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NARRATOR: ARTHUR BEDIAN

ARMENIAN COMMUNITY CENTER
GRANITE CITY, ILLINOIS

HISTORY 447

ERIC BRUDER: This is Eric Bruder interviewing Arthur Bedian November 18th, the year of 2001. This is in regards to the oral history project for History 447 at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

BRUDER: Good morning, Mr. Bedian.

ARTHUR BEDIAN: Good morning.

BRUDER: How are you?

BEDIAN: Good morning, Eric.

BRUDER: Well, thank you for gathering with me today. As we spoke earlier, this is specifically about Lincoln Place, but also not limited to Lincoln Place, --

BEDIAN: Right.

BRUDER: -- and anything that you want to add about being Armenian or anything about Armenia, feel free.

For my first question, I would like to ask you, where were you born?

BEDIAN: I was born in Granite City.

BRUDER: What was your birth date?

BEDIAN: August the 28th, 1922.

BRUDER: 1922?

BEDIAN: Right. Seventy-nine.

BRUDER: Seventy-nine. Did your father come over with Arthurs in 1910? Not with Arthurs. With Edwards?

BEDIAN: Edwards. Yes. Well, I don't know what year he came. I don't really remember exactly, but, yeah, he came from Armenia. They're Turkish Armenian actually.

BRUDER: What were the circumstances around his departure? Do you know about that?

BEDIAN: Well, they were ready to put him into the Turkish Army, which he did not want to get into, and somehow he escaped to Bulgaria and joined the Bulgarian Army. That's about the extent that I know of. Somehow he got away from them when the war was over and found his way

to America, came into New York, and my mother had a similar situation where she escaped from where she was and ended up in Ellis Island, and they just exchanged pictures, and when they met there, they just got married and that was it.

BRUDER: They met at Ellis Island?

BEDIAN: Yeah.

BRUDER: And so they're strangers in this strange land, and they wanted to do it together?

BEDIAN: Right.

BRUDER: Wow.

BEDIAN: And lived happily ever after for, my gosh, how many years. I don't remember how many years. Let's see. I guess it's been a good 60 years that they were married, and my dad passed away in 1973 and my mother died in 1976.

BRUDER: What did your dad do for work?

BEDIAN: He was a core maker at the Granite City Steel Commonwealth, it was called.

BRUDER: Did your mom work?

BEDIAN: No. I think she never did.

BRUDER: Do you think that was rare or was that common? Did the women in the Armenian community work or did they generally stay home?

BEDIAN: Well, my mother hardly had any education. She couldn't have done anything other than maybe housework or some labor of some sort. That's about it. She didn't know how to read and write, neither Armenian nor English. She never did. We just barely taught her how to sign her name in English and that was about it.

My father was self-taught. He taught himself how to read the daily newspaper. Of course, once in a while I would have to interpret it for him. You know how our headlines are. They'll say two, three words, and he'll say, "What is this? Do we have war?" or something, and I would have to translate it to him as to what it really meant. It just was brief words.

You can very well misinterpret what you're reading,

and for the Armenians, in his case, he just recognized certain words and that was it. The rest of it he had to fill in, so --

BRUDER: So is that how he kept in touch with events in Armenia? Was he interested in what was going on?

BEDIAN: Oh, no. He received an Armenian newspaper which was printed in Boston, and he subscribed to that for many, many years, and, boy, he looked forward to that. Of course, that was always old news compared to what he got daily here, but he didn't get the daily newspaper. He bought the Sunday paper only, but he would pick up the daily paper maybe at the Armenian Club, so the coffee house where all of the older folks gathered, the men folks, and he received his Armenian paper, which, like I said, in the beginning, it came out about three times a week, I believe, and later on, as the older Armenians would pass away, they had less of a prescription going out. They ended up cutting it back to twice a week, and I think right now it's once a week, and that was his Bible. Whatever that news he got out of there, why, he believed in it.

BRUDER: What was the name of that paper?

BEDIAN: Hairneik.

BRUDER: Hairneik?

BEDIAN: Armenia.

BRUDER: What's that mean?

BEDIAN: Well, that's the name of the country. Hairneik is Armenia.

BRUDER: Oh, okay.

BEDIAN: Yeah. So that was it. So whatever news he got out of there, why, they would go to this coffee shop and do their discussions and arguments over various articles that's in the paper and how they interpreted what was written and have some rough words with one another, but they enjoyed it.

BRUDER: Did he intend to stay here, or was it his plan to go back to Armenia?

BEDIAN: In his case, I -- you know, I've heard of many other instances where they thought they would come here and make a few dollars and go back, because they all thought that money was growing on trees here and they were going to go back, but I don't ever recall hearing my father wanting to go back, because, see, he was in Turkish Armenia and probably the section of Armenia where the Turks had taken over. In fact, they still have it to this day, and you may not believe it, but the younger generation is still fighting for it. The genocide, they're not admitting to the genocide that they brought about and killed many of our relatives. His brothers and one sister escaped. She came to America via Canada, and he spent some money paying her expenses until she got to America, but she met up with a person living in Troy, New York, and he ended up marrying her, and they stayed in Troy, New York. In fact, my first cousin lives there now with his family.

BRUDER: Well, how did your dad end up moving to the midwest?

BEDIAN: I don't know. I'll be honest with you.

BRUDER: It seems like the big community would be in New York, the Armenian community.

BEDIAN: Yeah. Right. Well, they are, and they're still there. It's either in the East Coast or the West Coast, and they're just sparsely populated in the midwest. I mean, we've got them -- like Detroit is loaded with -- I guess they've got more Armenians than anywhere else. Chicago is pretty good, but when you get down here to St. Louis, we've got very few. We're strong in what we do. We do a good job right here. You can see a big building like this with bingo money, but they're mainly out East. Quite a lot of them stayed there. They did very well for themselves. Those and the others, I don't know for what reason, they left. My father went to -- clear on to, oh, gees, where was it now where they had copper mines. What the hell state was that. Not Arizona, was that? Anyway, it was out west, and --

BRUDER: It might have been Arizona.

BEDIAN: He did some mining there, not very long, and there's a group of them that just traveled from one city to another until they just finally ended up right around in here and stayed here. Quite a lot of them stayed here.

BRUDER: And then word spread about the steel foundry?

BEDIAN: Evidently word got out. Well, this was called the Little Pittsburgh of the Midwest, and that's because there was about a half a dozen or so steel mills here and various farms, so they all got good jobs here, and, of course, the company enjoyed those guys because they worked for peanuts, and it was a tough job, core maker. Had those pneumatic hammers, you know, working in those -- they were building molds, and then they poured steel over the molds. I mean, they didn't do the whole thing. They put the proper sand in their sandbox and used a pneumatic hammer to pound it all in until it was all good and solid where it would withstand this high molten steel, and from there they would make the metal parts for boxcars. That was their livelihood, but they sweat like crazy. No air-conditioning, no nothing. They were just out in the foundry. I think the floor was dirt floor to start with anyway. I've only seen the plant once and -- probably twice at the most. I never worked there. I worked at a scientist's lab here in American Steel. They were making similar parts to boxcars.

BRUDER: Whereabouts did you guys live in Lincoln Place?

BEDIAN: Well, we were on -- let's see. I guess we had about three or four homes. We lived on Niedringhaus. We lived on Maple Street. We lived on Chestnut Street.

BRUDER: Why all the moves? Just moving up to bigger houses or --

BEDIAN: No. Not necessarily. Maybe they would run out of money and couldn't pay their rent and had to get a lower paying rent home, and one of them used to be a dry cleaners, and that was turned into like an apartment, like a two, three room apartment, and that's where they lived in there for a while.

We didn't live in there. That was in a later date. We had gotten married. Wife and I lived in Detroit for about five years, and then after that we came to Granite City and couldn't find a suitable home here, and then we ended up in St. Louis, and we had, oh, let's see, stayed in one home there for about 8 years and 29 years in the other home until we finally retired, and now we're in South St. Louis County in an apartment.

BRUDER: And what kind of memories do you have about growing up in Lincoln Place, school, church, friends?

BEDIAN: Well, we had a community center there, which is still there.

BRUDER: The same one?

BEDIAN: The same one. And right across the street from there is that coffee house I was telling you about. That's a rather large building which the ARF bought. That's the Armenian Revolutionary Federation.

BRUDER: It still is?

BEDIAN: Well, we sold that out, and they've got it turned into apartments right now. The whole building is apartment houses, apartment rooms in there, but the community center directly across from there is where we as kids practically lived in.

There was a lady there called Sophia Prather.

BRUDER: I've heard a lot about her.

BEDIAN: Yeah. She was a gem. Hard to live with, but, boy, it took that kind of a --

BRUDER: Tough love?

BEDIAN: Tough love is right. She was a gem. Without her, a lot of us would have been helter-skelter. Who knows where we'd be.

BRUDER: Well, your face just lights up when you think about her, doesn't it?

BEDIAN: Yeah. Oh, God, it's great. I remember one time, I don't know what the hell I did wrong, but she chased me. It's a rather large interior. There's a gymnasium there and shower room and restrooms for males and females, and I dashed in that male room where there was showers, and I ducked under the shower stall and thinking I am going to get away from her. She came right in there and found me with a strap. Boy, she strapped me a couple times. It didn't hurt or anything, but she was a good, strict gal, very good. In fact, she would hand out Bibles to grade school graduates. Grade school went to the sixth grade, I guess, or eighth grade, because the ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth would be the high school.

I still got that Bible. Yeah. And her name is written in there with a little note.

BRUDER: It means a lot, doesn't it?

BEDIAN: Yeah. And that's where a bunch of us learned to play basketball especially, and eventually we ended up on the high school basketball team, and Andrew Hagopian was one of them which I think you interviewed already.

BRUDER: No. I haven't interviewed Andrew.

BEDIAN: Or is that the one --

BRUDER: Somebody else I think is interviewing him. About the 1940 team?

BEDIAN: Yeah.

BRUDER: Yeah.

BEDIAN: I was on that squad, and I ended up with diphtheria, and, of course, I had to be taken off because you're off for several weeks. In those days, there was no medication that got you well overnight. In fact, they had to dry clean all the suits of the team, so it cost them a couple bucks.

BRUDER: So but for the fact that you got diphtheria, you would have been in Chicago with them playing?

BEDIAN: Yeah. Probably.

BRUDER: Wow.

BEDIAN: But as it turned out, why -- I mean, I was still part of the squad, --

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: -- and the squad, of course there's only ten that can go to Peoria, but the rest of us, we were still on the squad. I traveled with them to play basketball against Edwardsville, Collinsville, East St. Louis, Wood River and whoever else was -- Madison, those that were in the conference, but other than that, that was it.

BRUDER: When I was talking to Mr. and Mrs. Asadorian, Mrs. Asadorian related to me how there was always that wall, that barrier, that separated the Lincoln Place residents from upper Granite City.

BEDIAN: Yeah.

BRUDER: And she said after that 1940 championship season, --

BEDIAN: Things changed.

BRUDER: -- all of a sudden, things changed.

BEDIAN: Right.

BRUDER: How did you see different things changing? Did you notice that as well?

BEDIAN: Well, I didn't really notice it that bad, other than maybe through the newspapers. You know, they wrote about the fact that -- mentioned some of the names and would always refer to Lincoln Place. They stopped using "across the tracks" where -- that's what they would call those of us that lived across the tracks.

At one time that was called Hungry Hollow because the people there were not as well to do as those living on the other side of the railroad track, and from that, they got Lincoln Place, and, of course, the whole city was known as the Little Pittsburgh of the Midwest, but we started getting on the team and found out that -- well, because of Miss Prather, I personally give her all the credit. I'd give her 90 percent of the credit, because without that gymnasium being there, we would never have learned how to play, and there was no one there to teach us either. It was all on our own.

BRUDER: She didn't teach you how to play?

BEDIAN: No. No. Nobody there. She had an assistant, but a female assistant, but they all kept track of keeping the kids all under control. They had various groups organized, you know, little children, and these grades belong to this and one tier, and then we had a Sunday school that she had teachers from various schools come on Sundays to teach, and we thoroughly enjoyed that.

We went to Sunday school every Sunday, and that's all we had because we didn't have an Armenian church then.

BRUDER: So you went to church at the community

center?

BEDIAN: Well, just the Sunday school.

BRUDER: Sunday school?

BEDIAN: Right. We had a gymnasium, was as big as this, and every teacher, and based on the age of the students, would get into a corner or in the middle or something so that you didn't interrupt one another, and we loved it. What I learned about the Bible and the religion, I learned from them.

BRUDER: So that stuck?

BEDIAN: Yeah. We had church services possibly once a year, I'd say. I don't hardly remember. We'd bring in a priest from another city like maybe from Chicago and he would be there for us, and we'd keep him for a day or two and he'd be back to his home city where they paid his salary. We may have just given him a token gift for coming here and maybe paying for his transportation. I don't know. But we must have had some sort of a board of trustees that handled any church gatherings that we may have had.

We used a church in Lincoln Place that belonged to the Bulgarians or Macedonians. I don't know which it was. I think it was Bulgarian.

BRUDER: I think you're right.

BEDIAN: And the word was out that that was the very first Bulgarian church in America, and then we bought that from them, and subsequently I think the current board -- not the current board, but the subsequent board, I was on the board for about 20 some odd years myself, and I believe they just handed it to a group of people to be sure that they were the right kind of people because they didn't want to hurt the nice neighbors that we had that kept an eye on our church, and so we didn't want to put anyone we didn't know that they're decent people that could stay there and not make too much of a problem for the neighbors, and it turned out good that way.

BRUDER: As far as you know, it's still a church?

BEDIAN: Yeah. It is. I drove by there only one time, and they had a glass door, and we parked the car right up front. We didn't go in because services were being conducted at the time. Our church service starts at

10:00. So they must start at 9:00, I guess, maybe, 9:00, 9:30, but we just looked straight through, and you could see right through the glass doors, and you could see the priest right up front conducting services, so they were rolling right along.

BRUDER: So when the Armenians bought the church in 1954, you were on that board of trustees?

BEDIAN: Yes. I was on the original board of that church that we bought. There was a bunch of younger ones of us.

BRUDER: What was that like, to be on the ground floor, so to speak, of the Armenian church, the community, and you're on the board of trustees with this opportunity to serve? Mr. Asadorian spoke of his 18 years of service --

BEDIAN: Mm-hm.

BRUDER: -- with very fond memories, and also maybe some regrets about not being able to serve the community, their physical needs. What are your recollections of that time period?

BEDIAN: Well, let's see, if I'm not mistaken, we had seven members on the board, of which three or four of them were elderly members, old enough to be our parents, and the rest of us, which was four or five of us, were all in our late 20s, so we were anything they said goes. I mean, we didn't know religion. We didn't know Armenian religion. So whatever they said, we went right along with them.

Finally, when we got a priest, we did the same thing there. A priest would come in, and they said, "Well, this is the way the church is built," and they put a wall up front. A second priest came in, and he said, "Oh, that wall doesn't belong there." He said, "This is the way it's supposed to be." So we went right along with him. We didn't argue with any of them. Anything they said went. We figured that part is their job. The altar and running the church is their job, and the administrative portion was our job, and anything he wanted, we tried to get for him, and any piece of equipment we needed.

We had a church bulletin that we put out monthly, and all we had to do was put a notation in there that we're buying a reproducing machine and it costs this much money and anything you'd care to volunteer as a donation,

why, give it. Man, we got plenty of money, all the money. It was all paid for. No problem. But we had, God, I'd say a good half dozen priests within, let's see, 20 years or more, and each one would come in with a little change where they were taught, and this is what they recommended and this is what we did. We went along with them. We figured the last one we would get would be the correct way, and that's what we would do. Whatever we learned about religion, we learned from each one of them as they came, and any time some religious day would come up and we'd start preparing for it and there would be something different, we'd say, "Whoa, the last priest we had, he did it this way." He'd say, "Oh, that was wrong. This is the way you do it." So we went along with them. Didn't rock the boat. As we went on, we learned.

BRUDER: One other thing I wanted to ask you was, as the church was a fixture in that community for so many years, how did you feel when Sundays would come? You know, I'm sure you worked hard during the week. Sunday was your day of worship. It was also the day of rest. What was that like, a typical Sunday for you?

BEDIAN: Well, in our case, my family's case, my folks lived right behind the church. This is in Lincoln Place. And my mother used to make that flat bread that they would cut up into small pieces, and it would be blessed and handed out to the parishioners as they left. My father was the deacon all those years, and so they both served the church all the years that I could remember. She'd come and help clean the church and everything else.

And we lived right off of 270, and it was a piece of cake for us to get on the highway and come down here. So we had two children, a girl and a boy, and every Sunday morning we'd have pancakes. I'd pull the car out of the garage, onto the driveway. We'd all get dressed, walk right into the car, to the church. I never, in all those years, had to tell either one of them, "We're going to church today."

BRUDER: They just knew?

BEDIAN: They just knew. That was it. And then we had other couples who didn't have that same situation. They lived right here all in Granite City. The majority of them were right here in Granite City. We had very few in St. Louis, and they didn't come every Sunday. They'd come like once a month, twice a month, once a year, Easter and Christmas maybe, but we welcomed them whenever they could come.

BRUDER: Sure.

BEDIAN: But then we were here every Sunday. We still are. The wife and I still come. My son and his wife and family, they live in Chicago, and my son isn't as dedicated as we were. He's got a family of three kids and a wife, and they go to church there I'm guessing probably more like once a month.

My daughter, she's turned into a Catholic for whatever reason, but then the wife and I are here. Out of the 52 Sundays, if you take away the two Sundays we are on vacation, because we either entertain our sister who lives in New Jersey and her husband or we're there. Every other year we exchange. So out of the 50 Sundays that's left, if either of us gets sick, once or twice a year, that's all we miss. We're here every single Sunday, and we live about the furthest than all of them. It's an 80-mile trip for us going and coming, especially since they closed McKinley Bridge. It used to be about 25 miles. So now we've added on another 15 miles to that. And the bridge isn't going to be ready for another four years or longer.

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: Longer than that probably. So that's it. And the wife and I used to be on the church bulletin, which we put out once a month, and we ran that like a newspaper. It just had to be out the first week of each month, and Eddie Asadorian and I were more or less co-editors, and the priest was the overseer, and we had reporters from each church organization like the choir and the Ladies' Guild and Mr. and Mrs. Club, and we'd take all their reports, and then we'd have the board of trustee reporter submit something, and then the priest would write something in there, so we ended up with a pretty good bulletin. In fact, other cities kind of like copied ours. We used to send a copy to every church, and then we worked on that until the wee hours of the morning, sometimes 1:00, 2:00, 3:00 in the morning. I would help interpret. We wrote this bulletin up, Eric, in Armenian and English, and whichever of us wrote the editorial portion or even the board of trustee portion in English, we would sit with the priest and interpret it for him in Armenian. Those of us who knew fluent Armenian would help out, so that his portion would be pretty much identical to ours. You could take the two and check them out against one another and they'd read identical. So, anyway, that was the bulletin.

BRUDER: So through that bulletin, you also kept in

touch with other Armenian churches throughout the United States?

BEDIAN: Yeah, by sending them a copy of ours.

BRUDER: And did you get copies of theirs?

BEDIAN: Yeah. Eventually, we used to get copies, several copies from them. Right now, I think Detroit has about the best one that I have seen. In fact, I subscribe to theirs, and they put out a beautiful bulletin.

BRUDER: It kind of reinforces that sense of Armenian community, huh?

BEDIAN: Yeah. Oh, very definitely. You know how people like to see their names.

BRUDER: And their language.

BEDIAN: Yeah. And any time you can put their name in the bulletin for whatever reason, whether it's a donation or prayers for someone or Requiem service, list those all in there by date, from who and for who and the amount of money that they gave. Now I think they eliminate the amount of money. They just don't think that has any bearing on the bulletin, but it doesn't come out anywhere near like the good ol' days, you might say. I mean, we had dedicated people like Eddie Asadorian and myself and my wife. My wife did all the typing. It was on stencils. Do you remember stencils? And I did the proofreading. She'd correct it, and we'd take that and we had somebody that used to run the duplicating machine for us, and then eventually he dropped out, and between Eddie and I, we would run it. It's a little messy job, if you remember how you get that ink and you had to put that damn thing right on there just right, put your finger on there and get all the bubbles out of it and make sure it's right on that cylinder properly, and we'd run off the number of copies we knew we needed and then a few extras, but we ran it like a newspaper, and then as we got all the pages completed, we would stack them up on the long tables and we'd invite two or three couples who belonged to the Mr. and Mrs. Club, and, you know, everybody didn't accept our invitation, but those who would come in, just with the staff that was there, which would be Eddie and his wife and my wife and I and two or three others, we'd have about a dozen of us, and we'd just walk right around that table, pick up one copy each, put it in properly and stack them up, and then we'd have somebody do the stapling and the

addressing, and we had a system going there.

BRUDER: Very systematic.

BEDIAN: And then stack them up into Zip codes, because the post office wouldn't give you a cheap rate unless you helped them out. And we'd have to weigh them, so we'd put the weight on it, bind them up, and the priest would take it on in, and then we used to leave a cash balance with the post office so that the postage would take care of it, and then when they would run low, the priest would come back at one of our next meetings and say, "We're down to about five or ten dollars, we need some more money to replenish it so that we can get some more bulletins out," and that's what we did. Now we get about, I don't know, three or four a year, bulletins. We just don't have the dedicated staff members that we had in our days.

BRUDER: Well, what's different about this generation of people that go to the church in your opinion?

BEDIAN: I don't really know.

BRUDER: It's your sons and daughters, man.

BEDIAN: It's a different breed. I think if my son and daughter were here, they would be more like myself, but I can't speak for the others.

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: Because I know my son is dedicated, because in Chicago they got him in most everything.

BRUDER: He serves where he's at?

BEDIAN: Yeah. So if you wouldn't be that dedicated, why, he wouldn't be there. Heck, I could get him on the phone, and if we got a lengthy discussion, he has to interrupt two, three -- he's got call waiting fortunately, so he'll either tell them he'll call them back in a few minutes or he'll tell me, "Dad, I got a hot call, I'll call you back sometime, I'll call you tomorrow," if he knows it's going to be lengthy, and we visit him and sometimes he's in the other room for an hour, hour and a half just on the phone. So he's pretty busy.

And I know my daughter is that type, too. She

hasn't gotten into anything like this, but she's very good at it. She's helped them out considerably. She was with KSDK community relations. She was a director of community relations and wanted to help them out here on the printing and the setting up of certain circulars that they want to put out. I don't know what the hell to say, whether it's just jealous or what the hell it is, but they just didn't give her too much to do, which she could have been very helpful, so they kind of cooled her off, and that's one reason why I think she just left them.

BRUDER: Well, what are your childrens' names? Go ahead.

BEDIAN: Lisa.

BRUDER: How old is she?

BEDIAN: She is 41.

BRUDER: Forty-one?

BEDIAN: Yeah. She's 41.

BRUDER: And your son?

BEDIAN: And he's 37, I guess. He's four years younger.

BRUDER: And they have kids?

BEDIAN: No.

BRUDER: No kids? No grandchildren yet?

BEDIAN: My daughter is not married. She's going steady.

BRUDER: Oh, okay.

BEDIAN: But he's got three children. They'll be here for Thanksgiving.

BRUDER: So you haven't got to spoil any grandkids yet?

BEDIAN: No. I don't consider them really spoiled, because my wife and I don't believe in that spoiling. I figure if they had only one, that happens automatically, --

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: -- there's no way of getting around it.

BRUDER: That's just so much attention.

BEDIAN: But when you've got three --

BRUDER: Yeah.

BEDIAN: Yeah. Because everything you've got, you give to that one, --

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: -- and you can't help but do it, but when you've got three or four, it's different. You do something for one, you got to do it for all of them, so you got to be careful what you do. Like myself, for their birthdays and Christmas, I know they're going to need plenty of money when they start going to college, so I just buy them each a U.S. savings bond and give that to them. I know that they're not jumping with joy when they receive it at this age, because they're five, seven and nine now, --

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: -- but I started off as soon as they were born, so the nine year old one has nine years of U.S. savings bonds, and I asked both the parents if they wanted me to continue that or just give them bigger and better gifts, and they said, "No, continue that," but we still get them gifts anyway beside that, you know, for Christmas and their birthdays, beings that we don't see them that often.

When they come, we just give them some cash and take them out to their favorite fast food joints, White Castle. They love White Castle.

BRUDER: Yeah. Who doesn't. So you're looking forward to the holidays?

BEDIAN: Yeah. Yeah.

BRUDER: So when you get around that table, do you guys start recollecting about the memories of what it was like to live in --

BEDIAN: Well, as they get older, they're wanting to know more about our background.

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: More about grandma and grandpa, how did they meet, how did they do this, the same as you're asking, you know.

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: And unfortunately, I admit it, I'm very guilty, but when you're born and you're five, six, seven, eight years old, ten or fifteen years old, you figure you're here on this earth to stay forever and you don't think about asking them where did they come from, what did you do, and I feel bad that we don't have more information about them.

Like my mother, she tells me she had to swim across some channel somewhere in Asia where the British people were, the soldiers were, you know. They used to be all over. They used to own a lot of land, which they eventually gave to the people, but she was saved by the British, but I know very little about it, but there's a lot we should have really learned about them and put it down in writing and have something to pass on to our children. We don't have it. I've got their certificates, citizenships, documents and all, made copies of them for each of the kids, and I've got the originals, which they can fight over later on, but they've each got copies of it now, and I've already written an Armenian dictionary, which I got the English word, then the Armenian word in the Armenian language, and then the phonetic, and as far as I'll put down an English word, and there's two or three Armenian words that mean the same as, so the first time I wrote the dictionary, I wrote from one to five words because I used three Armenian dictionaries to make this up from, and I laid them all out, and I picked up -- I didn't pick out all the words in an English Webster. I did common words.

BRUDER: How lengthy did it turn out to be?

BEDIAN: Oh, my first binder is about that (Indicating) thick, and then our archbishop saw that, and he says, "Do me a favor," he says, "Cut it down to like two words at the most, two Armenian words that mean the same as the English word," and that took me 18 months to do.

Now, I don't know how many years it took me to do

the original, because I wasn't shooting for anything. I just wanted to do it and I did it. And in fact, I've got one right there in the trunk of my car. If you've got the time, I'll show it to you.

BRUDER: Gladly.

BEDIAN: And I tried to get it in print, and a close friend of mine in Boston, who is in the printing and publishing and book writing business himself, says, "Art, I wouldn't make an attempt." He said, "It's so expensive, you wouldn't believe it, and you wouldn't make a penny out of it if you're trying to make money," and I wasn't really, but other people from out of town and here said that if you ever do get it printed somehow, they'd like to buy a copy.

I went to a printing office right near where I live in St. Louis, and I was fortunate enough to run into somebody who ran them for me very cheaply. He put it in a binder of about that (indicating) big and about that thick, and it really looks nice. You'll see it. It's in my trunk. And I don't know how many I ran of those, about maybe ten of them, and I passed them around, gave one to each of my kids, and both my sisters. The one sister reads Armenian a little bit. The other doesn't read at all. The youngest one doesn't. And then I went to Kinko's, got them to do a copy for me, and they charged me -- God, I can't remember if it was 17 dollars or what.

[Tape ended.]

BEDIAN: -- and history and things like that, and he's eating it up like crazy. He just doesn't get enough of that. And I showed him my dictionary, and he says, "Can I borrow it?" He says, "I got a reproducing machine at home."

BRUDER: So you were saying he reproduced it by hand?

BEDIAN: Yeah. He did a few, and then I says, "Well, would you like a copy of this?" And I said, "I can take it to Kinko's and get it done." He says, "If you don't mind." So I took it, and I told him what it was going to cost, so I got him a copy. So he's got one of those, but it's just prohibitive to try to run one of those and try to sell it and still make a couple of dollar profit even from it, because we've got Armenian book stores in California and Boston that other people have written dictionaries with. Some of them are

Armenian-English and others are just English to Armenian. Now, if you can't read Armenian, what good is it for you? You're not going to make heads or tails.

Now, I can give you this dictionary; if you want to know how to say table in Armenian, you just go right over to the t's and find the word table, and you'll find it, and you'll be able to -- well, you'll have a rough time with some of the words, because you have to put two letters together with the English alphabet to pronounce a certain letter of the Armenian, like we've got a (Indicating). You're going to need a t and an s to make the s-t-s sound, where we've got one letter that is a-s-t. See, we've got 39 letters in our alphabet. The English is, what, 27?

BRUDER: Six. Yeah.

BEDIAN: Twenty-six?

BRUDER: Mm-hm.

BEDIAN: And so each of those letters evidently help out, and there's no sound alike words in the Armenian language. If I am conversing with you in Armenian, you know exactly what I'm talking about no matter what word I use, but if you're an Armenian and I am talking to you in English, for the word seal, it's s-e-a-l and there's a c-e-i-l for like ceiling, but I've got a bunch of words written at home, I wish I would have brought it with me, --

BRUDER: No. It's a good example.

BEDIAN: -- but there are certain words that sound identical but spelled different.

BRUDER: And completely different meanings.

BEDIAN: Complete different meaning.

BRUDER: They say English is the hardest language to master for that reason.

BEDIAN: Yeah. But in Armenian, you give me these words and I can give you one word for each one of these and you know exactly what I am saying.

BRUDER: Well, it's obvious you place a very high value on the Armenian language. How have you seen that played out in church? Because I was talking to Father

Vartan, and he joked with Miss Asadorian that he got permission from the Catholicos to do the entire service in English, and she went through the roof, and she said it was very important that they maintain the Armenian language in the service. What do you think about that?

BEDIAN: For those of us at our age, my age, of course I'm 79, and we've got -- well, there aren't many of us left anyway in the church that are our age, those that come, I say. There's others that are, but those of us in my age, we want the Armenian kept. I personally do. Even though I don't understand what the hell is going on and I have been going to church since 1954 and you're talking about almost 50 years now, I've learned something, but I couldn't explain the prayer book to you now if I opened it up. No way. I just can't do it.

And I've got a prayer book which is only in Armenian words and Armenian letters, and on the opposite side of the page is the English words. Now, I couldn't hand that to you and say, "Here, Eric, we're on this page, now you follow it." You couldn't follow it because you wouldn't know where we're at. There's no phonetics in there. Now, we've got books over there where the phonetics are there, and what I did is I took a copy of that book home one day and just turned each page one at a time. I used my original prayer book, which I got in 1954, and I copied the page number of the books that they're using in there so that when anybody was to walk in 10 or 15 or 20 minutes late, I could always tell them what page they're on, and I find that that's a big help to them. I've got two prayer books like that. I gave my original book to my wife, and Der Vartan, he gave me his with a cover on the outer edge, the portion that wears out a lot, you know, right on the very edge of the book, the back end, I'm talking about, and so I redid the whole same thing in that book, put all the page numbers in there, so anyone coming in, I can tell them just where they're at and they can open it up and follow; otherwise, you'll find people, they're flipping back and forth until they can hopefully find where they're at. And so that in itself helps. I don't know if that's what you were going to ask me about our church, but no one has taken an interest in my dictionary, and I would think that that would be very beneficial to practically everybody in there, even if they took that dictionary home and left it at home and just used it at home. You don't want to use that in the church. It's not beneficial other than if you ran across a word you heard in church services and you want to look it up and go over to the priest afterwards during coffee hour and say, "Hey, I've got a word I want to discuss with

you."

Now, the other thing you started to ask about is the Armenian and English in our church. You weren't there soon enough, but we had some people here from Baku. I think they came from Baku.

BRUDER: What is Baku?

BEDIAN: I think that's the capital of Azerbaijan.

BRUDER: Okay.

BEDIAN: And we've got a lot of Armenian -- well, of course, the poor Armenians, they're all over Southeast Asia, you know, because during the genocide, they all fled, and as far as they could run or go, why, that's what they did. So they're loaded in Iran and Iraq, Saudi Arabia, any of those countries there that's deep in oil, and poor Armenia is right in the middle of them. The only Christian nation in the world, right in the middle of them, not a drop of oil. Could you believe that? And this is why we're having trouble with the U.S. Government right now. Azerbaijan won't allow oil to -- they won't open the gates, pipeline, for oil to trickle into Armenia, so several years back, they had to cut practically all the trees in Armenia for firewood because they would not allow oil to come in there.

BRUDER: Do you think that's a religious thing since the Azerbaijan is mostly a Muslim country?

BEDIAN: Yeah. Oh, definitely.

BRUDER: So it was Muslims taking it out on the only Christian state?

BEDIAN: Right.

BRUDER: Perhaps --

BEDIAN: Right.

BRUDER: -- that was the motivation.

BEDIAN: Well, they're trying to do away with us. Right now, we've got -- in Azerbaijan, there's a piece of land in there, it's a country called Nagorno-Karabakh. I don't know if the priest went over that with you.

BRUDER: No.

BEDIAN: Ninety percent of the population in there are Armenians, and at one time that was part of Armenia, which is not too far from there, the country of Armenia. That was given to Armenia as being part of Armenia, and Stalin wakes up the following morning and finds out that that's the way the committee had voted, whatever committee that was which took in several countries, and they decided that belongs to Armenia, and he just says, "No, it doesn't, it belongs to Azerbaijan," just like that, and, of course, he was the head of the communist country there, and that's the way it was, so it belonged to them.

And right now, well, lately, in the last several years, they've been having a war there, and little ol' Nagorno-Karabakh, which is just a dot in the country, they have battled against the whole country of Azerbaijan. In fact, they've even taken over several of their cities, which they won't give up until they have peace there, but they stopped warring for I'd say about two years now, but they're ready to declare war on us again, I guess, as soon as they get enough ammunition and the proper piece of equipment they need to start another war. It's a shame, but that's how it is, constantly at war. And Armenia can't do much. Whatever they can do, they do for them, of course, because they're the first independent nation that broke away from Soviet Union when the Soviet started crumbling. There were 17 of those type of countries under the Soviet rule like Uzbekistan.

BRUDER: Georgia?

BEDIAN: Yeah. Georgia, and all of that, but there were 17 of them, and they're all free now of being Soviet Union.

BRUDER: Or trying to be?

BEDIAN: Yeah. Trying to.

BRUDER: Chechnya?

BEDIAN: Still have a lot to say about how they run their country, but then you've heard of countries that you've never heard of, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and, God, they're all Muslims, you know, and why the hell did they ever pick on those countries? Why didn't they let them alone? You know, they're not your type. The Russians aren't.

BRUDER: Religious at all?

BEDIAN: Well, they are. The communists.

BRUDER: Not the communists. Right.

BEDIAN: But Russia itself is, because they're an orthodox country, and they still got services going on now, --

BRUDER: Sure.

BEDIAN: -- so --

BRUDER: Yeah. I didn't mean to imply religion wasn't in Russia; it just wasn't an official part of the State.

BEDIAN: Right. Not at that time. Right.

BRUDER: Right. Well, I guess the thing is, is that there never will be peace, in my opinion, until that last day, you know, when everything is made right by the ultimate peacemaker, and he's not going to come bringing peace either.

BEDIAN: No. Look at Afghanistan. They've been at war from year one, and even though the Taliban is practically out of there and already the Northern Alliance is fighting amongst themselves as to who's going to rule there, so it's never going to come to any peace, and poor America is trying to have peace there, but they can't even show their faces. The Northern Alliance soldiers, I think they showed it on TV that they're hitting them with their rifles to stop taking pictures of them, because if they're recognized by the Taliban or anyone else, they'll go kill their relatives, and they don't want the two to be connected in any way.

BRUDER: Well, I spoke with Mr. Asadorian about this. How has the Bible helped to shape your world view about even things that we're talking about now, war, rumors of war, and just basic human nature, you know? I'll just tell you I believe that men and women are not inherently good. The Bible tells me that we all have a sin nature that we war against. You highly value the Armenian language, translated it, or not translated, but incorporated that into a dictionary.

BEDIAN: Right.

BRUDER: Did you use the Bible for any of that?

BEDIAN: No.

BRUDER: No?

BEDIAN: I'm not close to the Bible at all, Eric. As often as I've tried to read the Bible, I'll go through a few chapters and all, and all of a sudden I just leave it like this (Indicating). When this priest came, he had us started through his weekly bulletin to, "Let's read this chapter and this chapter and this chapter," and I started it, and no one followed up on it as to, "What did you derive from this?" or, "Let's talk about it," or anything. We didn't do that. So I kind of dropped it. So I admit I'm very, very poor at being close to the Bible, and I've got about two or three of them at home.

BRUDER: Mm-hm. Do you believe that that is the inspired word of God?

BEDIAN: Oh, definitely. Definitely. Yeah.

BRUDER: Yeah, because that would have to be the basis or the foundation for the establishment of the Armenian church, so I was kind of interested in that, and that's not uncommon, you know, for whatever reason. The Bible has been painted in I guess almost uninterpretable clouds, but it sounds from you like denominations aren't that important.

BEDIAN: No.

BRUDER: You say your daughter turned Catholic, but you see that under the umbrella of orthodoxy; do you not?

BEDIAN: Oh, yeah. Well, when we first got married, the wife and I, we got married at the age of 20, we're going to have our 60th anniversary next year, --

BRUDER: Congratulations.

BEDIAN: -- next October. Thank you. And we didn't have a church --

BRUDER: You said October?

BEDIAN: Yeah.

BRUDER: October what?

BEDIAN: 18th.

BRUDER: That is my wedding date.

BEDIAN: You're kidding.

BRUDER: No. October 18th, 1998.

BEDIAN: No kidding.

BRUDER: That's a very good day.

BEDIAN: '98. Hey, it's the best month of the year. I'll take October twelve months of the year.

BRUDER: Yeah. It is nice. I didn't mean to interrupt you.

BEDIAN: Yeah. No. That's all right. I was going to say, when we first got married, she was a Catholic and brought up as a Catholic, a very strong Catholic, and when we came here to live in Granite City, --

BRUDER: What's your wife's name?

BEDIAN: -- Mary --

BRUDER: Mary?

BEDIAN: -- we couldn't find a home here to our liking, and we ended up in St. Louis, but in any event, this was still our home as far as church and the community was concerned, and we didn't have a church, and so when we finally -- and I told her that after we get married, we don't have a church, and I always had great respect for the Catholics, only because of they're more exposed and they just seem very strict. Like our friends, they were not permitted to do any cussing and all that kind of -- go to church every Sunday and whatever, but, anyway, I said if we get married and we have children and we don't have a church, we'll raise them as Catholics, but before we had any children, it took us 13 years to have our first child, and we in fact put in adoption papers, and I'm one of those cases where just as we were getting ready to adopt one, she became pregnant. She kind of relaxed, I guess, and it happened, and so four years later we filed it again and we got our son, but then we had our church, and my daughter was baptized in Detroit Armenian Church, same as what we've got here, and our son was baptized here, and

so, anyway, she accepted our religion and gave up the Catholic religion, and to this day she's been a strong member of our church and got a finger in everything, still belongs to the Ladies' Guild, and we've also got the Armenian Relief Society here.

BRUDER: What is that? What does that do?

BEDIAN: That helps out the needy people.

BRUDER: Back in Armenia or here?

BEDIAN: Mostly here now.

BRUDER: Was that in Lincoln Place, too?

BEDIAN: Yes.

BRUDER: A relief society?

BEDIAN: Yes. It started there in Lincoln Place.

BRUDER: And what was its goals and aims?

BEDIAN: Well, at that time, mostly it was to help out people overseas. In fact, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, which sounds like a revolutionary outfit, but that was the only name they could find back when they were really fighting, and that's the name that stuck with them, in fact, when I used to belong to any organization, you ever got into the service, you know, they had to check up on my background because they asked you these questions, what did you belong to, and I had to put the ARF, which was the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, and they checked me out on that, so they found out that we were on the right side, fighting the communists and all of that.

BRUDER: But that was kind of an arm of the church, right?

BEDIAN: Pardon?

BRUDER: That was an arm or support of the church?

BEDIAN: Arm or supported the church, yeah. We supported the church. Without -- actually, in my opinion, without us, the church would not have been as strong as it is today in the beginning, but now they don't need us because they're on their own two legs. They're strong enough now, so -- and let's see. Where were we? What

were we talking about?

BRUDER: Well, what I was trying to get back to was how the church was able to minister to different people, because we were talking about the Bible and then we got off on the offshoot. If I could, I'd like to bring us back to Lincoln Place and talk about some relationships that developed in and around the church and also your friends that weren't church and what was the difference there, because it appears to me that -- correct me if I am wrong -- your mother and your father were both religious people. You said your father was a deacon. Did you have friends that didn't go to church or was that the limitation of your social --

BEDIAN: Oh, I guess we had -- I wouldn't call them close friends, but they were associates. We played together as kids, and I know of a few families where they didn't come to church, but we didn't try to force them to come or anything.

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: You hardly can force anyone. I've got a guy I grew up with right here in Lincoln Place and went to service with him, we weren't in the same outfit or anything, he went to India and I went to Australia, so you can see there's -- thousands of miles apart.

BRUDER: You served in World War II?

BEDIAN: Yeah.

BRUDER: Thank you. Thank you very much.

BEDIAN: Yeah. I was in the Army Air Force. I ended up in New Guinea and the Philippine Isles, and just before we were heading for Japan, why, Harry dropped the bomb and saved us all.

BRUDER: Is there anything you want to tell me about those years?

BEDIAN: Oh, we were a support outfit, so I wasn't into any fighting. We had to dodge some submarines and things in going from one island to another, but even going to Australia, it took us I think 17 days just to get to Australia, which you could probably do in much less time than that, and --

BRUDER: You had to dodge the German subs?

BEDIAN: No. It was the Japanese.

BRUDER: Japanese subs?

BEDIAN: Yeah. We were in the Pacific theater. All the three years that I spent in the service was over out there. I was in the States for I think something like six weeks, and all of a sudden we got a wire that says they need six of us, and, you know, you check with each other while you're on the train or the plane as to what's your M/O, or what do you do in service, and all of us were different. There was no tie-ins. And actually, when we landed at Jefferson Barracks, we were in South Carolina and came into Jefferson Barracks, and they didn't even come to meet us there. We had to call up and they finally came after us, and we didn't even know what the hell we were here for. Crazy. But, anyway, from here we went to California and then got on the boat and away we went, and that was it, went to Australia for about another six weeks, I guess, three weeks, or whatever that was, and then from there we went straight into New Guinea. That was a hell hole. And then from there we went to the Philippine Island, went to Manila.

Some guy had to go back to Australia for rehab, came back with a couple of puppies, gave one to me and one to the staff, to the mess sergeant. The mess sergeant says, "Hey, Art, why don't you take care of the puppies and I'll get you all the fresh food that comes in," and I said, "That's a good deal." So that's what we did. They were Pomeranians. My cousin was in the Navy. We were corresponding, and he came up and asked me if I had anything that I wanted to take back to America, and I says, "Well, I've got a dog here, but," I says, "you wouldn't take him, would you?" He says, "Yeah." He says, "Bring me a bottle of rum and the dog and I'll take it for you." So I took it to the ship in my Jeep. When I got there, I started walking up to the gang plank, and the sailor stopped me and says, "You know, we're about ready to shove off." He says, "You'll be AWOL maybe if you're looking for somebody." I said, "Well, I'm looking for" -- his name was the same as mine, except he spelled his B-a-d-i-a-n like the Armenians pronounce it. It's really Bedian.

BRUDER: Bedian?

BEDIAN: Yeah, but you could really say B-e-d-y-a-n would sound more like the Armenian name than B-e-d-i-a-n.

They don't know how to pronounce it. It's the simplest Armenian name there is, as you found out from Asadorian and Hagopian and Manoogian and all those names.

So I went back off, and I told him who I'm looking for, and he says, "Oh, yeah, he does our movies for us." He's an electrician, so they gave him a side job. So he says, "We'll throw a rope down for you." He says, "Tie that bottle of rum up and we'll hoist it up and then we'll throw the rope back down and let you send the dog up." So I kissed the rum goodbye. I figured that's the end of that, but fortunately they did throw the rope back down and I tied him under his arms, and he's dangling and going up like this (Indicating). My God, he built a box for him and shipped it off to my wife. They lived in a city called Melvindale. They made the front page news.

BRUDER: Isn't that something.

BEDIAN: Yeah. "Sergeant sends wife dog," or some effect like that.

But I was going to say, if they used my dictionary, had copies of it even in a church, we've got so many intermarriages now there, because we couldn't even operate the church without the non-Armenian speaker, because the whole staff of our Sunday school, I think the whole staff is all non-Armenian, so you could see where we wouldn't have a Sunday school class if it weren't for them.

BRUDER: And then I would think at that point, while it's about an Armenian church, --

BEDIAN: Right.

BRUDER: -- it's not really about Armenia anymore?

BEDIAN: No. No. They're trying to get religion across, but then you'd have to know the Armenian word, and here are these non-Armenians. How are they going to help out the kids if a child is smart enough to say, "Hey, how do you say that in Armenian?"

BRUDER: They need a dictionary.

BEDIAN: Yeah. Need something there, and if there was a dictionary like I got, they could look it up real quick and say, "Oh, here's how you say it," and write it up on the chalkboard and write the phonetic. You don't have to write the Armenian, since they don't even know how to read and write. They make an attempt to teach both here, Sunday school and Armenian school, but it's

difficult. If you don't have enough guys like myself who could teach it and knows it, both Armenian and English, you're not going to do it, but, you know, you don't have enough of us around, but this is how they could use that dictionary. I should call it really a phonetic dictionary is what it is.

BRUDER: Well, is it an actual school? Is it affiliated with St. Gregory's Church, or is it just a Sunday school, what you're talking about?

BEDIAN: No. It's affiliated. They come into church the first half hour, and then they all quietly leave. The teachers and the students come over here to -- I don't know if they even use this room. Maybe they do. I've never followed them to see where they go, but I think we've got regular Sunday school classes in there.

BRUDER: How many kids, about?

BEDIAN: Oh, gees, I suppose there could be as many as 20 or 30 of them.

BRUDER: And they're learning a little bit about the Armenian culture and language?

BEDIAN: I doubt it.

BRUDER: Really?

BEDIAN: I think they're just learning religion, just about God and Jesus and those kind of things. I don't think any of it is pertaining to Armenian. I could be wrong. Oh, they may talk about Armenian Christmas, which is celebrated on January the 6th as opposed to the 25th of December, even though you're never going to change them from the 25th of December in the first place.

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: It's just that they will know as a child. No matter how old they are, they're going to remember that January the 6th is Armenian Christmas and the reason it's on the 6th, and we have services that happens to end up in the middle of the week, so they try to, in a nice sort of way, get permission from the school teachers to leave them off on that day so they could attend services, but very, very few are released to be able to come to church, but those of us that are retired now, why, we come to church on that day and then we'll come into that little room

there for a little luncheon and then break up after that.

BRUDER: Mr. Bedian, how big was the church in Lincoln Place that you can recall? I'm not looking for head count.

BEDIAN: Oh, you can get 100 people in there.

BRUDER: And usually it was pretty jam packed?

BEDIAN: Yeah.

BRUDER: When did that start to trickle off?

BEDIAN: Oh, when the old timers were dying off and no one hardly to replace them. You've never seen the church, but if you saw it --

BRUDER: Yeah. I went down there.

BEDIAN: Oh, did you?

BRUDER: Yeah. I've been in Lincoln Place.

BEDIAN: Oh, okay.

BRUDER: You're talking about Maple Street?

BEDIAN: Yeah. You know how the sidewall is like curved --

BRUDER: Mm-hm.

BEDIAN: -- on both sides?

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: And up front, if you remember, there were two containers which stand in it.

BRUDER: Okay.

BEDIAN: That's where you lit your candles and stood them up there, and we're using the same process here. We used to have people lined up clear to those sandboxes, standing up, wall to wall, arm to arm, clear on around, plus the balcony would be loaded, three and four deep up in the balcony, and some would even be outside. I mean, that's on holidays, Christmas and Easter, especially Easter. Easter I would say would have the most.

BRUDER: Oh, yeah.

BEDIAN: Definitely.

BRUDER: Definitely.

BEDIAN: The only other time that you'd be loaded like that would be funerals. So, you know, when you have funerals, and in the days when the old timers, all of our parents were living, there was a heck of a lot of people, a lot of people, and they came to church. Armenians seem to think that the Armenian church is really for old people, which is really bad.

BRUDER: Right.

BEDIAN: It's bad, and even to this day, even though we don't have that many older folks, but if we had them, they'd be in there right now.

BRUDER: Is there anything you want to tell me that I haven't asked you about?

BEDIAN: No.

BRUDER: I realize we're kind of constricted for time.

BEDIAN: No. I mean, if there was a question that would bring me about -- just like I brought up the dictionary, I didn't even think about telling you about that.

BRUDER: That was fascinating.

BEDIAN: But I just thought you might be interested, so I mentioned it. If you've got a minute, I can even show you a copy of it.

BRUDER: Okay. Well, at this point, I guess we'll just conclude this interview.

BEDIAN: Okay.

BRUDER: And I want to shake your hand and thank you very much.

BEDIAN: Good luck to you. It's a big job on your hands to put this all together, whatever it is you're

trying to do.

BRUDER: We'll figure it out.

BEDIAN: Yeah.

* * *