

EI-308

EDWARD (ISRAEL) OJALVO

BIRTH DATE: APRIL 30, 1912

INTERVIEW DATE: 4/30/1993

RUNNING TIME: 43:23

INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE

RECORDING ENGINEER: SAME

INTERVIEW LOCATION: PEMBROKE PINES, FL

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: NANCY VEGA, 10/1994

TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: CHARLES MITCHELL, 12/2006

TURKEY (SEPHARDIC JEW), 1920

AGE AT IMMIGRATION: 8

PASSAGE ON: *PATRIS*

PORT OF EMBARKATION: PIRAEUS, GREECE

RESIDENCES: TURKEY, TIKERDIE

US: NYC LOWER EAST SIDE

Oral Historian's Note: Mr. Ojalvo is the brother of Nissim Ojalvo, Interview EI-307. Paul E. Sigrist, Jr., Director of the Oral History Project, 8/29/1994.

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service, and I'm here today, April 30, 1993. I'm at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Israel Edward Ojalvo, and that is in Pembroke Pines, Florida. Mr. Ojalvo came from Turkey in 1920 when he was eight years old.

OJALVO: Right.

LEVINE: Well, I'm very delighted to get a chance to talk to you, and why don't we start at the beginning. If you

would tell me your birth date.

OJALVO: Well, I think it was, they tell me April 20th or 24th, 1912.

LEVINE: And, so I guess that means that you didn't have the exact record.

OJALVO: No, I do not have the exact. When I came to this country, my mother put me into school at the age of ten, but I was really eight because she put me that I was born in 1910, but I couldn't have been ten years old. I, through my brother, my other brothers, my sister, told me that I was ten years younger than him, so I think he's ninety or ninety-one, so that makes me eighty or eighty-one years old, so that means I was born 1912. What else?

LEVINE: Did you celebrate birthdays at all?

OJALVO: We never did.

LEVINE: In Turkey?

OJALVO: No. We were lucky to have bread.

LEVINE: What was the name of the town where you were.

OJALVO: Tiker Dagi.

LEVINE: Tiker Dagi.

OJALVO: Right.

LEVINE: Were you, do you remember it? Could you describe something of the town?

OJALVO: Well, it was a very small town, like a countryside, like you go to the Catskills, something like that, very small. And I do remember hills. The ocean was right in front of our house. And I do remember one thing. My mother used to send us to school, kindergarten, whatever it was. I was six, seven, five years old. A soldier, I knew he was a soldier, he had a uniform, and I had a slice of bread in my hand. He steals it from my hand. And he swallowed it. He ate it like as though he never ate before. And I looked at him, as I can still remember that. Shoes, he didn't have. He had sacks around for shoes, and I knew that, we had no food. There was no such thing as food. I used to tell my brother, "I see children drinking milk. How come I never have any milk?" So she didn't say anything. The next day I know, oh, gee, that's something. The next thing I know, she

gave me something that's white. It tasted terrible. "What is it?" I said. So she tells me, "It's milk." "That doesn't taste like milk." I found out later that she mixed flour with water and probably put some sugar or something. "That tastes terrible," I said. "That's not milk." I never drank milk till I came to America. So what else could I tell you? My mother used to go to work. And, of course, to feed us, because my father came to this country in 19, 1912, 1912.

LEVINE: So he came the year you were born.

OJALVO: A couple of months later I was born, but he was here in America, that he was going to make money and send for us. Then the World War came, World War One. He didn't send for us till 1920. Probably when the war was over, able to have some money and send for us. Yes.

LEVINE: So what did your mother do to manage?

OJALVO: To support us, she used to go to work, maybe domestic help, maybe. I really don't know. I don't know. But I'll never forget that she came home one evening all black and blue. "What happened?" You know, I was

six, seven years old. She said, "I passed through a garden, I tried to pick some, two scallions." And the man that owned that farm beat her up. You know, the food was no, there was no such a thing as having food.

We never had any. We had nothing but scraps. They had a factory where they would put onions together. She would send me there and pick, whatever there is, I would pick an onion or two. After going through the whole plum, you know, they would put away the skins, and maybe they would skip an onion or two, to bring home. It was very hard times. And what else could I tell you?

LEVINE: Now, who was living in your family?

OJALVO: I had a sister. She was the oldest. She went to one of the aunts to do work for her, and to have one less person to feed in the house.

LEVINE: What was your sister's name?

OJALVO: Bahora. See, in English that's Becky, Bahora. She died about ten, twelve years ago.

LEVINE: So she went to an aunt's house.

OJALVO: To an aunt's house.

LEVINE: And then there was Lizzie . . .

OJALVO: And I, and another brother, Sol. He was a little older than me, three years older. And we were, an my oldest brother that you interviewed yesterday, Nissim. He was, he used to make shoes. He was eighteen, nineteen, twenty years old, nineteen years old, and he learned how to make shoes, you know, ladies' shoes. And he was able to bring a few dollars home to support us. And I never tasted ice cream in all my life. I don't know what ice cream is, or milk, or fruit, or anything. There was no such thing for us.

LEVINE: What was your mother like? Can you remember any instances when you were with her that kind of brings out the kind of person she was?

OJALVO: Well, very nice person. We all know our mothers are always one of the finest. A very hardworking person, always looking after us, making sure we are, whatever little clothes we had, to be dressed nice, to take us to school. It was, the school was in a (?), I imagine, it was, where they would teach you how to read and write in French. And when I came to this country, probably they put me back to school here,

they analyze you to what grade to put you, and I think I was being put at the age of eight in the fifth grade or fourth grade, and so forth.

LEVINE: Getting back to Turkey, do you remember, what was the makeup of the town as far as, there were Jewish people, and what other . . .

OJALVO: On one section was strictly us, that we were all Sephardic, as far as I know. We all spoke Spanish. That's our language, you know, from the Middle East. Our language, but I never knew a word of Turkish at my age. Of course, my other brother and sister, they knew Turkish fluently because they were much older. My sister was about, uh, at that time, twenty-seven, twenty-eight. My, Nissim was about nineteen, eighteen, nineteen. My other brother was about twelve or thirteen, and I was the youngest. We all spoke Spanish. Our synagogue was not far from where we lived.

LEVINE: Do you remember any observances that you carried out while you were there?

OJALVO: Well, I think in order to survive my mother will take in a boarder or two from the Turkish Army, and would

give her a couple of liras. At that time the money was lira, and that's supposed to be like dollar bills, whatever it was. And this would be once or twice a week, he was on leave and he wanted a place to sleep well away from the Army. And, of course, we had a big house that was left from her father.

LEVINE: Can you describe the house?

OJALVO: It was on a hill overlooking, overlooking the ocean. And I remember during the war you could see the bombs when the war, from the battleships, coming in. I suppose there were English fighting, because Turkey was with Germany at that time. And this is what I could remember distinctly. It was very, very frightening. I'll never forget, once, I was very sick. And they were taking in people to the hospital who were sick in order not to spread the disease. So they were going from house to house, you know, from the government, Turkish government. My mother took me out of bed, covered the bed up, and she told me, "Go out and look out the window as though you know that I am, I'm fine." So I got on top of a chair, and I'm looking out the window. When the government people came in, "There's nobody sick in this house. If he

was sick, he would have been in bed." But my mother was smart enough to put me right on the chair and look out.

LEVINE: Why didn't she want you to go to the hospital?

OJALVO: Oh, because once you go to the hospital, who knows? You'll never come back. I don't think they would be taking, you would be taken care of. And I used to hear my grandfather, he was more like a, a home doctor. People used to come in. He also lived in their same house. He re-married. His wife died, which is my grandmother died, remarried, but he was more of a doctor, and people used to come in with any kind of ailment.

LEVINE: Can you remember some of his treatments, how he . . .

OJALVO: Do you know what I used to hear?

LEVINE: What?

OJALVO: He used to give them opium. Would you believe it? You know, he knew, like, for instance, whatever they had. So they used to, he used to give them just enough, not to over kill them or anything like that, and they used to feel better. In them days, Turkish

people used to take opium in them days. And . . .

LEVINE: You mean, for medical purposes?

OJALVO: For medical purposes. This is what I used to hear. After all, you know, when somebody is really sick, and you give them some kind of a sedative, sixty percent of his ailment is almost gone. This is, that's the theory he had.

LEVINE: So was he, he was considered, I suppose, a very important person.

OJALVO: Sure. He was very important. They used to come in from all over, from town, Turkish people, or whatever, or Sephardic people, like we are, Spanish people. "What is wrong with you?" He used to examine them here or there. "Take this, you'll be all right, once a day and no more than once a day." And so forth. And eventually whatever ailment that person has, eventually it will get well. And this is what he did.

LEVINE: So, okay. So there was a group of Sephardic people living in your town, in your section.

OJALVO: Right.

LEVINE: Then Turks.

OJALVO: Turks were on the other side. Our whole place, like I'll say about, as far as I can remember, a mile square, as far as I know. It was very big. They were all Sephardic people. There were never any Greeks or Turks living with us. Our section was considered strictly, uh, Spanish people, and that's it. We struggled. Then we heard the war was over. We were so happy. And many times soldiers would come into our town and give us some scraps they had. We had some kind of bread. Like I always tell my wife, galleta [Spanish word for cracker], some kind of a hard bread. We were so happy to get it. You know, that was more like rations for the Turkish Army, and they used to give it, they used to, the Italians used to come to our country. We'd know what they wear, and they used to hand out some food for us. It was very hard times.

LEVINE: Were there Armenians in your town?

OJALVO: I don't think so, because the Armenians never got along together with the Turks. They would never, because at one time Turkey annihilated hundreds of thousands of Armenians, so they were never in our

town. Maybe there were some Greeks, but not Armenians.

LEVINE: So you never witnessed any of the Turkish-Armenian conflict.

OJALVO: No, no, I never did. But I used to hear that they were very fanatic. I used to hear they had some kind of a, of a holiday that these, the Turks, I believe, were Muslims. In order for them to get rid of their sins, this is what they used to say. They had to throw themselves off of certain cliffs. If they survive, that means their sins are forgiven, whatever sins they ever had. They were fanatics. But the Turkish government treated us . . . (an announcement can be heard coming over a public address system) So the Turkish government treated us royally. We were never, never, never at any time hurt by them. They treated us very, very nice.

LEVINE: Was this because you were Jewish, as compared with Christian, which the Armenians were? Or . . .

OJALVO: Well, other countries did not, you know, we migrated from Spain, and Turkish government, Turkey was the only country that took them in royally. They were

happy to be with them, and it was to their advantage.

Because we people, as far as I understand, Sephardic people from Spain were very intellectuals, and Turkey was very glad to have them in our, in Turkey. So they treated us royally. What, we could speak our own language, pray to our, whatever religion we have, we had, we have. And never bother, not like other countries, like Greece, they're not allowed for the people that migrated from Spain, they couldn't speak Spanish. They had to speak their language, Greek. We didn't.

LEVINE: So they accepted the Sephardic Jews . . .

OJALVO: Royally.

LEVINE: With their own customs and their own ways . . .

OJALVO: Our own ways.

LEVINE: (?) that, uh-huh.

OJALVO: They were glad, in a way, because, like, we Sephardic people do not eat pork. Neither do the Muslims, so they feel like we are something with it. The only meat they would eat was mostly only lamb. The same with us, probably. So they feel that they left us

alone. We were treated royally. And I remember the schools that we had, I had to walk maybe five, six, seven, or a ten-minute walk from where we lived was the Alliance. And what else could I tell you, because I was small, I was young. I don't remember many hardships, whereas my other, my sister or my brothers did, or my mother.

LEVINE: Do you remember you were describing the big house that your grandmother had inherited.

OJALVO: Yes.

LEVINE: And it was on a hill.

OJALVO: On a hill, a beautiful hill.

LEVINE: What was it made of?

OJALVO: It was a wooden house, but it was on a hill, and it was overlooking the ocean. It was beautiful, like you think that you are in the Riviera, you know, today if you are in a house like this, this is high class, but all because the whole town was like on a hill, and there was a very big, big deep hole, not a hole, but a circumference of about ten blocks that it was steep to go down, but everybody lived on top of that hill, and

when you go down that steep hill, there was the ocean where you can see the ships going by. And during that time was battleships, where you can see the, when they threw the bombs, they used to go right over our houses, because they knew they're not going to hit houses. It was useless. So over it maybe there was the government buildings, post office or some other kind of government buildings. And, of course, when, and I used to tell my mother, "How come everybody, when I'm in school I hear, 'My dad, my father, my father.' How come I haven't got a father?" I used to tell that to my mother. "How come?" I do remember she saying, "What shall I tell you? If you see a man in the street, call him 'Papa.'" (he laughs)

LEVINE: Why was it that your father went to America? At that time were many people from your area . . .

OJALVO: That was the custom in them days in order to make enough money. There was no money. It was able to borrow money from, you know, that was my grandfather gave him money to go to America, and make enough money to send for us. Then the war came. We were stuck for eight years.

LEVINE: Did you have a lot of family in the town?

OJALVO: Aunts, aunts, I remember, and one uncle.

LEVINE: Was it a close, I mean, did you get together with them?

OJALVO: Sure, yes. They used to help us out once in a while, this uncle that my sister went to the house to live with them. You know, they had no children, so my mother said, "Go to her. You do a little work for them, help them around the house, there's one less mouth to feed." And once in a while we, it would also help us out to feed us, because he had some kind of a clothing business, what I hear of business. I don't know. But my mother used to take me there. It was like stores, like a bazaar or something, and he had a business, and he used to help us out. He was supposed to be the wealthy man. And . . .

LEVINE: What was his name?

OJALVO: Marco, come to think of it. My, one of my brothers is named Gile. He is named after him, because he was so nice to us. And his son was named after this uncle of mine.

LEVINE: And was he, now, he was your father's brother or your mother's brother?

OJALVO: His wife, his wife was an aunt to my mother.

LEVINE: Oh.

OJALVO: He was a total stranger.

LEVINE: I see. And Marco was his first name, or his second name?

OJALVO: His first name. His second name I really can't remember. I don't know, what was his second name? You know, that was supposed to be much, for wealthy people. I remember the house was, in back of ours, was much nicer than ours.

LEVINE: Do you remember what about it made it . . .

OJALVO: I remember that we had a small door to come in. He had two big doors to come in. You know, it was more, a much better house than we had. And then, of course, our synagogue was not far from where we used to look forward to go to the synagogue Friday night, Saturday. And the synagogue was right on the tip of the ocean going down that hill, a beautiful synagogue. And we

used to look forward to it, and what else could I tell you, my dear, it's hard.

LEVINE: What else do you remember that was pleasant or enjoyable about life in that town?

OJALVO: When holidays used to come around, I remember that. That we were going to have some goodies or some, a little bit better food than we had during the week. It was all like, like during Passover my mother would go over to the place where they're making matzos. Oh, that was a treat for us to have a piece of matzo, really matzo, whatever it was. And we used to look forward for these holidays, Passover, Rosh Hashanna, Yom Kippur and all. That was a happy occasion for us. And I will never forget when I came to this country, in Ellis Island. So, they used to examine us. You know, the doctor. He had to question you, whether you know how to talk, whether you're deaf, whether you know if there's anything wrong. So a doctor was asking me a question. Of course, he knew that we came from Turkey, that he's speaking to me in Turkish. I don't know a word of Turkish. And he said once, twice, three times. And he's looking at my mother. In other words, this young boy is deaf mute. He

cannot hear and he cannot speak. So finally the interpreter told my mother, "Ask him what is his name." So my mother tells me, "Israel, Israel." That's in Spanish. "Dicele el nombre." "Tell him what is your name." And I popped out, "Israel." So the doctor was so amused, he took me by the ear and pushed me right out. Like in other words he understood that I did not understand Turkish, what he's telling me, but I do understand Spanish, what my mother is telling me. And that was a very, then we were in Ellis Island for two or three days.

LEVINE: Why were you there for that length of time?

OJALVO: They had to examine you. They, you couldn't come to the ship and go right out. You had to, the doctor has to examine you, has to see that you are well, everybody. My, and then they would take our heads and put them in a certain place to fumigate us if we have any bugs or anything, but we were always clean in every way. And I'll never forget when the ship docked in Ellis Island. I suppose my mother was telling me, "This is your father, this is your father." Pointing to somebody downstairs. They were all to one side of the ship. You know, maybe they had seven, eight

hundred passengers. The ship was going to one side. The captain, the sailors, they all said, "Spread, spread apart!" You know, to level the ship because the ship almost went to one side. If you have eight hundred people looking to the side where the people are, that they came to visit, you know, you can do, overturn the ship over. So they told us to spread, and we did. At the same time we each went, one by one, to the railing. And I remember she said, "This is your father." He threw a banana over, you know, from the bottom to the top, for us. He had some fruit for us, but he threw it over. He couldn't come to the ship. I says, "What's this?" You know, yellow. I never, then they heard, from downstairs they heard, "Peel it, peel it! You eat it!" "What does it taste?" They said, "It takes like a melon." They said it tastes like a melon or a pear. We didn't, we never tasted any bananas. We didn't know what apples or oranges. Oranges was out, absolutely. The only fruit maybe we ever had, somebody had a back yard, we had some peaches or apricots, we'd take one, that's it. In fact, a boy of eight years old weighed twenty-seven pounds. That's all I weighed. You know, they used to weigh you. There was no such thing as food.

Nothing. And this is, this is what it was. So we worked ourselves up. We came to America.

LEVINE: First, tell me, what was it like being with your father after you first got . . .

OJALVO: Very nice, very nice. I never knew what a father was, but after I got used to it, Pop, we used to, and he was very nice to us. And he used to work hard.

LEVINE: What did he do here?

OJALVO: They were all factory workers. We would never, but, of course, my brother, he knew about shoes. He went to work in a shoe factory, and it didn't take long. He got married, and I went to grammar school, high school, graduated. And I went to a trade, trade school. And I went in the shoe line, and I became the shoe cutter for the trade. And finally we settled here, married my wonderful wife.

LEVINE: How did you meet your wife?

OJALVO: Well, through her brothers. I used to go out with her brothers. We were friends. And she was, one day we went there and says, "Where's your little sister?" And her brother says, "She's sick in one of the

rooms." We always used to play cards, you know, to pass the time. I'm not playing cards. I'm going to keep company with her to keep her company. After she got well, we started to go out. And this is how we met. We married fifty-seven years.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

LEVINE: And what is your wife's name?

OJALVO: Sophie.

LEVINE: And maiden name?

OJALVO: Magrisso.

LEVINE: Could you spell it?

OJALVO: M-A-G-R-I-S-S-O. Magrisso. Sophie Magrisso.

LEVINE: And do you have children?

OJALVO: Yes. We have, we have three children. I have two wonderful sons, and one daughter.

LEVINE: And their names?

OJALVO: Their names, my oldest is Clara. The other is

Maurice, and Robert. And she is married. She is a grandma. My son is also married, and has got two children, two big children. One of them got married recently. And my daughter, and my youngest is a bachelor. He teaches. He teaches, he used to work for American Airlines, a financial analyst. Finally he went to teach because he likes to have his summers off. He used to be, he used to be very well off for the American Airlines, but it was very hard work. He was on the executive capacity that he had to work long hours. So he figured he might as well go for teaching, and he's got his master's and many other degrees.

LEVINE: Let me just go back to Turkey for a minute.

OJALVO: Yes.

LEVINE: Did you have any experiences with Turkish people? Were there Turkish children in your school, or was that . . .

OJALVO: Strictly Spanish, Sephardic.

LEVINE: I see.

OJALVO: There were no Turkish children.

LEVINE: So did you have direct dealings with Turkish people when you were there?

OJALVO: No, not at my age, not at my age.

LEVINE: The other question is what did your mother pack when you were coming to America? Do you remember anything she took with her?

OJALVO: Oh, very little clothes, but I do remember one thing. I had a beautiful captain's hat that she bought me, something new.

LEVINE: For the trip?

OJALVO: For the trip. In them days, if you're a boy with a fancy cap and hat, you know, one of these beautiful hats. That I do remember, I'm sorry I disregarded it, disregarded, threw it away. When I came to this country, of course, my father was telling me, "There's nothing to be ashamed here in America. Nothing to be ashamed. Everything goes here in America." So I, my mother gave me a bath, or I went for, in the house in the tub, but I just got put on my small pajama, was it. "Go and get me a pack of cigarettes." "Let me get dressed." "No," he says, "you don't have to get

dressed. In America, there's nothing to be ashamed of." So I went downstairs to get a pack of cigarettes. Macca, who knew what it was. I go downstairs, there was little children, little girls, boys. "Shame, shame," they were telling me, the way I was dressed. (he laughs) I said, "What the hell did he do to me?" I came upstairs. "What is this 'shame' they were telling me, these children downstairs? Did I do anything wrong?" So then I found out that he sent me there the way I was with just a pair of long shirt, and nothing underneath, you could see through. (he laughs) They said this, is he some kind of a nut or something. So there was a lot of experience there to be had.

LEVINE: Do you remember the ship you came on?

OJALVO: Yes. The name of the ship was, just recently, it was a maiden voyage. I knew it.

LEVINE: Patris.

OJALVO: Patris, that's the one, Patris. It was a maiden voyage, and it took about thirty days, thirty-four days, to come to this country from Europe.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything about the voyage?

OJALVO: Sure. We were, of course we were third class, that was considered, and whatever food they had. And I'll never forget, they told us by tomorrow we're going to land. So my mother tells me, "Take this pillow and throw overboard." I thought she meant the feathers in the pillow, but what she meant was the pillowcase. So I opened it up. I'm throwing out the feathers.
(he laughs) The captain and all, "What the hell are you doing?" You know, the ship is going, very windy. You could see the feathers all over the ship. I didn't realize. I told my mother, "I didn't tell you this. I only told you to throw away the pillowcase, not the feathers on the inside." And the food was something you could have, it was better than what we used to eat on the ship. Every day we had something to eat, thank God for that. But it was very, very hard times in Turkey, and we were glad to be here in America.

LEVINE: Do you remember coming into the New York Harbor?

OJALVO: Yes, well, on the ship. We had to be on that ship, as I said before, one day they won't let you out of the

ship, and I could see the lights at night, you know, from Ellis Island you see something different, lights at night. And then we were taken out of the ship, examined by doctors, and two or three days later my father took us in some cab or something. We didn't drive, but he had somebody to drive us. We came to the east side.

LEVINE: Was it the Lower East Side?

OJALVO: The Lower East Side, on Rivington and Orchard, yes, on the East Side. And we had four rooms there, four very nice rooms on the third floor. And something to look forward to. We were glad to be here.

LEVINE: So did you, can you think of anything that struck you as very different when you first came, about this country?

OJALVO: Well, it was a metropolis. After all, I lived in a small town. I never knew that anything like this ever existed. A four-story building, a five-story building, we never saw that before. It was something entirely different. It was something beautiful. And, of course, our parents, my father was a very, you know, conscious to make sure that we had a lot of food

in the house, a good home. Some days they used to pack us up, take us to Van Cortlandt Park. That's the only outlet we ever had. If you ever heard of Van Cortlandt Park, you know, that's like picnic, they used to pack up watermelons, the food, and cook there, and be there all day from seven in the morning maybe till seven at night. That's the only outlet that we ever had, which was beautiful. And that is it.

LEVINE: What does it, what does, how do you think the fact of starting out in Turkey and coming to this country, what impact do you think that had on your life?

OJALVO: Something wonderful. Something a different person can look forward to. I never knew that a life like this ever existed for a young boy or a young, for people. We thought it was wonderful, wonderful. It was a wonderful life to be here, because what we had in Turkey was not anything. Maybe there was no war, no World War One or anything like that, maybe we could have lived a little bit better. As I said before, she even used to send me to the ocean not far, right down the hill from where we lived, to cook with ocean water, because there was no salt to be gotten, "No salt," I used to hear, "no sugar." And no food, no

bread whatsoever. I remember people used to wait on line. You were allowed to have one loaf of bread, and people waiting on line, and the bread was not even, they used to put yeast in order to rise. They didn't give it a chance to rise, and the bread used to fall apart after coming out of the ovens. It was horrible.

This is what it is, during wartime. It's not easy. I wish I could tell you more, but I cannot remember much about Turkey.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, what you've told us is really wonderful.

Is there anything else you'd like to say before we close?

OJALVO: No, there's nothing. It's wonderful of you to come over to interview me. What else could I say? And we have a wonderful life here in America. We live here in this village. I don't know if you ever heard of this village before.

LEVINE: Century Village.

OJALVO: Century Village. This is one of the most beautiful places for retirement people.

LEVINE: Wonderful. Maybe you can say what are you most proud

of or grateful for that you've done?

OJALVO: Well, that I have a wonderful wife, which I will never, never, we're married fifty-seven years. Our children are all well-established, and pretty well-off. And thank God we have our health. What we had, we had our ups and downs. I was very ill twenty-four, twenty-five years ago. Thank God I survived.

LEVINE: And you're enjoying this part of your life?

OJALVO: Yes. And, of course, you know, I'm legally blind.

LEVINE: Okay.

OJALVO: Yes. That happened a year-and-a-half ago. All of a sudden I cannot, I cannot see your face. I know there's a figure there. I gave up. But, of course, here we have everything. Take us around, the buses, any place we want to go, the entertainment. We have everything here. And our neighbors are wonderful. We have the most wonderful neighbors that you'd ever want to see. Always a beautiful car. Since I couldn't drive any more, I had a brand-new Cadillac. I gave it to my children. After all, let them enjoy it. And this is it. So we get along fine.

LEVINE: Well, that's wonderful. Well, thank you so much.

OJALVO: You're welcome.

LEVINE: I'm so happy I had the chance to talk with you.

OJALVO: Sure, thank you.

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine, and I've been speaking with, you go by the name of Eddie.

OJALVO: Yeah, I do. That's right, that's right.

LEVINE: And it's April 30, 1993, and I'm here in Pembroke Pines, Florida, and I'm signing off.

OJALVO: Thank you.