

- 1 GVP10 Dora Hogan
- 2 D: Hello. Please state your name for the recording.
- 3 DH: My name is Dora Hogan.
- 4 D: And if it's okay, may I ask how young you are?
- 5 DH: Ninety-two years old.
- 6 D: Ninety-two, what a blessing. (laughter) I'ma turn this down, the fan. (pause) And Ms. Hogan,
- 7 have you ever experienced gun violence personally or lost anyone to gun violence?
- 8 DH: Yes. My son.
- 9 D: Your son? And what was his name?
- 10 DH: Prentice Barnes. B-A-R-N-E-S.
- 11 D: And do you mind telling us what happened?
- 12 DH: Some—[the shooter] across the street was shooting at a guy that was with [his] boyfriend- I
- 13 mean girlfriend. And my son was in a van, waiting on a red light and the bullet hit my son in the
- 14 car into his left eye and went into his head, into his brains and killed him.
- 15 D: On [Sherman Park]?
- 16 DH: (inaudible) 1:10
- 17 D: [Street Name]?
- 18 DH: [Street Name].
- 19 D: Okay, [Street Name].
- 20 DH: Mhmm.
- 21 D: Okay. And what year did this happen?
- 22 DH: Mm, well it's been, let's say five years ago.
- 23 D: Five years ago, and now it's 2018.

24 DH: Mhmm.

25 D: Okay, so 2013.

26 DH: Yeah.

27 D: Okay. And, ya know, sometimes when something happens to our children, had stories that  
28 I've taken in the past, did you feeling anything? Did you have any intuition that you sensed  
29 something was wrong?

30 DH: No, I didn't say-- did I have sense that something was wrong?

31 D: Mhmm.

32 DH: Well, like, while he's shooting him?

33 D: Yeah.

34 DH: Well—

35 D: Or you think maybe the day before or why it happened? Or while it was happening?

36 DH: No, no. I didn't feel nothing wrong, there was nothing wrong, went nothing wrong. This  
37 was, he was not shooting at my son.

38 D: Right.

39 DH: He was shooting at his head. My son was at the wrong place at the wrong time. Of course,  
40 my son was working, that was his job. Driving that van, picking up people, taking them to the  
41 doctor. And he was on his way to pick up a lady, take her to the hospital. And he was waiting on  
42 a red light, and this boy saw this other boy across the street, and he sh—was shooting at the other  
43 boy. He didn't hit the other boy, he had got my son.

44 D: Oh my god.

45 DH: Mhmm.

46 D: Is the man who accidentally shot your son, is—is he serving time?

47 DH: Yes, he is.

48 D: He's still in?

49 DH: Yes.

50 D: Oh wow.

51 DH: Mhmm.

52 D: And, did he ever, did you ever have a chance to talk to him? Did, did he ever express any  
53 remorse for doing it?

54 DH: When we was in court and he was there. He was real, ya know, in a way I kind of felt sorry  
55 for him because he was a young kid. I think 'round about 18 years old, I believe.

56 D: Oh wow.

57 DH: And he apologized to me and he said that he wished that he could give his life to get my son  
58 back because I broke down, and you know, they had to take me out because he was just, I told  
59 him what he had done, it pushed me, made my life all messed up. Because that was the son that  
60 would take me to church and the grocery store and everywhere. So, he really just, in other words,  
61 he took the son away from me that I really missed, still do miss him because right now, my life is  
62 not happy. I have not been happy since my son was taken away.

63 D: Oh.

64 Dh: Yeah, he took him away. But he was, he apologized and he kept saying to me in the court,  
65 "I'm sorry, I'm sorry." And when the jury said that my son was at the wrong place at the wrong  
66 time, and he said to the judge, "Your honor, I disagree with you." He said, "Mr. Barnes was at  
67 the right place at the right time, but I was wrong when I saw this guy that was with my woman  
68 and I shot-- was shooting at him and the bullet hit Mr. Barnes." So, he was very sad about it.

69 D: So—

70 DH: And he also said that if he ever get out, that he was going to come by to see what he could  
71 do for me. Bless him.

72 D: Oh wow.

73 DH: Mhmm.

74 D: Hmm. So, you're not keeping in contact with—are you keeping in contact with him while  
75 he's in prison?

76 DH: No, no, no, no.

77 D: Oh, okay.

78 DH: I have, we have a card along with my, his-- my son's wife. (phone began ringing) We will  
79 give him the card that we, if we want to, ya know check it out. But I choose not to, I don't want  
80 to be bothered with any of it.

81 D: Okay.

82 DH: Mhmm. (phone continues ringing)

83 D: Well, you said—you said that you felt sorry for him so, did you forgive him for what he did?

84 DH: Oh yes, yes. Because he wasn't, ya know, he wasn't shooting at my son. It just was an  
85 accident. That's what the jury said. So, I had to forgive him because he wasn't doing it on  
86 purpose, ya know.

87 D: Mhmm. (pause) They finally stopped, I gotta ask you that question again. I can cut it out. So,  
88 you said that you felt sorry for him. Are, is there any chance, are you guys keeping in contact  
89 while he's in prison?

90 DH: No.

91 D: Okay. You said that a card (phone message)—A card did come, you said a card did come for  
92 you to have the opportunity to communicate with him but you chose not to?

93 DH: No, I have a little card. Like a choice card.

94 D: Mhmm.

95 DH: A little plastic card.

96 D: Mhmm.

97 DH: And I could, if I wanted to, I guess, find out, ya know, how he was doing. But I choose not

98 to.

99 D: I understand.

100 DH: Mhmm. Yeah, I just—

101 D: I-If, if, for mom's or dad's or anyone who just recently lost someone to gun violence, what

102 would you say could help them deal with the loss? What would you say could help them?

103 DH: Well, someone from downtown came out and talked to me after my son got killed, you

104 know.

105 D: Mhmm.

106 DH: And stayed about a couple hours and told me that if I need any counseling or anything, that

107 I could contact them. But, I felt like I trusted in the Lord and he brought me out of this so, I

108 didn't call them back. I was just so strong and God has showed me that he didn't shoot my son,

109 just being low down. He didn't know that the bullet was gonna miss the guy he was shooting and

110 hit my son. So, I tried to forgive a person, then I tried to forget about it.

111 D: Okay.

112 DH: So, I went that way.

113 D: So, would you suggest then to someone who's just now going through to try and forgive and,

114 and what would you say to them?

115 DH: I would suggest that if they, ya know, if they's a Christian person, ya know, the Bible tell  
116 us, ya know, that we have to forgive and if it was accident. If it was the person shot somebody  
117 just because they were lowdown and mean or somethin', then I would say, I would go after them  
118 too. (laughter) But my case wasn't like that.

119 D: Right.

120 DH: But if it was, had it been like that, I probably would've went after them. But it was different  
121 so. If someone kills somebody's son or daughter, whatever, they just have to kind of, ya know,  
122 get 'em a lawyer and work it out the best way they can, ya know? Because I don't believe in,  
123 "Because you kill my son, I kill your son." I never believed in that part about it.

124 D: Mhmm.

125 DH: Ya know. I would say, put it in God and let the Lord work it out. Ya know?

126 D: What would you say we could do, if anything, to help reduce gun violence in the city of  
127 Milwaukee?

128 DH: I, I think that somehow, we need to try to find a way to take some of these guns from some  
129 of these young people. I've seen young guys come by my house, when my grandson used to live  
130 here, crazy. No older than (pause) I think, 12, 13, 14 years old. And I will see a gun in their  
131 pocket. And I would say, "What are you doing with a gun in your pocket?" "Well, if anybody  
132 mess with me, I gonna shoot 'em." I said, "You better take that gun back home and give it to  
133 your mom and your daddy. Because you don't need a gun." And I feel that if some of these guns  
134 and some of these parents were tightened down a little bit on their children. I believe that would  
135 help out. 'Cause there's bunch of grown ones out there, is crazy too, with a gun. But there's too  
136 many young people with these guns on the street. They get to arguin' and if you're sayin' it, and

137 you know they gonna pull their gun. They done shot ya. And in jail they go. Then, when they go  
138 to jail, they think, they have less of school, they think of how bad they can be—

139 D: Mhmm.

140 DH: --and when the get out, they're ready to go right back and do the same thing. I know one  
141 that got out on one day and shot somebody the next day and went back to jail. Ya know, they  
142 don't care. Putting them in jail, is not, I don't believe is really helping 'em. They need  
143 counseling, they need to be some place where people can, ya know, counsel them, tell them,  
144 "This is not right." Putting 'em in jail, givin' them a little food to eat, when they do wrong, throw  
145 them in a hole. And when they get out, be even worse.

146 D: Hmm. Is there any last words you'd like to add?

147 DH: I just like to say I wish this city and police officers, I go for them too, I wish they had been a  
148 little better with the children. Sometimes they are, p—I know my grandson, they approached him  
149 two or three times because he was born in Germany. And they have to re—they still doing it. To  
150 send him back to Germany. Even though he have a birth certificate says his mom and his dad  
151 were in Germany in the Army.

152 D: Mhmm.

153 DH: So, he was born in the Army, and he was brought to the United States to me. When he was  
154 like, five months old. So, I raised him ever since. And they is, everytime they see him, it's  
155 because he accidentally sent his birth certificate to his dad, down in Florida.

156 D: Mhmm

157 DH: And his dad messed it up.

158 D: What?

159 DH: Well, here we got a copy of the birth certificate but they want the original one.

160 D: Right.

161 DH: And they have called me and said, I was, whatever that word they use, "Harborin", ya  
162 know, keeping him away but they were gonna catch them and send him back to Germany. He  
163 not, he was born in Germany, his parents were serving over there in the United States Army. He  
164 has a birth certificate that states up on the top, "United States Citizen". So, I wait every day for  
165 them to come right here, they come right here, they gettin' it.

166 D: (laughter) Well, I pray they don't come.

167 DH: When they come, I'm ready for 'em. A-and they told me they could take me too. And told  
168 'em okay, I said, "But when you bring your wagon," well if they're gonna have to, they might  
169 take me, but somebody gonna take them too. And a child is scared to be out on the streets,  
170 because everytime they be driving or something, and the police stop and, and the first thing they  
171 say, "You're not a citizen, you're gonna be, we, we can arrest you and take you back." A couple  
172 times, they did take him to jail.

173 D: Oh, oh my gosh.

174 DH: But then, they found out the boy graduated from high school here, he went to college here  
175 and everything and just because we couldn't get a real certificate, ya know. With the--

176 D: The original.

177 DH: Original one.

178 D: Mhmm.

179 DH: Ya know, but they would go down there and then finally somebody, you know, they would  
180 let him out. But, some of them, some of our police officers choosing to take him, they're not  
181 quite straight either. And that's what make these young kids do the way that they are doing.

182 Because they say everytime one see 'em, 'cause of course got a badge on 'em, ya know, and a  
183 gun. And they gonna attack them, and they fire back up on them too.

184 D: Oh wow.

185 DH: Yeah, I hear these kids every other day, talking about, I guess they call them, I guess I could  
186 say it, Pigs. Because everytime one of them pigs hop them, they ain't gonna go home.

187 D: Oh no, but that's not the answer either.

188 DH: No, no. It's not the answer. And I would tell them, I'd say, "You know, just be obedient and  
189 listen to them, if they take them down, ya know, you just go down. We'll have to come down  
190 and get ya out."

191 D & DH: Mhmm.

192 D: You're right.

193 DH: Yeah. So, he's still working and you know, everything and he got a government loan, so if  
194 he was, if he wasn't supposed to be a citizen--

195 D: He wouldn't have got it.

196 DH: He wouldn't have got it.

197 D: That's right.

198 DH: Mhmm.

199 D: You're absolutely right about that.

200 DH: Yeah, so ya know, I went through lots and hear all this stuff. And at my age, I say, "Oh my  
201 gosh." Some changes could be, ya know, made if they get out there and do. They talk about it  
202 every morning, early morning radio. Talk, talk, talk. But they need to give some action.

203 D: Amen.

204 DH: Take care of each other. Ya know, I listen to that talk. This who say that, this who say to get  
205 out and do something about it, ya know?

206 D: Quit talking.

207 DH: Mhmm.

208 D: (laughter) Say, put them into action.

209 DH: Yeah, put it into action.

210 D: Mhmm.

211 DH: If I get up and tell you my house need cleanin', you're not gonna get up and clean it, why  
212 talk about it? Don't tell you about it, just get up and start cleaning it. So, that what I-- I just want  
213 to see this city of people unite together. They can't do nothing. These kids is in these stolen cars,  
214 young kids killing innocent people, taking their life away from little children that will never see  
215 their mom and daddy again. I think that's terrible.

216 D: It is.

217 DH: It is. (pause) It is. 'Cause sometimes I feel that if I had some wings, I would fly away  
218 because I don't want nobody to get me.

219 D: Wow.

220 DH: Mhmm.

221 D: That was a powerful statement.

222 DH: Yeah. Yeah. Uh huh.

223 D: On that note, I will end our interview. Thank you.

224 DH: You're welcome.

225 [Do we stop here?]

226 D: That was good. Especially that fly away part.

227 DH: Yeah, I would. Cause I mean, a couple of weeks ago...

228 D: Yeah.

229 DH: And I said—

230 D: You said, now what happened?

231 DH: I don't know, it was a funeral. And I guess it must've-- I was told it was somebody that was

232 in some kind gang.

233 D: Mhmm.

234 DH: And they live across the street.

235 D: From you?

236 DH: Uh huh.

237 D: Which is [Sherman Park area]?

238 DH: [Street Name]

239 D: [Street Name]

240 DH: Uh huh.

241 D: Okay.

242 DH: And my guess is they went to the funeral at that church.

243 D: Mhmm.

244 DH: And I guess they had, ya know, if we pay some stuff they had on the family.

245 D: Mhmm.

246 DH: So, one sent a van of guys sneaked up on him, and one was on one side of the street and the

247 other was on this side of the street. 'Bout three doors down from me. And I heard that shooting

248 so, I went there, didn't go out. Looked out the door, by the time I looked out the door that bullet

249 came by and "ZOOM". I got myself back in my house, waited on the police came down, ya  
250 know, to our housing. Ya know, well, one-- three houses from me.

251 D: Mhmm.

252 DH: There's people that know the shooters, across the street. The bullet went through her big  
253 window.

254 D: Oh wow.

255 DH: And she and her husband had just walked from the window to get out of the way. And the  
256 one that was on this side, ya know, the guys on this side was shooting and that bullet, he was  
257 running down this way and they was shooting at him. So that's why the bullet came down this  
258 way.

259 D: Wow, and went right past you?

260 DH: Mhmm.

261 D: Oh my god.

262 DH: I'm standing at the door. If I'd had myself outside, I'd have got shot probably in the head.  
263 'Cause it--that, "ZOOM" and I say "Oh my gosh," and I closed my door and I got back in the  
264 house.

265 D: Mmm.

266 DH: Waited on the police, who came and they asked, "Did anybody get hurt here?" And I said,  
267 "No, if I'd have been out on the porch." Like, ya know, how some people stand out there.

268 D: Yeah.

269 DH: I don't do that. But I did go to my door.

270 D: Mhmm.

271 DH: 'Cause when that bullet came by there and I found out this was going on, they were running,  
272 ya know.

273 D: Mhmm.

274 DH: Shootin' at each other. I said, "Oh my gosh." Later on, I was told by one of the officers that  
275 it was some gang, a bunch, you know, that was shooting back at each other.

276 D: (sigh)

277 DH: We need to get rid of some of them too. But how can you? You get rid of one set, another  
278 one break out. They always got back ups, don't believe it.

279 D: Yeah, wow. Thank you again, Ms. Hogan.

280 DH: May the Lord have Mercy.

281 D: Ooh (pause) that's scary.