

Tape 16b: Interview with Israel Bermudez and Rachel Lemus

Interviewer: Helen Krische

Date of Interview: 2006

Length of Interview: 31:46

Location of Interview: St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church

Transcription Completion Date: October 13, 2020

Transcriptionist: Emily Raymond

[Tape begins with buzzing and static noise]

Israel Bermudez (Interviewee): ...It was an accident, but just...happened to get hurt.

HK: Was that at New York School where they were congregated.

IB: Now, that was a bad time too, because there was a lot of people that came in from out of town to get, you know, in trouble, and down in East Lawrence –

RL: They're doing that now.

IB: East Lawrence, they shot out all the streetlights. And then they'd go down the street in their cars with their lights [off? out?] And you know, if they see somebody they didn't like, or something, they'd start chasing or shooting them or whatever. I mean, you can sit there in the evenings on your porch and there's bullets come through the leaves in the trees, you know. And that didn't last long, couple of weeks, maybe two or three. The thing about it is, I went to the – to the store one time, and like I said, I had black friends, that I grew up with and played ball with, and when those riots and things were going on, there was a lot of, like, [unintelligible] people came in too. And then you had the black [unintelligible]. And they were all around. And there was, there was a lot of tension here, when you walk in a store somewhere, they look at you, and try to figure out: Are you a militant, or are you with them, or are you with them? I, I was in a store one time talking to this black fellow that I went with, played ball, and there was, some college, I think they were college kids, and they were older. And I don't think they were from town. I think they were just troublemakers. And they came in, we was standing there and they got all around, about six of 'em. [murmurs] "They're gonna, they're gonna beat us up, boy." And so I thought: "Well, all we can do is stand back to back and fight as many as we can." But back then I didn't think about it, you know. Back then fights were just hands, you know. Didn't use nothing. The militants did, but most of the time, when you see somebody, [unintelligible] they was just fistfighting, you know. One got beat up and then get up and go home. And after that it started turning into knives and guns and all that kind of stuff. [unintelligible] There was a lot of –

RL: We had a – funerals, we was just talking about this the other day – we didn't go to the funeral home, they brought the body to the home.

IB: Yeah.

RL: And then in those days you brought the body to the home, and okay, let's say somebody died, I don't think we ever had one for us, but you know, somebody [unintelligible]. And the

parents would get together and they figured, you know, you're gonna, after the rosary, you're gonna offer coffee and rolls. So that's when my mother sometimes would say, "Go get the coffee," you know, big can, or "Go get the five pounds of sugar and we'll take it over, take it to her before so she know they have it." Somebody else would bring – buy bread, and then after the rosary we had – we were little, we were looking forward to that bread. We, we drank coffee all our lives, since we were little.

IB: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

RL: Us kids were, I remember, I remember some putting in a milk bottle.

IB: You had milk, but you [unintelligible], but that was it.

RL: Lot of milk, and, but we drank coffee. And up to this day I, my husband's trying to, "You drink too much coffee." I said, "Oh, that's okay." Something's gonna take me one of these days anyhow, I believe. It isn't like, you know, I'm bothering somebody else by, you know, smoking in your face, or nothing, but...the funerals were like that. Very seldom did they go to the little –

IB: The whole family went to the funeral, these little kids would be [unintelligible], everybody else [unintelligible] Having the rosary or something like that. The person's laying right there in the dining room [unintelligible] in the casket. So the little kids just didn't want to stand there, so they'd be outside. [murmurs] We'd always peek in the window, you know, to see the body, what was there. That's the way it was.

RL: It's all, like I said, we're all together.

IB: Lotta that growing up like that is just because you were poor. And you, you know, you couldn't afford this and that. So that's the way you had to do things.

RL: Well, I have a piece of paper, 'cause my dad lived with me after my mom passed away, he came to live with me. And I found this little paper that's handwritten, I think he paid \$300 for the house, \$10 payment. I've got that.

HK: Oh.

RL: And he got this little house, then he built two bedrooms. It was just the living room, really a living room, one bedroom, kitchen, and the back like a porch. Then he, then the city came, you had outhouses, then the city came and said no more outhouses, you're gonna have to put your bathroom in there. And that was fine. But down the basement of that house my dad had, there was a faucet, he put up walls and there was a stool, a real stool, you know, it might have been used, but –

IB: We dug the, we dug the line, sewer line, to the, to the –

RL: And the way you flushed it, there was a faucet there, and there was a bucket, so you know, when you needed to flush it you just fill it and it would flush. But then the city came and says no

more, they give us a [unintelligible], so then he put the bathroom upstairs. Then he built two bedrooms, one for the boys and one for the girls. Cause we had, they had their own little –

IB: See, back then you –

RL: I can't remember how we slept.

IB: Back then you didn't know, [murmurs] let anybody in that door if you didn't want to. Even the police. But back then you didn't want that. So the city would come and the police would come.

HK: What house was this, what is the address?

RL: 810 New Jersey.

HK: 810 New Jersey.

RL: That I remember that there, I remember the 740 and 819 before that, I don't remember. But the 810 New Jersey I remember, we had the outhouses, you go out there, and there was just, what outhouses looks like. And then, the city came in and said we were kind of lucky 'cause Dad, he got, measured, there was like a porch and he divided a little wall and then we'd put the stool, the tub and the basin, and this, my mother's Maytag with her washer. He had a few tools. But we had that, and then he made a shower downstairs, just put a wall like, you know, a wall and then we had a curtain, in case somebody had to go to the bathroom and then it was a shower.

IB: You might have one lightbulb in that one room.

RL: Yeah.

IB: There wasn't outlets or anything. Just the light would hang, you know, most of the time you had kerosene lamps [unintelligible]

RL: And my dad would put them, yeah, nowadays, when my dad was doing some work. For them to learn – well, to help him too – that's why my brothers all know how to do things 'cause my dad had 'em right there. You know, right there, and they –

IB: We used to run away, but then we had to come back and [murmurs] [laughs]

RL: But you know, they had, like [unintelligible], we burned a fire, I remember we had a big stove in the living room. Big top like that. And we would dry our socks, and it took forever, thick socks. Cause there was a little, he made a little wooden box and he'd tell these boys, "When I come back from work, that wood has to be all cut so I can" – big enough to put in the fireplace. Wood and the guys would do it. I mean, they knew it had to be done, but first they'd come home and have a cup of coffee. And then they'd get out there and do that and my dad would never get after, that I can remember, get after them, get in here. Now the kids, "Eh, I'll do it later Mom." Not my kids, but –

IB: He went down to KU and, landscaping. They cut trees and stuff down. So he'd always take 'em to the landfill, and so he'd always tell the children, "Just take it to the backyard and drop them off." I mean, these logs were that big around. They would just drop 'em in the yard and so it was our job to get them [unintelligible]. And then we had this crosscut saw, needed two guys, one on each side, and one of our jobs was to cut wood every day for the stove, you know, and then we could play. So we, so we'd always start doing that and then the little ones would sit on the logs so we couldn't move them, [unintelligible] get up there. And after a while the neighbor kids would come around, say "That looks like fun," you know, like Tom, you know, like painting the fence. So pretty soon they get, rather than just stand there and watch, "[unintelligible] My turn!" You know, they kinda, so, they'd all come home, we'd saw the wood and then we'd go play ball, you know.

HK: Mm-hmm.

IB: But it was, that's the way –

RL: Our swings were a rope in the tree. Remember, Izzy? And Daddy had a little work shed, and then he had a garage and it was swinging from that rope clear across. That was, like I said, we didn't have nothing like a little, uh – swing set.

IB: Only problem there was we had a mean dog, and he was always chained there. When you swung across there –

HK: He'd try to get you.

IB: He'd try to get you. Every once in a while he would, too. [laughs]

RL: But no, we just looked forward, you know, we knew we had to get our work done. And like I said, I remember my dad would have those boys, they built the two bedrooms. And he had 'em right there, watching him, handing him, they know what a screwdriver was, a whatever, you know, that's how they learned.

IB: Other thing about it was you had two [murmurs] screwdriver, one hammer and all this, sometimes get [rocks? nails?] somebody come along with a hammer, but you just didn't have a whole lot of stuff to work with.

RL: In those days my dad worked his self, and he became a foreman for KU. I've got some newspapers on it. He became a landscaper for the grounds. And he had no education by the time he got in there. You know, sometimes people don't know, they have the education, go to school, but they got it up here.

IB: [Murmurs] Well, my dad, at the beginning he didn't know English, so he [unintelligible] He got records to learn how to do English. That's how he kind of learned. My oldest brother has some really good stories –

RL: He's coming for the fiesta. He comes every year, he's in, he lives up in the mountains in Denver, about 20 miles from Denver. He comes, he'll be coming Thursday and he – he can remember things and I said, "Too bad he's not coming," you know. That – later he'll be here, but I mean, that... My dad, um, he liked to drink, like, he wasn't one of those, like some people and they go to the bar every day or every weekend, not like that. We, we were, us kids were first. You know, like I say, he didn't take much to get drunk, you know, like people, but we were, we came first for him. I mean, he had two jobs. He worked, uh, I guess when he worked at KU, right? Then they, the older men made these carts, big square and those big wheels put in the middle and then they put handles, they'd go down the alleys, pick up cardboard, 'cause you could sell cardboard, copper, which you could get more money even now. Pop bottles –

IB: Pop bottles.

RL: He'd get all that and go sell it for extra money.

IB: We kids did that too. We, I did that growing up.

RL: But actually the older men, you know, Mr. Garcia, Mr...

IB: Used to do that all the time.

RL: They'd go down the alleys.

IB: As a little kid, you know, we used to get wagons or we'd carry, cardboard, you know, you had to break the boxes down and carry the cardboard, and, uh, we used to have to go to this junkyard which was only about two blocks down the street. But as a little kid you come in there too, you maybe pulled the wagon, cardboard, and they'd – they'd put it on the scale and weigh it and then whatever it was they give you so much per pound. And the guys that run that thing would cheat you. I mean, you were a little kid, and you were coming in with this cardboard. And these guys are cheating you. They'd always stand in front of the [unintelligible], and they'd never let you see what it weighed. And so we knew it weighed more than that, 'cause you know, they'd give us half of what it was. And we knew, we carried it over there. And so then one time we was in the yard doing that, and this lady that used to do that, she used to live in [unintelligible]. She'd go up and down the alley getting stuff and taking it back. She said, "Well what you do to get back at em," she said, "when you get the cardboard lay it down, get you a bucket of water and then just sprinkle it, to make it heavier [unintelligible]. And we thought, you know, it'll work. [laughs] So we did that and we'd take it in and the guys said, "Well that's only about 15 pounds [murmurs; then says 25 pounds?]. But then, so he'd cheat you down to 20, 15 pounds so we end up, you know, getting even. But with metal you couldn't do that, 'cause it was metal. You'd find metal stuff. And so after awhile, this is getting to be bad, 'cause you know they're cheating you. But there was nothing you could do, and as little kids you start thinking, "Well, they're cheating us and they're grown men and we can't do nothing about it." So we go "Well, in the evenings when the thing closes down, the junkyard closes down, let's go jump the fence and throw half that stuff back and resell it to them." [laughs] So we did that, we did that for a while and then they got a dog and we couldn't jump the fence anymore. That's where this junkyard dog came in. We, we was trying to get one guy over there, you know, with the dog, but

they have high fences, [unintelligible] room, you know. You're a little kid, you know, you gotta run fast, hit that thing, get up that thing, that dog's right behind you, so. Sometimes you could do it and sometimes you couldn't.

RL: The other way that we made money for us younger kids was, he was a farmer, Heck? murmurs] I think they still have a farm.

IB: There was three or four farmers, they were all brothers.

RL: They'd bring this, like I guess, it's a truck, right? Am I right?

IB: Flatbed truck.

RL: And he'd park in the middle of the block, two times, here, and he'd – he'd pick us up. And we'd get in the back of the truck and he'd keep us all day picking potatoes.

IB: ...No more than sixteen, they always had a place, they'd pick you up either this corner or this corner. You had to be there at like 6:30 or something. So everybody that could walk around, five years old, everybody got on that truck and went. You sat there in the morning with your little bag of, your little lunch. And the truck would come and everybody gets on there and I mean everybody, if there's 50 people there, there's only room for 30, otherwise everybody's gonna be standing up or they'd be hanging over the side.

RL: We were young –

IB: Oh, yeah.

RL: Like 12 and 10 years old when we went –

HK: So what year was this? About what time period?

IB: Late '40s.

HK: Okay.

IB: Then you went out there and you picked potatoes, you know, family, you'd go out there and get what they called a station [tape fades briefly] there and the next guy, and as a family you went out there and you kind of all stayed together, you know, until, most of the time. Unless there was some girls, and the older guys –

RL: That's what I was saying. Instead of him helping his sister, he went to help his girlfriend. [laughs]

IB: Some days I would pick five bushels when I should have picked 35 or something.

RL: And we had a lot of Mexicans, young men, single, come in, and where would they go? They send 'em to Bermuda's. 'Cause like I said, my dad was a foreman, and if somebody looking for a job, they send 'em to Bermudas. But they didn't have no papers, the ones that came from Mexico, and my dad said: "You're better off going to the city, because you won't be able to get nothing here." And, uh, but we had fun too, getting in that truck and going out there, we're standing up in the truck, 'cause he had, he had these boards there, and but, that was help for us and we really –

IB: It was dangerous, 'cause you –

RL: But we had –

IB: Kids, and the whole family, and they had grandmas out there, you know, like 75 years old. They were out there picking potatoes. And the only shade you had was when you found a sunflower stalk, and then you'd turn around and pretend like this is buried in the ground and you put a piece, some sacks over it. And then there was competition because sometimes you run short on sacks. The truck had come around. You got potatoes, you gotta put 'em in a sack, so you was running over there and steal some sacks. [laughs] And there'd be little fights. Just little [unintelligible]. I mean, [unintelligible] but it was kinda funny, you know. You had to survive, kind of.

RL: But we always, you guys had, like I was telling her, a lot of boys came, from – I don't know where they came from. Spanish speaking, those had to come from Mexico. But they'd always, sometimes our porch was a bit, you know, was hot, so you had no, little, one fan for the whole household. When we were young, we'd sleep out on the porch, and as soon as it was getting light, Dad would wake us up: "Come on in." And then we'd come in the house.

IB: Or the dogs would carry you away.

RL: But we had, we had, well they were friends, we didn't really know 'em. But they'd take 'em in, and they'd stay at our house.

IB: When we was, uh –

RL: And, and you more like [unintelligible] our house.

IB: When we was kids, I mean, we was real poor, a quarter go a long way. And there would be bums that would get off the train 'cause we lived about a block from a train station. The railroad tracks, and they'd, hobos and stuff, would come down that alley all the time. And they must've marked the houses, cause they'd go along and they'd come up to that house, and my mom would always feed 'em.

RL: Always.

IB: And we had –

RL: Always. Always.

IB: She'd always make something for 'em, and have 'em sit on the back step there, and she'd give 'em coffee and [unintelligible]. And then one guy told me that's what they do, they'd go down and mark a house, they'd put an X or something on it. And the next one will come down, he knows he can get something to eat there. But she never turned 'em down.

RL: Never turned 'em down. Fed 'em, I don't care if they're black, white or Hispanic.

IB: She would make 'em something like [unintelligible] tortillas, we always had tortillas. My mom, seemed like she'd sit there and make tortillas, round the back –

RL: Flour tortillas.

IB: There'd be six of us sitting at the table [unintelligible], she'd have a little pile like that of tortillas. And everybody grabs one, and it takes thirty seconds to get rid of it. And she would keep that thing like that all the time, cooking and rolling 'em out and making the dough and all that. After a while you get to thinking, you know, she was pretty good. Pretty fast.

RL: Like I said, they didn't go to school but my mom sometimes would tell us, she told me one time, she said: "Your mother, what a mother" or something like that. She says: "You get the stupid mother." I said: Why do you say that? She says: "'Cause I never went to school." I said: "Well, your parents didn't let you, I mean, they felt like you didn't need to go to school." It was just gonna be work, work, work. But yet, her and the whole neighborhood, there was like three or four women, after they ate lunch and got their dishes – they'd sit together in one house. They'd take turns. And they had crochet, you know, like they'd make a curtain for that –

HK: Mm-hmm.

RL: And form a – a little angel, a horse, a basket with flowers, and they'd, she'd put a, you know, they were gonna quit time to go get supper, she'd put a little safety pin, you know, she'd – and then she'd go to the Salvation Army and she seen a dress that was a little, seen a dress for larger person. She'd look at the material: "That's practically new." Well, she'd buy it and downsize it to fit us. And you know, and then she, I said, "Who else, Mother, you don't need no education, you've had twelve children. Nine of us living. Dad was never on welfare. And you could crochet anything. You could sew anything. You could cook." I remember this cornbread she – I think it's cool, I think I'm gonna make cornbread. She was going to get her flour, put whatever, no measuring, break the egg, and I remember a little crack coming down that cornbread. No recipe. I said: "Well, who had, you had twelve kids. You could cook anything you want. Sew, crochet, what else does a woman need to know?"

IB: Even when she went blind later on in life, she would sit there and crochet all the time, just –

RL: Yeah, diabetic. She was a diabetic. But no, we were – after they're gone, you – I said a lot of times to my husband, thinking about it, you know, what you don't say to your parents when they're living, you know. You know, they came to a country with not knowing anybody. Now

the people that are coming, they have somebody, you know, somebody's already here for them, so they got two or three families there. They had nobody. Took a chance and came because, you know. But they didn't – and here my dad [had?] the education, he didn't have it, became a foreman for KU over...over...I think right, over 30 years, 35?

IB: He's a [unintelligible] now.

HK: Well, what would you do when someone became ill?

RL: Uh...the...

IB: You'd never see a doctor. The only time you see a person that was, the school nurse. That's the only time you ever see any medical people, unless you really got real sick, or cut your leg or – 'cause I remember my brother cut his, almost cut his foot off. Stepped on a Mason jar or [unintelligible]. Cut all the [unintelligible], they had to take him to the doctor then. And then he come back and he needed crutches. Well, we couldn't afford crutches. So my dad cut a limb that had a fork in it, and there, and put a deal up here, and that was his crutch. He was pretty fast. You could still catch him.

RL: Homemade scooters, uh, the boys, uh, stilts out of wood –

IB: You made – you made up your own games.

RL: That was fun.

IB: We had games where we'd, like we had stilts, everybody had stilts, and we'd get up there and then we'd fight on stilts, try to get – or we'd get a smaller guy in the back and, you know, you're the horse and he's the – and they'd fight, they'd pull each other and try to [unintelligible] each other. And then there was a, down on Pennsylvania Street there used to be a TNT popcorn place that shelled corn, and the cobs went out in a pile and it was probably bigger than this house. That was my playground. We used to go out there and play king of the mountains on that. The biggest guy would get up there, used to throw the other ones all off, and – you're a little kid, corn cobs are rough, by the time you get done, you'd be all scarred. [laughs] But you'd play there for hours and hours and hours. Every day after school we'd go down there and play, then they'd haul 'em all off, and then we'd have to wait until they start building 'em up again. And then we had guys that were 17, 18 years old [murmurs]. They went up there, and we were like little kids, like 11 or 12, they got up there, and they were always king of the mountain usually. Every time you'd try to gang up on 'em, one guy would grab on and –

RL: But everybody helped each other, especially, you know, the women having one child after another, you know, another little one. Uh, Mom, they got together, well okay, so-and so had a baby – didn't have to worry because they, my mother knew that this – you baptize a baby you become a...

IB: Godparent.

RL: Yeah, but [murmurs] mom and dad. What they call comadre and compadre. You baptize my baby, you would be my comadre, and she'd be my child's daughter. And, you know, they were there to help, Mother didn't just – have the baby, didn't have to worry, 'cause they knew that these other ladies would take care of those kids. Wash 'em, feed 'em. You know, that was fun days.

IB: And back in those days, if you went to somebody's house and you were acting up, they would beat your butt just like you're their kid, and that's the way it was. Nobody ever said anything about it. You go over and misbehave at somebody's house and they'd take the paddle to you or throw you out or whatever, smack you around. And you never said anything, 'cause you know you're wrong and, you ain't gonna go tell nobody nothing 'cause then they'll get after you for being ornery at that place or something, but that's the way it was. Everybody, if you were in their house, you did what they told you to do.

RL: Also, the funerals – if they knew people were real poor, we'd collect, they'd collect among the neighborhood, to have whatever, and, and that's another thing they did. We was – I think about it now that I'm older, and I said: "Those were the good old days to me." [laughs] Even though we were poor, we appreciated. Appreciated, you know, what we got. I think our kids – our grandkids – I didn't do that with my kids. Barbie doll, [Delores's?] Barbie dolls, and she didn't have no more dolls. And I didn't have – like I said, I wanted her to have a little bit, but I don't want her to be – now, my grandkids, it's a different story. My grandkids. I have a son and daughter. It's just a completely different –

IB: When you grew up poor, you appreciate things.

RL: Mm-hmm, I think so.

IB: 'Cause I grew up on beans and tortillas and...

RL: Oatmeal.

IB: The only meat I knew was hamburgers and hot dogs and chicken. I went into the service, and you know, you get these trays, you go through, they're slopping all this food, and God – I'd taste the meat and I'd say: "What is this?" Those guys would look at us – brisket or whatever it was, pork chops – I said, "Man this is really good," you know. I'd make a big deal out of it, they're looking at me like –

RL: Well, during the week –

IB: Where you been, in a cave or something?

RL: During the week it was wieners. Mother would get the wiener and cut it up, fry potatoes and put the wiener in there. Or wieners with hamburger. But Sunday was special, we knew we were gonna have a good – you know, like a chicken. Also marriages. Somebody got married, these women had these pans, they were white. And they had a navy blue line, just a quarter of an inch trim, or navy blue. And my – it was always chicken molé. It's like a barbecue sauce, you know.

They just boil the chicken and then they make this molé. And then they'd put the chicken in, and there was rice, with two kinds, a vermicelli, it was like a little spaghetti, and sometimes they had salad. Well, when there was a marriage the lady would ask my mom: "Could you help me with the rice?" Sure, yeah. There was never a no. She would bring the rice. And then when they're real close, they'll, don't – don't bring it. And tomato, and onion and the garlic. It takes rice, but a lot of times they would just bring the rice, "Can you make 5 pounds of rice?" And they'd distribute. Then we would take it to the, wherever they were gonna have their wedding. And that's how the food was made. It wasn't catered in. [laughs]

HK: Yeah.

RL: And it was strictly, that was a typical molé. The broth, made it more tasty with that vermicelli, and rice was using the broth of when you boil the chicken. That's what makes everything good now. But no, you could go – on Sundays the boys would go to church and they'd come back and they'd have two or three friends and it was a day they get to come and [sit?] and drinking coffee. And the other time they'd go to this other person's house, you know, that's the way – every Saturday I remember these boys had a car, Saturday afternoon 'cause they were gonna date, I guess, in the evening, wash their car, I mean, they had 'em clean. Washed their cars inside and out.

IB: That was my brothers. I didn't get a car till I was 22.

RL: You had a yellow Chevy I remember –

IB: 22 years old. I'd been in the Marines and got out, and bought me a car.

RL: And then when the boys went into the service we had four brothers – well, five of my, four of my brothers went into the service – and they'd come, in, like leave, was it leave? And they'd come in like 2:00 in the morning, I mean, knocking and just knocking at the door.

IB: We never told 'em we was coming.

RL: And they wouldn't tell us when they was coming. Oh, and then everybody got up, and Mama was ready to make the pot of coffee was in a percolator, wasn't it?

IB: And then they'd call everybody that –

RL: Yeah, it was –

IB: You got these people staring at you, this room and that room, you know, they're looking at you like –

RL: The best coffee I've ever had, you know, was from the older ladies. Ms. Ramirez was my godmother, if you talked to [one of the Ramirezes?], it was a pan with two handles. The water boiling, the coffee, I'd watch it.

IB: Well they, back in those days they didn't use coffeepots. Just got a big pot and filled it up with grounds, coffee. And then they'd let it boil, put a lid on and let it boil, and I'm [sitting there?] and stuff would settle on the bottom –

RL: And you could go down –

IB: Everybody had one, they were that big –

RL: You could go down to this person's house and for sure they were gonna offer you to eat. No problem, it was just everybody was together. The men all, they were compadres, 'cause you know, every family had a large family [unintelligible] godfather, everybody was godparents and comadres and compadres. But that's the way they – once in a while my dad would go to [unintelligible] and my godfather, he liked a beer or two now and then, couple beers, and my mother, the – they went to something. We'd look forward to the evenings and looked forward to that steak. But that's the way that we were raised, and, you know, hand-me-downs. And we had clothes – my brothers I'm sure handed, you know, the bigger one down, down. And I was the youngest one.

IB: I was the youngest, I never got – by the time I got it, “What is this?” [laughs] “What's this supposed to be?” [all laugh] I was the youngest boy, so anytime anything came to me, it was – what is it?

RL: I tell my granddaughters, they got a drawer of socks. Oh, God! You know, how they sell those socks like six in there. I had two pair. I had one with the hole in the heel, and one without a hole. So this thing with – I was learning how to darn and this thing was about this thick and you know, I'd be all – and I'd always make sure the night before, especially in the wintertime, that I was gonna end up with the best on Sunday. We'd wash 'em in the night, put 'em on top of the stove to be dry and now my grandkids have all these pairs of socks. They got so many.

IB: The boys were – you took care of your own socks.

HK: Oh, gosh.

IB: The boys growing up, you know, you had your own socks and your own underwear, everything, so you more or less washed them and took care of them. And I remember a lot of times you just had what you call the tops, they were just the top of the socks [laughs]. The holes were in the [laughs]. And my brother, he was always trying to figure out, [someone coughs]. One time when he was in junior high, he was talking to this girl and put his foot up, he forgot he had his tops on. And the sock [laughs], turn around, he said “God!” But we just got all the tops, and they were just the [unintelligible], so –

RL: Was you – are you a Lawrence person?

HK: Yes, I am. I went to St. John's School.

RL: Oh, okay.

HK: And, uh –

IB: Your last name's what?

RL: Krische.

IB: The Marlboro person, the guy that owned the Marlboro factory, what was his name...?

HK: George. Bob.

IB: Bob. Yeah, Bob Krische.

HK: Mm-hmm. Yeah, he's my uncle.

IB: Oh.

HK: Yeah.

IB: He hired a lot of them Mexicans. A lot of 'em used to work for him. They'd say, "Go out to Krische's, he'll hire you."

HK: Yeah...well, it looks like our tape ran out. Um, I think –

IB: I was just getting wound up, too.

HK: Yeah, I know.

IB: I was on a roll.

RL: Um, do you need anything like this for the flood? Are you interested in this, and like – ?

HK: Oh, sure.

RL: I kinda, I found these two, 'cause like I said, my parents – my dad came to live with me for a while and I got all the pictures.

HK: Mm-hmm.

RL: You can see there, I don't know where that's at, but I thought that was a depot but it's a depot, two floors?

IB: Uh, the Santa Fe depot used to be two or three stories.

RL: Oh really? And looks like maybe that's after the water left.

IB: Yeah, that was [unintelligible? deeper?]. 'Cause that was in '51.

RL: '51.

IB: I was, uh, 16 I think. When I was a kid I went – I used to like this girl that lived down near the Santa Fe houses, and the flood was coming and they was putting sandbags up in the doors. To impress her parents, I went down there, get sandbags and we'd put 'em in the doors. Course the water went through 'em [laughs]. About two years later –

HK: Val brought this picture and, if you know, let's see, well I think we identified all these.

RL: Mm-hmm.

HK: There are some that aren't identified.

IB: You got names [unintelligible]

HK: So yeah, there's names, and here's a pen, if there's some that you know there, go ahead and fill it in.

END OF TAPE 16B