

**Oral History of:** Mireille Plotke  
**Interviewed by:** Robbie Terman  
**Date of Interview:** March 8, 2018  
**Location of Interview:** Max M. Fisher Federation Building  
**Subject Matter:** Diaspora in Detroit: the Jewish Immigrant Experience

Robbie Terman: 00:04 My name is Robbie Terman and today is March 8th, 2018. I'm interviewing Mireille Plotke at the Max M. Fisher Federation Building in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. This interview is part of the Diaspora in Detroit, the Jewish immigrant experience oral history project. Mireille, do you give permission to the Leonard and Simons Jewish Community Archives to publish, duplicate, or otherwise use this recording for educational purposes, and for use as deemed appropriate by the archives?

Mireille Plotke: 00:34 Yes, I do.

Robbie Terman: 00:34 Thank you. Okay, we're going to start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

Mireille Plotke: 00:40 Okay, I was born in Cairo, Egypt. In Egypt, actually. I was born in a place called Tanta. My dad and mom had a building, like a house. Not house, I'm sorry. They lived in an apartment on the first floor. But, I was born in Cairo, because my mom on her due date was about to approach, she went to her doctor in Cairo. It's a woman doctor. In 1944.

Robbie Terman: 01:10 1944, and--

Mireille Plotke: 01:11 May 31st, 1944.

Robbie Terman: 01:13 So you were born in the hospital.

Mireille Plotke: 01:19 You know what, I really don't know. I cannot answer you that question. I know that my mom had her doctor, and she went there. I don't know if I was born at a hospital or not. I really don't know. That I cannot tell you.

Robbie Terman: 01:34 So, I just want to make sure I have this straight. So you were born in Cairo, but your home was Tanta?

Mireille Plotke: 01:41 Tanta, my dad had a business. My dad had a business in Tanta.

Robbie Terman: 01:46 How far from Cairo was Tanta?

Mireille Plotke: 01:47 Oh, I would say a couple of hours.

Robbie Terman: 01:53 Couple of hours?

Mireille Plotke: 01:57 Yeah.

Robbie Terman: 01:57 So a bit of a distance.

Mireille Plotke: 01:57 I think we lived most of the time in Cairo. It was just a short time that I remember leaving, after 1948, when the state of Israel became the state of Israel, and my dad had to leave because it was really bad for us.

Robbie Terman: 02:14 In Tanta?

Mireille Plotke: 02:15 In Tanta, yes.

Robbie Terman: 02:16 Okay. So, what do you remember about Cairo, and from your early childhood?

Mireille Plotke: 02:24 Okay. At one time, Egypt was a very lovely place. We had a lot of British, French, English, Italian, Syrian, it was a very wonderful country that was bi-language country. And it was wonderful under Farouk. Once Farouk fell, he was no longer, you know, a king, and Nasser became the president, it became very bad. Really became bad.

Robbie Terman: 02:59 Do you remember approximately when Farouk left office?

Mireille Plotke: 03:05 In the 50s. I believe 1956. Either 52 or 56, I don't recall exactly when Nasser came.

Robbie Terman: 03:14 And can you describe your community? Was it houses, apartments, how did people live?

Mireille Plotke: 03:20 We lived in an apartment. We lived in an apartment, in a high-rise apartment. Close to downtown, not so far from downtown. And I went to Lycée Francais in school. Before Lycée Francais, I went to a Jewish school actually. And then, my parents took me out, because it was changing, unfortunately, and a lot of the teacher, even though they were not Muslim, they were Christian, they were talking against Israel, and they were brainwashing us. So, we left that and we went to Lycée Francais.

I studied French as well at the Jewish school, but was Jewish, Hebrew, Arabic, and French.

- Robbie Terman: 03:59 How old were you when you went to the Jewish school?
- Mireille Plotke: 04:04 How was I? Normally when you go to kindergarten--
- Robbie Terman: 04:07 Through what grade?
- Mireille Plotke: 04:09 Right, kindergarten. And then I left, I believe, in early 50. No, about mid 50, and I went to Lycée Francais.
- Robbie Terman: 04:19 How old were you when you went to Lycée Francais?
- Mireille Plotke: 04:22 11. 10 or 11 years old.
- Robbie Terman: 04:23 11, okay. And were you in a Jewish neighborhood, or was it a mixed neighborhood?
- Mireille Plotke: 04:31 It was a mixed neighborhood. Our building had Christian and Muslim, and we had some Jewish. And we did have next door a guy who is Iman, who was really not a very nice guy. He locked his wife ... It was very sad, he locked his wife's door every time he left. It was very, very sad. I think about it sometime and I feel, "Oh my gosh ..." And she had cancer, unfortunately. Ovarian cancer, and she couldn't go to the doctor. And you're talking about a good time, but some of the people were not great at that time already. And she died alone. It was very sad.
- Robbie Terman: 05:10 That's very sad.
- Mireille Plotke: 05:11 I remember her. And my mom used to talk to her from the door, just to keep her company.
- Robbie Terman: 05:17 And was this an urban area?
- Mireille Plotke: 05:20 It was a city. No, we lived in the city.
- Robbie Terman: 05:22 So it was a city?
- Mireille Plotke: 05:22 Yes. Close to downtown.
- Robbie Terman: 05:25 Now, for city living, what kind of ... Can you describe this ... Where there a lot of stores, department stores, entertainment?
- Mireille Plotke: 05:33 Oh, sure, they had a lot of café. When we went to downtown, they had [inaudible 00:05:38], that's a Jewish owned store. Like

I said, it was very lovely at one time. It really was. And very often we still go to the Nile, and I remember when the Hilton Hotel came in Egypt, and my cousin got married in the hotel, Hilton Hotel. Yeah, it was very lovely. The city was wonderful, and my mom used to take me for a picnic by the Nile, and we used to have picnic. Life was not bad in Egypt at one time. It really and really was not. And I never felt inferior. I always felt more superior.

- Robbie Terman: 06:17 Now, was ... Now I know there was--
- Mireille Plotke: 06:22 Until the end.
- Robbie Terman: 06:23 Until the end.
- Mireille Plotke: 06:24 Then it became really bad. Yeah, after Israel became the state of Israel. Then in 1956 when the war broke, it was not great for the Jewish people. A lot of the store owners who own Jewish merchant, or whatever they had, lost their business. A lot of them left. A lot of people left in 1956, but my parents didn't at the time.
- Robbie Terman: 06:50 When you were growing up, before there was problems in the Jewish community, and the treatment of Jews in the community, did you mostly frequent Jewish owned businesses, or did it not matter, you went to whatever business you needed to go to?
- Mireille Plotke: 07:06 We did only [inaudible 00:07:08], whatever needed to be done, we did.
- Robbie Terman: 07:06 Okay.
- Mireille Plotke: 07:12 We did have a kosher butcher, we had ... No, of course not. We went to any business, wherever, it doesn't matter who owned it.
- Robbie Terman: 07:23 And I want to talk a little bit about your household. Can you tell me a little bit about your parents and your family life?
- Mireille Plotke: 07:29 Yes. My mom and dad, they met each other at a Shabbat lunch.
- Robbie Terman: 07:37 What were their names?
- Mireille Plotke: 07:38 Angel and Murad, which is Mordechai.
- Robbie Terman: 07:39 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mireille Plotke: 07:43 And they get married, and we had five girls and a boy, and we kept the holiday. We went to the synagogue every Shabbat, with my dad. My dad and I went, and my brother. My mom really didn't. She was always busy.

Robbie Terman: 08:00 And can you tell me the names of your siblings, from the oldest to the youngest?

Mireille Plotke: 08:04 Sure, okay. I have Perla, and unfortunately she passed away in Israel. She lived in Israel. And Jeanette. We call her Nina, it's Jeanette. And Blanche, she did pass away also. Charmaine, [inaudible 00:08:21] which is my brother in Chicago, and Charmaine in Israel. And Charmaine has three beautiful daughters, and one of them is a very talented designer. It's called Berta's Design. She's all over the world actually, bridal design.

Robbie Terman: 08:39 Oh, that's great.

Mireille Plotke: 08:40 Yeah. And our household was, you know, my mom was, of course, she did not work. She took care of so many kids. I felt like she was always cooking, my poor mom. I don't know how she did it to be honest with you.

Robbie Terman: 08:55 And there's six of you. Six and two adults. What was the size of your house for that many people?

Mireille Plotke: 09:01 I'm sorry?

Robbie Terman: 09:02 What was the size of your apartment?

Mireille Plotke: 09:04 We had ... Well, each room had two kids, so we had ... And some of them were older already. So, we had about four bedroom.

Robbie Terman: 09:17 That was a good size apartment.

Mireille Plotke: 09:19 Yeah. Or three bedroom. I don't know if it was three-bedroom ... I think we had three bedroom I should say. Three bedroom for the kids, and then one for my mom and dad.

Robbie Terman: 09:25 Most importantly, how many bathrooms?

Mireille Plotke: 09:27 That is not ... That's, you know, only one bathroom.

Robbie Terman: 09:27 Oh, one bathroom.

Mireille Plotke: 09:31 Only one bathroom, yeah. I can't lie about that. No.

Robbie Terman: 09:35 So what she was traditions--

Mireille Plotke: 09:39 And my mom used to have somebody that come and do the laundry for her, because she didn't have a washing machine and dryer.

Robbie Terman: 09:44 Interesting.

Mireille Plotke: 09:45 She did not, yeah.

Robbie Terman: 09:45 And I'm sorry, I can't remember if I asked this, you're the youngest, right?

Mireille Plotke: 09:45 I'm the youngest.

Robbie Terman: 09:48 Correct, okay. And, excuse me, how was Judaism practiced in your household?

Mireille Plotke: 09:55 I'm actually a Jewish [inaudible 00:09:58], which there is [inaudible 00:09:59] is a little different. I'm not a historian, so I cannot tell you more about it. Practically, from my understanding, unfortunately I did not, as my parents did. I don't know which year they came, okay? I believe they came from part southern Russia. I believe that. But we lived there over 100 years, and this is not, my parents didn't just arrive in Egypt. They lived there many, many years.

Robbie Terman: 10:25 So, I'm sorry, your parents were born in Egypt, [crosstalk 00:10:29] but their ancestors came from [inaudible 00:10:33]. Might've.

Mireille Plotke: 10:36 Because southern Russia is not [inaudible 00:10:39].

Robbie Terman: 10:38 Oh, okay.

Mireille Plotke: 10:39 They were not. I don't believe they were [inaudible 00:10:42].

Robbie Terman: 10:42 Okay.

Mireille Plotke: 10:42 They were [inaudible 00:10:43], and there is a [inaudible 00:10:45] community actually in California, because my cousin lived there. I don't practice [inaudible 00:10:51], though religion is a little bit different than [inaudible 00:10:55].

Robbie Terman: 10:55 Okay.

Mireille Plotke: 10:56 For instance, milk was our chicken, because we didn't think that chicken and milk, chicken does not have to be not mixed with milk. They don't produce, they're not mammal.

Robbie Terman: 11:11 Okay.

Mireille Plotke: 11:13 But our holiday, we had one Passover, one day Passover, one day Rosh Hashanah, and the reason for that, it's because where we lived, what part of the world we lived. Israel also has that. You know, they know where the sun is, and when it's coming down, so we celebrated one day.

Robbie Terman: 11:34 Just one day.

Mireille Plotke: 11:35 No, another one, [inaudible 00:11:36], I should say. One [inaudible 00:11:38] in seven days. Here, I think we have to [inaudible 00:11:41] in eight days, am I correct?

Robbie Terman: 11:44 Yes.

Mireille Plotke: 11:44 Yeah. I'm talking about Passover.

Robbie Terman: 11:47 Yes. And you said you went to synagogue with your father.

Mireille Plotke: 11:52 With my dad, yes.

Robbie Terman: 11:53 On Shabbat.

Mireille Plotke: 11:53 Yes.

Robbie Terman: 11:56 And any other traditions as far as, so may be something that your mom always cooked?

Mireille Plotke: 12:01 Yeah, she did. Yes, of course. In Passover, she made this delicious [inaudible 00:12:09], which is different than here.

Robbie Terman: 12:11 It's different than here?

Mireille Plotke: 12:13 It's different. Not Apple, no.

Robbie Terman: 12:14 That's one of my favorite things at Passover, is the [inaudible 00:12:17].

Mireille Plotke: 12:16 Yeah, I do too. Actually, I love the Apple more.

Robbie Terman: 12:19 Yeah.

Mireille Plotke: 12:20 I agree with you. My mom used to make the dates and prune and nuts and wine. It's similar, but you use Apple. We had a lot of plenty full of nuts and dates. We had a lot of dates and nuts in Passover.

Robbie Terman: 12:35 Yes.

Mireille Plotke: 12:36 And we did have rice in Passover.

Robbie Terman: 12:38 Really?

Mireille Plotke: 12:39 We did have rice Passover.

Robbie Terman: 12:41 Wow, so there are some differences.

Mireille Plotke: 12:43 There is definitely a difference, yeah.

Robbie Terman: 12:44 I want to talk--

Mireille Plotke: 12:45 My husband is not from that part of the world. He was born in Germany.

Robbie Terman: 12:49 So you have different traditions, but you melded together.

Mireille Plotke: 12:52 Yeah, but it's okay. Yeah, we melded together. I didn't want my kids to be oddballs.

Robbie Terman: 12:59 I want to talk a little bit, again, about how Jews were treated in Egypt. And you know, we talked about how at one time it was very nice life.

Mireille Plotke: 13:08 It was very lovely. But I'll tell you, they did call you dirty Jews at the end, and it was not very comfortable for us. It really was not.

Robbie Terman: 13:08 I can't imagine.

Mireille Plotke: 13:18 And at that point, my dad ... You know, we left in 61. I mean, think about it. In 56, Jews already left. They were ordered to leave. And my parents were not ordered to leave, so they waited so long. So in 1960, 61, it was really bad. When you left Egypt you only had one suitcase, 25 dollar in your pocket. That's all you had. My sister, my older sister left Egypt in the mid-50. She was smart. She got married and left, because they know what was happening already.

Robbie Terman: 13:59 Well actually, let's go back.



Mireille Plotke: 14:01 Okay.

Robbie Terman: 14:01 Let's go back a little bit, and we'll do a little bit chronologically.

Mireille Plotke: 14:04 Sure.

Robbie Terman: 14:05 So 1948 ...

Mireille Plotke: 14:06 I was born in 44, I'm sorry.

Robbie Terman: 14:09 So when state of Israel is declared in 48, now I know you're only four years old at this point, do you remember anything about that time, or even things your parents told you about how--

Mireille Plotke: 14:19 I do remember actually, or my father ...

Robbie Terman: 14:22 Any changes from that moment? Just from that--

Mireille Plotke: 14:25 Yes. Yes. Where we lived, in Tanta at that time, the landlord or the manager, I have no idea, told my dad, "If you come down I will kill you." I do remember that.

Robbie Terman: 14:38 That's where you lived.

Mireille Plotke: 14:40 Where we lived. And then my parents left the next day, and we went to my Nona, which is my grandmother, and they still lived there for a while, and my grandmother left actually. My grandmother left.

Robbie Terman: 14:55 Okay, so your grandmother left--

Mireille Plotke: 14:55 My grandmother left in 1948.

Robbie Terman: 14:55 Was it your grandmother on your mother's side?

Mireille Plotke: 15:00 My maternal.

Robbie Terman: 15:02 Your maternal grandmother left in 48.

Mireille Plotke: 15:03 Yeah, my Nona left. My other one died before I was born.

Robbie Terman: 15:07 And why, did she move to Israel?

Mireille Plotke: 15:09 Moved to Israel with my two aunts.

Robbie Terman: 15:12 And why at that time did she move?

Mireille Plotke: 15:17 She felt that Israel is her country, and that she know that was something going to be ... She wanted to take me with her, and I didn't want to go. She was smart, but my mother then did not want to leave. It's hard to visualize, just like what happened in Germany, that something was going to happen to you, basically. It's just that's how people's reaction is. So, they stayed. They stayed, and unfortunately, the [inaudible 00:15:45] came in their head, aunt decided then to leave in 61. But it took my parents for years to get a visa.

Robbie Terman: 15:54 I definitely want to talk about that.

Mireille Plotke: 15:54 Yeah.

Robbie Terman: 15:57 But I'm going to go back a little bit before, and we'll get back to that. So 48, when people are now going to leave for Israel ...

Mireille Plotke: 16:05 No, some.

Robbie Terman: 16:06 Some people, yeah, certainly some people.

Mireille Plotke: 16:08 Right, because in the 56, that's when really people left.

Robbie Terman: 16:12 Now I know that in Egypt, and I'm not really sure when this started, or maybe this is always how it was, that Jews were not considered citizens of Egypt.

Mireille Plotke: 16:23 Absolutely, they're not. I was not.

Robbie Terman: 16:24 So you were never considered, [crosstalk 00:16:28] even before, when the times were good you were not considered Egyptian.

Mireille Plotke: 16:32 Never. No, no, no, no.

Robbie Terman: 16:33 Or from Egypt.

Mireille Plotke: 16:33 I was in [French 00:16:34]. That's a French word, which mean you are not a citizen of the country. You are a person without a country. [French 00:16:44].

Robbie Terman: 16:44 So, you're living there but you have no country. What rights did you not have because, as a citizen ... What couldn't you do because you are not considered a citizen?

Mireille Plotke: 16:57 Well, nothing really at that time, but we not couldn't do anything. It's not that we were not allowed to go to here or there, it's just that's how the rule was, and we accepted it. And

some people, unfortunately, who thought by buying citizenship would remain there, some people did that. It was a lot of money. And thank goodness my parents didn't do that. No, there was nothing that I recall. You remember, I left many years ago. I mean, I'm 73 right now, and I left when I was almost 17, so we are talking about a long time.

- Robbie Terman: 17:29 Yeah. But yeah, I can imagine. I mean, you were born in that country, you lived there, and they were not considered a citizen.
- Mireille Plotke: 17:38 No, of course it was horrible. But in a way now I look at it, I'm so thankful. I'm so thankful. And I'm thankful to come here.
- Robbie Terman: 17:47 So, I want to go back to your schooling.
- Mireille Plotke: 17:49 Yes.
- Robbie Terman: 17:49 So you had a situation where you had to leave a school because of--
- Mireille Plotke: 17:54 My parents took me out.
- Robbie Terman: 17:56 Because of what was being said.
- Mireille Plotke: 17:58 Right.
- Robbie Terman: 17:58 Do you remember things that were said to you?
- Mireille Plotke: 18:01 The teacher was saying that Israel is a very bad country, as nobody should ever live there, because they work very hard, and it's very awful. And I used to tell my mom that. And I really didn't want to leave Egypt or go to Israel. I did not want to go to Israel for sure, because I was scared from that.
- Robbie Terman: 18:20 Because the teacher scared you with what she was saying.
- Mireille Plotke: 18:20 Yeah.
- Robbie Terman: 18:23 Was there also propaganda in things like television, newspapers, and I think there's probably starting to be television, right?
- Mireille Plotke: 18:30 There was television, of course.
- Robbie Terman: 18:31 So, in television, or newspapers, or even anything you saw on the streets, was there propaganda against Israel?

Mireille Plotke: 18:38 Oh, yeah, of course, of course. I remember in 1950 something, one of the people who were in control said, "All the Jews are enemy of the state, and they must leave the country," and that's how they use to insult all the Jews. Oh yeah, it was not a good place. Like I said, I was called dirty Jew when I walked. I was not comfortable. Towards the end I was not comfortable at all. It was such a change.

Robbie Terman: 19:12 But you stayed there for a long time. Now, what did your parents--

Mireille Plotke: 19:17 But they couldn't leave right away. They had to get a visa.

Robbie Terman: 19:19 So, what did your father do for a living?

Mireille Plotke: 19:21 He was a jeweler.

Robbie Terman: 19:22 He was a jeweler.

Mireille Plotke: 19:23 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Robbie Terman: 19:24 And he owned a jewelry store?

Mireille Plotke: 19:25 He owned a jewelry store.

Robbie Terman: 19:26 What was it called? [inaudible 00:19:28]. And where was the jewelry store located?

Mireille Plotke: 19:33 At one time it was in Tanta, and it moved.

Robbie Terman: 19:38 And what type of customers did he have?

Mireille Plotke: 19:41 Most of the client he had was Middle Eastern, that bought a lot of jewelry because it's like a dowry, or it's when their daughter get married. It was doing well at one time. Yeah, it was doing good. But he had to leave. And all his brother also were in the jewelry business.

Robbie Terman: 20:02 Why do you think your parents stayed so long?

Mireille Plotke: 20:05 Because, well, imagine yourself at 58 or 59, whatever, and you are going to leave a country that you spoke the language, and you don't know what the hell you're going to do, excuse my expression, you can take that off if you want. What would you do? I mean, think about it.

Robbie Terman: 20:25 What was the main language that you spoke?

Mireille Plotke: 20:27 We spoke French, Arabic, and I didn't speak English at the time, but I learned it in France.

Robbie Terman: 20:33 Did you speak, at home you spoke French?

Mireille Plotke: 20:37 I spoke French, yes. We spoke both languages, but mostly French.

Robbie Terman: 20:40 And when you were out shopping, or out--

Mireille Plotke: 20:42 Well, it depends where I was. If the people did not speak French, of course I'd speak Arabic. If I didn't, I spoke French, with my sister, etc.

Robbie Terman: 20:53 So, at what point, what was the incident, the inciting incident that made your parents decide this is it, we can no longer stay here?

Mireille Plotke: 21:02 I think when they realized there was no future for their kids. And basically like sacrificed ... They didn't really sacrifice, because there was no future for them either. And that's when they decided that it's really about time. And then two of my sister left, no, one of my sister left already.

Robbie Terman: 21:30 So one of your sisters, which sister had left?

Mireille Plotke: 21:32 Perla.

Robbie Terman: 21:32 Perla had left, and about when did she leave?

Mireille Plotke: 21:36 In the mid-50.

Robbie Terman: 21:37 Mid fifties, to go to Israel?

Mireille Plotke: 21:38 To go to Israel. And life was difficult, no question about it for her.

Robbie Terman: 21:41 What did she say about life in Israel?

Mireille Plotke: 21:45 She said they're working very, very hard, but they're established together, their establishing business. Her husband did establish a business, was a partnership with a furniture store. So, they made it okay.

Robbie Terman: 21:58 Where in Israel where they?

Mireille Plotke: 21:59 They lived in [inaudible 00:22:01].

Robbie Terman: 22:03 So, your parents decided, and they were ready to leave. How many kids were living at home by this point?

Mireille Plotke: 22:09 Okay, it was ... Well, [inaudible 00:22:13] was married already. [inaudible 00:22:14] was married, Charmaine was married, Perla was married. Nina, which was Jeanette, myself, and Blanche. And Blanche stayed in Egypt. She didn't come with us.

Robbie Terman: 22:28 How old was she?

Mireille Plotke: 22:29 She was older than I am.

Robbie Terman: 22:30 Okay.

Mireille Plotke: 22:31 So, she came nine months later.

Robbie Terman: 22:34 And you said that it took you several years to get the visas to leave.

Mireille Plotke: 22:39 Yeah, I think it was about three or four years.

Robbie Terman: 22:39 Can you talk about that process?

Mireille Plotke: 22:41 I didn't personally do it. I was too young to do it, really. My older sister did it. She really, if it wasn't for her, I don't know, my parents were lacking doing it. It was really my sister who worked very hard. And, we were very fortunate to get the visa, because I learned some history in this country, that after World War II, they had a lot of Jews coming in this country.

Robbie Terman: 22:41 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mireille Plotke: 23:06 And they stopped it for a while. So, it was in 1962 or 63 they opened it again, and we were able to come.

Robbie Terman: 23:15 So, it's interesting that Egypt didn't see US citizens, they wanted the Jews to leave, and yet it kind of was a difficult process to leave.

Mireille Plotke: 23:28 Right. Well yeah, absolutely.

Robbie Terman: 23:31 And you said you were 17 when you finally left Egypt.

Mireille Plotke: 23:34 Almost 17, not quite.

Robbie Terman: 23:35 Almost 17.

Mireille Plotke: 23:36 Yeah, 16, almost 17, yeah. And we lived in France for a while.

Robbie Terman: 23:40 And there had been some turmoil in Egypt leading up to that. What was the condition like in Egypt when you were leaving?

Mireille Plotke: 23:48 Well, I know it was very hard for us to leave with anything with us. It wasn't great. It was not great. But, we made the best of it.

Robbie Terman: 23:57 You said one suitcase, right? One suitcase and 25 dollars.

Mireille Plotke: 24:00 One suitcase and 25 dollars.

Robbie Terman: 24:01 So what was in your suitcase? Was it clothes, personal items?

Mireille Plotke: 24:04 Mostly clothes, very few pictures with us. The only souvenir I took is [inaudible 00:24:12], whatever that is, and my daughter has it now, because we really didn't take much with us.

Robbie Terman: 24:19 And at that point, your father, did he still have the jewelry business?

Mireille Plotke: 24:25 No, he did not. Not anymore.

Robbie Terman: 24:25 So what happened to all the money that you had to leave?

Mireille Plotke: 24:29 We were not a millionaire, or very, very rich. We were very average.

Robbie Terman: 24:33 Right, but more than 25 dollars.

Mireille Plotke: 24:34 More than 25 dollars, yeah. I'm not going to say, "Oh my gosh, we were millionaire." Though my uncle, who was very, very comfortable, stayed, and he lost everything. So we left whatever we had that wasn't important, we just left. We felt like it was more important ... My mom and dad felt it was more important to leave, and have future for us then stay in Egypt. And they were smart, thank goodness for that.

Robbie Terman: 25:02 And how did you prepare for the trip, to leave Egypt? Was it hard to--

Mireille Plotke: 25:11 Yes, because I didn't know what the climate was going to be. And I remember having some clothes made for me. It's so funny, I do remember that. We went to buy fabric and went to a seamstress, and made me some wonderful stuff, and I packed a few things. And it was exciting. It was exciting. It was really

exciting, because I know it was going to be different. I was young, so I was excited.

- Robbie Terman: 25:37 Was it hard to leave your friends?
- Mireille Plotke: 25:40 A lot of my friends already left. They really have left, so it wasn't that hard at that moment.
- Robbie Terman: 25:50 Now, you left at least one sister here.
- Mireille Plotke: 25:52 I left one sister, and she came nine months.
- Robbie Terman: 25:52 Any other family members?
- Mireille Plotke: 25:52 No.
- Robbie Terman: 25:56 Now, was she intending to come nine months later, or edges she tried to stay and then just couldn't do it?
- Mireille Plotke: 26:00 She tried to stay. She wanted to see what it was going to be here first.
- Robbie Terman: 26:02 And it was just too hard to stay?
- Mireille Plotke: 26:05 Yeah, yeah.
- Robbie Terman: 26:09 How were you treated by others who were remaining when they found out you were leaving?
- Mireille Plotke: 26:14 In Egypt you mean?
- Robbie Terman: 26:15 Yes, in Egypt. Did you have anyone who said anything negative, or people who were supportive of you leaving?
- Mireille Plotke: 26:21 Actually, people were mostly nice. The people we knew were nice. The Christian were happy for me, my teacher was very happy for me I remember. Very, very pleased. [inaudible 00:26:33] Lycée Francais. And somewhere like they wish they did. They wish they could leave. But we were lucky.
- Robbie Terman: 26:44 And you didn't come to the US first, right? You went to France?
- Mireille Plotke: 26:50 No, we left in Egypt [inaudible 00:26:50]. You know what the HIAS is?
- Robbie Terman: 26:51 Yeah, Hebrew--



Mireille Plotke: 26:52 Immigration, right.

Robbie Terman: 26:53 Yeah, immigration Association.

Mireille Plotke: 26:54 Yeah, they put us in a hotel at the [inaudible 00:26:59] area, and by the [inaudible 00:27:01]. And it was very, you know, small hotels, and we ended up eating lunch at [inaudible 00:27:12] on Shabbat, and I think my mom did whatever she can to buy groceries and make lunches and dinner for us. I don't know if they gave us money at that time. They must have, because I don't think we, how would we have lived?

Robbie Terman: 27:28 Did you contact [inaudible 00:27:29] before you left Egypt, or did you make contact once you arrived in Paris?

Mireille Plotke: 27:33 Once we arrived. Once we arrived to Paris. They already knew we were coming, and they taught us French. English I mean, not French. I'm sorry. They taught us English.

Robbie Terman: 27:42 Did you go into school when you got to Paris, or just take these English class?

Mireille Plotke: 27:45 English classes. I was almost already, you know, had my school done.

Robbie Terman: 27:49 So you didn't have to enroll in high school. What do you remember about the journey between Egypt and Paris? How did you get there?

Mireille Plotke: 28:01 First we left Egypt by train to Alexandria. And from Alexandria, we took a boat, like a boat. And it was a very nice boat, and it was nice, and they had a lot of immigrants, and a lot of people who were older were very sad to leave Egypt. Very sad. My dad was sad, but not really sad. I think he wanted to make sure we were going to be okay ourselves, because he was already not that [inaudible 00:28:35]. And my dad had a vision problem. He had glaucoma. So he was happy to leave, hopefully that he would get a good treatment, wherever he is.

Robbie Terman: 28:46 Now if you weren't considered citizens of Egypt, where there any sort of documents then that you had? Like now we'd have a passport, but you know, if you weren't citizens, considered citizens of Egypt, you wouldn't have a passport. How does that work?

Mireille Plotke: 29:03 Well, we had, I mean, was a paper how we became to this country, is that what you meant?

Robbie Terman: 29:07 Yeah for going to, when you went to Paris. And in getting a visa, Documentation of where you came from.

Mireille Plotke: 29:07 We had a passport.

Robbie Terman: 29:14 So you did have a passport.

Mireille Plotke: 29:15 Oh, of course.

Robbie Terman: 29:15 Okay, so they did issue passports, even though you weren't considered Egyptian citizens.

Mireille Plotke: 29:19 Yeah, the passport came. I mean, we had the visa coming from the United State that allowed us to come. Then, I don't know. I'm trying to remember where the passport came from. Oh my gosh, that's a long time ago, and I lost my old passport. I did lose my old passport. But, we had passport obviously, we couldn't just come. [crosstalk 00:29:44].

Robbie Terman: 29:45 I'm sorry, go ahead. No, you please go ahead.

Mireille Plotke: 29:48 We went to the boat, and we went to, we passed the police.

Robbie Terman: 29:52 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mireille Plotke: 29:53 And then stopped at Marseilles. And then from Marseilles, I believe from Marseilles we took a plane to Paris.

Robbie Terman: 30:03 And why did you choose Paris?

Mireille Plotke: 30:06 That's the place they put us in until we come to the United States. It's not my choice.

Robbie Terman: 30:10 Okay, so your intent always was to come to the United States.

Mireille Plotke: 30:13 Right.

Robbie Terman: 30:14 But they routed you basically through France first. Now, why would you decide not to go to Israel?

Mireille Plotke: 30:22 Well ...

Robbie Terman: 30:25 [inaudible 00:30:25], why did your parents decide?

Mireille Plotke: 30:28 I think we thought it was a better future for us to be here. We know Israel is going to be a little difficult at that time. This still was a pretty new country.

Robbie Terman: 30:36 Yes, and did you know anyone in the United States? Is without one of the reasons you chose?

Mireille Plotke: 30:41 I really did not. What happened is when we moved from Egypt, and there is a, I would say, a Jewish Federation, or the Jewish family service has put us in an area where there are some Jewish families that already came to the United States, and settled in that particular area. So, my mom and dad and us would not feel so lost.

Robbie Terman: 31:05 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mireille Plotke: 31:06 It was in Chicago, in Rogers Park. That's where we stayed. And I went to school at night, and I worked. I was almost 19 when I came to this country.

Robbie Terman: 31:22 Okay, so from about almost 17 to 19 you lived in Paris.

Mireille Plotke: 31:26 Right. A little over a year and a half.

Robbie Terman: 31:28 So in 1960s Paris--

Mireille Plotke: 31:31 When was Kennedy assassinated?

Robbie Terman: 31:33 63.

Mireille Plotke: 31:34 So, that's when I came.

Robbie Terman: 31:35 Okay, so you're in, 61 to 63 you're in Paris.

Mireille Plotke: 31:42 [crosstalk 00:31:42].

Robbie Terman: 31:42 About. Somewhere around there.

Mireille Plotke: 31:42 Yeah.

Robbie Terman: 31:43 So about a year, maybe a year and a half you're in Paris.

Mireille Plotke: 31:46 That's right.

Robbie Terman: 31:46 What was life like in Paris?

Mireille Plotke: 31:49 Oh, we didn't have any money, so it was really hard. What was life? What I did, I remember somebody helped me ... The [inaudible 00:31:59] helped me. There was a doctor who wanted some help that his wife [inaudible 00:32:04]. Not to clean the house, to help her organize something, and I was

doing that to get some extra money. It was okay. It was not really great, it was not, and I'm glad I didn't live in Paris for permanently. I think Paris, it's okay to visit, I don't think it's a wonderful country to live in.

- Robbie Terman: 32:27 Now, you spoke French, so you didn't have language barriers, so that was good.
- Mireille Plotke: 32:30 Oh yeah, I spoke French, thank goodness. Oh, absolutely.
- Robbie Terman: 32:31 And they taught you, [inaudible 00:32:34] helped you learn English.
- Mireille Plotke: 32:36 They did. And I was very lucky.
- Robbie Terman: 32:38 Now, how about the Jewish community at the time you were there?
- Mireille Plotke: 32:41 In Egypt or in--
- Robbie Terman: 32:42 Sorry, in Paris.
- Mireille Plotke: 32:44 The Jewish community had nothing to do with me, but the [inaudible 00:32:47] was the one helped us. The [inaudible 00:32:50]. I didn't know even anything about the Jewish community in France.
- Robbie Terman: 32:54 So you are somewhat isolated.
- Mireille Plotke: 32:56 Yeah, we were.
- Robbie Terman: 32:57 Just biding your time in Paris.
- Mireille Plotke: 32:58 Yeah, biting just until it's time, just to be ... I mean, like I said, we were in this small hotel in [inaudible 00:33:04], and whatever time, you know, had to go and leave. My dad was not feeling good, I used to take him to the doctor, because of his eyes.
- Robbie Terman: 33:18 Did you feel any anti-Semitism while you are in Paris?
- Mireille Plotke: 33:22 No, I didn't feel anti-Semitism. I really didn't even think of that. But what I thought is, I noticed that one time my sister spoke Arabic to me, and I said to her, because she didn't want everybody here anything, I said, "Don't you ever speak Arabic here." And the guy at the restaurant, at the store was very odd. He looked like ... He gave us a dirty look or something. So, I

don't know that you call [inaudible 00:33:53] nothing to do with anti-Semitism. They really didn't want anybody from the Middle East.

- Robbie Terman: 33:22 It was the Arab countries.
- Mireille Plotke: 33:58 And look at now, they are full of them.
- Robbie Terman: 33:59 Yes.
- Mireille Plotke: 34:00 And you know what? Europe was bad to the Jewish, look what happened to them. Really. I mean, it's the truth.
- Robbie Terman: 34:08 What were the circumstances you finally got word that you were going to ... So, what were the circumstances where you finally found out that you were leaving Paris and going to Chicago?
- Mireille Plotke: 34:21 Oh, I was so excited. So excited.
- Robbie Terman: 34:23 And [inaudible 00:34:24] arranged it?
- Mireille Plotke: 34:24 [inaudible 00:34:24] arranged it. Everything was done by [inaudible 00:34:27]. It was really, they were God send heaven. Yeah, it was perfect for us.
- Robbie Terman: 34:32 So, how did you get from Paris to Chicago?
- Mireille Plotke: 34:35 Okay, from Paris we went to Brussel, and we took first a train to Brussel. And from Brussel we went to, took a plane to New York. And oh my gosh, I was so excited. It looked so big at that time for me, I saw the Statue of Liberty. And then from New York, our home was designed for us to go to Chicago. Again, they planned it for us. I would've liked to go to California, but I didn't. I did not.
- Robbie Terman: 35:07 What was your first impression of the United States?
- Mireille Plotke: 35:20 First of all, people were very sweet. We had a very generous, very, very nice and generous ... We had a lovely neighbor next to us where we lived, an American woman, and I really didn't have much clothes to be honest with you. And she had a daughter who was a very pretty daughter, very slender, and I remember her giving me some of her clothes. That was very nice. And she was very tiny. I mean, slender, like myself at the time when I was slender. And I wore her clothes, and I went to

school, and I worked. I loved it. I did love this country. I really still, I love the country.

Robbie Terman: 36:01 Was it college, or ...

Mireille Plotke: 36:03 I went to college at night to learn the language, [inaudible 00:36:06] University.

Robbie Terman: 36:07 So you are still learning English.

Mireille Plotke: 36:07 But I did go to school in this country at Oakland University, Oakland community college, after I got married, but then my husband lost his job and I had to stop going to school. I have two years.

Robbie Terman: 36:20 How long were you in Chicago?

Mireille Plotke: 36:22 Well, okay, I moved to Chicago in 63, then I met my husband when I was 20.

Robbie Terman: 36:30 Very shortly afterwards.

Mireille Plotke: 36:32 Yeah, it was short.

Robbie Terman: 36:33 Okay, tell me about meeting him. What's his name? How'd you meet him?

Mireille Plotke: 36:37 His name is Peter, and he was born in Germany. He lived in Indiana. His father was a rabbi. My sister wanted me to go to a dance at night, it's an alumni dance from college. And I really didn't want to go at that time. And we went, I went with her. His mom and dad were in Israel. Since he's a rabbi, he probably would've never went to Friday night dance.

Robbie Terman: 37:03 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mireille Plotke: 37:05 And I didn't want to go, but thanks to my sister, she wanted me to go, and I went there and this is how we met actually. That's how we met.

Robbie Terman: 37:12 So I bet you're pretty glad you went to that dance.

Mireille Plotke: 37:15 Yeah, I did. Yes, of course.

Robbie Terman: 37:17 So, how long after you met did you get married?

Mireille Plotke: 37:21 Well, see, years ago people did not wait for long like today. It's crazy, isn't it? He proposed to me I think about eight months after we met, and then we get married when I was 21.

Robbie Terman: 37:36 And where did you live when you first got married?

Mireille Plotke: 37:40 I lived in Rogers Park with my mom and dad. That's where the people put us, in that area, at that apartment place.

Robbie Terman: 37:48 And then after you got married?

Mireille Plotke: 37:50 And after I get married we lived in Park Forest, Illinois. And then I had a baby, and after the baby was born we moved to Michigan. So, this is my home. This is really my home more than anywhere else.

Robbie Terman: 38:05 What was the child's name?

Mireille Plotke: 38:06 Elizabeth.

Robbie Terman: 38:07 Elizabeth.

Mireille Plotke: 38:08 Elizabeth [inaudible 00:38:08], and she's successful businesswoman.

Robbie Terman: 38:12 So she was born, and then you moved to Detroit. Why did you move--

Mireille Plotke: 38:16 And she was six months old. My husband was looking for another position. He was working at Standard oil company, and they wanted to move him to Texas, somewhere in Texas. He didn't want to go there. So, he found a job. And he always like the Tigers. So, we moved to Michigan. And here I met my best friend, Carol, with which I have known over 50 years.

Robbie Terman: 38:41 What's your last name?

Mireille Plotke: 38:42 Lawson, Carol Lawson.

Robbie Terman: 38:43 Carol Lawson. And what did your husband do when he came to Detroit for a job?

Mireille Plotke: 38:47 He worked as a PR, public relation at [inaudible 00:38:51] Corporation.

Robbie Terman: 38:52 And where did you live when you first moved to Detroit?

Mireille Plotke: 38:55 We lived in an apartment, Northgate Apartment, and that's where I met my girlfriend. And then after our second daughter was born, we lived in Southfield.

Robbie Terman: 39:02 And what's your second daughter's name?

Mireille Plotke: 39:05 Michelle [inaudible 00:39:05] Jacobs. And she lives in Colorado. Elizabeth lives in Aspen, Colorado now.

Robbie Terman: 39:12 So, your husband and you lived in, I'm sorry, the--

Mireille Plotke: 39:19 And Jennifer, I have a third daughter.

Robbie Terman: 39:20 Third daughter. So, you'd lived first, I'm sorry, say that again, where you first lived when you moved to [inaudible 00:39:26] Detroit?

Mireille Plotke: 39:28 I lived in Northgate Apartment.

Robbie Terman: 39:29 What city is that?

Mireille Plotke: 39:31 I think it was Oak Park.

Robbie Terman: 39:31 Oak Park?

Mireille Plotke: 39:32 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Robbie Terman: 39:33 And then Southfield.

Mireille Plotke: 39:34 Southfield. Our children went to Southfield High. Southfield [inaudible 00:39:39] Southfield High.

Robbie Terman: 39:41 And you didn't know anyone in Detroit when you arrived.

Mireille Plotke: 39:43 No, but luckily I made friends very easily. I did. [inaudible 00:39:49]. I'm lucky, yeah.

Robbie Terman: 39:54 And now you moved into two areas that had a large Jewish population.

Mireille Plotke: 40:02 Yeah.

Robbie Terman: 40:02 So, did you immediately get involved in the Jewish population?

Mireille Plotke: 40:05 Yeah, I did. Yeah. We belong to a synagogue right away. We belonged to [inaudible 00:40:07] Shalom, and I belong to



[inaudible 00:40:13]. And we do observe holiday here. And I keep kosher even.

- Robbie Terman: 40:17 And your Neighborhoods, in Southfield and Oak Park, was it a primarily Jewish neighborhood, or a mixed?
- Mireille Plotke: 40:23 Southfield was quite a bit Jews. They were mixed, but there were quite a fit Jewish. And the school, unfortunately, really changed in the area, and we decided to move.
- Robbie Terman: 40:32 And by the time you arrived in Detroit, then you probably spoke English very well.
- Mireille Plotke: 40:38 Oh yeah, of course, of course.
- Robbie Terman: 40:39 How about your husband being from Germany?
- Mireille Plotke: 40:43 He came when he was four, so he was really American, yeah.
- Robbie Terman: 40:47 Do you ever still speak your native language?
- Mireille Plotke: 40:50 I speak French. I don't really speak Arabic very well. I mean, I can understand it of course. I don't know if it's psychological or not, but I don't love the language. Like, I will understand it very well, if it's from Egypt. And I could read it, some of them. My French is stronger than my Arabic in reading, but I would be able to read Arabic as well. And I do read Hebrew.
- Robbie Terman: 41:15 Oh, so you also speak Hebrew, or read Hebrew.
- Mireille Plotke: 41:18 Yeah. Even though I learned Hebrew when I was a kid, it was just a short while, remember I left.
- Robbie Terman: 41:24 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Mireille Plotke: 41:25 And my teacher was a [inaudible 00:41:26] teacher. So when I came to this country and went to services, I really didn't really read the Hebrew very well. So I took some classes, and now I could read it very well. Not that I understand all of it, but I could very easily follow services and read it [inaudible 00:41:43].
- Robbie Terman: 41:44 Now, when you first came to Detroit, you have very young children.
- Mireille Plotke: 41:48 I had a baby. One baby, yeah.
- Robbie Terman: 41:49 So, were you a stay at home mom?

Mireille Plotke: 41:52 I was a stay at home mom for a while, until my youngest one until two, and then I worked, and made my own business in the end.

Robbie Terman: 41:58 And what did you do for a job?

Mireille Plotke: 42:02 I worked in retail, [inaudible 00:42:04] for a while, and then I decided to have my own business, a promotional product.

Robbie Terman: 42:12 And what kind of work exactly was that?

Mireille Plotke: 42:14 Promotional product is anything with your logo on it. Do you know what that is?

Robbie Terman: 42:14 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mireille Plotke: 42:20 I had nice client, I had Pfizer, high grade broker network, and it was successful. I actually still have a few clients, but I'm really retired. I'm retired.

Robbie Terman: 42:35 And where there any changes in the lifestyle that you made when you came to the United States?

Mireille Plotke: 42:45 Not really. The only thing I remember that I was very having a hard time is the bread, the white bread. I hated the white bread. Anna didn't know you could toast it. Because my mom used the white bread. But, once I find out that you can toast it, it wasn't so bad.

Robbie Terman: 43:04 What were some of the favorite foods you had that were in Egypt, that they did not have here, or at least weren't easily obtained?

Mireille Plotke: 43:11 Okay, that's true. I used to love fava bean, and I'd buy it for breakfast sometime. You buy it in a can.

Robbie Terman: 43:20 Yes.

Mireille Plotke: 43:20 I used to love that. And I still do actually. And some time I make [inaudible 00:43:29]. Do you know what that is?

Robbie Terman: 43:20 Yes, yes.

Mireille Plotke: 43:31 I like that, but you can make that. But when I cooked, I really cooked pretty much American, because that was the easiest. You know, I didn't have much time. I didn't really have a lot of hard time getting adjusted. Maybe because I was young, and ...

Robbie Terman: 43:51 Did you find there to be more similarities in your lifestyle between Egypt and America, or a lot of differences?

Mireille Plotke: 44:02 Well remember, Egypt at one time was very multi-culture. It was really not, we were not like Yemen or anything like that. We were more advanced. We were just more, it wasn't that different. It's not. The only thing I know that I went to private school, and they were very strict. That much I know. And if I came here and went to school here, it would've been hard for me, because I'm not a follower.

Robbie Terman: 44:31 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mireille Plotke: 44:32 So I would've had a hard time.

Robbie Terman: 44:34 Now I know [inaudible 00:44:35] help to you quite a bit when you first came to America.

Mireille Plotke: 44:39 Right, especially with my mom and dad. But I really worked right away. No, [inaudible 00:44:44] helped us in Paris. Jewish family service helped my mom and dad. Oh, absolutely they did. And we had a Jewish community center, and they tried to bring us, you know, as close as possible to what we are supposed to be doing.

Robbie Terman: 45:03 So you moved here with your husband. Did your parents stay in Chicago?

Mireille Plotke: 45:07 Yeah, it was hard. And my sisters.

Robbie Terman: 45:10 And your sisters?

Mireille Plotke: 45:10 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Robbie Terman: 45:11 And did any of the Jewish agencies help you and your husband when you first came to Detroit?

Mireille Plotke: 45:17 No, we didn't need to.

Robbie Terman: 45:18 By that time you were pretty much self-sufficient.

Mireille Plotke: 45:20 The minute I get married ... But even before I get married, I was really working already. I was pretty okay. It's my parents who needed help financially, they did. And it was fine for them, because thank goodness they had good medical care. They really did.

Robbie Terman: 45:37 Yeah. And you said you were excited when you left Egypt. What were your hopes when you came to this country?

Mireille Plotke: 45:44 Well, I was hoping to do ... I wanted to go to college full time, but I couldn't. I couldn't afford it. That was my main goal. You know, but I didn't let it stop after ... I did fine.

Robbie Terman: 45:58 And how were you treated when you first came to the United States?

Mireille Plotke: 46:03 Oh, they were very nice. And what I believe is it is very important to come here legally. And here is the reason, you get Social Security, you get help. It's very important. Very, very important to come legally. Anybody who comes illegal is missing something.

Robbie Terman: 46:22 Right.

Mireille Plotke: 46:22 Is missing something, no question about it.

Robbie Terman: 46:25 Were your expectations of America met?

Mireille Plotke: 46:27 Yes, it did. Absolutely.

Robbie Terman: 46:30 And are you naturalized?

Mireille Plotke: 46:33 Citizen, of course.

Robbie Terman: 46:35 And when did you become a citizen?

Mireille Plotke: 46:37 At that time, and I don't know how it is today, you have to be seven years. Just because you get married, it doesn't mean you become citizen. After seven years in this country, you become citizen. I had to go and swear, and they give me some questions to see if I can understand the question, of course I did, and I became a citizen.

Robbie Terman: 46:57 What, if any, challenges did you have, just from your childhood in Egypt to get to America? Where there any major challenges you faced, or difficulties, or do you feel like you just took things as they came, and did what you needed to do to move past them?

Mireille Plotke: 47:18 Are you talking when I left Egypt, France to come here?

Robbie Terman: 47:20 Well, any challenges you've had along the way. Anything that made the journey difficult, more difficult. And it's a little hard to

say, because it was a difficult experience anyways, leaving your homeland.

- Mireille Plotke: 47:32 Yeah, of course it's a difficult experience to leave your homeland, but no, it really wasn't. I mean, like I said, I was anxious to learn the language. And that's why I didn't speak French to the kids at home. I wanted to become more Americanized.
- Robbie Terman: 47:45 So do your kids speak French?
- Mireille Plotke: 47:48 No, they don't. I should've taught them French. I regret it now.
- Robbie Terman: 47:54 What are some of the best things that you have found about America? Or your favorite things about this country?
- Mireille Plotke: 48:01 Okay, when I first came to this country, I love being free, able to say what you want to say. I don't have to worry about if my political point of view is different than the other. However, what I notice now is a bit different. If your political point of view is different, and I'm not going to say which is right or left, you have to be careful.
- Robbie Terman: 48:30 Yes, it's very different than even a few years ago.
- Mireille Plotke: 48:34 And I'm very sad about that.
- Robbie Terman: 48:35 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Mireille Plotke: 48:37 And especially it's from the left side, not the right side so much. The left side, if you say anything, if you disagree about anything, they really think you're racist, or your stupid, or it's not a pretty thing. And that's what I regret mostly about what's happening here.
- Robbie Terman: 49:00 Right, what's happening today.
- Mireille Plotke: 49:01 It is very sad, yeah.
- Robbie Terman: 49:03 When you first came--
- Mireille Plotke: 49:06 I had no problem worrying about my political point of view.
- Robbie Terman: 49:09 Was there anything that was disappointing, something that you thought was going to be different?

Mireille Plotke: 49:15 I was disappointed a little bit. I wasn't sure. Now at that time, now remember, the African-American were not allowed to be anywhere, and that was sad. I remember volunteering, because I wanted to be a pharmacist, volunteering at [inaudible 00:49:27] Hospital. And there were an African- American young lady, I don't know if they were married or not. And I invited them to my house to come over and she said to me, "Are you sure your mom and dad will allow that?" I didn't really know what she meant. And then later on I found out that you're not allowed to, it's not good. So, that was disappointing, yeah. That was disappointing.

Robbie Terman: 49:54 And have you ever returned to Egypt?

Mireille Plotke: 49:56 No, I did not. I've been to Israel to time, but I have not been to Egypt.

Robbie Terman: 50:01 And you have no plans to ever--

Mireille Plotke: 50:02 No. Especially now, oh my gosh.

Robbie Terman: 50:04 Yes.

Mireille Plotke: 50:05 It's really a different country. Now it's really a different country.

Robbie Terman: 50:08 Yes. Did your parents feel that they made the right decision in leaving Egypt?

Mireille Plotke: 50:14 I think so. I think so. Definitely.

Robbie Terman: 50:18 Now, is there anything else that we haven't covered, that you want to share?

Mireille Plotke: 50:24 I think you pretty much covered. I hope it was okay for you, that everything was okay and easy.

Robbie Terman: 50:30 I think this is great. Thank you so much, Mireille, for talking with us today.

Mireille Plotke: 50:35 Thank you. And don't forget ...