

EDDIE



Q: How long have you been doing TV commercials?

E: About 14 years.

Q: Only in Los Angeles and only for Zachary All?

E: Strictly in L.A. and only for Zachary All.

Q: Are you Zachary All?

E: It is a fictitious name. I am a partner. My name is Eddie Nalbandian.

Q: How long has Zachary All been in business?

E: Sixteen and one-half years.

Q: What made you decide to go on TV? And how did it affect your business?

E: That is a long story. We went on TV 14 years

ago. My partner had had experience with TV. He said, I think it would be a good idea if we went on TV. There are no clothing stores doing TV advertising. Everybody is in the newspaper. He said maybe we could find a new angle to promote a business. He said you are going on TV. I said you are crazy. I was never on TV in my life. I am a tailor. He said to me, look you will be going on TV. I laughed. He brought a man in who was a friend of his who is today the president of ABC, Elton Rule. He was the local sales manager of ABC. We looked to see what we could do that would not kill us in price and do us good. Elton came up with what you would call a beer-type show today. It

was on 11 to 12:30 p.m. with Hank Weaver and at that time a guy named Lennie Bruce used to come on TV because he had nothing else to do, and Lennie would do his little things. Everything was live. They did not hold you to a minute. There was no such thing as videotape. You ran up there every night. You put on a suit and a tie and put on makeup. After two months, we decided I would not use makeup, and besides I was not an actor. So that was what I did. Every night I went there and every day I came to the store to run the business.

Q: Did it help?

E: It did a little.

Q: What do you think of yourself as a TV personality?

E: I don't think of myself as a TV personality. I really don't. It is a way of advertising for me. A way to get people into the store. Same as using a newspaper. I don't go in the newspaper because there is every schlock ad in the paper. When you open up the Saturday paper you read \$100 suits for \$49 and \$50. Two for \$100. We don't run competitive type advertising. All we say is, come in, look at the merchandise, we give good honest values, if you like what you see, if the price is right, buy it. If you feel that you are not getting what we say you should be getting, don't buy it. TV is a good way of saying that.

Q: How much fan mail do you get?

E: Once in a while you get a few letters. I laugh them off.

Q: Not everyone can have Frank Zappa write a song for them.

E: It is cute that he did. Frank Zappa did not write the song for me. He wrote it because he thought it would be a clever idea. Zappa did not sit down and say, here is a nice guy and I am going to write a song for him, I am going to promote him. He didn't do it for me.

Q: Maybe he did it because he is interested in you because you are on TV. And you are an identifiable person to all of us.

E: Yes, they made me a personality. We agree on that. Great, I am Zachary All to these people. But the big difference—Johnny Carson gets paid a lot of money to be on TV. I pay a lot of money to be on TV. Now there is a hell of a difference. Nobody pays me for certain talent because I don't have talent. My talent is making and selling clothing. Now I go out and peddle wares. It could be anybody on TV. Cal Worthington does it. He sits on a lion and an elephant. He sells automobiles. He pays for every spot he is on. Nobody says to Cal, come over here. We want to give you \$500. There is a tremendous difference. I only became a personality because I am on TV, not because I have talent. I have had guys call me up and say we have a part in a movie for you. They call me up, and I say forget it. They say read the script. I say I cannot afford it. Why? Because I have told people all of my life I am in the clothing business. I like it. It has been good

to me. And if I go ahead with this little part I may prove to all of the people who have always said he is a pitch man that I am a pitch man. Everybody else is a pitch man.

Q: Do you write your ads?

E: I don't write anything. It is all ad-lib.

Q: Can you tell us briefly where you were born and how you got here?

E: I was born in Massachusetts. Belmont near Boston. I'm 44 years old, born December 29, 1927. Went to high school. Quit high school and went into the Navy. In 1945 came out and in 1946 did not want to go back to high school. My father had a tailor's shop. I went to work for my father. Decided I didn't want to be a custom tailor; it was too hard to make a living that way. I went to designing school during the day, worked at night and became assistant designer in a manufacturing firm. Got married, decided California was a great place to live. Came to California, met my partner, who was then retired. I met him along the way. I said to him I am going into business for myself. He said I am tired of being retired. Let's go into business together. Tremendous. We had a store on Pico Boulevard with 1600 feet. You never saw anybody work the way I worked. You grind at it, and you say I can't go home because maybe a customer will come and I will sell that suit. In those days that \$60 suit was like a lot of money. You needed it because of the bills every week, and you needed new merchandise. After two years we decided we needed a bigger store. We went to Miracle Mile and looked. We took one with the rent at \$200 a month more than we were paying. We had to do it. We moved in. We wheeled and dealt. People started coming in. And then we spread to one more store and one more store. If you look at the store you will see split stores. We just kept banging down the walls until we had half the block. We took it on a long-term lease, and you know you get a little lucky and TV was good for us and this is the way it happened.

Q: How many suits are in your wardrobe?

E: Not that many. I am an average guy. During the year I will get three sport coats that I like; maybe two suits. Then I will turn around and give the suit to the guys that work for me. If something comes in that I like I will take it, but I am not what you would call a "clothes-horse" with 30 suits and 50 pairs of shoes.

Q: Do you watch TV?

E: I find myself bored with TV. Unless it is a tremendous movie, something that turns me on. I find it easy to leave the TV on and my wife and kids watch it. I will sit there and read the evening paper and try to find something to occupy my mind. I used to watch Archie Bunker but I cannot watch it anymore because I know what he is going to do. After a while I know what he is going to say. So why should I sit there for half an hour? I am not enthused by TV anymore.