Imagine my surprise, yes, it was both Mr. Hart and Mr. Harris calling to collect money for the Mosegan Fund, collected annually before Passover for charitable needs. This incident represents how the most menial chores and for modest amounts were undertaken by the leadership. Like other synagogues our sisterhood and men's club held form parties, annual picnics, the women designed and sewed Torah mantles, ran bridge parties and other fund raising activities. Our modest success as of then contrast strikingly when I was told recently about a smaller local congregation, which last year raised \$50,000 with their bingo operation. The men's club sponsored musical and lecture evenings, particularly recall sharing a series including Rabbi Israel Goldstein and his talk titled "The Yasagers and the Neinsagers." Means those who say yes and those who say no, which related to the acceptance of a divisional plan for Israel as advocated by the major powers. Then there was the aesthetic and the striking appearing Rabbi Leo Jung, who, I remember, spoke to Mr. Jacob Hollender on the phone before accepting our glass of tea just before. . . that is as to kashruth before accepting our glass of tea, just before taking his afternoon nap. During

A. (Continued) the period between Rabbi Jeremiah Berman and Henry Fisher services continued led by Cantor Aaron Solomon, who meanwhile had acquired the necessary smirha which within Orthodoxy gave him the addition of sermon. . . gave him the title of rabbi. His service. . . services methodically began to expand by the addition of sermonizing and other rabbinical practices of his choice, in addition to those of being the cantor. Since this was contrary to the preference of the officers who preferred that these functions be led by a rabbinical graduate of the seminary, it was decided to explore the hiring of a replacement as cantor before our new rabbi took office. 1946. A tryout afternoon during which we were to audition a cantor, Sam Rosenbaum, whose last assignment had been in Camp Dix. A fellow member, Jack Cameman, an. . . who was the Executive Secretary of the Jewish Family Service, and I were to pick him up at the JYMA where he was housed. It was with. . . it was with quizzical anticipation that we knocked at his door. Would he be the prototype of a cantor? Tall, fat, with the usual beard? Looking today at his form of that period I see him, cherubic but thin, ample hair, wearing rimless glasses. But, the startling image that we possessed then was that of a totally informal young adult wearing a pullover sweater and slacks. Later at the synagogue he sang portions of liturgical numbers of his choice, and within fifteen minutes of the discussion that followed, I moved his being asked to serve us in Rochester. Now, in 1976, as Maurice Samuels titled one of his books, little did we know what a pillar he would become in every area of the success of our temple. As mentioned earlier, our facilities became more and more inadequate. Besides the upstairs being curtained into Sunday school classes, what we had was a two-story cottage next door, best described as inadequate, old and cold. Thoughts of expansion became a reality in the drawing up of plans in '49 for extending the present

A. (Continued) structure along Park Avenue, plus the acquisition of two houses on Stravlen Park owned by Mr. Ben Rosenthal, a member of the congregation. At this point there came about a change in approach, which as we look back, was one of Beth El's most fortunate of happenings. Nothing could have been worse had we acquired the added property and proceeded. Imagine these plans, plus the expenditure for a structure facing the narrowness of Park Avenue, its traffic, minimal parking facilities, and in a deteriorating neighborhood. A small group of younger men foresaw this, and sparked by subsequent gift, a parcel of land, corner of Winton and Hillside Avenue by Ben Bernstein and Irving Norry, together with Sam Poze, Leon Sturman and . . . and others, we decided to involve the total . . . the total membership. We pointed out how our membership had been steadily gravitating toward the Brighton areas. With charts we pointed out that Winton Road was a mid-point as to walking distance for members to attend services. There was strong opposition, particularly by Mr. Harris and Mr. Rosenthal, plus members living in the close proximity of the Park Avenue. It was comforting as Leonard . . . as Leon Sturman quoted to me to have a man like Barney Rose giving encouragement saying go to it boys, it won't be for me, but for our children it is the right thing to do. Friday evening, January 20, 1960 was the evening of the regular Friday night services, followed by a reception in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of the daughter of Leonard Silverstein family. And an estimated 700 persons, our largest attendance, crowded the upstairs reception hall. As we left about 10:30 I spoke to Morris Levinson in the narrow hallway which exited to Meigs Street, and discussed with him the dangerous aspects of such a crowd within our limited space and the hazards it posed. Early the following Saturday morning, it was still dark, our phone rang. It was Debbie Karp. . . Debbie Karp telling my wife that Beth

A. (Continued) EI was afire. While they still talked I was already pulling up my trousers and almost to the door when it occurred to me to ask which one? Because the new unit at Winton Road was already in existence. As my car reached Monroe Avenue with a red glow in the darkened sky from the rest already visible, it intensified as the car moved quickly in the direction of Meigs Street. Once parked and approaching amid the entangling fire hoses, there stood the thick stone outer walls with flames and smoke pouring forth, out of control, indicating that it had been burning for hours. I walked over to the south corner of Meigs Street and Park Avenue where Rabbi Karp and Sam Poze were standing. We dejectedly looked at one another, there was nothing to be said. Later, accompanied by firemen, the building completely filled with smoke, accompanied by Sam Rosenbaum and they were able to reach and rescue the scrolls spared by the fire. Sam Poze, Lou Ouzer and I assisted in housing them in the neighboring homes. The story is told that children encountering the not yet informed Jay Stern on his Sabbath walk toward the synagogue gleefully stopped him to say you don't have to go today the shul burned down. And Jay gestured himself and just laughed and continued his walk. At a later investigation we met with Battalion Chief Naylor who tried to determine the where and how of the fire. He pinpointed it in a space between the dumbwaiter and refuse box . . . box . . . refuse can in the rear kitchen area and suggested that probably one of the guests had despoited his partially smoked cigarettes among the greasy leftovers of the party. We explained to him that smoking by our congregants was not permitted on the Sabbath. Mr. Naylor smiled and answered in effect that he was a Catholic and they, too, had many prohibitions which everyone did not necessarily observe. The offer of use of facilities that followed were many and varied. Six Protestant churches, hotels and organizations and Temple

A. (Continued) B'rith Kodesh. We, of course, had our completed educational building at Winton Road, and actually did use B'rith Kodesh as a second service during the following high holidays. B'rith Kodesh was using the Eastman Theatre. Those who drove to services voluntarily went there in deference to others who preferred to walk to the Winton Road educational building, which until now had been restricted to secular. . . secular use rather than religious services because of the fear by some that it might lead to a division of the membership. It now became our one and only place for every activity. The need for the original plan of building a sanctuary there was not a must and plans as to its 'implementation' were set in motion. Raising of funds, the selection of an architect, the choice of materials and the furnishings were, I think, a well done and cohesive happening in our history. Not that people part easily with money, but there was a feeling of camaraderie among the leadership and workers, and it permeated the general membership with a warmth of participation in the creation of their own synagogue. Procedure wise as well there was wisdom by the officers and building committees, which were small, and who placed reliance in professional advice rather than that of lay well-meaning members. Except in one case, we did hire a professional fundraising firm which had successfully performed in their way in other locations, mostly in New York. . . in the New York area. Except for the impetus of a planned schedule, which kept us moving, we disagreed as to methodology and the raising of funds. As Morris Levinson said, you'll be leaving but we continue to live with our members and do not intend to embarrass them in the process of fundraising. A small group gave the initial start with their pledges of \$25,000 each. Then on to the completed successful campaign. First an architect. Sam Poze, chairman of the original school building, felt that our former architect had done so well

A. (Continued) that we should consider them as local associates within. . . with whomever was selected as the sanctuary designer. One who should be Jewish. . . Jewishly oriented in his knowledge of our particular needs. With a nucleus of Sam Poze, Earl Goldstein, Ben Robfogel and myself, we interviewed and visited . . . we. . . let's see, we interviewed and visited nearby cities to see structures by architects whose names had been suggested to us. And culminated with our inviting Percival Goodman, an architect of many Jewish temples, to come here for a presentation of his ideas and philosophy as to our needs. This was followed by a personal trip by the group to Albany, South Orange, and a third city which had completed buildings he had designed. Together with our satisfaction as to his ability and the fact that the architect's fee would be the same as to any less experienced or proven a . . . 'i.a.' architect, we felt that he should be our choice. A sidelight which proves a point can be told. Attending a wedding among which were guests from Chicago I chanced to chat with a gentleman, in the course of which came out that he, too, was involved with a building of a new synagogue. He asked me who is your architect? Percival Goodman I answered. His mouth opened, he reached for his pill box in his vest pocket and said, you see these pills? Before you get through working with him you'll be needing these, too. As it happened it turned out just the antithesis, not only was his cooperation with his local associates smooth and friendly, but his association and work with us as well. It is. . . it is my opinion that it was the wisdom displayed by the leadership which made for this amiable and in the end a beautiful, well executed complex, which incorporated all of. . . all of our year round needs. We respected his ability and went along with his suggestions. Certain snags, which our local architects at times encountered and wrestled with, were solved and adjusted by a one-day visit from Mr. Goodman. It was difficult to part. . .

- A. (Continued) to carry the suggestion by well-meaning sisterhood members with a flare for decoration, but the committee was firm and again entrusted this area to the architect. And as a consequence we ended up not only with fine taste, but our comparative shopping showed a monetary saving as well. That's it.
- Q. Do you want to keep going?
- A. Well, yea, yea. Of course, yea. I want to see what. . . Well. . . very good.
- Q. I guess you. . . I want to go back and ask some questions about Beth El. You said you were permanent secretary. Is that the same thing as president?
- A. No, no. No, the usual officers, you know, in all. . . in all organizations. It's either for a one-year, two-year, whatever it is and so forth and so on. So there would have been a new secretary each time, but at that time the reason I can't explain to you, but we had a permanent secretary. And as I pointed out, Len Greenstone was the first secretary and I followed in his footsteps. So for many years I was secretary for the coming of various rabbis and. . . and. . . and was in the background of things that went on, so that really gave me an inside track on what was going on.
- Q. And continuity.
- A. And continuity, right.
- Q. Let's see. What were these rabbis coming one at a time and just for short periods of time?
- A. Oh, no, no. Let's see. I don't recall how long Rabbi Berman was there, but I know Rabbi Fisher was with us ten years. Stuart Rosenberg was with us ten years. And Abe Karp was with us twelve years.
- Q. Oh, so altogether you were permanent secretary. . . ?
- A. No, no, no, no. That's . . . after. . . I think after the coming of Henry Fisher then the new constitution was done, then we went into the regular

A. (Continued) route. . . routine of the usual type of election of officers.

Q. OK.

A. But then, you know, I became an officer later on, subsequently having been president, I've been on the board ever since, you see?

Q. What. . . what other offices have you held?

A. Well,. . . well just the president.

Q. The president.

A. Well, I mean I was president of the men's club and some of that stuff in the earlier days, but I mean, you know, that's not quite like being president of the temple. But I. . . I purposely got a kick out of it because all of these things I've been telling you about, the building of the temple, took place at the time that I was president. And as it happened I held office for four years, which was a year longer than our usual presidency, for three years, but because we were in the midst of a new building they thought. . . they thought they didn't want to digress with this thing, so I continued for four years.

Q. Let's see. Well, one of the things that I'd like to ask then, you said there was disagreement over whether or not to move the synagogue?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you feel like going into some of that?

A. Well, you know, remember Nancy. . . it is Nancy?

Q. Yes.

A. That's right. Remember after we got through last week we talked and I made the observation that you can't always tell everything in a thing like this? There are always background things that are best unsaid, you know. So in. . . in talking for instance about the leaving of Aaron Solomon I. . .

I soft-peddled it more or less. And the same as to what happened with

- A. (Continued) Mr. Harris and Mr. Rosenthal. We were given a hard time. But, you know, there's no point in going into details, it just tells what happened and I just tell you enough I think at that time to understand what was behind their feelings.
- Q. Yea. In terms of . . . well, the sense I got was half the congregation moved out here but half the congregation stayed down there?
- A. Oh, no, no. As a matter of fact, I would say. . . no, half. . . no I wouldn't say that half the congregation lived near there. As I pointed out when we made out the chart we found that at that time it was a mid-point between Park Avenue and Winton Road. It was a good selling point, you see? Later on, more people moved in the Brighton area, so that that became nearer than the people who lived in the Park Avenue area.
- Q. In other words you had already seen the trend coming?
- A. Oh, yes. It was very. . . in other words anybody let's say that's moving from St. Paul Street or wherever down here they wouldn't necessarily. . . if they had a choice certainly wouldn't buy or rent a house on Meigs Street, they'd rather come out more towards where the suburbs.
- Q. I don't know who Mr. Harris and Mr. Rosenthal are. They were other members. . . other presidents?
- A. Yes. Mr. Harris. . . no, Mr. Harris was a personal friend of Mr. Hart. And as I pointed out they two were sort of the sparkplugs at that period. And you asked me whether he was an officer? No, he was one of the kind of people that said no I don't want to accept any office, but you can be sure that he was right there in the background and made himself felt. You can sort of carry that along.
- Q. And Mr. Rosenthal was a past president?
- A. No, Mr. Rosenthal never was an officer. He just as I understand was a . . .

- A. (Continued) a . . . a founder of the temple. And he was a man of means and he . . . well, I'll put it rather softly. We expected a lot more of him than we got.
- Q. And you also mentioned Barney Rose?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Now are you . . . is he . . . was he also a . . .?
- A. He was a long-time member of that and respected, you know. Aaron Rose's father.
- Q. Oh, Barney Rose was Aaron Rose's father!
- A. Aaron Rose's father, and he was . . . I . . . I just gave him as an example of one of the elderly men who were enough farseeing as to appreciate the fact that a mistake would have been made had we continued along the lines suggested.
- Q. OK. Also you mentioned that this building out here on Winton Road was used for secular purposes? In other words. . .
- A. When the building was completed, you know. . . peculiar thing about people who have worked. . . some people, let's say, who have worked hard, this is our building, you know, and they. . . it was very difficult to get them to make the change. . . well, for a good reason, as I said before, it wouldn't be good to have half the people come here and there were a number who lived too far away to go to the other place. So what we did at that period was to have our. . . our secular things down there and. . .
- Q. Schools. . .
- A. . . . services were held. . . still held on Park Avenue, you see? And it just took. . . in fact it led to . . . it. . . it's like a mother not wanting to let go of her child. Because as time went on I remember other things came up. Like the J wanted to have sort of an outreach group at Beth El, and so forth, and we had to do a lot of selling to try to get some

- A. (Continued) of the oldtimers to agree to it or. . . they. . . they just didn't want to go whole hog on the thing. Oh, they'll break things and all that stuff, they were really proud, but, you know, I can. . . it's an understandable thing in a way.
- Q. Yea, oh yea. OK. Maybe we'll go back to the rabbis because one of the interesting things you told about was how Rosenbaum was hired. Do you want to change your tape?
- A. Yea I think so.
- Q. OK. We were talking about interviewing different rabbis and cantors. And I wondered at that time were the. . . were the rabbis sent from the Jewish Theological Seminary?
- A. Well. . . yea, well the. . . interesting thing to that, too. Well, they have a committee at the seminary who. . . you write to them and this committee looks into it and gives you advice. And they are supposed to understand that we are a particular kind of congregation, so we want a particular kind or rabbi. Well, whether we're to the right or to the left, that's all and so forth and so on. But what I. . . the interesting thing that I alluded to might be the fact that Henry Fisher was head of the selection committee. And when this thing came up he decided he would take the job, but he was very good.
- Q. Oh. What was Henry Fisher already middleaged or past. . .?
- A. Oh, no. He was quite young.
- Q. Still young?
- A. Well, oh I would say so. He was at seminary. Let's see, did he have any other pulpits before that? I. . . I really don't recall the details.
- Q. Where did he go from here?
- A. To Chicago.

Q. Chicago. When you used to write letters and say what kind of a congregation Beth El was, how did you describe it?

A. Oh, well the sem. . . you don't have to tell the seminary, see, they know because they come here and they know the tenor of our services, and the things we're interested in. You know, it'd be interesting because you know we're changing rabbis now. And to compare what was done then to now is. . . Dr. Peter Adelstein was chairman of the committee and if you saw the routine that went with. . . was gone through with a questionnaire, calling a meeting of the membership, what kind of a rabbi would you like? What do you think about the . . . the place of the wife of the rabbi? Is she an influence? Is it important? I mean, he really went into the thing. And, well, he's a Kodak employee, I guess, and that's the way they handle problems over there. But, as a matter of fact, Peter just told me recently that he's been asked by the seminary to write an article for their magazine on his procedure in this thing. So that gives you an idea.

Q. Remember when Henry Fisher and Rosenberg came? There was a. . . was it that same type of. . .?

A. Oh, no I wouldn't say so. I. . . it was much more simple. We wrote the seminary and they sent people, you know. In those days they'd send somebody, he might give a sermon. We don't do that anymore. In other words, we don't base selection on the rabbi. . . the sermon that he gives because as you well know, and people should know, that giving the sermon is just one hour of. . . of a whole week. And a multitudinous duties. . .

Voice: Bob, I'm going over to the library.

A. Why don't you wait 'cause I have to go over there, Edna?

Q. OK. Let's see.

A. Well, you asked me about the selection of the rabbis.

Q. The selection of the rabbis.

A. Yea.

Q. Do you think that the rabbi's duties have changed, that his sermons are only one hour a week, do you think they've become far more complicated?

A. Oh, sure. Look at the size of the congregation. I mean, it's like comparing a person who was a . . . who was the president of a . . . a business that does \$10,000 a year business and another who's the head of a corporation that are doing millions of dollars worth of business. I mean, there's always something for him to do, all week long. And every evening all week long. It. . . you know, it's. . . it's best described as impossible job, really.

Q. Yea. You also mentioned in terms of fundraising it. . . it seemed to me that let's say twenty years ago or, I guess, it's been twenty years. There were a lot of congregations, and now I know that you have a fairly elaborate dues system here. Did they have a dues system then?

A. Yes, yes. And, of course, they were a lot less than now, but I suppose if you compared the economy they were just as difficult for people to pay. But, then again, we're going back to what I said before where. . . we're a congregation of what is it around 1200 families? In that area, I think, fifty more or less. And the men's club is a bigger operation, the sisterhood's a bigger operation. The actual physical taking care of the building is a major operation. And now, you know, they've started smaller groups within the temple in order to overcome the fact that it's difficult to get to know people in a big congregation. So a rabbi has ten or twelve additional groups that he should keep his hands on. Oh, there's plenty to be done. And. . . and another thing is there's been a new phase of activity in temple life and that is in the area of counseling where people come and want to talk over

- A. (Continued) their problems. I remember Rabbi Karp used to tell me about how much of his week is taken up by people coming to talk and so forth.
- Q. In terms of . . . of funding a synagogue, Beth El never resorted to bingo?
- A. Oh, no. No, they never will.
- Q. They never will.
- A. Well, we just had our dues raised, I don't know whether you know it or not, your folks would probably know about it. No, we feel that we should . . . we would never do that. We never had gambling of any kind even at our functions, you know. Just isn't the thing that . . . that we do. And I'm glad to . . . that we're able to . . . But you know, I'll be very honest and say that some of the very smaller congregations who've had a hard time, they only have a small number of people of means within their congregations, and they really have no way of raising additional money. And so I can't condemn them so much, you know, for doing this. Although it isn't a nice thing, you know, we used to laugh about Catholics doing it, and now of course we're in full swing in many cases.
- Q. I know. I know for a fact that Beth Sholom is largely supported by bingo and so is Hillel School.
- A. Yes.
- Q. So, I know it helps their activities.
- A. Well, I suppose the way we should say that is the end . . . you excuse the means in favor of the end.
- Q. Do you remember any of your early sermons, topics that . . . that the rabbis used to talk on?
- A. Well, I don't know. You know, each rabbi is different from the other. Some . . . some do one thing better than the other and so forth. I remember Henry Fisher was known for his sermonizing. He did a terrific job. He did

- A. (Continued) such a job that many of us would say that. . . that he did a lot of book reviews. And when he would give a book review, why, he would write another book you might say, 'cause you didn't recognize the book that he was reviewing. But, he was. . . he was brilliant in that area. And he used to pack them in Friday nights. And I remember this was the era when the Nazarean was written, and of course it was written by Saul Nash, you know, Jewish. And here was a Jew writing about the Nazorean and there were some other Christian background books that he wrote. And the book reviews on Friday night the whole synagogue. . . we packed the place, really.
- Q. Was Zionism a big sermon topic?
- A. Well, I don't know what you mean by big. It certainly was a subject that has been as long as the Zionist movement's in existence. I think it's been a topic. In other words, I. . . I assume that when the portion of the week leant itself to using that topic, then they would talk on that topic. You know, they seem to have a formula to attack the. . .
- Q. Yea. Let's see. Well, some of the other topics I wanted to ask about in conjunction with Beth El were what some of the other duties and. . . and programs you were involved in besides the building of the temple?
- A. Well, I know. . . well, you know, you're trying to get a personal thing, which I can easily give you, but I don't think this is what you really want. Or is it? I mean. . .
- Q. Yea.
- A. Well, I can just point out to you, just take a few minutes on it. What happened, I mean, we became members of the temple and relative to what I said before about the oldtimers doing the mean. . . the most menial of tasks. . . I remember we. . . my wife and I were called on by Mr. Germanow, you know, that's the father of the present boys, Mr. Germanow. And as to

A. (Continued) our becoming members after we'd been in the city a short time. And, oh, I said to him well I think we will; but I don't think that I can. . . I'm sure that I can afford to join now. And Mr. Germanow says oh, don't think a thing about it, he says, I'll see that you get enough work to pay for your membership. And he did. He did. Just a sort of a sidelight. But then, I mean, I was active. I. . . I started a Boy Scout troop there. You remember. . . remember last week I told you about my. . . my camping with the JY and the Boy Scout work there? So, that Mr. Kramer, that's Mr. Ben Kramer, used to be. . . have the drug store here, he came to me one day and said, you know, we could use a scout troop at Beth El. And I'd like my son Bob Kramer to become interested in activity over here. Would you. . . will you do something about it? And I said yes I would. So I got . . . he introduced me to his son, Bob Kramer, and they've been our best friends since then, I mean, eventually led to . . . And there was Dick Cohen who was a friend of Bob's, and we started and ran the Troop 131 over there. And that was a very pleasant experience.

Q. Who were most of the boys?

A. All members.

Q. The congregation. . .

A. Yea. Yes. Yea, it wasn't a mixed group like they have today all over. They were all Beth El members. Of course, we had our problems because on the weekends there were. . . we couldn't ride anywhere, so we, you know, wherever we went, if it was a weekend we had to leave Friday before the Sabbath and the problem of kashruth, too. The problem as it affected kids who went to the. . . to the main scout camp, you know. And eventually we were able to get a kosher table there, worked out. And, so this. . . this is all like. . . all different movements that went through its period of

- A. (Continued) development and so forth. So that I was very much surprised during the course after some period of years working with the scout movement to be asked if I would become secretary of the temple. I was just as surprised when I was asked to become president. But, I always was active.
- Q. During your tenure as secretary and president were there major changes in the Sunday school or the Hebrew school?
- A. Oh, yes. Tremendous. One of the biggest changes that took place was the time when Stuart Rosenberg was here in that he eliminated the Sunday school. Now that is a tremendous, tremendous step to take and ran into tremendous opposition by parents. Let me explain what I mean by eliminating the Sunday school. Sunday became part of the Hebrew school week. In other words, instead of having two days of Hebrew school and one day of Sunday school, we had three days of regular school, of which Sunday was one of the days, you see? And, . . . and when one came on Sunday it became part of the regular school system, and not just a plain storytelling Sunday school sort of thing, you see? And, Jay Stern had quite a lot of explaining and Stuart Rosenberg because this was objected to by very many members. But, we felt this was a must, and we did all right. I mean, eventually it worked out well.
- Q. Why do you think the members objected?
- A. I'm just trying to think what the basic objection was. I couldn't be that the kids had to come three days a week 'cause they were all young kids. I think they eliminated the kindergarten part 'cause made it. . . and started right as a part of the school system, coming on Sunday. Must have been one . . . one of the classes, number one class, A Class, or whatever it was. I really can't offhand explain it to you.

Q. Did it eliminate. . . eliminate English?

A. No, no, no. That. . . that had nothing to do with it. Some of the. . . English. . . I mean. . . well, the Sunday school is now in Hebrew, I mean.

Q. Right.

A. No.

Q. When did Jay Stern come? Before Rosenberg?

A. About the same time, I would say offhand, or. . . or possibly before. I really can't. . .

Q. Same time. Was he the first educational director or. . . ?

A. No, no. We had two or three others, I don't even remember their names. But he was. . . he was quite a guy. Sure knew his stuff. I remember attending one of his Wednesday night classes and . . . you know the interesting thing to me about Jay Stern is the fact that he was a. . . a real observant Jew in every aspect. Even lighting of lights on Saturday, not answering the phone and so forth and so on. And on the other hand his . . . that's the way he lived. But, his viewpoint as to history of the Jews and other aspects of Jewish life was very liberal, very liberal. In fact, not that it makes any difference, but Jay Cohen, who is not in Israel, was one of the leaders in the Reconstructionist movement, relative of Jay's. We always joked about that back and forth. But Jay was a marvelous teacher himself. He was terrific.

Q. You mentioned the Wednesday night school. You also were involved in adult education?

A. Oh, well I wasn't. . .

Q. As a student?

A. Oh, yes, yes. I went as a student like everybody else did, yes.

Q. I guess . . . I guess one of the things I'm asking is whether or not the adult education program in the Hebrew school, Sunday school developed after the temple moved to Park Avenue out here to Winton Road? Whether or not there were real changes or. . .?

A. Well, no. The word you said, developed, I think was . . . would describe it best because I remember Henry Fisher over on Park Avenue used to have . . . well, he didn't have a number of classes, like we have here where you have a choice, but I think also. . . let's also it was Wednesday night, he would teach and tell us a lot of things about Jewish customs and things. And a lot of it, which is a lot of idle pesliach, to give an example. I mean I remember, you know, it's so long ago how he told us like after a funeral or people. . . they covered their mirrors with soap or . . . and then they. . . other certain things connected with . . . with death which are. . . they're not Jewish in their origin at all. These are things that have been added to over the years and so forth and so on. And, well actually what I'm saying is that people put a great deal of stress on these things and when they're really not Jewish concepts at all, they've been additions. And that is to say I could also give another example, the unveilings. That's something. . . something new that. . . that's been added in recent years. So. . . so over the course of. . . of Jewish life, things are added and I suppose a lot of things are dropped. That's evolution, I believe. Unless . . . unless you're ultra-Orthodox, then of course there's no such thing as dropping.

Q. Where did the Hebrew school meet when the temple was on Park Avenue?

A. Oh, they met in that little house next door. Remember I described it?

Q. Oh, yea.

A. It was an old house there with. . . oh, it was so cold. And the kids used

- A. (Continued) to sit in their clothes. . . overcoats and so forth. We actually had no room whatsoever. Every inch of space there was taken up.
- Q. Yea.
- A. And when I say about the Sunday school upstairs, it was a big room with areas curtained off, you know, you could hear. Each class could hear the other class. We were. . .
- Q. Who were the Hebrew school teachers? Do you remember?
- A. Well, I imagine in that period we may have. . . we had people who had some knowledge. I recall . . . and so forth and so on. But, in contrast to today where all our teachers have taught in schools and so forth and so on and get tenure, and it's a regular part of the school system, like the regular secular school system.
- Q. Also before when you were talking you mentioned Aaron Solomon?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Now, this is. . . this is not Abraham Solomon, this is Aaron Solomon. . .
- A. Aaron Solomon who is now a rabbi out at. . . out. . .
- Q. Beth David.
- A. Right. He used to be the cantor at Beth El.
- Q. And Rosenbaum replaced him, but Abraham Solomon has been there throughout the whole time?
- A. Yes, yes. He's been with us well over fifty years. Yes.
- Q. Do you have any recollections or stories to tell about him?
- A. No, because others perhaps would because he. . . he ran a Hebrew school in the Jewish neighborhood, you probably know about it.
- Q. I found out, yea.
- A. You found out. And . . .but I. . . but I mean you might be interested in knowing then he used to walk from down there to . . . to the temple for

A. (Continued) Saturday morning services, until many years, you know, when he got somewhat older he would stay over. He would and then wait till after the Sabbath to go home. But I used to see him walking down East Avenue. Or on holidays he would walk.

Q. Long walk.

A. It's a long walk.

Q. Let's see. Well, another question. . maybe I'll change the tape.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A (Interview II)

Interview II  
Tape I  
Side B

- Q. This is Side B. Today is July 1; I'm Nancy Rosenbloom, and I'm interviewing Mr. Berman. Another question that I was interested in is the communication between the congregation at Beth El and the other Conservative congregations. Have you seen, let's see, a consolidation of Conservative congregations? Is that part of the reason why Beth El has grown so in the last twenty-five years?
- A. No, I . . . not . . . not . . . not because of the statement you just made, but we just . . . asking whether there was cooperation between the various. . .?
- Q. Cooperation and communication and. . .
- A. Well there have been attempts, particularly in youth groups, to have certain affairs where kids from Beth El and B'rith Kodesh and think the others have horns or any different Jews or any. . . anything else. But, not too much. Unfortunately. I've always felt myself there should be more cooperation and mingling between the two groups. But, I wouldn't say there's been. . . there's always. . . there's some, but I don't think it's to a marked degree.
- Q. How about Beth El and the Jewish community and the non-Jewish community, ecumenical services and. . .?
- A. Well, we have a series of. . . of brotherhood weeks, I mean, you know what. . . One year the Jewish and non-Jewish congregations have a brotherhood week. We usually have a dinner alternating at. . . no we didn't alternate. We couldn't alternate because we had to have kosher food, so it was always held at Beth El. But, we. . . I forget which particular church it was, used to come one year . . . or used to be the sponsoring group, and they would bring the speaker.

- A. (Continued) And then we would be the sponsor, too. But that sort of petered out. I remember discussing this with Rabbi Karp, it really didn't. . . it was quite a . . . not very meaningful, I think, you know. It. . . it didn't mean much to get enthusiastic for one evening and then 364 days, you know, down at the bottom of the rung, or at least not functioning outwardly.
- Q. Do you remember who any of the speakers were?
- A. Not offhand I would say. I do remember the time when the other. . . the non-Jewish group had a . . . a chap here from Notre Dame, and boy did he give a Christian sermon. And . . . and really gave us a typical Christian sermon about Christ and all the rest of it. I guess that may have been one of the reasons we sort of tapered off. I. . . I well remember that evening.
- Q. Do you remember in 1964, whenever it was when. . . when the ecumenical council absolved the Jews of killing Christ?
- A. Yes, I think so.
- Q. Do you remember if the synagogues took any position on that?
- A. I doubt it.
- Q. Sort of ignored it.
- A. I don't. . . I think so.
- Q. OK.
- A. Big deal.
- Q. The same thing with the Supreme Court ruling to abandon prayer in school?
- A. Yea, well these things, if they were acted on at all, I would say would be part of the. . . the community council action on the part of downtown Welfare Fund. They clearly come . . . the aspect of the Federation would take action on those things, if there were things to be written in the paper and so forth. It was. . . we always try to do it through them rather than individuals writing on their own, you know, and being way over in left field

- A. (Continued) on something individually.
- Q. Did Beth El and the Federation have close lines of communication? Or. . .
- A. Well, I think the Federation has . . . where necessary, yes. I think there was cooperation, you have. . .
- Q. But does. . .
- A. Although I think the Reform movement. . . political action was one of the bigger things in the Reform movement than it was. I do remember that we did appoint a public action chairman once, but I don't think very much was done.
- Q. So, the. . . the congregations don't have a representative sitting on the council, Federation council?
- A. Oh, yes. Well, I think they do. There's a set up, that's part of the set up. I think they do. Every organization does. I'm sure they are. . . I'm sure they are.
- Q. So I guess one of the questions I was trying to get at is whether or not you perceive the Jewish community as unified or as, you know, separate entities?
- A. Well, it's easier to answer that because you say whether it's unified. I can only make comparisons among my own experience, and I have lived in Syracuse. I went to school and the comparison is very marked in that you find the same people. . . oh, boy.
- Q. We were talking about community unity. OK. I guess from there the. . . the other question that I would want to get at would be different things that unify and divide the congregations. Some of the issues.
- A. Within the congregation?
- Q. Yea. Other than the building. . . we discussed the building. Were there issues of rituals that have been divisive over the years?
- A. Not particularly divisive, but you see when you asked me that question and

- A. (Continued) then you. . . you're really asking my personal opinion on how I feel about it. You see, the question. . . the basic problem is that a Conservative temple is made up of people who are far to the right and far to the left, and others who consider themselves in the middle, you see? So you're never going to get a. . . a consensus of what you do there as to ritual or anything else. And while Beth El has always claimed to be a middle-of-the-road congregation, which is supposed to be a definition of Conservatism, in my opinion it has really been . . . really a rightest congregation because if you. . . if one compares the. . . the services as far back as I can remember compared to today, see the changes are minimal in my opinion. And I can only express my opinion. . .
- Q. Yea, yes. I. . .
- A. I don't know as. . . I don't represent anybody except my own. Now what I'm driving at is this, that my own concept of the Conservative movement is, and based on the fact of things I've read and things I've heard about and. . . and having been with Rabbi Karp on various trips where he has a. . . a talk on the Conservative movement, which is very good. Did we cover this before last time? We didn't. Well, anyway the. . . the Conservative movement seems to be proud of themselves, the fact that they move with the times, as necessitated by the times and so forth. That is. . . that. . . that is what they stand for. But, as. . . as I've alluded to by what I started to say, I don't think they have. See? And as an example at our own Temple Beth El, when I stop to think of. . . of. . .
- Q. OK.
- A. Well, we were talking about divisiveness in the . . . because of the fact that the Conservative movement is . . . consists of extreme right and the extreme left and so forth. Oh, yes. I know what I started to tell you.

A. (Continued) I started to tell you about the changes that have taken place. There. . . there have been, oh, I can think of two or three, I'll think of them maybe as I go along. One of the things that we've done, we now read the Torah . . . instead of reading a whole portion of the week on Saturday morning, we read a third on Saturday morning, a third on Monday, and a third on Thursday. Those are the three that they have Torah readings, you see? So that. . . so that shortens the service and leaves more time for the rabbi to talk about, you know, the portion of the week and so forth. Explain it to the people. But that took years. I remember Sam Poze and I used to talk to Abe Karp about it, and he says well I talked to many of my congregation. . . many congregations and cemetery. . . oh, boy, seminary . . . And they haven't. . . they don't think it's such a great idea, and let's wait. So it was. . . not until we finally got over on Winton Road that this came about. All right, that's number one. Now the second thing that occurred to me is the fact that we . . . we do. . . we have our services every morning at seven-thirty, I think it is. And the evening service at six o'clock, all year round. Now, but. . . but if you. . . if you're real Orthodox and you want to do it say the way it always has been done and is still being done in most places, as you. . . this is all controlled by the . . . the sunset, see? You. . . you davad marev at sunset, which means that in the summertime the people that want to come to services and means they have to come at eight-thirty at night or nine o'clock at night. You see? And, well, I don't know. They. . . that's quite a chore. I mean, you come home, you have supper and you have to go back again. These are people that come and so forth. So that as I say, we finally came to the point where we said six o'clock all year round. Well, now . . . and how does this. . . what's involved there? Truly a matter of interpretation. So actually what

A. (Continued) I'm really saying is that Jewish life, Jewish ritual lends itself to interpretation. I mean, it always has. So that I always say that it depends of the position of the rabbi. I say the congregation is what the rabbi is because if you ask him a question he could answer in a, quote, liberal way, or he can. . . or he can go towards the. . . toward the right, you see? And the rigid in his answer. So that I feel that any of the questions. . . many, most of the questions that bother people relative to ritual can be settled by the . . .by reinterpretation, and the point is that when the rabbi says it's OK, the people to whom it's important, it's OK. If the rabbi says it's OK, so it must be OK. So that is why I make the general statement which I did, as the rabbi goes, so goes the congregation because in him remains the power of making decisions which orient the direction in which you're going.

Q. Yes.

A. OK. I think there was a few. . . I think at most one or two other things, but outside of that our services are exactly the way they always were. They start at nine o'clock on Saturday mornings, well we may have cut off ten or fifteen minutes in length, but outside of that we cover the whole service.

Q. What were some of the other things that there might have been changes in besides the service? Kashruth is not. . . ?

A. Oh, no, no. Kashruth is basic at. . .at Beth El. It. . . it's so basic that one of the things that people looked aghast at was the fact that like for instance if. . . if you had an aunt was. . . or a cousin who was being Bar Mitvah and you wanted to bake a cake and bring it to the Bar Mitzvah and so forth, we don't allow it, you see? Because we don't know what kashruth you have in your home, you understand? And a lot of people, their own interpretation of what's kashruth isn't the same as somebody else's, you know? They could use the same utensils for one thing or another, and they'd

A. (Continued) say, well I'm kosher and so forth and so on. So, once and for all we had a meeting in which we made the decision that every. . . all food it has. . . that. . . that goes in our kitchen comes from one source, which we have control over. Because we owe an obligation to the community. If we say to Hillel, you have your annual dinner at our place, it's kosher. It's got to be kosher, not pussyfooting or. . . or partially pregnant. It's either. . . it's either kosher or it's not kosher. So we made that ruling, and it is definitely kosher. We have only one or two recognized cateresses that can use our kitchen, otherwise. . .

Q. Well, then what would be other issues that were divisive?

A. Oh, I don't know. I don't think we've ever had anything. I think we've come right along pretty well. I mean, you know, now recently as I told you we're changing rabbis. Well, that's a. . . that's a tricky business. I mean as far as divisiveness is because . . . because any one person will cotton to another person more than another or not at all, so that no matter when a person goes or a change is made there are certain people who are unhappy about it. So you have to go through certain ritual to satisfy these people. But I'm. . . and. . . and it isn't easy. It isn't easy. But, on the whole knowing other shuls and people that have told me about it, how they have millions of meetings till twelve o'clock at night and all that business, I would say what we've coasted along pretty well.

Q. Before you mentioned something about the kids at Beth El thought the kids at B'rith Kodesh had horns?

A. Oh, no. I just used that as a descriptive. . .

Q. As kids could be.

A. That they were different. . . that they were different Jews than they were.

See? That's really what I meant.

Q. No, that's. . . I mean I understood that. But I mean like in terms of the Boy Scout troop for example. . .

A. Yea.

Q. Were there ever children of members at Birth Kodesh in your Boy Scouts at Beth El? Or. . .

A. No, they had their own Scout troop. They had their own Scout troop. But we had. . . I'd say the kashruth problem when we came to scouting was . . . was the big one, yes. But, we adhered to it.

Q. Well, maybe I can't think of anything else to ask you about Beth El because you described very well the fire and the changes.

A. Yea.

Q. How did they get rid of the old building? The remnants of the old building?

A. Oh boy, I went through murder. You know, having been president I'd get calls from the. . . from the headquarters down there, the neighbors are complaining it's a hazard. You know, we just let it stand there because we didn't know what to do. We didn't have another building, and well it could be hazardous, although they said the walls were very firm. But, when you gonna do something? Well, what it meant is thousands of dollars to pull that stuff away. And eventually it was done, and we had to pay for. . . and it was really a crime. That building was, you know, we bought it. It was a church originally, and it had this. . . I don't know what the real name of it is, it's sort of a red stone, very valuable if you were to try to build a building with it. But they can't be reclaimed because the cement. . . it would cost so much to clean them all. So it just becomes a lot of junk to be hauled away. And that's what we finally had to clear it, so we did.

Q. And sold that right?

A. And sold that land, right.

Q. And the scrolls you said you were able to save the scrolls, but there was. . .

A. There were a few that were burnt. I think there were a few small scrolls I'm sure that were upstairs in the . . . that they use in the Sunday school and so forth. But, you know, they. . . I think the . . . what's done in Jewish life, these are buried and so forth. As a matter of fact, we have them up in our hall in a little case for a while, people look at them. And others objected to it, why haven't you buried these and so forth and so on. And we saved a lot of books. But the. . . the stench just remained there. I don't know whether they ever got rid of it or just got rid of the books.

Q. And the talats and the. . .

A. Oh, well that. . . that's a minor matter, the talasim. But the. . . the . . . on the whole we saved a lot of Torahs. Some of them needed fixing and we had them fixed. And so forth and so on. And, oh, boy it was an experience.

Q. There was no caretaker in this building?

A. Yea.

Q. So that was. . .

A. Yea, well you can put two and two together. You know, when he mentioned about the cigarettes?

Q. Yea.

A. Well, I don't know whether he was around, I wouldn't want to liable anybody, but there's no. . . he used to smoke cigarettes. And no question, after everybody was out of the building and he had his job and all this. I'm sure he was smoking, and he must have left it there.

Q. Yea.

A. Because nobody in. . . in the services would certainly step out in the hall there, in those days particularly.

Q. Not then?

A. No.

Q. OK. You mentioned before that we might talk a little bit about Zionism. Do you feel like talking a little bit, maybe?

A. Well, I told Reuben I would help him. You know I . . . you know I tried to make a lot of sidelights as part of the things that I've been doing more than content maybe. But when I started . . . thought that I was gonna talk about, that was the first thing I was gonna begin with was when I thought of Zionism was to think of the weather. Why? Because we would work like dogs and to have a speaker come to town, you know? And then be sure and come and all this stuff, and then it would be a terrible winter's night. It was always in the winter, and we had food and all that stuff. And, oh, we thought, boy, are we gonna get. . . there's gonna be twelve people. And that was always in the back of our mind. It just sticks.

Q. Well, you were a member of what, the national Zionist organizations?

A. Well, they had a big chapter. In fact, I talked to Ruby Goldman, and I forgot how many hundreds, or he may have said a thousand. . . he'll probably tell you about it when you talk to him, or whoever does talk to him. We had a . . . it was a big organization in its day.

Q. That's different than the Labor Zionists?

A. Oh, yes. They each had their own chapter, Labor and there were others and so forth. Of course, Hadassah, all part of Zionism, but this was called a general Zionist movement. Of course, you know what's happened as years went by. Their work was taken over by Federations and by this other committee, of which Rabbi Bernstein was chairman up until recently, you know this committee that has a record, in Washington, that talks to the Congressmen and, you know, dispenses propaganda and so forth. What do they call these kind of people who talk to the Congressmen? You know?

Q. Lobbyists.

A. Lobbyists, yes. Yes, it's a lobbyist organization. Because we used to at that time write to Senators, you know, and have 'em call on the legislators.

Q. Well, what would you say the major difference between the Labor Zionist and this other Zionist group?

A. Well, I . . . I wouldn't know. I can only guess that the Labor is a combination of Socialism together with Zionism. In other words, it's an arm of Zionism that's a group of people who felt that the Socialist movement could play a big part in it. And I've done some reading subsequently and I . . . I remember . . . just . . . just make the one statement that the Zionists were very unhappy that when they did get the state the Social . . . Socialist group, who at that time said that their force would be such a . . . a big thing in the movement, they were very disappointing in their lack of help.

Q. This . . . this other Zionist that came to be a political lobby, there's never any question of the fact that the members are assimilated Jews, Americans, Americans. And they really don't care to move to Israel? Am I correct? It's more. . .

A. Oh, no question about it. No question about it.

Q. Monetary contributions and. . .

A. Oh, there's no question about it. In other words we really have no say-so or should have actually in how they run their government. But I suppose there has been some cautioning influences to a degree, but I mean not. . . not really exerting any influence on them. They have their own party system and that's up to them.

Q. I guess early on in Rochester was there a group that was mostly affiliated with B'rith Kodesh, of the early Zionist?

A. No, no. That wasn't part of the party platform. No, the Reform movement had

A. (Continued) part of their national platform, the fact that they did not believe in the State.

Q. The State.

A. This is what's called the Pittsford platform, and because they met in Pittsford at that time, in which they spelled out what the Reform movement stood for. And they spelled out the fact that they didn't believe in the special homeland for the Jews in Israel. So they couldn't possibly be part of a group and they weren't.

Q. I guess I was thinking because Rabbi Bernstein was so active.

A. Oh, I know, but look at the place in the Reform movement after the . . . Phil got here. I mean, he added the Bar Mitzvahs and the . . . and, you know, all the other addenda that . . . taking on some of the things that we have in . . . in the other aspects of Jewish life because they felt that there was a lack . . . a need to round out the program, there wasn't enough there without it.

Q. When I was here before you told a story about hearing Maurice Samuels and Phil Bernstein in 1917.

A. Yes, something about that.

Q. Trip back from Palestine. I wondered if you had any other recollections? Oh, in 1948 when they passed the resolution that Israel would become a state? Or . . .

A. No, no. I remember . . . I remember the night. I remember we were at a party at Elmer Louis' house, and they took the vote at the U.N., and I remember I think Elmer went to the phone and called up the newspaper and they said that they voted the State for Israel and that the President had given de facto recognition to the State. That was quite a night. I'm glad there was something going on particular so I can pinpoint the night that it happened.

Q. How about the 1967 war?

A. Well, that must have affected everybody the same, I mean. There'd never been such an outpouring of . . . of monetary help and other aspects of being useful by Jews. . . by Jews who we never knew were Jews! When that happened I think nothing affected people. . . Jewish people as a whole as that terrible few days.

Q. So you think that there has been possibly a change in the last place, either for Jews in terms of the Rochester community? More supportive of the State of Israel?

A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. We have. . . we get . . . Reform movement, of course. Well, I. . . obviously say not in the same depth that we do at Beth El, although even in the Orthodox shuls. Now we have a dinner once a year in behalf of bonds for Israel, and they've only had one. . . one, I think, or two at B'rith Kodesh. They just don't. . . are not able. . . well, they do reach them in other ways, but they're not able to get enough of a . . . of a total membership turnout to have that type of dinner.

Q. As they do at Beth El?

A. As they do at Beth El.

Q. Or at the Federation office?

A. Well, yea, they have their, you know, Nelson Kirschenbaum has. . . has us all programmed among the Orthodox Jews, and the banks. I mean, there's a whole program in the bond movement. In fact, they just raised a . . . he was telling me last week they raised a million dollars honoring a Mr. Costanza, president of one of the banks here in town. Not. . . not the Costanza was the vice-mayor, this is a bank president.

Q. Angelo.

A. Right.

- Q. Somebody was telling me, somebody else was telling me.
- A. Raised a million dollars. Really something.
- Q. Probably mostly non-Jews?
- A. Oh, yes. Practically entirely.
- Q. Yea, that's. . . that's really. . . Have you traveled to Israel yourself?
- A. I've been there three times.
- Q. Was it groups going?
- A. Always with a group.
- Q. Rochester groups?
- A. No, no. When I say groups, B'nai B'rith twice and. . . and American Jewish Congress once.
- Q. That reminds me, why do you think there's no B'nai B'rith in Rochester? Is it out of Syracuse the B'nai B'rith?
- A. No, no. There's a B'nai B'rith in Rochester, but not a functioning organization in that they may have one or two meetings a whole year in which they have a speaker. It's mostly a bowling society.
- Q. Oh.
- A. Yea. A group who bowls together on the weekend and so forth. Yes.
- Q. I don't know. The. . . the other questions that I would ask would be on stories you have about specific people. You told some stories about Aaron Rose at that time.
- A. Yea, but I think I tried to do that all about Beth El and so forth and so on.
- Q. Or different activities in Rochester, like the Yiddish theatre. Do you have any memories of that?
- A. No, I. . . I remember this particular person walking along Joseph Avenue with these big posters under his arm, distributing them to various stores, if there were such a thing. The person to talk to about that would be Mr.

- A. (Continued) Fogel on the . . . on the . . . whatever station he broadcast the Jewish hour on because his family were and still is, I mean, his nephew is in Hollywood in the movie business today.
- Q. All right. I know who you mean. All right or any. . . any other stories or recollections that jump to your mind?
- A. I don't think so. I think. . .
- Q. Can I end then by asking you some personal. . .
- A. Yea, you did last time, such as?
- Q. Well, no these are more philosophical questions.
- A. Oh.
- Q. I guess. . . well, one thing that I. . . that we're all aware of in Rochester is the way Rochester has really grown from an urban. . . urban to a metropolitan community. And I just wondered whether you felt that the Jews have a commitment to an urban community?
- A. Well, I don't know what you mean by a commitment. I mean, the Jews are the kind of people who better themselves, as other people do. But I mean they're known to. I mean when the Jew came on the East Side of New York, as soon as he was able he moved his family out to the Bronx or wherever it was. And, of course, in our smaller city the same thing takes place, particularly so now as the thing moves faster because of the fact that, you know, we have problems with the inner city and that type of thing.
- Q. Do you think there's a drain on the city in terms of . . . I don't know. . . leaving the city an empty shell. Although Rochester's not exactly an empty shell, but downtown today is a lot different than going downtown twenty years ago.
- A. Well, what are you asking? If we know it's that way, but what can I ask or say that will make it any different? I don't. . . I'm not very optimistic

A. (Continued) about it becoming much better than it is now.

Q. Well, because you said you're not very optimistic, and that was for the actual city of Rochester, and that's actually the point I wanted to end with was just what you thought the future of the Rochester Jewish community, or the Rochester community is. If you see a future or. . .

A. That's a pretty. . .

Q. It's a heavy question.

A. Heavy philosophical question and I think you should ask one of the rabbis. I mean, I'm not able to talk off the cuff and give you an answer like that. I wouldn't even attempt it.

Q. I mean as a Rochester resident. . .

A. I could think about it and give you my opinion, but no I don't think I would care to comment on that.

Q. OK.

A. Because it wouldn't be of any value.

Q. OK.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE B (Interview II)