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## **Towfig Arjmand Memoir**

### **F761.1 Foreign Born Physicians in Springfield, Illinois #1**

Memoir

112pp.

Arjmand, Towfig

Narrators discuss their native homelands, family, religious faiths, holidays, university and medical education, childhood activities, brief history of their original country, and their reasons for coming to the U.S. Arjmand, an anesthesiologist from Iran, discusses the revolution of 1978, the Jewish religion, and the Iranian government.

Interviews by Eugenia Eberle, 1994

Donated by Eugenia Eberle

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THE ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AWARDS ENTRY

1995

an oral history collection  
of  
FOREIGN BORN PHYSICIANS  
*their twenty years in Springfield*

Submitted by  
Southern Illinois University School of Medicine  
Pearson Museum

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## *Nomination Narrative*

Oral History is considered a unique discipline and probably a luxury to most museums because there are so few recorders of the past and there is so little funding for the documentation of recollections. Initially this project began from the affection for a dying medical colleague who had given his entire career to the Springfield community as a member of the Springfield Clinic. He was our dear friend, fellow Orthopaedic Surgeon, and Korean emigrant. His recorded oral history was the catalyst for what I felt was a need to acknowledge those physicians from other countries who came to Springfield to practice their specialty. As a member of the SIU family, it seemed to me that the Pearson Museum was the most appropriate repository for the documents and tapes of interviews conducted with medical colleagues born and trained abroad. This endeavor represents a way of expressing my enormous admiration for those who immigrated to the United States twenty or more years ago, some survivors of World War II. As an oral historian, it occurred to me that through this effort, the Pearson Museum would have a record of foreign-born physicians who have given their careers to Springfield.

The project has been well received by those who have participated and a rewarding one as well. Others have expressed their enthusiasm and are looking forward to participating in order to help complete the ongoing collection.

Eugenia Eberle  
Pearson Museum Nominee



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January 27, 1995

Dr. Jo Ann Rayfield, Chair  
Awards Program  
Illinois State Historical Society  
1 Old State Capitol Plaza,  
Springfield, IL 62701-1507

Dear Dr. Rayfield:

I would like to advance the nomination of an oral history project completed by Ms. Eugenia Eberle for consideration in the State Historical Society's Annual Awards Competition. The entry is, in fact, a series of oral histories collected by Ms. Eberle and donated to the Pearson Museum this summer. The project is unique and deserving, I believe, of particular attention because it has captured the histories of a group who are not frequently studied even within the disciplinary confines of medical history--physicians who have immigrated to this country in search of professional and personal success.

Ms. Eberle has collected a record of the lives of a selected number of Sangamon County physicians who were born, raised, and trained abroad, but who emigrated to the United States, made their homes in Sangamon County, and spent the better part of their medical careers delivering care to area residents and enriching the cultural heritage of the greater Springfield community. Her work represents the first such effort of which I am aware to document the experiences of this group.

Certainly, Ms. Eberle's work has great local significance. It offers a first-hand look at accounts of medical practice in Springfield and is worthy of attention in this aspect alone. Its concentration on the immigrant experience, however, and the challenges that have been encountered by professionals who have taken up residence in the American midwest after leaving their foreign birthplaces, provides her work with far broader significance as well. It has caused us at the Pearson Museum to begin viewing that group as a specific focus for collection development.

Ms. Eberle's oral histories are unique in their breadth and diversity as well. The physicians interviewed include those born in Czechoslovakia, England, Iran, Korea, Latvia, and Peru. They include physicians who have specialized in

anesthesiology, family medicine, infectious diseases, orthopedics, surgery, and urology. They include those who came to Springfield as teachers and those who came here as practitioners. The histories tell tales that span a global history of several decades and a history in Sangamon County of fifty-odd years.

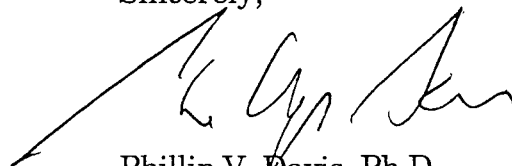
Ms. Eberle's focus on professionally trained medical men and women as subjects imbues these histories with another unique and valuable perspective. Physicians in our society are in a singular position to observe the most important and fundamental aspects of human life. Their personal reflections on the formative experiences in their own histories are a fascinating look at the changes in personal and societal manners and mores. Ms. Eberle's collection is a rich source for such information.

On a more personal note, I am particularly pleased that the Pearson Museum was chosen as a repository of these histories because I believe that they represent a source of information about the history of medicine in our local community that is inaccessible in any other form. I am hopeful that Ms. Eberle's collection and transcription of these histories will prompt other physicians to consider the Pearson Museum as a repository for their personal and professional papers. Ms. Eberle's careful work and her professional approach to the process of oral history has provided us with an excellent example of how lively and important the documentation of medical history can be.

Enclosed with this application are copies of the interview tapes and transcripts, copies of correspondence sent to participants in the project, and other related documentation each of which demonstrates the professional attention with which this project was carried out. An assignment of rights (also attached) was executed by all physicians who were interviewed for the project. Only foreign born physicians who practiced in the Springfield area for some twenty years were eligible for inclusion in the project. Not all such physicians were interviewed, and only physicians still residing in the Springfield area were included.

Thank you for your consideration of Ms. Eberle's work for an individual award in the oral history category. On her behalf, I am proud to advance this nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phillip V. Davis", written over a horizontal line.

Phillip V. Davis, Ph.D.  
Director  
The Pearson Museum

15 May 1994

I am conducting an Oral History project which is to include interviews of foreign-born physicians in the Springfield and surrounding communities who have practiced in the area for twenty years or more. These one hour interviews will be transcribed and assembled into a collection for the SIU School of Medicine Library and in the Sangamon State University archives. Your diverse backgrounds have been an asset to our communities and as an expression of appreciation, I would like to record your brief memoir for the School hoping to include as many of you as possible.

The general format from which I will base my questions are as follows:

1. Where you were born? Spent your youth?
2. General family background; parents, siblings, etc.
3. Memories of your youth.
4. Recollections of your University and post graduate life.
5. Your reason for emigrating to the United States and what your alternatives might have been.
6. Has your experience in the United States been consistent with your expectations? What were they? And if not, why not?
7. What brought you to Springfield?
8. Influences in your life. Role models.
9. Have you returned to your homeland over the years? Changes?
10. Do you have plans for retirement?

I will be calling you at home to make arrangements for an interview and to answer any questions you might have.

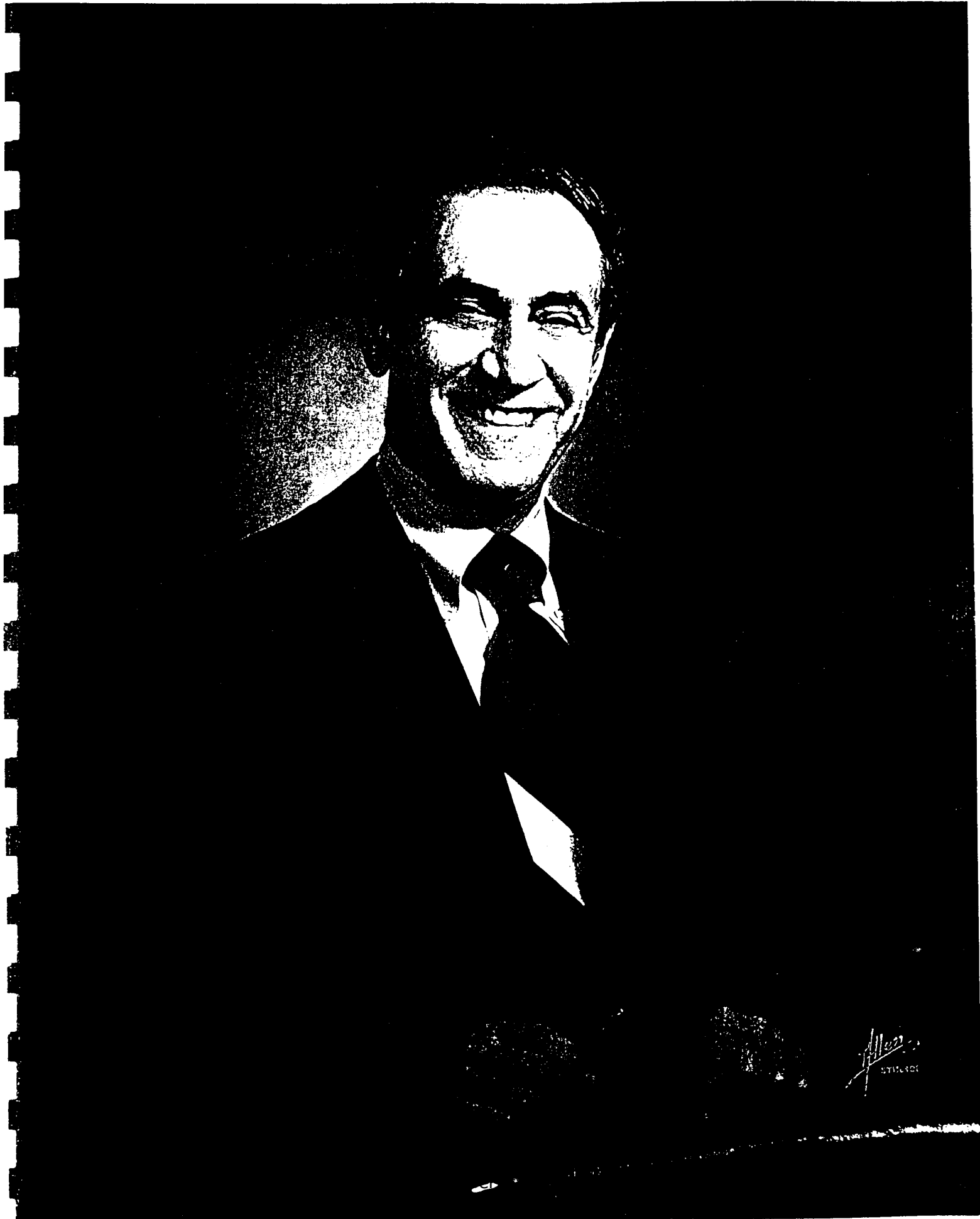
Looking forward to your participation and support, I am,

Eugenia Eberle  
Oral Historian

**TOWFIG ARJMAND**

*Iran*

Anesthesiology



Allen  
STUDIO



## *Preface*

This manuscript is the product of a tape-recorded interview conducted by Eugenia Eberle in the summer of 1994 for the SIU Pearson Museum at the SIU School of Medicine and the Sangamon State University Archives. The material was also transcribed and edited from the tapes.

Towfig Arjmand was born June 4, 1929. Raised in Kermanshah, Iran, he talks about his family, ancestors, the Jewish faith, the Iranian Revolution of 1978, and touches on the history of Iran's politics. His education began in the Alliance Israelite, Shahpour High School and the University of Tehran where he finished his medical degree. He came to the Edgewater Community Hospital through an International Exchange program, continued in Chicago at Old St. Luke's Hospital and the University of Illinois. After practicing anesthesiology a short time in the Chicago area, he moved to Springfield in 1966 to join fellow anesthesiologist, John Shield at St. John's Hospital. He went into semi-retirement in 1962.

In 1960, Dr. Arjmand married Beryl Hobbs a nurse from England, also at Edgewater Community Hospital. They have four children. Susan, a graduate of the University of Illinois Medical School with a residency in Family Practice in the Chicago area. Ellis, a graduate of Northwestern University has finished his residency and fellowship in otolaryngology and has recently joined SIU School of Medicine. Denise is a graduate of Millikan University, and Rochelle, is a graduate of Bradley University with a degree in Psychology working in Chicago.

Eugenia Eberle was raised in Haverford, Pennsylvania, where she earned an athletic scholarship to the University of Virginia. Her interest in journalism made it possible for her to write for the Arab News while living in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia for six years with her husband, Professor of Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgery with the SIU School of Medicine. Mother of four grown children, her civic interests and involvement in museum studies subsequently led her toward an interest in oral history at Sangamon State University where she is working on a masters degree in Public history.

Readers of this oral history memoir should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word and that the interviewer, narrator and editor sought to preserve the informal conversation style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Pearson Museum and the Sangamon State University Archives are not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for views expressed therein.

The manuscript may be read, quoted and cited freely. It may not be reproduced in whole or in part by any means, electronic or mechanical without permission in writing from the Pearson Museum or the Sangamon State University Archives.

## CARD CATALOGUE

Arjmand, Towfig (1929- )

Foreign-born physician. Began his career in Anesthesiology with St. John's Hospital in 1966. Born in Kermanshah, Iran. Educated at the University of Tehran, Edgewater Community Hospital, Chicago; Old St. Luke's Hospital, the University of Illinois, Chicago, Research and Educational Hospital, the teaching hospital of the University of Illinois.

Terms: Open July 20, 1994

Project: FOREIGN-BORN PHYSICIANS in Springfield, Illinois.

Interview by Eugenia Eberle Length: 1 hour  
22 pages

## *Interview*

July 20, 1994. Interview with Dr. Towfig Arjmand in his home at 1515 New City Road, Pawnee, Illinois, 62558.

Eugenia Eberle, Interviewer

Q. Towfig, where were you born?

A. I was born in Kermanshah, Iran.

Q. Where did you spend your youth?

A. I spent the first eighteen years of my life in the city of Kermanshah which, if you like, I will spell it for you. Kermanshah is a large city on the western boarder of Iran, not too far from Iraq, between Iran and Iraq.

Q. When were you born?

A. I was born June 4, 1929.

Q. Tell me something about your mother and father.

A. Well, my father was born in April of 1900 also in the city of Kermanshah. His father which would be my grandfather was a merchant and he started quite early in life as a peddler going from village to village to village and after he established and accumulated some capital, he had a business in the city of Kermanshah as a wholesale distributor for clothing, women'S clothing material. Fabric. And my grandfather became successful in his business which. . . I remember him because he passed away when I was eleven or twelve years old, and my father didn't pursue the business activity of his father. He felt that he wanted to get out of that environment of business and so forth. He was self taught. He studied English with the American missionary which they had a house for him in the city of Kermanshah and he studied English and then later on he had a job as office manager, translator at the British Consular Office in the city of Kermanshah. My mother. . .

Q. What was his name?

A. My father's name was Aziz and my grandfather's name was Eliyahu. It's a Biblical name. Eliyahu Mir.

Q. Did he ever work with carpets at all?

A. You mean my grandfather?

Q. No. Although any Iranian is an expert. At least they think they are in carpets, so because

Q. No. Although any Iranian is an expert. At least they think they are in carpets, so because invariably, during their lifetime, they keep buying carpets and exchanging and buying and upgrading, so he had some interest and some information about carpets.

Q. Did your family have carpets?

A. Oh, always.

Q. Did you inherit any old carpets.

A. Yes I did, from my father. They were not old because the old carpets were not considered top quality because of the numbers of years of usage, they would trade them and get a new one. So I think Persian carpets, really quality if they aged would become valuable. I have some carpets now which would be about thirty years old but they're quality. I'm sure they would last for another fifty years so maybe at that time, they would be considered very valuable but they were not dealing with the merchants. My mother was also born in the city of Kermanshah. Her father was an Iranian born and raised in the city of Kermanshah, but her mother which would be my grandmother was a native of Baghdad, Iraq. Some eighty five years ago they were married and my mother is the oldest.

Q. So did they meet on a caravan or something of that sort?

A. (chuckle) No. In those days, marriage was done by arrangement. Somebody knew somebody and felt this would be a good match and so forth. My grandfather from my mother's side was a widower and lost his wife and had several children and for some reason married my grandmother who never married and took care of the children when they were without mother and start having her own family. She ended up having five daughters and three sons. Eight children all together. My mother had been the oldest one of her family.

Q. How many siblings do you have?

A. I have five. With myself it would be six. We had three brothers and three sisters.

Q. And what are they all doing today and what are their names?

A. My oldest sister, her name is Rachel. She's married and at the present time, since the revolution, she migrated to the United States. She's in Berkeley, California. She has four children and she's grandmother of eight children. That's Rachel, and my second sister is Margaret and she lives in Montreal and she also came to Montreal after the revolution and so they selected Canada and they were quite happy and this is the one whose husband passed away two weeks ago while visiting Springfield.

Q. What revolution was that? Khomeni? 1978?

A. Yes, it was. . . 1978-79. The population became quite unhappy with the excesses of Shah and after they existed, but the revolution didn't improve the situation. In fact, in many ways probably economically and socially and in many aspects they just are at a stand-still.

Q. The mores were tightened again?

A. Very much so. The old Islamic code was enforced and with all kinds of excesses. The women cannot go outside without their head being covered. They cannot wear short sleeve clothing even in the heat of the summer which is quite often in Iran. It's very warm in the summer. And the woman out in the job market used to be working in many levels of the government and now they're limited to teaching and just has been a great enough change since the revolution. Although the revolution did not make a definite effort against the minority, the Jewish population and the Christian population with the exception against the Bahai. The revolution, being Fundamentalist Islamic, they became completely against the Bahai Faith. Faith by itself. . . a lot of people, they relate that to Islamic Faith but it's not really related to that although the man that advocate the faith was a Moslem clergy had some new ideas. He had some new conception. He advocates the international language. Universal language. He advocates, for instance, the Universal Government, sort of a United Nations that we have, and he was considered such religious by the Islamic clergy, which was over a hundred fifty years ago in Iran and he has been persecuted at his follower ever since so when the Islamic Revolution took over after Khomeni came to power, the Bahai were put in a very difficult situation. A good number of them were killed, a good number of them went into hiding, a good number of them left. In fact the United States recognized that fact and gave them sanction. Any Bahai Faith. . . any person who belonged to the Bahai Faith could go to the States without any problem. And they did. A good number of them came to the United States.

Q. Did they go to any particular state?

A. I think, for some reason, they like California. They liked California, they liked the weather, they liked the opportunity.

Q. Are you Bahai?

A. No, no. I am of the Jewish faith and, as I mentioned, the Revolution was not against the Jewish population or Christian population, but the opportunity became rather limited and a good number of the Jewish people, perhaps some Christian felt that they would like to leave, and they did. They left the country. It became difficult for them to advance in business, became difficult for them to send their children to university. University had always had a good number of Christian and Jewish. Suddenly, the space was limited. They were only admitting children of the clergymen, the children of those who were supportive of the government, and opportunity became less and less. And I think that was the reason that many number of my family left to United States, to Europe.

Q. Did they emigrate early on or through the revolution?

A. Some, they had the foresight. They saw what was coming and they left in '77 and '78. At that time it was a lot easier and they could move themselves and perhaps even move their capital. Later, it became harder and they migrated out of the country. Some went to Israel, some went to Europe, France, England, Sweden. These are the people they thought that opportunity was being limited to them. Number one, the position in the government was probably impossible for them because this became a Fundamentalist Islamic Government so all those jobs became available only to their own people. So back to the story. . .

Q. Let's get back to your siblings.

A. Yes. And then myself. Of course, I'm not included in this movement because I came to the United States much earlier for reasons of my own.

Q. After Margaret?

A. Myself. I'm number three, the oldest son. Then I have another sister, my younger sister, she's also in California, not in Berkeley but in a city of El, near El Cerrito in the Bay Area.

Q. Near San Francisco?

A. Right.

Q. And what was her name?

A. Parvin is her name. She is married. She has three children and she doesn't have any grandchildren yet.

Q. And then?

A. And then my other brother, Homayoun. He's in the Bay Area. He had his education in the United States. He went to the University of Illinois. In 1960, in early 60's, and then he went back to Iran and was a successful architect and then he came back to the United States after the revolution. And then I have a younger brother. His name is Farouk and he lives in Los Angeles.

Q. So you see a bit of California every now and then?

A. Quite often, quite often.

Q. And of course my mother. She is still living and lives in the Bay Area. She lives by herself. She has an apartment.

Q. How old is your mother now?

A. My mother? 84.

Q. Tell me something about your early childhood in Kermanshah.

A. The city is rather pleasant. It's in the high elevation. Mountainous. The center of the province, the Province of Kermanshah and center of Government, center of Commerce, center of Business. Close to the Iraqi border with great influence back and forth between Baghdad and Kermanshah. And the Jewish community of Kermanshah was quite small and they were primarily engaged in the merchant and few professions, few physicians, few engineers and few pharmacists among them.

Q. Were you a close family?

A. Very close. Very close. In fact, it was not a ghetto type of life but the neighborhood was Jewish with some mixture with our neighbor, Moslem, Bahai and so forth and we had very close reach to my grandparents, my aunts and my uncles. Life was very easy. We were all in this big. . .

Q. One big family.

A. One big family. See each other often, see each other on holiday quite often.

Q. Can you describe your holidays?

A. Well, we were fortunate. We had two different holidays. One was the Jewish holiday, which of course are known as Passover and New Year, Yom Kippur and so forth.

Q. When is that in Iran? When was the date?

A. The date is the same. The Jewish holiday would be the same all over the world. For instance the biggest day is Passover. Passover does not have an exact date in the Christian calendar but has an exact date in the Hebrew calendar. The Hebrew calendar and the Christian calendar is different. The Hebrew calendar is based on the moon. Twelve moon consists of one year and the Hebrew calendar therefore could be found in a different season but they have corrected that. Every three years, they added an extra month to the whole year. Instead of twelve months, it's thirteen months. In order to keep the holiday fix in the season. As you know, for instance, Passover always coincides with Easter which originally they were the same. When Christ celebrated the Last Supper, the Last Supper was the celebration of Passover. Distribution of the wine, the Communion. That was taken from that last night which was the Passover night so Passover is ALWAYS in the spring regardless of the change of the calendar. Sometimes the beginning of April, sometimes late in March, sometimes the middle of April. They think the Christian calendar corrected that and they had the element of the moon. See, there's no specific date for Easter. As you know, Easter is always on Sunday but we don't know what date in April or what date in March because this is combined with the moon. They have created some specific date according. . . it has to be a full moon. So anyway, the feast of Passover is the biggest holiday that we have and of course, second important is New Year, Rosh Hashana, which is always in the fall and followed that with the Yom Kippur, the day of Atonement. These are major holidays that

we celebrate. As I say, another fortunate thing for us in Iran was that we had Iranian New Year day after the Moslem holidays. The Moslem holiday is the biggest one was the New Year, the beginning of the New Year, twenty first of March, although this was not originally a Moslem holiday because this goes back prior to invasion of Islam. New Year or the twenty first of March has always been celebrated in Iran as the beginning of the year, the beginning of the season, so we are fortunate to have that day off for seven days from school.

Q. Now, on Sundays, you celebrate your Sunday's on Friday?

A. Yes, that's right. In the Moslem tradition they selected as Friday as a day of rest. As you know, the Jewish people, they have Saturday as a day of rest according to the ten commandments. Saturday is the day of rest. The Sabbath.

Q. So does that make it difficult for the two?

A. No, not really. No. We were at the Jewish school and we had Friday and Saturday. Both.

Q. What about Sunday?

A. That's a regular day.

Q. So what kind of school did you go to?

A. The school that I went belonged to an organization which still exists which is called Alliance Israelites. Israeli Alliance. This organization is a French organization and they're mission was primarily education for the people, not necessarily for Jewish people, people that needed that in the Middle East and North Africa. Colonial France then had some interest in North Africa. This school became quite popular since they were probably the first organized school in the Middle East. Some of the Iranian old families or perhaps those who wanted a better education for their children, they would send their children to Alliance.

Q. Was it a private school then? Or was it considered public.

A. Considered a private school.

Q. And who supports them?

A. It was supported by the Alliance Israeli, the French organization.

Q. So there was a tuition.

A. The tuition was not adequate to pay for the school teachers and all that. It was supported primarily by donations from outside the country.

Q. From out of the country?

A. From out of the country.

Q. Do we have any such schools here in the United States?

A. There are schools like that. The parochial school in a very large Jewish community. New York, for instance, Philadelphia and Chicago and things like that but it's supported by itself, by the religious group. For instance in Chicago and I'm sure in New York for sure, there will be a hundred of these schools.

Q. Of the Alliances?

A. No. The Parochial schools. The Alliances are primarily for the Middle East and North Africa, a colony that France had at one time.

Q. Now, in your school did you learn certain languages? Was it pretty rigid or was it primarily religion?

A. No it was not religious. It definitely was not. I think what the Alliance did advocate was primary education. The education was local. The education was parsee which is the native language and plus French. They would only in school that they were teaching a language at the beginning when this school started. There is no other school.

Q. When did this school start?

A. I'm not sure of the exact date.

Q. In the early 1900's?

A. Perhaps even earlier because my father went to Alliance. The same school that I went, and my grandfather, I don't think that he went.

Q. Well you were lucky to have such a school in town.

A. Yes, we were lucky and then, of course, this was exposure of the population that only Jewish community in the Moslem community because a school one hundred years ago in Iran was not an organized type of a school. One classroom of children would go there, children would sit there all day long and this was primarily an Islamic education. Reading the Koran and so forth and then suddenly Alliance Israelite came all united school, the classroom. They were teaching mathematics, they were teaching science, and so forth, therefore it became popular. It became quite popular although it was limited. They couldn't take the whole city. It was. . . the Jewish community had their priority to send their children to Alliance. And probably five to ten percent of the student body, they were Christian or Moslem.

Q. That didn't cause any problems?

A. No no.

Q. Not in those days?

A. No, no, not in those days.

Q. Do you think that's causing any problem today?

A. Well, Alliance. I don't know if they exist anymore.

Q. It may well be a problem then.

A. They. . .the educational system became sensitive to Khomeini who probably closed and restricted their activity.

Q. Did you have any pastimes. What did you do as a child?

A. Well, soccer was popular. Soccer was quite a popular sport in the elementary school and the high school, but I have to add the school Alliance only provided up to the ninth grade. After that, for the high school, it was a public school which was provided by the Board of Education.

Q. Was it a Gymnasium? What did you call it?

A. They didn't call it Gymnasium. They just called it high school.

Q. What high school did you go to?

A. I went to the only school which was in Kermanshah. The name of it was Shahpour, Shahpour High School. And for three years. . .

Q. The only high school in Kermanshah?

A. The only high school? It was a. . .I'm sure by now they have a lot more but that was adequate for that number of students because a lot of students after sixth grade education, they would drop out. Ninth, they would go further. But the high school, that was the only one.

Q. Did you have certain testing at the ninth grade?

A. It was a national at that time. The sixth grade was one testing, ninth grade was another testing and of course the twelfth year after the high school was another testing and after that, university.

Q. When did you think you were going to be a doctor?

A. When I was in high school, I had a strong feeling for science. I did quite well in national science and chemistry and physics and I thought I will try medicine. There was no college. We would walk to university from high school and I believe still the same situation exists.

Q. Do you have two extra years in high school?

A. No. Twelve years. After we finish high school, the only university at that time was the University of Tehran which was in the capitol.

Q. May I go back?

A. Of course.

Q. You have the same kind of twelve years that we have in our schools and then you have no college. Then if you excel in science. . . You see, you were tested earlier, but if you excel in science then it was natural for you to apply. . . So you have excelled in the twelfth grade into sciences and then you're examined and if you do well and want sciences you go into medical school.

A. Not quite like this. The college as we know here in the United States didn't exist at that time. People from high school, they would select the field that they like, either science, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry from right then, from high school. They would go to the university. There was no college, as we know it, two years or four. It didn't exist. University, for instance, the medical school was seven years.

Q. So they were all specialties.

A. They became MD's. They were not specialists, they became MD's. They would have entrance examination. Each one of the universities, the medical school and so forth and then the engineering school, the literature, the law school and so forth, they would have entrance examination and those students, that they had a good grade, have nothing to do with their high school grade. The entrance grade, then they will be accepted.

Q. Like a GPA?

A. Perhaps.

Q. You did have some arts, some liberal arts, the first two years.

A. In the university? No, just suddenly you are in the medical school. Seven years medical school. It was combined, the college and university together. For instance, the first year or two, they emphasize a great deal on chemistry, physiology, on a higher level than high school, then

home, eighteen years old, and away from parents and away from my family and in Tehran. I stayed for a couple of years and lived with my uncle which they had an apartment, and his family. Then after that I went to dormitory to university.

Q. Have you any highlights at that time in your life? What was going on politically in Iran?

A. Oh, it was quite, quite, not violent but quite dynamic at that time. This is the year I went to university, I went in 1948. A lot of things were happening. First of all, Iran from 1941 until 1946 was occupied by the British and the Soviet and the American troops and the politics, if you know it, was at that time was quite quite dynamic. In early '40's conference among the three major powers, Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, was held in Iran. As a young boy, I was always interested. Although there was a complete blackout during the conference. There was no television at that time. I don't even think they had TV in the United States but the radio. . .nothing, they did not give any information, not even newspaper, the newspaper was shut out. We didn't even receive a newspaper from Tehran to our city and that time. . .we knew. . .my father said there was something going on and we learned there was a conference with three major powers in Tehran and the day that they left, yes, it was announced there was a Tehran conference.

Q. It's really the antithesis of a free country isn't it?

A. Well, I think the country was not free. We were occupied at that time.

Q. But controlled by the Shah?

A. No really, the control was in the hands of the allies. We were under their control. The Shah was in power but I don't think anything could have been done under the British and the America, although the occupation was friendly, it was not like the occupation when the Germans, when they went to Poland or the Germans when they went to France or Belgium. The occupation was friendly and the Tehran conference as a gesture of good will with Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill signing a document, they promised the people of Iran and the Shah that they would leave the country at the end of the war.

Q. Peacefully.

A. Peacefully. It was not a forceful occupation. There was no resistance from the people. The people accepted that because they needed Iran for a movement of ammunition and supply for the Persian Gulf through Iran for the Soviet Union. It was the safest way. They couldn't supply the Soviet to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. They couldn't supply them through the Far East because of Japan, so the supply would come from the United States through Atlantic, South Africa, through the Indian Ocean, to the Persian Gulf and then we had a railroad and the convoy of trucks was non-stop. Non-stop from the Persian Gulf to the Soviet Union. To the border of Soviet Union.

Q. Persia is always Iran. Which do you call it?

A. Iran.

Q. They have always been under turmoil. Has there ever been a peaceful period?

A. Oh, yes. We've had to. . .The history is quite rich because the history is very old but anyone should divide it into two segments. Before invasion of Islam and after invasion of Islam. Prior to Islam which happened in the seventh century, Iran had their own culture, their own country, their own government, in fact. . .

Q. And that's why it was called Persia?

A. Always Iran. But in the eyes of the foreigner, we were called Persia.

Q. Why was that?

A. Because of the Iranian at one time had a Province of Pars. They called it Parsee. In English language, Persian, in the French the same thing. Always they called us Persian but for us it was always Iran so. . .it always was Iran. Before Islam, in seventh century Iran culture and Iran government, Iran advances quite remarkable. It was really quite remarkable and they were far superior than the culture that the Arab brought to the country. Of course Arab brought their culture and their religion and forced the people by force of Saud who converted the people to the new religion and they didn't change the language but they influenced the language quite a bit and changed the alphabets and a lot of the natives. . .at that time the Iranian fate was Zorastorian. The follower of Zoraster, but then they were forced to accept Islam. A lot of Zorastorians didn't accept that, they left the country. There was a mass migration from Iranians and they went to India and they still exist. The group in India still call themselves Parsee. A good example of a Parsee is Zubin Meta, the director of the New York Philharmonic. Zubin Meta . . .this group of people are known in India. . .of course they're Indian but then their ancestors migrated from Iran with their faith of the Zorastorian through here. . .

Q. What was that year? What was the time frame?

A. Seventh Century. So the second part of Iranian history is after the invasion of Islam. Here comes a new religion, a new order, a new everything and they had an animosity. They developed a tremendous animosity with the Iranian because really they were superior, without a doubt, in culture, in advance, in science, in everything. But of course they had to developed their own and from then on, the Iranian system of government, Iranian way of life, religion and everything changed. But they've always had a period of ups and downs.

Q. What period is it in now?

A. I think it is in a transition.

Q. What were your reasons for emigrating to the United States and what were your alternatives?

A. That's a good question. I finished medical school and at that time. . .

Q. When?

A. In 1956.

Q. They. . . our university was only interested in graduating the general practitioner. The opportunity to become a specialist, surgeon, orthopaedic surgeon, pediatrician and so forth was quite limited. They were limited and there were some positions available to become surgeons, some residency position but very very limited. The class I graduated from there were over two hundred of us and probably a good number of them went right into practice as a general practitioner throughout the country.

#### TAPE ONE: SIDE TWO

As far as specialty, a good number of them went into general practice, into their own town, to their own village, it was needed, it was opportunity. People needed a good physician and they were capable of providing this service. Very few positions were available as far as the residency was concerned and so therefore few people, I'd say thirty or forty of us, decided that opportunity would be available to go to the United States to obtain a residency and become specialists and hoping to go back as specialists. I was one of them. I decided. . .

Q. You wanted to further than the general practitioner?

A. Right. I didn't want to start general practice and wanted to be a specialist.

Q. Did you want to stay home? Would you have preferred to stay in Iran?

A. I would have stayed if there had been an opportunity but then the opportunity was not available to everybody. There were just a very limited number of residency positions available, so then my correspondence with some American Hospitals at that time there was no matching. As you know, now we have a 'matching program'. The American graduate from an American school, they don't have to correspond directly, although some of them do with the head of the department. They go outside of the matching, but the matching that made life very easy for them. They go through the matching and then they follow it. In those days, people would write directly to hospital and by coincidence there was a dynamic change in the United States, and as I look back and as I read. Suddenly the war was over, suddenly tremendous numbers of doctors were needed in the United States hospitals. The second World War, and then the Japanese War, the European War was over and the Korean War was ended. There was apparently a great deal of need for physicians in the hospitals, in the community hospitals and the American graduate from medical school, there were just not enough of them to fill the residency position. So there was a need on one hand for the foreign graduates that they wanted to come to the United States, only

many of them they came to the United States with the idea of staying, I don't know. I think everybody came with the idea that here is an opportunity to go to the United States to become a specialist and go back. At least this is the way that I felt, that, 'this is it!' I would go back, and the American hospital, they had a tremendous amount of places to be filled, so it was a flood of foreign graduates in the late '50's and early '60's that they came through the United States. But this movement has been changed, up and down. At one time they came here to become a specialist and at one time they came here for the opportunity of staying but every country had their own reason and their own need for instance very few people in this country came from England because they had their own system. Very few people here, that they came from Germany. Very few people in the United States that they came from France for their training but then from the Third World Countries, like Iran, like other Middle Eastern countries, like Philippine, like India, they were a large number that they came.

Q. So what brought you here? How did you matriculate?

A. Well I corresponded. There is a publication, JAMA, Journal of the American Medical Association which, I don't know what month it is, there are certain months that they. . . I don't know if they have it anymore because it's done by the matching program. Everything is done through matching. At any rate, they would have publish the name of each hospital, the number of Interns, the number of residents and so forth, their address and so forth and all the information. I corresponded with some fifteen, twenty of them and received a couple of responses and then I selected one in the city of Chicago by the name of Edgewater Hospital which is a Community Hospital. It still exists on the north side of Chicago.

Q. What did you do there?

A. Internship. The rotating internship.

Q. Was it an International Exchange type of thing?

A. Yes, this was strictly direct. Although this was under certain rules by the State Department, they did call them exchange students.

Q. And you were there for how long?

A. For one year.

Q. And then where did you go?

A. And then I spent another year in another local hospital in Chicago, Old St. Luke's Hospital which eventually they became part of St. Luke's Presbyterian, Rush Medical Center, and then after that I went to the University of Illinois.

Q. In Champaign?

A. No. In Chicago. The University of Illinois Medical School. . .you see the University of Illinois in Champaign, in Peoria, Rockford, they're all new. The University of Illinois had only one university, one medical school which was in Chicago and they had their own hospital which used to be called Abraham Lincoln School of Medicine, Abraham Lincoln Hospital. I was there at the time it was called Research and Educational Hospital. R & A. That was called the teaching hospital for the University of Illinois.

Q. How long were you there?

A. I was there two years. And then what did you do?

Q. Good question. I stayed around in Chicago, practiced for awhile.

Q. What field did you go into?

A. Anesthesia. Anesthesia. In 1966 I had a friend. He said that St. John's Hospital in Springfield was looking for an anesthesiologist. I visited them, called them, visited them. At that time, they had an anesthesiologist here, Dr. John Sheilds, that he came from Barnes Hospital in St. Louis and I joined him. There were two of us at St. John's Hospital.

Q. Were you a part of SIU?

A. SIU came after.

Q. I know. Did you move into the SIU complex?

A. Sure. SIU came to Springfield in '70's. The first student that we graduated from Medical School was not even a native of Illinois. They were from. . .as I recall, they were from North Dakota. There were a bunch of students, some twenty of them. Our first year of graduation was only twenty four students at SIU.

Q. When was that?

A. That was 1975. And then, I was here. I was in practice when Dean Moy. . .the school was started and Dean Moy came and became the Dean. Of course there was no school. They didn't even have a building of their own and slowly and gradually they grew and they have their own building, utilizing the two hospitals.

Q. Has your experience in the United States been consistent with your expectations? What were they, and if not, why not?

A. It has been. I have no disappointment in any formal shape. Perhaps I. . .opportunity came and I thought, 'what's the point of my going back to Iran? I could stay here. I have my family. I have children.

Q. When were you married?

A. I married in 1960.

Q. And how did you meet your wife?

A. Beryl was a nurse at Edgewater.

Q. And what is her maiden name?

A. HOBBS. She was a nurse from England. The hospital, they were in dire need of nurses and they had their add in the local nursing magazine in England. Every hospital had their add that they would pay their transportation and that they would give them a year contract and so forth and she came to Edgewater Hospital.

Q. What influences have you had in your life? And do you have any role models?

A. You mean who influenced your life? No particular people, no particular people. Obviously I was impressed with a lot of people that I work with. The internship was not a very pleasant experience because suddenly, totally, a new environment, new language, new country and you leave the airport. The next thing you are at the hospital and you are looking at the situation. At the beginning it was tough but then people, some people are kinder, some people are not so kind but then it somehow works it's way but then I got the relatively pleasant relation outside of the hospital, inside of the hospital and life goes on. I was always interested in politics, the environment that I lived. In Iran, I was always interested in politics, I knew what was going on as we were talking about the dynamics and the violence of Iran politics and then suddenly I come to the States and for awhile, there wasn't anything because I would watch TV and at that time. As I remember the convention, the party convention was going on and they had it on television and the Democratic Party. It was new and quite interesting to me. Here the party, the people gathering in a location and selecting a party nomination for political office for presidency. At that time Eisenhower was nominated for a second term and Stevenson, Adlai Stevenson was nominated for the second time from the Democratic, and I thought it was quite interesting. That was the first thing that I saw. Of course then in 1960 I watched and I followed the political process of party again, the two party process of selection of John F. Kennedy from the Democratic side. It was very exciting and Nixon from the Republican side, and I remember, I think this was learned later, that for the first time the two candidates had a debate. I think from then on it became a precedence. It was quite interesting to follow the democratic process in this country. It has a great deal of, not a direct effect, but a great deal of impression on me.

Q. What ever happened to the Shah? He came to California with an illness. What has happened since his death?

A. This was way later closer to the 80's. Because he was deposed in the 1979 and then after that. . .let me see, the first country he left, he went to Spain.

Q. Nobody would take him.

A. As you remember, that was the cause of the hostage during the Carter Administration because they let him come to the United States. He was quite ill and his friend, David Rockefeller, he was Chairman of the Chase Manhattan and he was quite ill and he had lymphoma and although it was under control, he was sick and then they let him come to the United States for treatment and after that he went to Panama. Carter made arrangements for him to go to Panama and he stayed there for awhile. But prior to this, the Shah would come to the United States maybe every year because sometime on an official trip he was invited by a President or he would come on his own on a vacation or a pleasure trip. He dealt with many of the Presidents of the United States. I think he dealt with Roosevelt. He was a young King when Roosevelt went to Tehran and then after Roosevelt, I don't know anything specific with dealing with the Truman Administration but I knew at that time there was some political upheaval in Iran, the Province of Iran, north of Iran, Ajerbaijan, occupied by the Soviets and the Soviets wouldn't leave and through the United Nations and the force of Truman how come the Soviet Union left that Province. At any rate, the Shah dealt with six or seven of the Presidents. He was close to Nixon, very close to Nixon. He dealt with Kennedy, he dealt with Nixon and then of course Nixon was rather short and the last President he dealt with was Carter.

Q. What was his reputation in Iran?

A. It depends on who you talk to. I think those people who benefit from him, from his regime, from his system, they were completely in love with him. They liked him very much.

Q. Lots of pomp and ceremony.

A. Very much so. So this was part of his makeup, although his family, this dynasty was not an old dynasty. He was only the second one. His father was a general and then he grabbed the power from the previous dynasty that they were in Iran for two hundred years and they were getting old and decrepit and corrupt and his father grabbed the power. He was a strong man. Reza Shah was his name.

Q. This was Pahlavi.

A. That Shah Pahlavi. Pahlavi is the name of the dynasty but the son's name, the second one, Mohammed Reza.

Q. What has happened to Saroya, his wife?

A. The Shah Mohammed resolved. . . the last Shah which we had, married three times. His first wife was a sister of King Farouk of Egypt. He married her quite young. It was a marriage, arranged by King Fouad, King Farouk's father and Reza Shah, and I think the British had a great deal of influence at that time in the Middle East. They wanted to see some friendship (chuckle) so probably I'm sort of ancient to know those things but I'm always interested in history. Always

interested in history. That marriage to the sister of King Farouk didn't last long and from that marriage they had a daughter and after a while the Shah became a sort of international playboy. He had to have a son for continuation of dynasty (chuckle) and he had only a daughter so that was not accepted by the constitution of Iran. So anyway, he married Saroya.

Q. She couldn't have children could she?

A. Well of course they married and then she couldn't have any children and then that ended up in divorce. Saroya was an interesting lady. Her father was from old old tribes people in Iran which had gone to Germany and had married a German girl, so Saroya was a mix of German and Iranian and that marriage lasted several years and she couldn't have any child, in fact she went to Mayo Clinic, she went to all the clinics in the United States, all the clinics in France, and Soviet Union, Moscow. She couldn't and then they ended up in divorce. Although the Shah really liked her a lot. Loved her. But then the third wife was an Iranian girl. Her name was Deba. She was a student in Paris. She was a lot younger and she was a student studying art in Paris and somebody from the Shah's family perhaps sister or somebody had seen her and they thought she would be a good candidate for the Shah to marry.

Q. Then they had three children?

A. I know for sure two boys and a girl, or maybe four, I'm not quite sure. At least three.

Q. How many are here in the country? It seems to me they are all here.

A. They're international because the Shah left them with a great deal of money and they move around quite a bit. They. . .well, their oldest son, which also by the way, his name is Reza. . .

Q. They thought he would go back to Iran .

A. I think he would like to but I don't think he would dare to.

Q. How would Iran feel about that?

A. The present regime? As soon as he got there they would arrest him. I don't think they would allow anything like that.

Q. He was groomed wasn't he?

A. Sure. He was sent to the United States and he became a pilot and he was educated in the United States.

Q. Have you returned to your homeland?

A. Twice.

Q. Only twice in all these years?

A. Twice in all this time. In 1965, that was after my father passed away and I went to see my mother and spent two or three weeks in Iran. At that time the Shah was in power and things were moving pretty much to his liking and things were pretty stable. The second time I went to Iran was just before the Revolution. We went to . . .the family, the whole family. Beryl and children. We took a trip in 1977 and we had a great time because that was the time that Iran was making a great deal of progress economically and people were doing quite well, but then underneath of all those content and happiness and also satisfaction, people were not happy. I think there were rumors and rumors of the religious people. They had a lot of influence in bazaar. Bazaar, the clergy and so forth that they, that the Shah was feeling the pressure and Khomeini at that time was in exile and was living in Baghdad.

Q. Didn't his son take over?

A. No, no. Khomeini was in exile at that time and he was creating an atmosphere of unrest and unhappiness.

Q. Whose in now?

A. Rafsanjani.

Q. Do they like him?

A. Well, it's hard to tell, because the country's under their control. The clergy, they're all over.

Q. Under whose control?

A. Under the Fundamentalist control. Until . . .When Khomeini was alive, everything was under his control. Although he did not have an official government position, he never became President or he never became Prime Minister or any official government position. He was far above that. He was the supreme religious power. Nothing moved without his knowledge or without his blessing.

Q. Now, Rafsanjani is not as bad?

A. Rafsanjani is younger. Things are different. The Revolution is done, the killing and all. Perhaps safer, but I don't think you can say it's a safe place because there is no protection of law. The people, they are at the mercy. . .I feel perhaps if they are walking in the street, and then there is. . .this is a revolution. After fifteen years, people are still walking the street calling themselves the 'Revolutionary Guard,' and the Revolutionary guard could do anything.

Q. So there is unrest?

A. It's . . .there is a type of unrest, but everything is quiet, everything is under control, nobody is making any opposition so . . .and the clergy all over the country, they have their say, they have their way of controlling everything.

Q. So there's still a tight control from the Khomenis?

A. Not the way it was under Khomeni because he was a hard liner. He was an old man and everything to him was 'this is it and so forth.' Rafsanjani's trying to give a little bit of 'healing' picture to it. A 'human face' to it, but as far as the background is being a clergy and they're not prepared for the twentieth century type of government, democracy and so forth. It will be kind of interesting because there's election going on in a year and Rafsanjani. . . his term will be over and he cannot be re-elected, so . . .

Q. Could there be an overthrow?

A. They will come to a term. Another clergy would take over.

Q. Now, what would happen if Reza's son were to go back in the event he could get enough power behind him? Would he be able to take control and get it back to the way it used to be?

A. I think it would be foolish to go back.

Q. Tell me about your children.

A. Well, my children. We have four. My oldest one is Susan. Susan is a graduate of the University of Illinois Medical School. she had a residency in family practice. She's in Chicago area. Our second child is Ellis. Ellis is a graduate of Northwestern University and finished Residency and Fellowship in otolaryngology and he's joining SIU School of Medicine. Denise. She also is a graduate of Milikin University and she's interested in art and she's in Chicago.

Q. She's plays the piano very well, doesn't she?

A. No, that's Susan. Susan is the pianist. I wish she had gone into Music and made it a major because she just loves it. And we have our youngest one, Rochelle. She went to Bradley University and she has a degree in psychology and she's in Chicago. Working in Chicago.

Q. Do they all speak Iranian?

A. No. I wish they had. I attempt to teach them several times but I failed because they felt it was pressure. Maybe my tactic was not there, or technique, rather, was not appealing.

Q. Perhaps you should have said "No, they may not learn Iranian and they would have all learned it!"

A. Yes. I tried it a couple of times. We had a little area where they'd sit down and then they felt, 'do I have to?', and then forget it. It would have been a good opportunity for them to learn a foreign language.

Q. Now I know you have partially retired?

A. Yes. I have been partially retired since '92.

Q. Have you been happy with your specialty in anesthesiology?

A. Yes.

Q. Very technical.

A. It's a combination of many things. Technique. Of course you have to have good hands and then in the mean time it's really a practice of medicine in a very fast pace. Instead of prescribing medication and saying, "Come back and see me in two weeks", you prescribe a medication and see the effect of it immediately so it's a dynamic speciality.

Q. So anesthesiology has changed a great deal in the time that you have been in medicine?

A. Oh, tremendous. The most important change that has occurred is the degree of management because the technology as improved a lot and so has monitoring added to the safety to the patient, added to the convenience of anesthesiology and it is not much of guess work. Prior to thirty years ago, for instance, a lot of time we would guess, 'well let's do this, let's do that' much more because you have a precise. . .

Q. Everything is monitored?

A. Everything is monitored.

Q. And is it on a computer to?

A. Yes, it's all computerized, but it's a different field now and it's making a great deal of progress towards surgery. I think the surgeons, they became bolder and bolder and more courageous to do bigger surgery, complicated surgery, simply because anesthesia is safer.

Q. Has there been a turning event in anesthesiology since you have been in the field?

A. Sure. I'm sure. The event of muscle relaxant, narcotic. New anesthesia agents. Those are some, but the most important advancement is the development of monitoring.

Q. Monitoring?

A. That's right. If one could put it in one word, it's the monitoring that is done.

Q. Well, I understand that you've always had the nickname 'Tom'. How do you feel about that?

A. Not very good (chuckle).

Q. Well, I would prefer Towfig. And I thank you very much Towfig.