

Holocaust survivor says —'It could happen here'

By SHIRLEE IDEN

For Franka Charlupski, security is knowing she has a place to go. Mrs. Charlupski, a survivor of the Holocaust and a Polish national, lived in Poland at a time when there was no escape, no place to run for her and her family.

"We had no relatives or friends in other countries who could help us," she said. "Before the Nazis marched into Poland in 1940, we simply never thought of leaving. There was no way. And after Poland fell, it was impossible."

Today, Mrs. Charlupski, who contends "it could happen here," has the security of knowing that now if her life is threatened, as a Jew she can go to Israel.

"Every Jew has a home in Israel if needed," the Southfield resident said. "And that's just one of the reasons that Israel is so important to me."

On Thursday, Oct. 25 at Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Mrs. Charlupski will turn over the leadership of the Women's Division of State of Israel Bonds to Leah Snider, also of Southfield.

For three years, Mrs. Charlupski has been the leader, beginning her responsibilities with the agony of feeling deprived in proficiency of English, her adopted language. But working, often every day on the phone and in every way she could, she labored to sell the Bonds that allow development to proceed in Israel.

"THE PEACE TREATY is causing economic problems worse than war for Israel," she said. "Bond dollars can help. They need roads in the Negev Desert for the people forced to move out of the Sinai as it is turned over to Egypt."

Mrs. Charlupski and her husband, Allen, have been active in almost every Jewish communal charity for many years, but Mrs. Charlupski has worked hardest for Israel Bonds.

The couple first visited there in 1963, but have returned so often, she has lost count.

"My husband has two sisters in Israel," she said.

"It's a deep commitment for me, because when you are a survivor and you have a good life, you have to help others. How can I forget when I lost my mother, sister and two brothers?"

Mrs. Charlupski labored doing handwork in a factory of the Lodz Ghetto, making scarves for the German army before being taken to a concentration camp.

"Can one forget standing in front of the gas chambers at Auschwitz waiting for your turn to be gassed, then burned?" she asked.

"I stood with my sister and a friend, and then a Nazi woman with a whip came looking for 300 women able to work."

Mrs. Charlupski worked cleaning out bombed buildings in the city of Bremen where she was interned in a labor camp.

"It wasn't an extermination camp, so we could survive."

ADMITTEDLY, she said, being good at stealing, especially food, was a help in surviving.

Following the war, she and her husband arrived first in Oklahoma where they found that people didn't quite believe all they had endured.

"PEOPLE WOULD ask, 'Is it really true what we read about — did it really happen?' But what happened was so horrible it was hard to explain, hard to speak about."

"You live with haunting memories."

Mrs. Charlupski said that her work with Israel Bonds is, in a sense, done as a memorial for those who did not survive, as well as a testimony of faith for those, like she and her husband, who did.

"When my children were growing up, we never talked about our experiences," she said. "We pushed it aside. Then, when the Eichmann trial was all over the news, Larry, who was 12, came to us and said, 'You don't have to explain the number on your arm, Dad, I know.'"

And Helen, now a social worker in Boston has joined a group called One Generation After for the children of survivors.

The Oct. 26 luncheon is billed as the "Bond Between Us" interfaith luncheon. People attending will have bought at least \$600 in Israel Bonds.

Leslie Uggams, internationally renowned television and Broadway star, whose role in "Roots" brought her wide acclaim, will be the recipient of the State of Israel cultural award.

Leah Snider will be inducted as chairwoman of the Metropolitan Detroit State of Israel Bonds Women's Division.

And Franka Charlupski will receive a Serigraph Award created by Israeli artist Yaakov Agam. "But even as I give up the leadership, I won't give up my involvement," she said.



FRANKA CHARLUPSKI

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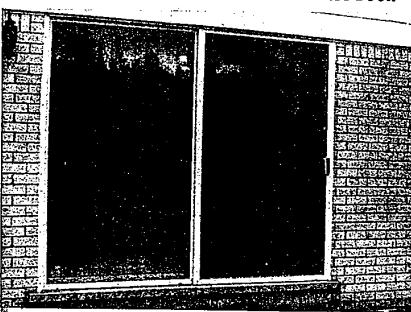
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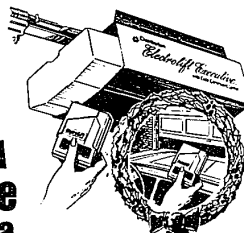
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