

Mico Alvo And His Cousins In Tel Aviv



This is a picture taken in Tel Aviv.

My cousin Yvonne is second from right, my cousin Pnena is first from right, I am on the rows, and I am not sure whether the man second from left is Toris.

At that time I was already a navigation officer and they had given me a leave, because they did not know what to do with us. We had rented a boat and I had the chance to row a little bit and remember the old days.

I remember that during my initial training in Gaza, whenever I took a leave, I would go as often as I could to Tel Aviv, and would always stay at my uncle's home.

They gave me a leave for the first time when uncle Joseph came and visited me with a marshal from Tel Aviv. Later on, before leaving for Egypt, they gave me permission for a week I think, or ten days. And I went to Tel Aviv.

We were passing the borders of Egypt with Palestine by train. We would pass through customs control at Al Kaltara. It took about twelve hours on the train. And all the trains were of the army. Uncle Joseph lived in a very nice area.

At boulevard Rothschild. I ate with them, we would go out together, and my uncle took me to buy me some clothes because I had nothing.

At the beginning, when I first found my uncle in Tel Aviv I felt great love and trust towards him. He treated me really well.

Uncle Joseph was a landowner in Tel Aviv. He would buy land and built buildings. He used to work in the bank too. He used to work at the Discount Bank, which was one of the largest banks.

But because he and his son didn't get along with the rest of the associates, they withdrew. It was one of their greatest mistakes, because later on the bank expanded very much and became an international bank.

I didn't know Hebrew. But this is what was happening. At the time, the first immigrants that had come to Palestine were from Germany. And they all spoke German.

For example, if nowadays they speak English in Palestine, then it was the German. In any shop that you would get in, if you spoke German they would understand you.

I was more interested to the fact that I was in a family environment again. I appreciated that very much. I couldn't see any difference in that I was with many other Jews. I wasn't aware that Palestine had to be Jewish land. And I didn't imagine that this could happen either.

I knew that many Jews lived there, but I didn't feel more like home, I never felt that there. I could only feel the difference that we used to be under German occupation and now we were free.

I was quite proud that I was wearing an air force uniform. I didn't have any conversations with Uncle Joseph. He never suggested that I should stay there. He had his interests here in Thessaloniki and he hoped that he would keep them after the war.

When I arrived in Palestine, I was the first one to arrive from Thessaloniki. There were many people originally from Thessaloniki in Tel Aviv. And I told them what had happened here.

Without knowing what happened afterwards. We knew that they had summoned them and had taken them to Poland. But what was going on in Poland we still didn't know.

I went to Cairo at the beginning of 1944. I got a permit again and came back to Tel Aviv.

My uncle was very upset that I registered in the air force and that I was going to get my training down there. He wouldn't forgive me for this. He was very afraid of danger.