

HOLOCAUST TESTIMONY

OF

SUSAN FAULKNER

Transcript of Self-taped Memoir

Date: October 19, 1983

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*SELF-TAPED MEMOIR*¹

SF - Susan Faulkner² [interviewee]

Date: October 19, 1983

Tape one, side one:

SF: I was born Susanna Neulaender in Berlin, the West-side, in April, 1921, the first child of Curt and Else Neulaender. My father was then an aspiring banker and growing in prosperity and we were...I was growing up in an upper middle-class environment on the West-side of Berlin, quite over-protected with a nurse in attendance and a rather highly disciplined environment in my home, typical German environment in many ways. My mother was rather compulsive in terms of discipline and I always felt very circumscribed by rules and regulations. My father was a very warm and affectionate man and had many interests. He was a marvelous pianist and whenever he came back from the bank, he would sit in the afternoon and early evening and play the piano and I would sit in a chair and listen to him. They had a rather full social life and, of course, I was very small and was not too aware of too many things except that there was a great deal of tension at home because it very soon developed that my parents were having a very difficult marriage. My father wanted an open marriage, so-called, and my mother could not handle it, but she also had her own outside interests, one might say, and I rarely saw her. I was the typical poor-little-rich-girl syndrome where I was left in the care of a nurse or a maid and rarely saw my mother during the day and in the evening they were usually going out to parties or having people over and I went to bed early.

I was raised rather strict in such matters as, for example, having to eat everything that was on my plate. If I didn't finish what was on my plate it was served to me the next meal. This was, as my mother explained, left over from the days of the First World War when in the last year or two in Germany, when they were near starvation and had to exist on cabbage products, cabbage coffee, cabbage bread, etc., and went nearly hungry many times, and she felt that it was a sin not to finish your food. My father had served in the German Army in the First World War; in fact he was drafted in 1913 and served in the horse-drawn artillery almost the entire four-and-a-half years at the front in combat, except for one time when he contracted a severe infection of some sort and was in the hospital for many months with a very high fever and other illness, and another time when he was almost killed by a grenade splinter which hit near the femoral artery and he recovered from it, but...and he never got beyond Feldwebel [sargent major] rank, which was the equivalent of warrant officer in the German Army. Whether this was because he was Jewish, or because of the fact that he had not gone to college, or because he did not have a higher social rank, I have no way of knowing, because he never mentioned it to us or spoke about it. He told me often about his experiences in the army. He was by nature a gentle person

¹Based on question provided by the Gratz College Holocaust Oral History Archive.

²née Neulaender.

but seemed rather proud of his service and always...but he did mention one incident when he had been ordered by his superior officer to shoot a young recruit who had defected during his first battle, had gone AWOL during his first battle, a capital offense in the German Army. And my father was supposed to kill him but he refused and even when his senior officer drew his pistol and pointed it at my father and told him to shoot him, he still refused and the matter was then resolved in some other fashion. I am not sure how. My father also mentioned to me how they used to ride their horses for hours and days on end until their legs were covered with sores but, if they came to a village or any kind of rest, the first thing that they had to do was to feed and water their horses and anyone who was found to neglect his horse at his own expense could be shot on sight. He spoke about his days as a recruit in 1913 when quite often sergeants would, could inflict corporal punishment without a second thought for the most minor offenses and yet I had a feeling that in general he was rather proud of the experience of his army service.

Going back to his earlier life, which I think is also material for this whole history, he was born in Beuthen, in Upper Silesia, which is the contested area between Poland and Germany and now in Polish hands, and the city is now called Bytom, I believe. His father and his father had been jewelers and watch makers for a few generations and had been settled there for quite a while and there was a story—I don't know if it's apocryphal or real—that at some point during the Seven Year War an ancestor was rewarded by Frederick the Great for his contribution to the war effort against Austria with a piece of real estate called Neuland, and that is where the family name Neuländer came from.

My father's family were not particularly religious, as far as I know. They did not keep a kosher home and, as far as I could tell by what he told me about his father, there was no religious observance in the family. His mother died in an influenza epidemic when he was six and his father married again. The stepmother was quite an obnoxious woman and he was very unhappy with her. His father was a very strict and very tight-fisted man. He was also given to a great deal of melancholy which affected all the children. There were five of them, three from the first wife and two from the second one. And when my father was 13, his father, because, apparently, a combination of financial setbacks and melancholy and unhappiness over his marriage and family life, shot himself with a rifle. My father was sent then, now orphaned, to relatives in Hamburg, very prosperous, upper-middle-class merchant family in Hamburg and lived there until he completed school at age 14, at which time he was sent to Berlin and there began as an apprentice in the stock market and...I'm not certain if he lived in the household of his uncle Max Liebes, who was also his guardian, or whether he had a room by himself. In any case, he quickly rose in the ranks and showed a genius for finance so that by the age of 19 he had become the manager of a bank branch, and his uncle and guardian was asked to declare him of age, prematurely at the age of 19, so that he could sign the checks of the bank. In the meantime, my father had developed a great affection for one of the daughters of Max Liebes, his first cousin, and my future mother Elsa Liebes. She was a very handsome and imperious looking woman, highly

intelligent as was my father, but by nature very reticent, rather cool. Both shared many interests in music and the theater and politics, philosophy, economy. They belonged to the kind of discussion groups that were then quite common among the upper middle-class intellectuals in Berlin and argued very often for many hours far into the night about all the political theories and so forth and so on.

My father had been born in 1892, so that by the end of the war, he was 25, and my mother had been born in 1895 and by the end of the war she was 23, and they had begun an affair over the violent objections by her father. While my father was in the service, she had gone to Belgium secretly, at one point, to meet him, pretending to be visiting her sister, who had gone to live and marry in Belgium, in Antwerp. Shortly after the war was over, in 1920, they got married and then, as I said, lived in Berlin-West. But, shortly after the marriage, in spite of the great passion for each other in certain ways, there was this cooling because it appeared that my father needed outside sexual interests and my mother could not cope with this. Again, my father never spoke about these matters; my mother did, and I only know one side of the issue.

As I was growing up, I hardly ever heard the word Jewish in our home. We were totally non-observant. My grandfather had been an Orthodox Jew who had immigrated to Berlin from Posen, Kempen, and continued in Berlin to have a kosher household and to observe the holidays and rituals, etc. But, because of his tyranny he made it impossible for his children to appreciate these values. They all, except for the one son who tragically died just before the end of the First World War...all of the daughters came to hate Jewish religious observance with a passion that I have rarely observed anywhere else. They despised anything to do with it and they all agreed that this had to do directly with my grandfather's tyranny, because as I said, he insisted on a kosher household but he wanted the Christian cooks and their family to make kosher meals, but these girls had no idea how to cook kosher meals, and my grandmother who was raised as almost a princess, the youngest of 17 children, very much spoiled by her older brothers and catered to and unable to keep a household at all, was unable to direct the household properly and had no idea how to instruct the cooks on how to cook the kosher meals. Therefore the cooking was usually execrable and the daughters all hated to eat at home and said that, as they came in downstairs at the front door they could tell from the smell that was coming from the upstairs apartment, what day of the week it was, and on certain days they would absent themselves if they possibly could, to avoid having to eat those meals. There was the additional fact that my grandfather insisted on everybody attending the synagogue services, especially on the High Holidays, and fast. My grandmother was a rather delicate woman and suffered from migraine headaches and whenever the Yom Kippur came around and she was obliged to fast and sit in the upstairs balcony of the synagogue, she would get faint, she would get terrible headaches, and she would suffer and her children suffered for her. In addition, the son Billy also had a rather delicate constitution and whenever he had to fast, he would become very ill. He would turn green and frequently faint and, even though, according to

the Torah, he could have been exempt from fasting because of his illnesses, he insisted on it and so did his father. And the girls, who all adored their brother and felt for their mother, came to hate their father for what they saw as a very ruthless attitude. He also...Max Liebes also had a terrible temper and would bellow at the girls and they were terrified of that. Nevertheless, to the outside world Max Liebes became almost a hallowed name. He was a merchant who built up a business of skins and furs and traveled widely and was known as an extremely philanthropic man. There were always poor relatives sitting down at table with them, some of them often stayed for weeks on end if they were down on their luck. People were always visiting. He always had an open hand for helping young people coming up and, in fact, one man whom he helped when he was a young man trying to establish a business in Central America, much, much later, came and gave me a needed hand when I came to Guatemala after escaping from Germany in late '38 and I needed a job in '39. This man had then become the owner of a large department store in Guatemala City and I called and asked him for a job and I told him that I was the granddaughter of Max Liebes and he said promptly over the phone that any descendant of Max Liebes will always have a job with me because he set me up in business. So we have the typical pater familias in Max Liebes who was, as I say, pious and generous and a philanthropic man, yet who, to his children in many ways, was an extremely difficult person who, furthermore, forced at least three of his daughters into unhappy marriages against their will and really caused a great deal of general unhappiness.

Coming back also to my mother's only brother Willy, whom I have spoken about before, he was a year-and-a-half her senior and a young man of extreme intellectual promise. Bright, studying, wanting to become a doctor and deeply interested in philosophy, a person of sterling character, as everyone agreed. He had many friends. He was a very beloved man and had many friends and he had been rejected by the German Army draft because of a problem. I don't recall what it was, some medical problem, and he insisted in 1918 at the time when Germany was having a harder time fighting the last battle, and he felt it was incumbent on him—a Jew—to show his patriotism and he insisted on enlisting as a medic. Went into the field in the summer of 1918, was seriously hurt during battle in July of 19...and finally succumbed to his wounds in late August of 1918, shortly before the armistice. He knew that he was dying. He left a will and testament that was extremely touching, in which he said that what little money he had should go to repay his debts, which were debts for some books that he had bought from a bookstore. He further said that he wanted to...he would have loved to live, but if he had to die, he preferred to die for his country, and that he hoped that in the future and after his death, his dearest wish was for his people to be settled one day in Eretz Israel and he was, I might add, the only Zionist in the family. None of his daughters became Zionists. He had been, at the time before his death, he had a correspondence with a rabbi with whom he was learning Torah and who had participated in his correspondence about Zionism with him. That correspondence was never published here. He would not allow it to have those letters shown and his death was

a tremendous shock to his family. His father never recovered from losing his only son. My mother had been extremely close to him. They were more than just brother and sister; they were almost like alter-egos to each other, they felt. They were quite similar in certain ways. My mother did not get over that loss for many years and the bitterness of it. There was a further loss when just a short while later, an older sister died while in child birth with her second child during the influenza epidemic of 1919, and the father, Max Liebes, then had already sustained a heart ailment from which he never recovered. I might also add that in those last couple of years of the war, when there had been bond drives, my grandfather, even though he was a very shrewd businessman, deliberately used money that had been intended for the dowry of his youngest daughters, to invest in bonds, war bonds for Germany, because he felt that he had to do this as a patriotic Jew and a patriotic German, even though he knew that the money would be lost and it was. My grandfather lived until...he died in 1923, shortly before I was two years old. I remember sitting on his lap when I must have been less than 20 months old, sitting on his lap and pulling on his beard. And I understand he loved me very much and he taught me to sing a little ditty which he was delighted to find I picked up at a very early age.

Coming back to the whole business of the Jewishness and Germanness, I cannot recall going to a Passover Seder until I was, I believe, seven years old. My grandmother did not keep any Jewish customs after my grandfather died. She had never been in favor and she really had no interest in it. My mother was so passionately anti-religious and so militantly atheist, that I recall many years later, she could not even listen to organ music or to any choral music on radio, regardless of what this choral music might be, because she associated it with synagogue services and with religious services. My father was, I guess, you might call a humanistic Jew. He had a generalized sense of Jewish ethics but they were basically humanistic ethics with Jewish overlay and I did not...I never, he never went to the synagogue and it was not until I was maybe 6 or 7, possibly 8 years old, when I went to the synagogue once...he took me to Yom Kippur services one time. I did not personally, as I said, experience any problems in regard to this whole Jewish question, because the Jewish maids we had...the Christian maids were, of course, very careful not to say anything about this whole business, but I do know that what prayers we were taught to say at night, they were just little innocuous prayers that were you might call non-secular, in a sense, and we did celebrate Christmas at home with Christmas tree and all, and I thoroughly enjoyed the Christmas songs and we had Christmas celebrations were very long established and happy tradition in our family and it never occurred to me to question any of this. There was no discussion about Chanukah and I don't think that I was aware that there was such a thing. The friends we had also had that same kind of totally assimilated attitude and so there was no note of incongruity as I was growing up. I do remember, somehow though, that when I was in perhaps second grade, during the Advent season in public school, that each day prior to Christmas, one girl from the class would be chosen to open another window in a little Advent card that was placed in the...on the window sill off the classroom

that we were sitting in, and I remember thinking at the time that there was something for me unhappy about the fact that I could not participate in this, that I was not chosen to participate in opening these windows and I somehow resented being forced...

Tape one, side two:

I wanted to add a couple of things, in listening to the first tape that I had left out. Number one, my father was awarded the Iron Cross, second grade, for his war service and his wounds and he kept that ribbon in a paperweight on his desk for many years. Secondly, he was 26 years old at the end of the First World War and, finally, I want to correct when I talked about prayer that I was taught as a small child. It was a very general prayer and of course it was not non-secular, it was non-denominational, just a general something to Dear God. I don't recall the exact wording. Now, as I said, to continue, I was forced...I resented the fact in the class that I was forced to sit there and participate in a majority ritual without actually being a part of it and being excluded. I was by nature a shy child, to begin with. I had...my mother being terribly critical with me, I was very...I grew up rather afraid in many, in social situations. On the other hand, I had begun as a very small child, less than two years old, in a gymnastics class with a retired major and I quickly became the star of this class and, when he was asked to participate in a famous health cult movie, and for a moment, I cannot remember the title, but it was a well-known movie that was made in 1925, something like, oh, I remember now, "Ways to Strength and Beauty," our class participated in that movie and I was the only one of whom a close-up shot was made, and my father took me to every performance and I remember seeing myself up there on the screen at age four running into the camera with an extremely happy face. It was truly...the only time I felt happy when I was in the gymnastics class partly because I knew that the major loved me and I adored him. In fact, I might say, that in my childhood years, my experiences with men was a much happier one than that with women. Certainly the nurses and the maids I had, for the most part, were either extremely negligent or cruel or both, and I had one maid for quite a while who instilled the most horrendous fears in me about being washed down the drain of the bathtub and that the boogie-man is going to get me and that she was going to throw me into the yard with a large shepherd dog who was doing to bite me and all these horrible things, and it was not until much later that my mother finally managed to find out about it and discharged her. But, in any case, my experience with these women was an unhappy one and, in general, with women around me. Coming back to the gymnastics class, this went on, I went once or twice a week, I don't recall, and the major was a tall erect man, typical Prussian Junker but, in the best sense, a man of great integrity, and, as I said, he loved me very much and he was very kind to me for many years after. I continued in this class and when I came to school at the time my father had become quite prosperous by the time I was five or six. We had, I recall, we had a Mercedes-Benz and we had even a chauffeur because my father had turned out to be such a terrible driver that my mother refused to ride in the car with him and insisted on a chauffeur and my father very happily got a chauffeur because he always liked to spend money and the chauffeur would bring me, was supposed to pick me up after school to take me to the gym class, but I was so embarrassed about being so singled out from the other girls in the class, that I pleaded

with him to...for the chauffeur to wait for me two blocks away from the school so that the other girls wouldn't see him.

We went on in this fashion, and, as I said to... This what seemed like an idyllic life, however, came to a very abrupt end in 1927. My father showed first signs of what was going to become a major mental illness. He was becoming manic and my mother saw some of the signs and then, in late 1927, just at the time when my little sister was born, he had a total breakdown and was sent to a sanitarium. I was not told about his illness. In those days people did not believe in telling children what was going on in the world or even in their own families and I only knew that he was sick and, of course, having him leave—the only person in my immediate environment that I really loved—was a tremendous shock for me and I sank into what I now think was quite an extended period of depression. In the meantime, my sister had been born, as I said, and I at first resented her to no end, because I felt that my father had been taken away from me and instead here was this little red screaming bundle that I had no contact with and I could not understand what she was doing there, plus she was taking an awful lot of attention away from me, because, after all, I was already six-and-a-half at that time so I had been the only child in the family for a long time and... In any case, eventually my father got better but, by that time, there was the crash, he had lost all his money, as did almost everyone else in Germany at the time, and unfortunately, he had also lost quite a bit of the savings of some of the relatives whom he had talked into investing their money. They never forgave him for this even though, it would seem that since everyone else lost his money and so did he, there was no reason why they should blame him for it but, nevertheless, they did and it created a great animosity toward him and the family. And it was now...suddenly, life changed drastically. If I remember correctly, the chauffeur left, and, I believe, the car left and a few other things, and my mother began to work at...about when I was eight, she got a job in Kempinski, which was a rather fine chain restaurant and also something akin to perhaps Schrafft's, but on a better level. They also operated a number of high class delicatessen stores, they had their own wines and so forth, and at first she was on...I don't know exactly what her position was, but she showed her very real genius for efficiency and organization and a grasp of management and by 1930, she had worked herself up to the head of the internal control of Kempinski and had a large department of women under her. In the meantime, my father had not been able to get back to his former position. Just before his breakdown—he had been a partner in a bank, but they, of course, would not take him back after the breakdown and I am not certain just what happened. Maybe he did have some kind of precarious income for a while, but, in any case, I was myself in a state of depression and I was really not quite aware of what was happening around me. I only knew that my whole world had sort of fallen apart. We moved to a smaller apartment. My father was suddenly no longer with us and I was given some nonsense story which I swallowed, only, I guess, because I wanted to believe it and eventually I found out a year after, when I was just nine years old, that my parents had gotten a divorce in 1929. And we now had a housekeeper,

Polly, who had been the maid in our former household and she was a young woman, on the surface quite hard, and, in fact, I almost called her Spartan in her approach to life, extremely hard worker, not a very good cook, but very handy with sewing and she loved us very much, which was a wonderful thing for us, because we had not had that much affection at home, and she was, I might add, a very convinced Social Democrat. She came from a small town in Silesia near Breslau, Goerlitz, from a working class family and she was...she, of course, brought the same discipline to my daily routine that my mother prescribed, but still I always felt that she was in our corner and I always knew that I could trust her and, as I said, we were very close to her, very attached to her. We saw my father...he came over to say goodnight to us two or three times a week, and we spent every second Sunday with him and I should have mentioned earlier, that he was also a passionate tennis player, and that somehow, I don't know how he ever managed, but he continued to play at a club, a tennis club, in Berlin, and in spite of the fact that he was of rather stocky build and, in fact, a lot of...short legs, he was an extremely fast runner, had very strong arms and body build in general, was an excellent athlete, and I would very often spend Sunday watching him play tennis at the club, and we... So somehow or other, life, in fact, for me became a little better now because for the first time I felt that I was useful. I was called upon to make my own bed and I had to help with dishes and I had to help with marketing and I had to take my little sister to the dentist or to the nursery school and sometimes travel half across the city with her, and I was just not quite 10 years old then and I was extremely proud of this new found authority and of the fact that I was being trusted to be able to accomplish these things.

In the meantime, the gymnastics class was continued for me, even though I knew my parents could no longer afford it, because the major had said that he would let me come for free because he was so...he loved me so much and because I had been there for so many years and he felt that I could be useful to him and the class also, because I would always demonstrate the exercises to the other children. So I continued in that. So, it seemed that on the surface, things were pretty much unchanged and, as I said, the whole question of Jewishness somehow began in some fashion that I am not quite sure how, began to intrude in a way I'm not certain how exactly, but there must have been something in the air. Political developments began around 1929, in Berlin, began to turn ugly in certain ways. There was a more reactionary atmosphere around us and, in fact, many years later my mother told my sister—she never said it to me, but—she told my sister that my father had predicted a Hitler in 1928. Now, again, I don't know if she meant that Hitler that would come to power later or that there was going to be a dictator. I can't say, because certainly no one had ever heard of Hitler in those days. He may have had some followers at some point but, certainly as far as I could see and as far as I could tell from the conversation at home and so forth, which was politically extremely untrammelled and far reaching, I never heard the name of Hitler mentioned until the early '30s.

Now, as I said, I do recall that there was this beginning of a consciousness of Jewish identity and, apparently, if I remember correctly, it came through relatives in Hamburg who were many of them, quite Zionist. My father's sister was Ruth Pardo. Her husband was a prominent lawyer in Hamburg, Helmut Pardo. They were all ardent Zionists and their children passionate Zionists, and, in fact, the oldest son, Ernst who is now Benjamin Pardo, was one of the very prominent leaders in the aliyahs, in the early '30s in smuggling young Jews into Palestine past the British guns and so forth, and they came to Berlin at some point, and one of my cousins, who was also Zionist, began to argue with me and we would somehow, I don't recall how, but somehow there was this beginning of consciousness that we were Jews and that there was something different about Jews, and that, in some way, I should be aware of this. But I was always, in a sense, I always was reluctant to talk about this to my parents. I'm not sure how. Certainly, I was reluctant to talk about it to my mother. I was reluctant to talk to my mother about anything, because she didn't want to be bothered. When she came home from work, she wanted to lie on the couch and put her feet up and have everybody wait on her and did not want to be bothered by any discussions about any problems that any of us might have and the last thing in the world that she would want was for us to tell her about our troubles. As far as my father was concerned, I could see that he was involved in just keeping his head above water in many ways. Financially, he was not really that well...he was having, I had a feeling, he was extremely unhappy over the divorce and over being separated from us on a regular basis and he also was...and he had his girlfriends and we would go on picnics and somehow or other, we would just not discuss things of that sort.

I now began, when I was about ten, I began to develop more of an interest of my own. I was reading enormously much. I read every night until all hours of the morning and I even at a very young age, and I don't know how I could have existed without my flashlight under the blanket. I had, by the time I was 12, I had read every book in my mother's library and there were several hundred of rather good, mostly novels, among them German translations of English and Russian and French literature and, then, I went over to my father's literature and library and read many of his books, but he tended to go more for philosophy, which was a little too difficult for me to cope with at that early age. But, in any case, I began to...my horizons began to widen and I began to be more aware of my surroundings and because...and, I guess, because of the environment at home, which was a very open, intellectual one, in the sense that we had an open house every Sunday afternoon where everybody came to visit and we talked about every conceivable subject, literature, psychology, philosophy, politics, art, and so forth, I had become aware already of these topics and I had gotten into a habit of intellectual curiosity. I now began to look at newspaper headlines and especially looked at the kiosks, in German it would be called Litfassäulen, the round columns at the corner of the streets where the announcements were made for the cultural events, where the various bulletins were posted for political meetings, where all kinds of proclamations were posted, and it was, really, in a sense, looking at a

Litfassäulen, it really gave you a very good overview of the cultural and political situation of the day. And I began to watch these various proclamations and headlines and so forth, and I began to see in around 1931 that the political situation was heating up. Of course in Berlin West, we were totally unaware of the economic hardships that were so current in other parts of Berlin and, really, we were totally insulated, and even in the public school that I was going to where there were a few working class girls, still, we somehow...it was very much a middle-class atmosphere and I was totally unaware of what was happening in other parts of the city, and I, in some way, however, I began to, I guess, get the drift of these problems in regard to inflation and so forth, and especially the growing unemployment in the early '30s. I got this from conversations with my father especially, who was an extremely, as I said, a politically conscious and socially conscious man, and had a great sense of political sympathies with working class people, even though admittedly, at first, at far remove, because after all, he was still living a very much upper middle-class life, at least as far as I could tell, and I do recall our maid saying to us, Polly, our housekeeper as I guess I should call her, saying to us that when she was 14, she had gone into service as a maid and had saved and scrimped for several years to put a little bit of money into a savings account and that, one day during the terrible ravages of the inflationary period in the early '20s, she had taken the entire savings and had bought one loaf of bread with it. And this certainly brought home to me the tremendous problems that had then existed and I had a sense from a certain bitter tone on her part that she still had much resentment, going back to that period and going back and even up to the present, I also know or, at least I know this from later on, that she had great bitterness against my father. She felt that my father had been a Social Democrat, as had been everyone else in the family, but that somehow or other, as he had been becoming more prosperous, he supposedly had abandoned his earlier principles and was now a typical nouveau riche and they felt that he had abandoned the democratic principles and I cannot ever say that Polly was anti-Semitic. It would be ridiculous to say that. She was nothing of the kind. But, I do feel that there was a certain sense on her part that she associated the excesses or the prodigal living of my father with the fact that he was Jewish. There was that connection made on her part as, of course, it was everywhere and I began to get the drift of this general propaganda. It was beginning to appear on the Litfassäulen and, on occasion, I would see posters and the beginnings of some horrendous caricatures and I...at first, when I saw it filled me with real loathing and also tremendous anxiety. I was not quite sure how to cope with it and, as I said, I began to see this propaganda. But I did not really know how to cope with it and this was one of the major problems I had during those years, the fact that I did not know how to counter the growing anti-Semitic propaganda and the caricatures and the attacks made on Jews on many fronts, because I had so little positive identification as a Jew from my own background and experience.

I continued to go to public school and I always did extremely well in school. I had...and I never had one moment's problem with any of my teachers. I do recall one

unpleasant incident, but that had nothing to do with the fact that I was Jewish. It was just that I believe that when I was eight, a teacher...we had an arithmetic drill in class and she had said she would not allow any coaching and I was always the quickest in giving the answers and, apparently, I had whispered the answer, thinking that I had merely whispered it to myself, but it was audible to the other girl and to the teacher, and the teacher came over and said, "You coached her." And I said, "No, I didn't," and she slapped me very hard and called me a liar, and it turned out later that I had had a very serious ear infection to which I was very prone throughout my childhood, and my hearing was very bad in those days because of it, and I had not been aware of how loudly I had whispered, and my father came that night and told me that he had gone to school that day and had talked to the principal and he made the principal fire the teacher for doing what she did to me. Well, it made me feel very good, but I was quite doubtful as to whether my father could actually get a principal to fire a teacher but, in any case, I liked the fact that he stood up for me. But, as I said, I never heard the word "Jew" in class, nobody ever mentioned it and there was no difficulty about it whatever and, except for the Advent cards that I had mentioned earlier, I don't even believe that there were Christmas parties held at school. I don't recall. I may be wrong but I don't think there were.

And I now came to high school in Germany. The high school starts in the 5th grade and I went to another school. I had gone to two elementary schools and now I went to the first high school, and I was there only a short time but then we had to change. We had to move again to another apartment, a cheaper one, and I had to leave that school and go to another one and, at this point, I made friends with a young girl named Krista, and Krista was blonde and blue-eyed with blonde braids and porcelain blue eyes and a rather stupid expression and, really, not a very nice person, but for some unknown reason, she had taken a liking to me and I am not sure why...I have my suspicions but, in any case, I was so thrilled...

Tape two, side one:

I was so thrilled at her having noticed me. I decided we were going to be friends. We went in the park. Whenever our housekeeper would take my little sister I would go along and so would Krista. We would walk in the park and I remember at one point that she told me grandly that she knew all about where children came from, and I said, "Where?" and she said, "Well, they come out from the mother's breasts," and of course, I had my own ideas that this was not right. I was not quite sure where they did come from, indeed, but that was not the place that I thought it was, but I didn't dare say anything about it. Now, as I said earlier, I had my ideas or suspicions as to why she took a liking to me. I think it was partly because her father was a railroad clerk and they were not...well, at best, they were working class people or lower middle-class people and really typical petty bourgeois and that came out in her whole outlook on life, in her behavior and treatment and so forth, but still, as I said, I was happy to be noticed and I had not had any friends before, so for me this was a marvelous thrill, and, also, there was the additional fact that she was blonde and had blue eyes and I had so wanted blonde braids and here I was with my wispy brown hair that I could never get to grow beyond my ears and I really did not like my eyes or any of my appearance. I thought that the blonde with blue eyes was after all much more normal so-called or common, and why did I have to be different? And I admired her for looking like everyone else, and I guess that was one reason why I took to her, to the friendship. In any case, she would come over to our house for dinner quite frequently. We had hot meals at lunch time, which is usual in Germany, and at night we had supper which meant sandwiches and she would have sandwiches with us, and very often when I went to my father on a Sunday, she would come along and he would invite her to come with us. We went on picnics and we went to a café for my beloved *Apfelkuchen, mit Schlagsahne*, apple cakes with whipped cream, and she would come along to the café, so she shared in a lot of the goodies that my parents were very generously offering because they, too, were happy that I had a friend and wanted to foster this friendship, even though I don't think either one of them particularly liked her. She was certainly not a particularly intelligent person. There was another thing. I was so happy at finding somebody who didn't seem to be unusually intelligent and didn't stand out because of the intelligence. She was just like everybody else, and I guess that's what I wanted to be.

In any case, only one time I was invited over to their house and I got there and I remember that the mother was sitting in the kitchen and it seemed to me a rather poor household. I was a little bit taken aback. I was not used to this kind of environment, and I don't know, I think we may have had a piece of cake or something, and I had the sense that her mother was hostile towards me. I couldn't put my finger on it. I wasn't quite sure how, but I just had a feeling...there was some kind of sense of hostility toward me and I felt uncomfortable. We went along with this friendship, so-called, and then in November of '32, when Hitler first won his first partial election, there was already the sense...and I got

this from home, from my parents, that the case was already won and that the National Socialists were going to be in power, and there was a great sense of anxiety among all of my family and friends and so forth, and the next morning in class, Krista came up to me and in front of everybody during recess and in front of everyone, she said in a loud voice, at least she didn't make any effort to subdue her voice, she said, "I can't be friends with you anymore, Susan. My father does not want me to be friends with a Jew," and then she just looked at me with those cold blue eyes and didn't say any more. I was so overwhelmed with horror and with rage and...that I just felt my whole face, I just felt that I was going to choke. My emotions were coming up into my head. I could hardly breathe but I couldn't say anything. I could see that everybody was watching and listening and the shame and the embarrassment over having her say this in front of everyone to begin with, and also the sense that she had absolutely not the slightest feeling of compunction about it, that there was not one word about, "I'm sorry," and this was after half year of what seemed like close friendship...It was to me an absolutely incredible trauma. I was then eleven-and-a-half and I remember that night I came home. I could not...I think I must have mentioned it to Polly. I don't remember now what I said. I guess someone must have said something to me, and I don't even think I cried. I was just too enraged, too upset. My eyes were burning with unwept tears, really, and I remember I could not sleep all night long. I was up all night long and all I kept thinking was that never again am I going to come close enough to anybody to expose myself to this kind of hurt, and it was something that stayed with me for many, many years. It left an indelible imprint.

This was only the first of many such incidents, and I would say that on the whole, over the next five years until we left in November of '38, the main thrust of the whole Nazi period, as far as I was concerned, was really much more a psychological than it was physical, because we did not suffer physically particularly. We did not have any...I mean obviously there were many restrictions on our lives socially and otherwise, but, on the whole, it was the psychological effect that was really indelible, and, as I had mentioned before, because of the fact that I had never developed a positive Jewish image, I found it so terribly difficult to respond to any attacks that were directed against me or against the Jewish people in my presence. I did not know...how did I know what was right and what was wrong? And at this point I began to...of course the *Stürmer*, this infamous horror of this hate sheet put out by Julius Streicher was being published daily and there were many times when the girls in school would leave a copy on my desk during recess, and I would come back to the desk and after recess...and I didn't know what to do with it. I was afraid to throw it away. I was afraid to read it. Obviously I was afraid to read it. I just did not know what to do with it. What I usually did was just put it under the desk or something. The problem was that there was this tremendous fear. Part of it was that I was always very short. I was always the shortest in class and the youngest, and that was in fact, one of the reasons I had never been told to skip a grade, because the teachers felt that it would not be good for me, because I was already the youngest and the shortest. And because of the fact

that I was short, I guess, and possibly because of the fear I always had of my mother, somehow this combined to a fear of any kind of physical confrontation. I was really terrified of any kind of physical confrontation, in spite of my being an excellent gymnast and being an excellent athlete in many ways, I was just terrified of being beaten up, and I knew that there were occasions when the Hitler *Jugend* boys or boys in the Hitler Youth were beating up Jewish kids. And at that time, the BDM Girls [*Bund Deutscher Mädchen*], in other words, the League of German Girls, they were also now proliferating in the school and they would beat...and many of them were much taller and stronger than I, and I was not a quick runner, so I was always afraid that I was going to get beaten up. And it became a rather overwhelming fear. It never really materialized but part of it, I suppose, of the reason why it did not materialize, was because I learned how to make myself inconspicuous. This became my great defense. I sort of melted, I learned to melt into the landscape. I wore my hair short and I wore basically the same clothes as the other girls and, of course, no make-up. No young girls in those days wore make-up, and I wore ankle socks, as did the others, I wore oxford shoes, as did the others. I wore skirts and blouses, as did the other girls. The only difference was that mine was not a uniform. The other girls wore white blouses and navy blue skirts and navy blue jackets with the insignia, and I wore just a regular shirt and usually also a navy blue skirt but sort of a tweed jacket that, in fact, in its outline, was very similar to that of the other girls—these uniforms. So, in any case, I learned to be inconspicuous.

I happened to be blessed with being farsighted, so when I would walk down the street, I could look ahead to the end of the block and even beyond and I could see if there was any danger approaching. If I saw a group of uniformed kids, young people, especially boys, or for that matter young girls or both, I would very quietly cross the street. And I learned how to evade danger and it became almost a second nature to me to look out for danger as I was walking the streets and to become extremely alert to any possible dangerous situation. From the time that Hitler came to power, I would say that there was not a day that I did not walk to school or walk back from school without a sense of fear in the pit of my stomach. But as I said, nothing actually materialized. The only thing was that there was so much around me in the atmosphere, in the things that we heard about and the things that we knew that were happening, and what we were told by friends and relatives and so forth, so that it was clear that this was not simply an irrational fear on my part. I mean, these were things that were going on. It was just something that somehow or other, by the grace of God or whatever, if you want to call it that, I did not fall victim. There were, however, a couple of very unpleasant incidents in school, several unpleasant incidents in school, not only in the general sense. At some point during the following year of 1933, we were separated in the classroom. I am not quite sure when this was done, but we were told we had to sit in front of the classroom so that we would not contaminate the Aryan children, and I sat next to a young girl who was half-Jewish. Her father was a Czechoslovakian Jew and her mother was a Gentile, and I think she was also Czechoslovakian. I don't recall, but,

in any case, they were living...they were caught in Germany. She could not get out. Her husband was already back in Czechoslovakia, I believe, and they were living in a rather precarious situation. But, as I said, the girl was considered half-Jewish, but, still, because of the father's background she was considered Jewish under the convoluted racial arithmetic of the German laws. And what happened one day was, I was sick that day and in one of my very frequent respiratory problems, and I came back to school the next day and I noticed all of the Jewish girls—there were only five or six Jewish girls left in the classroom—all looked terribly pale, one girl's eyes were red and it was quite obvious that something had happened and I asked what happened. I was told that in French class, when one of the girls in the back had been talking, the teacher told this girl that she should come up to the front and sit in this vacant space in my seat which was vacant next to that Jewish girl, and this young girl got up and said extremely arrogantly to her teacher, "I cannot." And she was in a BDM uniform of course, like most of the girls by then. She said, "I cannot believe a German teacher would ask an Aryan girl to sit next to a Jewish girl." At which point there was total hysteria and pandemonium in the classroom and the Jewish girls became hysterical. But the French teacher, to her credit, I might say, and this was unusual because she was...she seemed like she was a dried up old spinster...we always sort of made fun of her, but that day I wish I would have been there, because later on I wished I could have told her how much I appreciated her courage, because she stood her ground and said to her, "But a German teacher can ask a German girl to obey her teacher." Nevertheless, the girl refused to sit there and went to the principal to complain about the teacher, but somehow or other the whole matter was apparently not taken any further and the principal managed to side-step the issue. But this showed only the kind of pressures that were already being exerted in the classrooms in those days.

In any case, as time went on, and I am not quite clear about the various time periods here, but some of the Jewish girls were disappearing and going into private Jewish schools. It never occurred to me to ask my mother to send me to a Jewish school. I didn't know that such things existed. It never was talked about and because I was always told about how bad our finances were, it just did not occur to me to even think about such a thing. So, I just continued to go to school and put up with the treatment that I was getting. Among the... The one thing that I might say that was positive, if there is such a thing, about the Hitler movement, was the fact that for the first year after he came to power, there was religious instruction in the schools, including even Jewish instruction, and we were assigned to a Jewish teacher for one hour a week, and each time when we left the classroom there was general tittering and even loud derision on the part of the Christian girls, but, somehow, it didn't seem to bother me particularly because I enjoyed the Jewish instruction. We had a marvelous teacher. She was a rabbi, [Rabbi Regina Jonas] an ordained rabbi who was unable to get a rabbinate because of her being a woman and I have a feeling that she was really a feminist, but, of course, could not say so at that time. She had...I always thought of her as being sort of a biblical matriarch. Something like a Rebecca from the Bible. She

was rather an imposing figure and quite handsome and beautiful black hair that she had braided around her head, and I learned for the first time about the Bible and I immediately was carried away by the beauty of the Old Testament, and I read the entire Bible and I came to really love the whole...all those stories and she was very proud of me. I was one of her prize pupils, and that year we had a Chanukah play. She put on a Chanukah play. I don't recall where it was held, but I was one of the candles, supposedly of a menorah, and we all had some little verse that we were supposed to recite in Hebrew, and it was a very exciting thing to me. I was very pleased, and I might also add that both my parents came to this celebration to witness my debut as a great actress standing up there in some little nightgown and saying a line of something. And I never realized at the time how much it cost my mother to witness this sort of celebration because of her views, but, in any case, my father was, of course, terribly proud of me, but this instruction was terminated at the end of that first year.

One other incident that will always remain in my mind was: there was an old history teacher, in fact, a very unpleasant man, and whose suit probably hadn't been cleaned for the last 10 years, and I had already become rather contemptuous of him. Of course, I would never dare to say to him out loud because I knew so much of what he was teaching in class was complete lies, and one day in the class, and, as I said I had to sit in the front, one of the girls behind me asked me to give her a date, a historic date, that's the only time these girls would talk to me was when they wanted my help for either a date or how to spell something or a name of something or whatever, and, in any case, they asked me for a date, and I whispered or something to her because I was afraid not to. That was one problem I had. I was afraid not to give them these answers, and he turned to me and he said, "Keep your mouth shut. You are merely a guest in this country." Now the fact was that he had already been a teacher—this was the Augusta Victoria Hochschule (Lyceum), and it was a school to which my mother and her younger sisters had gone a generation earlier, and he had been among their teachers. He knew their story. He knew their history and he knew the family, and for him to say something like that to me, presumably to curry favor with the girls in the classroom, or to show what a marvelous patriotic Nazi and German he was, was so unbearable that I was absolutely beside myself with anger and rage. And, of course, I came home that afternoon and, again, there was no one that I could speak to. I probably did say something about it to Polly. I don't remember if I did. I don't remember. I may have not even have said anything, and I certainly did not say anything to my mother. She had her own problems at this time coping with Nazi spies in her department and so forth, people who were trying to get her out and tried every which way to get her discharged from her job. So I certainly didn't want to bother her and I just could not talk to anybody about it, and I was up the entire night and all I could think of was, "Why didn't I say something back to him? Why didn't I walk out? Why didn't I do this? Why didn't I defend myself? Why couldn't I fight back?" I was enraged by the fact that there was nothing I could do, and the sense of this powerlessness became so overwhelming that it was something that

stayed with me for a long time, because it carried through into many other situations in my later life. And I realized...I didn't realize at the time, but that is really what added to my sense of depression, because I knew there was nothing I could do. I kept telling myself, "You know darned well that there is nothing that you can do." What could I do? You know, there was nothing that I could do to defend myself and, yet, I was angry at myself for what I considered almost cowardice in not talking back to him in spite of the overwhelming powers and forces arraigned against me. At the same time, I was just horrendously enraged at the whole situation.

There was an additional thing which became a constant source of really undercurrent of constant rage and anger and that was that once a week we had to go to the auditorium to listen to a propaganda speech, usually by Hitler, and we had to sit on the back bench. I guess what we would now call the ghetto benches, totally separated from the rest of the girls, but we had to attend. There was no way for us to get out of it, and each time when he would say something against the Jews, you know these incredibly hyperbolic and irrational statements that he and others indulged in, the entire school almost would turn around and look at us and look at our faces to see our reactions, and the strength of will and of nervous energy that it took for me to make my face into a total poker face during those times became almost like a...it became a habit which unfortunately, a habit which remained for me so that for many years to come, at times of extreme stress and extreme anger and extreme pain, whether physical or otherwise, I would put on a poker face so that nobody would have any idea what was going on inside me, and I was simply totally unable to express my emotions because of that old ingrained habit. Another thing that I recall, was that we had to go to a performance of a movie about Horst Wessel, one of the young Nazi leaders whom everybody knew, had been a homosexual and who had been murdered because of some conspiracy...who knows why? But they had made a cult hero out of him in the Nazi movement and we all had to go and see this movie, and I recall I was just so appalled and repelled by the gross propaganda of this film and, yet, in spite of myself, I got carried away by the emotional force of it and at the end, when he was shot, I recall crying violently and being angry at myself for crying, because I knew that this was all propaganda and probably the entire story was a total fabrication from beginning to end. And at the end, of course, there was this terrible ranting and raving by someone, I forgot whom, about all these communists and the international Jewish conspiracy and so forth and so on in the usual way, and as we walked out, I felt that I just could not look at any of the other girls. There was a mixture of embarrassment and total sense of alienation and it was just incredible...And I had this kind of sense for so many years that I could just never shake off, and there were a number of other problems that were developing. Among them, should we say, "Heil Hitler" in school or should we not? And, of course, every morning as the teacher walked in, everybody was supposed to get up and give the "Heil Hitler" salute and there was this question of whether we were supposed to do the same or not, and first there was the question: Should the Jews do it or shouldn't they? And somehow or another the feeling

was finally that for the Jews to say, "*Heil* Hitler" would be a desecration of the holy Aryan alliance or whatever, and we were then excused, but, again, it was always a frightening moment and for me to stand there and have everybody around me salute and I was not saluting...there was always that one minute when I was expecting some kind of repercussions that never happened. One time, though, I was in the situation that was even more frightening. I had been walking...

Tape two, side two:

...down the street and I came up to the curb just when a parade was passing with Nazi banners and brown shirts and a band and the whole scene, and I was standing right at the curb where everyone could see me...there was just no way for me to avoid the issue, and, of course, everyone else was raising their hand in the Nazi salute, and I just stood there with my arms down at my side and shaking like a leaf inside and yet somehow I had the impression that everybody was watching me and that now there was going to be all kinds of horrible repercussions, but, in fact, probably, again, because I was short and because I had always managed to be rather inconspicuous nobody somehow noticed it. But, in any case, that moment passed, but it was a rather frightening experience for me.

I might now explain a little about what was happening at home. We were developing a sort of subterranean network among the Jews in Berlin. We all had the impression, an impression which I think was fostered deliberately by the Nazis, that our phones were tapped, that our mail was read, and that there was just no way that we could communicate without being overheard, and that every communication was in some way dangerous. When we wanted to say anything, we would walk into the bathroom and pull the shades down, turn the water on full force and then we would whisper, and the impression was that each janitor or superintendent of each building was a member of a cell, a Nazi cell, and that he was a creature of...that he would walk around in the building and listen to conversations. We had no way of knowing whether this was so, it may well have been, but we had no evidence. In any case, the codes that were developed when we talked on the phone were in some ways a little bit funny. Somehow or other my mother and her sister would talk on the phone and say such things in such a tone of voice that anyone who would listen would have to know that they were trying to say something else, and sometimes I couldn't help but laugh in hearing when she would say, "Well you know that it was going to rain this afternoon, don't you?" Of course, it was all terribly ponderous and yet nobody ever called them down on it, and in any case, it became...the atmosphere became tremendously oppressive. We slowly but surely...first of all my father could no longer work in the banking business, the finance business. He made a precarious living with some kind of commissions, third party commissions in some way...financing some investments somewhere, but it was all rather shady, and my mother amazingly enough continued in her position, and, when sometime later, *Kempinski*, being Jewish owned was sold to *Ashinger*, another chain restaurant store, she was taken along because the managing director thought extremely highly of her, and it was absolutely amazing, but until the last days of November of '38, she remained in her post as the only Jew among 7000 Gentiles in that business. It was really something quite remarkable because he personally would not allow her to be fired, though she had constant problems with provocateurs and people were coming into her department trying to provoke her into saying something. And there was one time when she told she was at a conference and there was a man whom she knew was

a Nazi spy and a provocateur, who had tried for a long time already to bring her down, and a military parade was going down the street from the army of some sort of unit and everyone else walked to the window, but she didn't, and he turned to her and he said, "Well, I can see Frau Neuländer is not interested in our German Army." And my mother, never at a loss for words, answered him, "Well, since my only brother died in the First World War fighting for Germany, I have not been as happy about military matters," which shut him up good, at least for the moment. In any case, the atmosphere, as I say, became very oppressive. I was becoming more and more isolated. I had one girlfriend who was from a lower, middle-class background. She was a very bright girl but her father was not doing very well. They were just barely struggling along and she and I would meet and get together but we had very little money. We had almost no pocket money and there was really very little we could do with ourselves. The whole life just became very circumscribed and rather sad in many ways. And yet, somehow, I was not...I did not seem to feel that kind of restriction...I guess, somehow, I kept on walking the streets of Berlin—it seemed it was my feeling—it was the only way I felt that I could be part of this society, and also in a sense, I think, I was sort of...it was a self-protective device in the sense that I could keep acquainted with the changing atmosphere and sort of keep up with what was going on as a sort of an alarm system by going into the streets and watching what was going on so that I could be prepared for myself and my family. And I think in many ways I had a great sense of what was going on because of the very fact that in the school, the girls and in general, the classroom and the teachers, of course, mirrored the prevailing atmosphere outside, and during the Nuremberg Laws suddenly things became much tougher and much tighter in '35 and Polly had to leave because my mother's boyfriend, who was then living with us—and she couldn't marry him for various reasons extraneous to the story at this point—he was under 45 and the laws were that if she was under 45, therefore she could not live in a household where there was a male, a Jewish male. She had to leave and we now had to cope with various Jewish women who were trying to take over as housekeepers, but, for the most part, the Jewish women in Germany had not been used to this kind of life and they did not really know how to cope with it, and it became a pretty sad situation. But I had to do quite a bit of help, but I was not that much interested. My main interest was in reading and compulsively listening to the radio. Unfortunately, of course, we could not hear any outside or foreign news, only German news which was unbearable to listen to, and I fixed our radio in such a way that I could receive short-wave. I knew that this was a capital offense and what I did was I used to turn the speaker and turn the radio way, way down and put a blanket over the radio and then put my ear right against the speaker so that I could hear news broadcasts, and a few times I heard German language broadcasts once from Germany and once late at night, I believe, from Amsterdam. I heard Salzburg festivals from Copenhagen and, to me, those were some of the green oases of our existence at that time. And I should say that I received one of these German broadcasts from Moscow, not from

Germany, of course, and I had, in any case...we had a rather empty life in many ways and yet somehow we managed.

On occasion, I would sneak into a movie and we were not supposed to use public transportation any more, from, I believe from 1936 on, but because I did not “look” Jewish in quotes, I could do a lot of things that possibly some other people might not have been able to do. This was, in fact, another element that I think was of great importance. The matter of appearance, because, of course, in a large city there was no way for people to know who was Jewish and who wasn’t unless they knew them personally or unless that person in quotes “looked” Jewish and, as I said, the fact that I did not look Jewish and looked more like a...you know, I had a small nose, brown eyes and brown hair, but in general, my coloring and so forth, I looked inconspicuous like any German girl maybe from Silesia or something. In a sense it almost made me feel guilty. I felt that I was getting away with something I might not have if I had looked more typically Jewish, and so these neurotic conflicts were growing, I suppose, somehow spurred on by general tendencies within me to begin with but also because of all these problems around me that I really had no way of expressing to anyone. And there were over those last few years several periods when, seemingly, the pressures on Jews were relaxing. One of those periods was in ‘36 during the Olympic Games. Just before that, after the Nuremberg Laws, the benches in the parks were painted yellow and marked for—if I remember correctly—non-Aryans only, or some such thing, and the other benches were green and, of course, no one ever sat on those yellow benches, or hardly anybody. Well, about a week before the Olympic Games started, these benches were suddenly painted green and, in general, you could see there was a general loosening up. We had...somehow we instinctively knew that if we wanted to go anywhere, or use transportation, or go to a movie or do anything, there would be no problem. And during the Olympics, there were many foreigners in the streets and it became a marvelous experience. I suddenly had a feeling that the outside world had come to us and that I had contact, that there were some people out there that we could contact and, yet, I had the sense that I...many times I would love to go up to someone in that street who looked like a foreigner and say, “Do you know what’s happening to us Jews here? Do you care? Does anyone out there know about it? What does the outside world know about us?” But I didn’t dare to, of course. You had no way of knowing who the person was that you were speaking to. It was much too frightening and much too dangerous a process. We did hear about one incident where a rather foreign looking or dark looking man had been riding in a limousine at night and he was dragged out from his limousine by a mob in the street who was under the impression that he was a rich Jew and they beat him up, and it turned out that he was an attaché of the Italian Embassy and the Germans the next day had a hard job to apologize to the Italians for their offense.

I remember that, during those weeks, of course, Jesse Owens had this marvelous achievement of winning the gold medals and I recall going to the movies and seeing how he had...how the Germans at the games had done everything to harass him and to prevent

him from winning. They made him start over again and they claimed that there was a wind in the back and whatever, and each time he would go, he ran even faster than the time before, and I was sitting there thoroughly relishing every moment of this experience and, of course, around me the Germans in the audience were sitting there in complete silence and nobody dared to say anything and nobody dared to make any comments, and of course I didn't make any comments. All I know is that I went there and it did my heart good to see that experience. Of course, a week after the Olympic Games were over, the benches were again painted yellow and, in typical German fashion, they were, if anything, always good at keeping things to their routine and doing everything exactly in good bureaucratic fashion. And, in the meantime, I had finished school and now in...early in the winter of '36, yes...and I might go back and say that I had been sent in the last year to a private Jewish school that was...had been formed sometime earlier by a man who had...a Doctor Adler who had been the principal of a very famous boys' Gymnasium in Hamburg where he had done some magnificent experimental work, and he was known to be a magnificent educator and he was dismissed from his job and had formed this Jewish school and, because of the fact that I was already ahead in school anyhow, and that my mother wanted me to go to work as soon as possible, I was to go to this school which was known as a *Pressen*. In other words, it did two years of curriculum in one year. I came in three months late into the school, in late '35, and left in the Spring of '36 and thereby completed the tenth grade at age 15. Now, I was sent first to an agricultural school in Silesia, a horrendous experience. It was one of those schools that had been set up by various Jewish communities, Zionist communities, and so forth and so on, and all I know is that the man who was the head of it was a homosexual who was later, I might say, some years later, arrested, and I was told, for such activities, and he was probably a marvelous man for the boys, but he really had nothing but contempt for the girls. There were ten of us girls who had to take care of 80 boys, which meant that we had to do all of the laundry and all of the cooking plus helping in the fields and get up at 4:00 in the morning and start the fire and so forth, and, for me, who had never done any heavy physical work, it became an absolutely overwhelming experience, plus I had a hand problem that went back...and I am not sure where it started...it may have been from my early days as a gymnast, and it really was a wrist problem which was not diagnosed until I was much, much older, but I could not rotate my thumbs properly and it made me extremely clumsy with implements and cleaning and things of that sort, and he would make fun of me in front of everyone because I was so slow, and treated me quite abominably. And other people would come up and say, "Why do you think he treated you like that?" And I never said anything, but I know that it was because he had seen in my eyes from the very beginning that I knew that he was homosexual, and I guess I just was not very happy about the way he treated us girls. And I could just never fit into that kind of pattern of serving the boys and being their servants, and at night I was so exhausted that I couldn't sleep half the night, and it was after two months, I became extremely ill and had a very high fever and eventually the doctor was called and said that I was totally

exhausted, and I had to go back. I could not do this kind of work and I was sent back to Berlin.

I was sent out again a few months later. Somehow my mother always liked to get me out of the house, because apparently there was some psychiatric evaluation by someone that I was having a problem because of her boyfriend. Heaven knows what. I never was privy to the various details of this Freudian analysis that was always ongoing and of which I was a lifelong victim in my mother's home. In any case, I was sent to a relative in a small town in Silesia, near where my father had been born...Gleiwitz; I am not sure what the Polish name is today, I think it's Gliwice or something of the sort, and it was my father's younger sister, his step-sister and her husband, who was much older than she and who was an Orthodox Jew and probably the most miserly man I have ever met in my entire life. And it was an absolute misery. I had to work in the office, which I didn't mind, I enjoyed the work, I liked organizing and I liked working, but I had to live in their home and he insisted on kosher food and, at that time already, slaughtering had been forbidden so that there was no meat available, and the only so-called protein that you could get was pigeons. And I would get one tiny pigeon for dinner and the rest was so little in terms of food because he was so miserly and so stingy about household money that I was always hungry and I would stuff myself with cake in the afternoon from what little pocket money she was giving me. And the interesting thing to me was that, at that time, I had to go to a commercial school, as everyone had to go until you were 18. I had gone to a commercial school...No, I had not yet. I was going here and, being that it was a small town, everybody knew the family. Everyone there knew that you were Jewish. When I went to the school, there was no question that I was Jewish and somehow, because of the fact, maybe because this was a Catholic community, somehow there was less enmity. I felt less hostility there than I did in Berlin, and, at the same time, the communities, of course, were much more separated there, openly separated, in the sense that it was impossible for us to participate in any general social activities of any kind. There was like no thought that you might ever go to any general cultural or social function and the only thing I remember, that I did participate with my aunt in singing in the choir for "Elijah" and for a performance at some future point and I don't recall now where exactly this was to take place. The whole experience was a very unhappy one for me. I mean, living there, not singing in the choir which I loved. And...but, as I said, the interesting thing to me was the difference in the way in which the Jewish community was much more isolated in that city than it had been in Berlin and, yet, in some ways I felt more comfortable there. Perhaps because there was more of a sense of being among your own and being among your own kind and there was a certain sense of protection that came to me from that. I can't really explain it any other way. I did not make any particular friends there. The young people, the young Jewish people there, most of them still were in some ways maintaining themselves, I don't know how. Their parents apparently still managed to have some money, and most of these young people could not go to college or university, as far as I know. I do not know exactly, but I do know that they

were not working. I was, I think, if I remember correctly, the only young person in that group who was working, and I had a certain sense of contempt for them. I felt that they were...many of them were quite a bit older than I, and I felt that they were really parasites and I was not particularly fond of any of them. And I had a certain sense of decadence about the way they were living. They liked to have the typical young late night parties and lights out and whatever. It seemed to me trying to carry on life as usual at this point to me seemed like...something very incongruous in the view of what I could perceive to be such a serious political situation and yet I didn't feel that any of them had that same sense of precariousness. And, in any case, I was quite unhappy there, as I said, and I pleaded with my mother to let me come back and, eventually, six months later, she did, even though she felt that I should not always be indulged in these weaknesses on my part, but her boyfriend, or my future step-father, was the one who spoke up for me and, in any case, I came back.

I had a rather interesting experience on the train back. I had told my friends I was going to live with my father for a while. We thought that that might work if I would live with him and be his housekeeper and, maybe and whatever, and I told him when I would be coming to the train station in Berlin and I was on the train coming back from Gleiwitz. I had to change trains in Breslau, what is now Bratislava,¹ and on the train, which was several hours, I got into a conversation with a man who was a postal clerk of some sort, and he started talking to me and he said, oh, what a nice girl I was, and I seemed so bright and everything, and he was telling me...and he just somehow managed to say something, and I don't know how I got to talk about it, but he said he always knew what Jews were like. They smelled so terrible and they looked so awful, but he could always tell a Jew, and, of course, I said nothing and we just kept on talking and talking and talking, and he said what a nice girl I was, and we talked about all kinds of interesting things. It was not a question of him making a pass at me or anything of this sort. I think he probably was old enough to be my father. I don't remember, he just seemed interested in talking to me, and when he left the train, and he was ready to leave the train, he had his foot on the lower step getting out the car and I said to him, "Didn't you say that you could always tell a Jew when you met one?" and he said, "Oh yes, I certainly can," and I said, "Well, you missed one." And he almost fell off the train, and that was one of the very few satisfactions that I had in those years. I would have loved to say more, but of course I really didn't dare to. I felt like...I really felt a little bit vindicated.

And, then, I stayed with my father for a while, but that also did not work out. He had late night things going on, and, then, also, I met a young man and he and I had started a romance, and my father really couldn't cope with this. He just couldn't stand the idea. He became extremely jealous, and there was a great deal of problems and I, again, I went back to stay at my mother's, after all, and I now began to work as a secretary in an immigration office, *Alltreu*. My mother's sister had a job just below me in the same

¹Mrs. Faulkner seems to have erred here. Bratislava was and is in Czechoslovakia. Breslau is Wroclaw today.

building in Potsdamstrasse, and it was the *Paltreu*, Palestine emigration office, and this one was the *Allgemeine* emigration office, *Alltreu*, and for all countries outside of Palestine, and I was the general clerk and typist and translator and whatever, and we had quite a few other people, of course, and I was the one who was put in charge of organizing the documents file, which was, of course, an extremely important one, because each file really held the life of at least one person in these papers and sometimes an entire family. And I had a triple cross-reference, I remember. It was very intricately organized and I might tap myself on the back and say that in the 12 or 14 months that I was in charge, not one paper was ever lost or could not be found. And, shortly thereafter the...and this had been organized, by the way, by the German government as a semi-governmental office, with the help of the Warburg family, a banking family, and it was specifically organized by the Germans to channel the Jewish money into the German coffers, because they had not decided that they would allow emigration. And, I should go back at this point, and mention something rather important in regards to the emigration question. Over the last several years, there were many times when I would ask, "Why don't we leave Germany?" And I recall in '36, when I was 15, shortly after the Nuremberg Laws were proclaimed, pleading with my father to leave Germany, and he had already had an offer to go to England. He had an offer to go and join a film company, and I said, "Why don't you leave?" and he said, "Look, the Germans are not going to do anything to me. I'm a war veteran. I have the Iron Cross..."

Tape three, side one:

...and I said to him, "But look this is complete nonsense," I said. He told me that he had the Iron Cross, he had fought for his country, he had nearly died. And I said, "But they don't care any more about these things." I could not believe that he could be so blind and that he could really fool himself like that. Now the fact is that, some years before in fact, shortly after Hitler came to power, I talked to him about...to him about Hitler and I said, "Doesn't it look like it's a very frightening situation?" I don't recall exactly what I said, but it was something along those lines, and he told me at the time, "Well, after all, Hitler did do some good things and look, at least, the unemployment has been eliminated, and people are back at work and it looks like he is doing some good things in the construction." And I said, "I know, but don't you see the danger?" And I could not understand that he just did not seem to...occur to him. I had a feeling that he really did not want to know, and as far as my mother was concerned, for her, the idea that she had a powerful position, relatively powerful, at least for her, it seemed like it, and made good money, was so important that nothing else really mattered. We didn't really have any other money and so we didn't have any assets. We didn't own any property. My mother no longer had much jewelry to speak of. At some point, she had her fur coat, which she sold, I forget why, and so we really had no money, but the fact is to her, having power was always terribly important and she saw if we left and went to another country, we would have to struggle and start from scratch, and there were stories coming back about people who had to work as cleaning women and laundry women and servants and so forth, and, to her, this was such horror that she simply could not face it. To me as a young girl, of course, this meant nothing. I just wanted to get out because, as I was walking the streets, as I mentioned earlier, to me the most overwhelming sense I had was as if I was in sort of a glass enclosure in a giant prison, and I could see everybody and...but nobody could see me and I could not get out. I was caught, and the only way I could keep my equilibrium mentally was to keep aware of what was happening but, yet, I had this constant sense of oppression and of being locked in. And it did not seem to me that the grown-ups or adults around me had that same impression or sense. It seemed that they kept adjusting each time that there was another limitation. It seemed to me that they would just [be] adjusting to it, pulling their little horns around them, or their little borders around them a little bit tighter and just sort of adjusting, and I suppose that this mental attitude that the Jews have always had to have of adjusting to the environment and somehow making do...and that and I guess there was the human feeling that the evils that we are familiar with are more easily faced than those that we are not familiar with, and I suppose also there was the feeling well, one day this was going to be over and it's a passing phase, and it's not going to be here long, and one day everything will pass.

And I might go back again to cover some other territory that I had not spoken about. My mother's younger sister, next younger sister, was married to a singer. He had been a

singer in the Prague opera, a tenor, and when he came back to Germany and was then for a while in a smaller...at an opera in a few other towns in Krefeld and in Dresden...but, eventually, he was forced to give all of these things up and eventually he was one of the singers who became a member of the Jewish Kulturbund that was formed shortly after Hitler came, in order to provide employment and cultural opportunity and artistic opportunity after the Nazis placed the restrictions on Jewish artists. And he was a singer who somehow or other managed to make a highly precarious living. He made a little bit money by singing in the synagogue services on occasion. It so happened that he, really, if you want to call it that, looked Jewish. He had an extremely Jewish-looking nose, if there is such a thing, and he was conscious of it and he was made conscious of it, and that made him extremely afraid of walking the streets and so forth. My aunt, on the other hand, was sort of dark blondish and had blue eyes and what might have been "looked like" the epitome of a German housewife, and she did manage to get some work as a bookkeeper and so forth and managed to keep the family together, and they went back to live in Berlin, as I said, and, then she and my mother became quite close again. And, then, she got this job at the Paltreu and obtained the job for me at the Alltreu upstairs and I was now exposed to daily pressures that were really beyond belief...the emigration that was available, as against the people that wanted to leave that was...We did not see so many people. We had a waiting room outside and, on occasion, there were quite a number of people out there waiting but, in fact, there were really not that many people, because at this time it was late '36, or rather '37, late '37 and early '38, and things had become much more difficult and the one...and I recall, each day we would get notification of perhaps, let's say, six visas that were offered for the Dominican Republic, to work at the...in some capacity, in the jungles, or to clear the forests, or I don't remember the details, but practically all the jobs offered of course, were almost invariably physical labor and required the kind of training that none of the Jews that were applying for emigration could possibly have had, and somehow we managed to evade and lie and change things and whatever and in some ways, a few people always managed to get out...but it was a constant terrible, terribly struggle. You sort of got the feeling that there was a tremendous pressure, like a tremendous water pressure coming through a very tight little faucet so that only a few little trickles are coming out on the bottom and that was the trickle of people that were being let out to leave the country.

And I remember one particular incident. I came...and I was always one of the first to come in the morning. I had to be there by 8:00 in the morning and I got there to find a man sitting there, very thin and pale and shaking like a leaf, and it turned out he had just been released that morning, early that morning, from a concentration camp, and had been given 24 hours in which to leave the country. I guess his family had bought him out. I don't know the circumstances, and within the next eight or ten hours, we had to manage to get all of his papers together, we had to manage to find a place for him, we had to manage to get him on a boat, and get him out of the country. And I recall that the man didn't say too much about his experience. He was obviously so frightened, he couldn't talk and, as I say,

he was just absolutely shaking like a leaf, and I recall that I had to fill the form out for him because his hand was shaking so much, and I started to shake myself just to see him in this situation. And, so, in any case, we managed to get him out, and there were a few other people like that and it was, still, a very sad too tiny minority and the rates, of course, of the tax that people had to pay, were varied from near zero for people like us, who had no assets, to people who had a lot of assets and it might be up to 99% of their income.

And I might also go back, since I mentioned concentration camps...I, of course, over the last several years we had heard many, many rumors...rumors were rife almost from the very beginning. I remember, in fact, my mother saying sometime in the early '30s, a year or two after Hitler came to power, that they were doing such horrible things to the Jews in these places, that some of them were so horribly abused that they would be crawling on the floor, yelping like dogs from the abject humiliation and debasement, and when, after I met this young man that I had spoken about before, my boyfriend, who incidentally also did not look Jewish, if anything they might have thought possibly that he was Italian, maybe...he was often taken for Italian, even part Negro, but, in any case, he did not look Jewish... He and I belonged to a small group of young people—all of us, I think there were about six or seven of us who would get together and go out on Sundays and go on picnics and maybe even sneak into a theater on occasion—and, in fact, I remember this one fellow who at one point in earlier years had apparently been a Communist, possibly a Communist and certainly at least a Socialist—he had talked us into going to a performance of “Hera and Leander,” a German play by Grillpalzer, and we went there to sit up in the balcony, and when we got there, I think it was standing room, and I looked down and I noticed that the entire theater was filled with blackshirts, and we looked around and here was Mr. Goebbels and his family sitting in a box just below us. We could have practically spit on his head if we had been so inclined, and it was a sort of provocative and a rather interesting experience.

But, in any case to go back, one day this same friend of ours so-called, asked us to come and visit him in his apartment. He had a small flat in the northern part of Berlin which was near the wedding and was the working class neighborhood, and we walked in and here was a young man sitting there who told us that he had just escaped from Dachau the day before, and this was, if I am not mistaken, it may have been in '36 or '37, and he had been in prison not because he was Jewish, but because of his Socialist or Communist background or whatever and somehow he had managed to escape. Now, I am not sure if that was feasible at that time, perhaps it was feasible at that time from Dachau, and he was a strong young fellow who had obviously been very resourceful, and I remember how...he didn't say too much about his experiences. He didn't tell us too much. I knew only partly because my boyfriend was so horrified at this fellow, this so-called friend of ours exposing the two of us to the danger of meeting this young man who was an escaped, you know, concentration camp inmate that he insisted on our leaving immediately and I didn't ever hear the end of that story. In any case, the point that I was trying to make was that we were

very aware of concentration camps from early years on, and we knew that the main victims were the political people, Communists and so forth. After that it went to other groups and so forth. There was also the fact that we heard about...it was always difficult to know how much of the dangers we were told about were real and how much was just imagined and was deliberately fostered by the Nazis to keep the Jews under control, or to keep the general population under control. This is something that was really difficult to say but, obviously, people did disappear and people did go away, and, but I guess in those early years that not that many people were killed, although we began to hear stories of people who had been killed and whose ashes were then brought back in urns and shipped back to their families who, furthermore, had to pay for the postage and pay for the urns, for these ashes. And I remember how that struck me as the most horrendously sadistic thing and, of course, I did not yet know how much worse things were to become, and how much more beyond all limits of imagination of sadism people could go when all restraints were removed. And we were...some of the situations that were going on...we heard about these people being in prison and I...and, yet, in some ways, somehow this did not touch us particularly, and I remember reading about, a book by a Hungarian, I believe he was an extreme leftist, I am not sure what, about...who had been released from...who had been in Gestapo hands...I don't remember now when I read the book, but I remember the book and some of the graphic details that he described and they remained very vivid in my mind for many days. And so, in any case, these were some of the stories that we were beginning to hear.

I might also say one more thing about the general population. There were very few people that openly dared to help Jews, or side with us. The French teacher who had stood up to her student in class was one I mentioned. There was one other incident that I thought...there were two other incidents in fact that I thought were quite remarkable. In my composition class in German, in public school...I think that I was about 13, the teacher had asked us to do a book review about three favorite authors, and she specified that they must all be German and, of course, me being a rebel, I refused to listen to this and I promptly came up with a review about Selma Lagerloef, who is Swedish, and John Galsworthy, who is English, and Theodor Storm, who is German, and she had said that we could only write three-quarters of a page on each, which made me very unhappy. I would have loved to have written reams about them but I couldn't, and she, in fact, the next day asked me, as the only one in the class, to read my review about those three authors. And had no, apparently, no hesitancy about my reading about non-German authors, which I thought was relatively courageous in those days, at a time when courage was really measured in some of those very small acts of personal integrity. I also had my gym teacher, who was very fond of me, and I was at one point in the 6th grade, I believe...I won first prize in a national gymnastics contest for my grade, but she called me over and she said to me, "Now Susan, you know that I can't give you the prize, because if the judges would know that a non-Aryan has won in gymnastics, they would be terribly upset and angry at me. I don't dare to talk about it to them," and she was almost in tears at having to hurt me so much, but, in fact, I didn't

care...to me the whole thing was absolutely ludicrous. I knew that I had won. I knew that the girls knew that I had won, which to me was even more important, and I knew she knew it, and that was all I cared about. I certainly was not interested in advancing the cause of gymnastics in Nazi Germany. So, I didn't need this for my ego, but, as I said, those were some of the few incidents where there was some integrity. There was also a young girl in my class—she was the only Catholic in our class in Berlin. She was from the working class. I believe her father was the superintendent of her building. She was the only one who was kind and talked to me. The other girls all totally ostracized me, would not talk to me during lunch and so forth, and this was already in a time, I think in '34 or so, or '35, when I believe that I was perhaps one or two or three Jewish girls left in the class. All the others had already been taken out. She was kind enough because she herself was also ostracized, because she was Catholic, and also because she was working class and she would have to leave the school at age 14, and so, I guess, in some ways, there was a certain bond between both of us being sort of socially unacceptable, and I appreciated that. And then there was one additional thing which was that shortly after the racial laws came up, Nuremberg, an anonymous...no, not an anonymous, a book came out in paperback or some kind of very poor quality paper, and I don't know where it was published, I don't recall who printed it and, unfortunately, I don't remember who it was that wrote the book. It was some, either a Catholic or Protestant clergyman. I think it may have been Niemöller, but I am not sure, and it was a book to refute the racial laws of the Nazi Reich, and it was such a courageous step and it had his name on it. I really was...it just comforted me so much to read that book. I don't recall now how I even got to the book, or who gave it to me. I have no idea, the only thing is that I remember reading it and I remember feeling touched by the sense that there are some decent people who still had the courage of their convictions, and, at the same time, I realized that it took more than just ordinary courage, I must add this, to stand up against this juggernaut, because very soon after the Nazis came to power they had spread such a sense of omnipotence, and of total watchfulness that everyone felt that there was just no way that you could resist. You had a sense of...that anyone who would stand up in public...it would have been an incredibly foolhardy thing to do, because, as I said, of the sense of total omnipotence that the Nazis had created almost as soon as they took over. Now, I had one incident that brought this home to me and that was when, I believe I was about 15, and I was crossing...going through the streets, going through the *Tiergarten*. I think I was going to visit my father, I don't remember, and at some point we stopped, we were stopped because Hitler was passing an extremely long block away through the middle of the *Siegesallee* in the middle of the *Tiergarten* and it was really the equivalent of two, possibly two avenue blocks in New York City and, in fact, it was so far away we couldn't even see them from where we were, but in any case we had to stop, and there were black shirts, Gestapo, I believe, uniformed and I think brown shirts, I don't remember now, facing us, and I think there was this storm trooper standing almost directly in front of me and in his holster he had a large pistol, and I remember standing there while we were being

stopped and thinking, “What would happen if I would grab this pistol and run like mad towards where Hitler is passing and try to kill him?” I realized that this was totally irrational and I realized I had never had a pistol in my hand in my life. I had no...I was a terrible runner, as I said, and I had always lost every running race because I was too slow, and the idea that I could possibly manage to get there and do this was absolutely ludicrous and, yet, it was almost like a compulsion for me to think about it and fantasize, that I would do this and I would run and I kept thinking about this and one side of my head was saying, “Well, what if you kill him and wouldn’t it be great,” and the other side of me was saying, “Yes, but even if I got up there, and if I could manage to pull the trigger, and even if I could manage to kill him, there would be ten others to take over for him, like hydra-heads, and even worse, and if they would arrest me and they would kill me, O.K.—that was one thing I must say that did not bother me in the slightest—I was not worried about being killed. At that point, I had developed the early adolescent messianic idea, I guess, that I was going to lead my people out of bondage and I was going to be the savior. It was certainly totally unjustified, but I guess it was in keeping with my age—of that early adolescent sense of needing to be a hero and feeling yourself omnipotent and so forth. But the one thing that stopped me, aside from all the other considerations, was the fear that they would, then, get a hold of my mother and my sister and that they would then be tortured and I...and that was the one thing, it was the torture that I think all of us were dreading. We had heard horror stories of eggs that were heated to a boiling point and then were placed into the vaginas of women, and some of the most horrendous stories...and, so, I knew enough about what was facing us and, of course, as I said the whole thing was a total fantasy and was a daydream. It was totally irrational and, in fact, silly, but I am only telling the story to illustrate the kind of dread that I had and the kind of sense that we had that it was totally pointless to even try to resist the prevailing atmosphere. Of course, this was true...of course, also of the Christians around us. And yet, there were some who could still behave with decency. As I said, my mother’s boss and some other people, but, on the whole, I also have to add that the Germans took to that entire antisemitic persecution like the proverbial ducks to water. And, of course, the young girls that I was surrounded with in class were perhaps...they were, I do feel, I have always felt that young women, especially young girls, can be terribly sadistic, perhaps almost more so than boys—I am not sure why, but that was my impression, and certainly it was the general sense that Hitler in fact, was brought to power mainly by the women and the emotionalism of the German women, who not only resented the economic situation but who just absolutely became almost sexually dependent on him, sexually bonded to him in some fashion. All we had to do was look at the newsreels and see the women who were listening to his speeches and you would get a sense of almost having orgasms while they were listening to him. This is not something original with me. It has been observed by many others.

Coming back to the girls in school, I do want to tell one more incident. At some point in...I believe ‘36, we were...a physics teacher was brought into our class, and he had

been shell-shocked in the First World War and apparently severely wounded and was...He was Jewish, he was an older man and he had a shaking of some sort, probably from his injuries, and he came into our class, and what the girls in our class did to make that man miserable cannot be described. I would be daily and absolutely almost in tears to see what they were doing. They would put gum on his chair, they would throw catapults at him, they would start screaming, they would throw papers, they would...It just cannot be believed because the man would stand up there shaking like a leaf with fear and with suppressed rage and with impotence and, of course, at some point, something happened. I don't recall what now, but I think it was after the Christmas holidays or something...he did not come back and I still remember that, and I saw the sadism and the brutality among these young women and how they enjoyed torturing and tormenting this poor man, and it was just really beyond belief to see the gleams with which they saw him suffer and, to me, this was a microcosm of Germany. I am among those who feel this was, at least, until now, an unredeemed people with very little sense of compassion for anyone outside their own family.

Tape three, side two:

Finally, I come to the events of 1938 which was a decisive year. We had all realized now, adults including, that emigration was the only possible out, and since we had relatives in Guatemala, we were able to obtain visas to leave for Guatemala, but not for several months and, eventually, we were going to go to the United States but we had to wait for the quota. In the meantime, my mother's boyfriend had to go with his parents since they were all stateless. They had *Nansen* passes as White Russians. They had gone to Bulgaria and there they stayed. They left in May of '38. They were going to go to the States also, eventually. In May, also, my father called me one night to say that he had to leave. He had been warned that he was going to be picked up that night on whatever charges and that I should come over and help him pack because I was always very good at packing, and he had to make believe that he was leaving for Belgium just for a one-day trip on a business trip, and I had to get as much as I could into his small suitcase for a one-day trip. I did, and I said good-bye to him and he went to Antwerp, and then he wrote to us from there but we didn't get much mail from him because of the difficulties of his existence and being short of postage and whatever. In the meantime, we were preparing to leave and for me it was a traumatic time also because I would have to separate from my boyfriend. Of course, I knew that I would have to stay with my family and he felt that he would have to stay with his family. His parents were quite elderly and his older sister had already emigrated to Indonesia, to some island there, but he stayed behind and they were not quite sure what they were going to do. And they had a little bit of money and, apparently, they had just not wanted to leave before. So, it was all an extremely traumatic time for everyone. It was a traumatic time, of course, because...since we felt that relationships were tenuous. We did not know if we would ever see each other again and, somehow, whenever he and I were together, we always had the sense that this might be the last time, and every time together became a very emotionally charged situation. And...we now are coming into the fall of '38 and I had to leave my job in order to pursue full-time getting the documents for our emigration. It was a tremendously complicated job and the Nazis, of course, intentionally made it more complicated. They wanted to make us as miserable as possible. There was the additional factor that if you, as a Jew, went to any kind of office, you had to wait until all the Aryans were taken care of and then you would be taken eventually after everybody else had been served in turn. In my case, again, because, of course, I did not "look Jewish," in some instances I was taken for the family maid, and one clerk, in fact, asked me if I was the maid for the family Neuländer and I didn't say too much about it, but I remember that we would have to get there at let's say, 6:00 or 7:00 in the morning and just stand in line for hours on end and wait until everyone else was served and then we would be taken care of. And it was a job that was absolutely full-time from morning till night and accompanied by tremendous mental stress and physical stress, not only, but mental stress, and somehow we managed to cope, as we usually did, and, then, what happened finally was the events of

the Crystal Night, *Kristallnacht*. And I am a little bit hazy about when exactly we heard the first rumors of what was going to happen, but it probably was on the 9th, which I believe now was a Wednesday, and it was a dark, sort of a grayish day, hazy and slightly warm for November, and somehow there was some kind of electricity in the air that we sort of had a feeling to stay at home, be cautious, don't go to the offices and so forth, and I might add, by the way, that just a few days before, my mother and I had to go together to Gestapo headquarters to get a good conduct exit, and this was something not usual and the reason we heard—I did not know it at the time—but the reason it happened was because one of my mother's cousins had at one time years before been a member of the Communist Party. And therefore, we were now involved in this kind of roundabout situation, and I will never forget...we had left instructions that if anything happened to us, my little sister would be taken care of by my aunt, and we went off and my mother, as usual, make-up and long beautiful legs and hat and dressed in her best Berlin manner, walked in and a Gestapo officer came up to us and asked her to sit down at his desk. I sat down nearby and my mother, who was always, who could be, when she wanted to be the most charming and also the most flirtatious person in the world, turned on every ounce of charm and every ounce of sexiness and flirtatiousness with this officer. I couldn't believe it, and, yet, he swallowed it whole and he absolutely got under her spell, as most men did who met her when and she really wanted to get them...when she wanted to charm them and she was an extremely charming woman, and we were there for half an hour and he escorted her out, bowed and everything else and that was the end of it. And there was not even a "*Heil Hitler*," I might add. It was really absolutely...when we came out, we both laughed. I was so sick. But my knees were shaking all the time and for all I know hers may have been, but she never admitted it to me. She would never admit any weakness. But I must say that I really admired her for her guts that day. It was an incredible performance and, in any case...coming back the Crystal Night situation...what was going on was an oppressive night and then somehow or another, various people came to the apartment and, as I said, my mother's boyfriend had already left, so that there were only women in our apartment so that we were considered relatively safe. And we had no money and we had no political connections, so presumably nobody would bother us, and a couple of friends, male friends, came to take refuge with us. Then after dark, my aunt with her husband the singer came, and they came after dark, as I said, with him pulling his hat way down over his Jewish-looking nose, and they told us that there was already destruction going on outside. Stores were already being looted and the sidewalks were littered with glass, and it was a pretty horrendous scene and nobody really talked very much. We were just all so overcome with the experience and, then, my mother did something that I must say I will never quite forgive her. And she is now dead four years. It was really incredible. She sent me out into the streets, and I will never forget her saying to me, "Well, Susan, you with your gentile nose, you won't be bothered. Nobody will bother you." And she sent me out into the streets of Berlin on the night of Crystal Night, the pogrom ongoing then, to buy, believe it or not, pork chops, because, after all,

the guests could not go without a proper dinner. They couldn't eat eggs or something. It wasn't as if we had nothing to eat in the house. It was just that she felt that they had to have proper food, and she sent me out to get...and the irony of it, for me to buy pork chops.

I had to walk clear through the...to the northern part of Berlin, because all the stores in our neighborhood that we were allowed to trade in...of course we could not trade with any non-Jewish stores. The Jewish stores had all been looted and emptied and I was afraid to go into any stores nearby because they might know that I was Jewish. So I had to go to the northern part of Berlin, and the wedding, which was in the working class neighborhood that I had spoken about earlier, and there I managed to find a butcher shop that was still open and I managed to get the pork-chops, and I managed to find my way back. And this took, it seemed to me that this had taken me eight hours, but, in fact, it only took maybe one hour of long, long walking, but the point is that, in the meantime, I was walking over the sidewalks, with glass crunching under my feet, and on the next street, the street parallel to the street that we were living on was the *Fasanenstrasse*, a famous synagogue, the oldest synagogue in Berlin, and it was in flames, and the fire trucks were there training their hoses on the neighboring houses, but letting the synagogue burn, and go up in flames, and the entire sidewalk across the synagogue was filled with hundreds of people out in the street, as if it was like a carnival to them. They were standing there watching this fire, applauding and laughing and having a grand old time and just thoroughly enjoying themselves. It was a most stomach-turning and horrendous sight I can imagine and something eerie about it, seeing flames light up the sky, and the firemen on the ladders, and the people standing in the reflected light, in the glow of the flames, standing there laughing and applauding, and I was walking through and tried to walk past them in such a way that they wouldn't see that I was crying. I was crying the entire time and I was so terrified that somebody would see me cry. I had my head down all the time and then I came up to near The Wedding and there was a cart. There were some brown shirts and they were beating up an old Jewish man with a long beard and they were beating him up, and there was people standing around laughing and applauding and, as I say, it was sort of like a Roman circus sort of atmosphere that night. And the entire streets, all the streets were covered with glass and here were all these stores totally looted, totally empty of their wares, and I came home and I was promptly sick all over the kitchen floor, and my uncle, who usually had a very delicate stomach, was nice enough to clean up and help and so forth, but my mother was simply incredible. She was just very ruthless about it. The next day she expected me to go out and do my usual rounds of the offices, and I said that I couldn't go out that day because I was very sick and she had absolutely no sympathy for me whatever. It was unbelievable. I must say, in many ways she assumed many of the attributes of her environment, I am sorry to say. And it wasn't until maybe the next day after her sister had talked to her and made her see the light a little bit, that she actually got up in the middle of the night and made some tea for me which almost touched me to tears, because I had never seen my mother do this

in all my years, and she apparently realized that I really had sustained a very severe shock from this experience.

And, then, the next few days, of course, were sort of like an aftermath and I said good-bye to my boyfriend. He came to the station to say good-bye to us and that was a trauma, but still for me it was sort of like in a dream. I could just not wait to get out of that prison. To me it was nothing like a horror and a prison and I hadn't wanted to live there for years and I was so happy to get out. All I wanted was just get out, get out. I couldn't wait and the last days were filled with all kinds of terrible situations because we had to sell all our, practically all of our belongings in order to raise what money we needed to pay for the tickets on the ship and this included...and also my mother told me I could not take my books along, and I had, since I was a small child, I had accumulated books people had given me, my father had given me and others, every one of those books to me was almost like a child, and for me to have to give up all those books, I...She told me that I could take three books, and it was something I never got over in my entire life. I just could not...I didn't care giving up anything else, possibly even the separation from my boyfriend was not as bad, because of my youthful feeling, I sort of felt that we would meet again and it would be all over, but giving up those books, that was traumatic to me.

We had a few dollars left, so we went quick out and got some sheets. For some unknown reason she thought that we should take extra sheets along. I think we would have been better off to buy stockings because as it turned out I didn't have enough later on, but, in any case, we got sheets and then I had to stay up all night washing and ironing them so we wouldn't have to pay customs. And, then, a man came to buy our furniture from us and, of course, realizing what our situation was, he gave us almost nothing for our furniture, and we had no choice but to accept his offer. And, then, the customs man came to supervise the packing and then the trunks were shipped directly to Hamburg to be taken aboard. And we were going to go on a boat, on a German boat, because, as I said, we did not have enough money to buy a...tickets for a foreign ship. And we would have had to buy foreign currency and we didn't have it. We went to Hamburg and there met the aunt that I had lived with some years before a brief time before in Silesia. her husband had died meanwhile and had left her a great deal of money and she was about to marry a man who was a widower with four children. My mother pleaded with her to give us just a few hundred Marks. It would have been enough for us to be able to get tickets for a foreign ship, but she refused, and I might add, parenthetically, that because she did not want to give the state his money, all of them perished in a concentration camp, including the children, because, instead of leaving this money, she was tied to the money, and she and the widower and the four children after they had got married, they all died.

In any case we got on the ship, and it was not only fourth class, it was really more sort of like steerage. All three of us were in one tiny little cabin and I was seasick from almost the first day on for many, many days, and we got into a tremendous storm where we lost one of the engines, and it was a very miserable situation and I was terribly, terribly

seasick, part of it probably because I have always had a lifelong problem with my ears and it affected my balance. And I am a terrible sea traveler, and I suffered from seasickness for many days. In any case, that was not the major problem. The major problem was that we had to eat second shift on the German ship and they threw the food at us, practically. They gave us just 20 minutes in which to eat it, and we were given...the food was ice cold by the time that we got it, sauces were congealed, and they deliberately put hairs in it and flies on it, and it was absolutely horrendous, and they treated us just abominably. It was really the next thing to being in prison, or possibly even worse, because to me, being on a ship always gave me the sense of claustrophobia and this situation heightened it. There were some relatives of ours who were also going to Guatemala and they were on the first class and second class and we did go to visit them on occasion and when we got there we would at least go in the fresh air. At one point, in fact, when I had been seasick for more than three days, my mother got a little frightened and called the doctor, and he said: "She has to get out into the fresh air," because we had no fresh air, or open air deck in our class, and I said, "Well, if I had to go to the second class deck, I would have to go through the kitchen and there was just no way for me to get through the kitchen. I would just as soon die." And, as I said, I think that the atmosphere of being in a German ship, just to me, I think it added to my problem.

Furthermore, there was a young man on board who had been in several concentration camps for almost...I believe he told me for 36 months, and when I saw him he was a tiny little, not so tiny but just totally emaciated, almost totally bald. All his teeth were missing. He was shaking the whole time and he obviously, desperately needed somebody to talk to who was non-threatening, and non-authoritative and who would he fasten on to discuss his problems but me? And he started to unburden himself to me about his experiences, and when he told me that the only reason that he had survived all those months was because he had been a carpenter and therefore was strong and muscular and with a strong constitution and was very young when they took him and therefore he had been able to survive. But some of the stories he told me about...like when somebody had escaped and they had to stand in the snow for 14 hours to wait until this fellow was brought back and then he was beaten to death in front of their eyes and there they were standing in the snow and were not allowed to so much as sit or anything. It was enough to give me nightmares for weeks on end, and I think he was...I don't now remember where he was going. He was going not to Guatemala but possibly to the States. I am not sure, but, in any case it was a horrendous experience.

But eventually, the sun came out and we came to...we arrived, arrived and because of the naval blockades, we had to go all around the coast of South Africa and come up on...or South America, rather, and come up on the side and go along the South American coast and come up in the Caribbean and then come to Guatemala that way and eventually we managed to come to...After two years more we came to the States. I might add, in Guatemala, at the time, they had a very large German population and the dictator then in

charge, a general, was friendly to the Axis only because much of the trade was going...the coffee exports, much of it was going to Germany.

I had initially gotten a job, in the President's office, with the Censorship Office, as a translator because my aunt was the wife of a jewelry merchant and watchmaker and she was an extremely beautiful woman, or had been in her earlier years, and had a very high social position and was very close with the President, as she had been with all the other Presidents before, and of whom there were many, I might add. And I am not sure exactly what her connections were with these various people, but whatever they were they redounded to my benefit, so I am not going to question it. In any case, she got this job for me, but, as it turned out, I really did not know enough Spanish to be a translator. I had only taken a few months of night school Spanish, so it was a little ludicrous for me to be a translator but, in any case, I did...they gave me a leave of absence to study Spanish, which I did. In the meantime, war had started in Europe, and they did not want to hire a foreigner for the government so then they gave me a labor permit, which was very hard to get in those days, and I became a saleswoman at a department store that I had spoken about earlier, to sell cosmetics, and after that, later, we went to the States, and now, I will go back to tell about my father's experience which was pretty horrible.

He had gone to Belgium, as I mentioned, living without papers, and eventually when the war started, fled ahead of the German Army through France and was eventually arrested by the Vichy French and placed into Camp Gurs and there, as he said, he would have probably starved to death, died, or frozen to death, if it had not been for the Quakers, who gave him blankets and supplied him with some coffee and some money and on occasion gave him some postage stamps so that he could communicate with us and so forth and so on. Then we managed to get a visa for him to go to Cuba, which was the only place we could find for him to go at that time. On the strength of that visa, he was sent to a camp near Marseilles, Camp Les Milles, which was a much better place. And there he stayed for a while. In the meantime, however, we came to the States and, irrationally, he decided that he did not want to go to Cuba if we were in the States, because, as he said, he would rather wait until he could come to the States directly. How anyone in his position, knowing what he must have known about this situation, could make this kind of irrational decision is beyond me, and my uncle in Salvador, who was a very wealthy man and who really disliked him intensely for whatever reason, had provided the guarantee for us for the visa...he could not believe...he wrote to me and said, "Now I wash my hands of your father and this is absolutely ridiculous and don't bother me again," and I had to go, figuratively speaking, on my hands and knees and plead with him and say, "Look the man was sick in his earlier days and I don't think he has ever gotten quite well, and his experiences have unhinged him slightly. Please don't hold it against him," and then I had to go back and plead with my father to see the light and he then agreed. And, in the meantime, he, of course, wrote himself now he knew that the Germans were coming towards Marseilles and we should please hurry up and get him out of there. And the Quakers were sending us cables: "Please

do something,” and it was a horrendous situation to put us into...this was in ‘42, I had just decided to get married. I had met a young man who was then in the service and he had proposed and I was very much in love and we wanted to get married and we had next to nothing. I was then earning a living, if you want to call it that, of maybe \$14.00 a week and my sister could not work. We were all living on next to nothing and it was a horrendous situation. We really couldn’t do much and, in any case, he kept writing and saying, “Please do something,” and, of course, he himself had destroyed his chances but, again, I cannot blame him. It was simply the circumstances had just unhinged him. He had just gone through too much in his entire life and eventually he wrote and his last letter said, “I know that the Germans are coming tomorrow and I know what is going to happen to us. I only know that I am not going to go along with them. We are supposed to go on these trains, but I know that I am not going to go along with this.” I am going to go the way my father went and, as I mentioned earlier, his father had committed suicide. In any case, he...then I contacted the Quakers. It was a desperate time, and, again, I had gone to the Cuban consulate in the meantime and asked to have a regular visa so that he could leave immediately, and I was told that Cuba and France had just broken diplomatic relations a few days before, and by a matter of a few days his life was lost because it was just now too late.

And he...while he was still writing to us, “Please do something,” we knew that there was just nothing left to do. It was simply impossible and I contacted the Quakers in Philadelphia and we agreed that this was just a hopeless situation. And then we heard nothing further, and we assumed that, you know, he had been deported and, of course, we already knew here about the cattle trains and what was going on and what was happening, and I got the strong impression, I might add this, from his letters, that he also knew what was ahead of them. It may well be that there were many people who really did not know what was ahead of them, and it may also be that he was not certain that they were supposed to be gassed, and I don’t know whether that in the summer of ‘42 they were already gassed or what exactly was happening. I think the gassing began in ‘42. Prior to that they were shooting them, if I understand it. Whether he knew that death was awaiting him, that I don’t know. I do know that he knew about the cattle trains, and that he did know about the concentration camps, he might not have known exactly what the ultimate fate was going to be.

Tape four, side one:

And I had gone to live in Louisville, Kentucky, because my husband was stationed in Fort Knox, and I went to live with him, and many months later, I don't recall exactly when, my mother wrote me that a Red Cross nurse had come to visit her and had brought her a few small mementos—an old automatic pencil, and I remembered from my father that for me for many years had not had lead in it, and a very tiny little photograph, I believe, and a couple of other things, and told her that my father had been taken to Auschwitz and that he was among those who was chosen for immediate extermination because he was already 50 and in very bad shape because of his long imprisonment prior to that time. She herself, by the way, had been taken, she was a member of the French Red Cross and had been taken along, by mistake, and when the Germans realized their mistake, they immediately released her, wanted to release her, but she wanted to stay a while to help the other people and contact others and possibly get messages to their families, etc. In fact, I believe that she is the person who is mentioned by the Klarsfelds in their marvelous book, or listing that they have, marvelous in the sense of the enormous work it took of giving the names of all the Jews who were deported from France between '42 and '44. I don't remember the exact title of the book. I have it here but I don't recall now. And, in any case, they mentioned her. She was one of those who has helped them in their work because she was so involved. She became so emotionally caught up in that whole tragedy. I thought, at the time...we all did, that he had been taken in July of '42 or around that time and that was the time that he had been killed, and it was not, in fact, until April of this year, when I saw the list that the Klarsfelds had put out. I found that he had been among those who had been sent to a camp—I believe it is called Darcey [Drancy] or Dancy near Paris, and there was held until November of '42, and then he was sent, in November, in early November to Auschwitz and was then put to death. I believe that the date was November the 6th, 1942. I, unfortunately, had nothing left of him because one of his letters were burned in a fire, but sometime later, I found one of his letters to me, among my mother's effects after she had died. And it was...his memory is one which for me has always remained with me, and many of the interests I have had in my later years have really influenced the entire course of my life because, when in 1958, I decided to begin college studies—I had never had a chance to go to college—I decided to go into college studies to major in English and decided to go into teaching because I felt strongly that my father would have wanted me to do something useful with my talents, and I thought that that would be the best way in which I could be useful, which was to teach others and so I got my PhD in English, in great part because of my memory of his values and his emphasis on education and being useful to your society, etc. And in general...and, of course, the money that I got from Germany from restitution because of uncompleted education and also for the effects of his apartment and also because of loss of him as a provider, etc. all that money I used toward my education, undergraduate and graduate studies, so that I could never feel that I was using this money

for any selfish motives, but just to advance those things that I knew he would have applauded.

And there were a couple of things that I just wanted to emphasize in discussing this whole situation. As I look back, it seemed to me that those Jews in Germany who had a closer Jewish identity, as I said, like those that I met when I was in Silesia, in general, had a slightly better time of it, because they did have a sense of their identity and there was a certain feeling of mutual protectiveness, however ephemeral it might have been, which we just did not have. We felt, in a big city, we just felt that each of our units was totally isolated. We could not...we didn't dare to, as I said, I walked the streets but only in the day time and not that much, and we certainly could not be free at night. We were not free to talk on the phone. We really could not socialize freely, so we felt totally isolated. We felt that we were sort of immunized from each other, and the sense, as I said, of this Jewish identity might have been a better protection and psychologically, for me, it left a great...the entire period left many problems for me only because during those early years, as I said, I simply had nothing positive in a Jewish image to hold against the caricatures and the vilifications that I was hearing daily. My father had been a banker. The main attack of the Nazis was against Jewish bankers. My father liked the German girls, and he liked the girls who had round knees and who were a little plumpish and not terribly intellectual, and the usual caricatures were of Jewish men chasing their blonde secretaries around the desk and, of course, I knew that this was not rational, to connect this directly to my father and yet, unfortunately, there was somehow to my immature mind, there was enough in all this talk to make me feel that possibly there might be something in it, and, as I said, I had no one to talk to about it. I had no mature judgment to set against it, and I had nothing but, really, fear around me and I had nothing but a world of adults around me who really didn't want to discuss the entire situation. As in my mother's case, would discuss things only in the most cataclysmic ways. It was almost as if the last day of judgment had come and she...my mother tended to be a tremendous pessimist and always saw things in the worst possible light and put the worst possible interpretation on everything, and that didn't help matters either. She just did not put things into perspective. My father, on the other hand, lived in some ways in a world of fantasy and illusion and some sort of a delusionary optimism which was the opposite problem, and so, I had very few people that could really help me set these things straight.

I should add one more thing, by the way. The major, who had been my gymnastics teacher, and who had been so kind to me for many years, had at one point shortly after the Nazis came to power, had come up to me and said with tears in his eyes that I could no longer come back to his class. Of course, he was not allowed to have me in his class any more and I always felt that he was one of the very few people that I considered as a humane and decent, but, as I said, he was very much in the minority. I might add, by the way, that my sister who was 11 at the time when we left Berlin, sustained in many ways an almost worse trauma. I am not going to go into all her psychological details, but the fact is that some years back she had occasion to go to Russia because her husband was a correspondent

for the New York Times and they were living there for a number of years and she became...came down with an acute case of paranoia to the point where she had to leave the country and could never come back. One time some years later, when they tried to go back, she had a tremendous setback and they realized that there was just no way for her to ever live in Russia again. In earlier years, in Germany, at a time when she was too young for us to tell her what was going on, had left a tremendous mark because she felt that something terrible was happening and that people hated us and that we could not do this and we could not do that and that we had to talk in whispers, but she didn't really know what the problem was and we did not dare to tell her. She was quite a chatterbox and we were afraid, so, in any case, we had to be very careful with her and, of course, she somehow must have thought that this was directed against her, and this may well have been the initial situation that caused her paranoia to grow later on.

And, now, coming back to my own situation, as it developed from the outgrowth of all these, of this early background, I came to really dislike the whole business of the persecutions and the Jewish sadness and the misery and, as many young people I guess had that sense for survival and self-preservation, and for the first several years after, all I wanted to do was just forget about it all. For one thing, I refused to speak German, and my mother practically had to force me to talk German to her in New York and my husband and I—he was from Austria—but we agreed almost immediately that we would never speak German together. Moreover, he had converted already. That was another very crazy story that I cannot go into at this point, but the fact is that he had converted to Protestantism and that I, obviously for some reason, again, or possibly as a reaction to all these years of sadness and repression and misery, wanted to get away from it all and what I saw as into a world that was not neurotic and that was not repressed and not limited and not driven by fear, and I married him and thus began many years of, really, a very crazy-quilt situation that developed into a very unhappy marriage and into many other by-products that were not healthy, and that turned out to be very unhappy, and I realized that many years later that I had gone the wrong road and I could no longer live that life of what I considered really a denial of my Jewish identity. And, unfortunately, my husband had lied to me about his background and I didn't know this until much later, until it was too late and we had adopted two children, who were Christian and, after he became ill and then I divorced him and he died, and I never did find out why he had lied to me but, in any case, to make a long story short, I then, finally, after so many years went back and tried to recover my Jewish identity or, rather, build one which I really had never had, and I am still having a problem because, of course, there had been a background of a general humanistic background. There was a certain amount of political liberalism. There was a certain indifference to religious upbringing. I had never had one. Plus a growing feminist consciousness and I simply could not adjust myself.

I could never really quite fit in to the Jewish organizations in New York City, after I came back to live in New York, after my divorce, and I tried religious observance, even

a very limited one, and found it very difficult, and I tried to belong to Jewish organizations, but if they were much pro-Israel I would have a problem, and if they were very radical, then I had almost more of a problem, and it has been just an extremely difficult situation and, I guess, to American Jews this is not a problem because they having...not ever had this kind of battle to regain or to create an identity, they have not had to try to figure out how to form an identity. I had to try to create myself as a Jew in a sense at age 46, after all those years of tremendously difficult and different kinds of environment conditions, and I have come to some kind of a medium situation, I guess. I have always tended to be sort of moderate in many ways, and this was one of those situations and I have my little observances in moderation, and I am pro-Israel in moderation, and I am Jewish, consciously Jewish in moderation, again, and, I guess, trying to gain some kind of equilibrium. But it has never been an easy situation and some of the habits that I had developed in those early years, especially the two habits of becoming inconspicuous, making myself inconspicuous and not rocking the boat, and the second one of having a poker face and tightening up like a taut spring at a moment of crisis, those are two habits that it has taken me many years to overcome, and I still haven't quite done it. At least, I am now managing to be less inconspicuous, but that is still not that easy and it cost me a great deal in terms of career advancement, because I just never learned how to make enough of myself, because of those many years of early conditioning, and I hope in the next few years to continue what little I can do to maintain the memories and to be a witness to those events that I did witness. And I feel strongly that those of us who had some knowledge of what went on in those early years of the Nazi period, must retain consciousness of it and must speak out and, also, that we must be alert to the early warning signs of that kind of pervasive anti-Semitism that is so common and has always been so common in Europe and, unfortunately, in many communities in this country.

I do not believe that we would ever have that kind of situation in this country as happened in Germany but, unfortunately, there are, as the economic situation deteriorates—throughout history it has been shown that these are times of danger for Jews because presumably because of their specific relationship to financial institutions, so that whatever the economic situation might be, they will be the victims of attack of those who are criticizing the particular economic situation, and therefore I feel it is incumbent on Jews to be alert and also to refute slanders and attacks. I have for many years now been a compulsive “letter to the editor” writer and I have written to everybody in existence that could possibly have said anything to do with the Jews, with Israel, and not only those issues, many other issues, and I think that I almost [have a] compulsion for communication [which] goes back to those early years when there was so much I wanted to say and do that I could not say and do, and that I was prevented from doing, and that I could not communicate with the outside world, and I could not speak up and I was powerless to defend myself. And I think that I am afraid I am stuck with this kind of compulsive need to communicate with everybody from the President about the Vietnam War, civil rights, or

the current administration or the New York Times, or almost anybody that one could think of. And so that it seems to me that, in some ways, I think those of us who did not go through the actual experience of the Holocaust, in some ways—and this may sound ridiculous to those who did go through it—I think, in some ways, the psychological burdens are greater only because we have that pervasive feeling why were we spared, and, in spite of the fact that I know that I did everything that I possibly could to save my father, I will never lose the tremendous sense of guilt over what I have perceived to be an abandonment of him, almost as if he had been a helpless child and I was the parent who just did not take care of him and, of course, I realize that much of what happened was really his own doing, but still I feel that I should have done something, and I think that this sense of guilt is, of course, unfortunately, endemic to the Jewish people I guess partly instilled because of the sense that we were...had...by the earlier rabbinic authorities that we are being punished for our sins, and, also, I suppose, because when you have been a victim for so long, you come to the point where you think that there has to be a reason why you are being victimized constantly. The reason has to be something within you, but these are elements that I find pervasive, and I think those are the one thing I see very little of in the current generation and the next generation growing up in Israel, and I think that is one of the good things of several good things about Israel that perhaps these new generations will finally get rid of some of these tremendous burdens of guilt and self-blame and self-effacement and so forth. Whether that is going to be at the cost of many other fine qualities, I don't know. That is not for me to decide. But I think that, as I look at my own life, after these years, I know that the after-effects are long lasting. I recently, in fact, at the recent conference in Worcester met a woman who had been in several concentration camps and was a survivor and I was absolutely amazed at her resilience, at her good nature, at her positive outlook, at her lack of bitterness, and I think it was probably those qualities that enabled her to survive to begin with. I understand she was very young when she was arrested in Berlin and still quite young when she was released, but, still, when I compare myself to her, here I am, I'm afraid, hopelessly pretty neurotic and with all kinds of psychological burdens and not all of them due to the Nazi period, I suppose. But, in any case, I think that the Holocaust survivors...they faced a situation and they overcame it and in that alone there has to be some sense of...I don't know if I want to say pride, some sense of satisfaction, although I am sure that many of them have tremendous guilts, and I know of many who have afterwards suffered horrendous after-effects and lasting ones. All I am saying is that those who say—and I have had this said to me many times—“Why don't you forget about those years? Let's put it behind you. It's dead and it's gone and it's the past, and let's not go back into the past,” and so forth and so on—it enrages me, because people do not realize how important it is to keep these memories alive, because we must bear witness. It is as simple as that. The Jewish history has been one, really, of bearing witness to so many persecutions and tragedies and none, of course, numerically as great as the Holocaust, but, yet, it is part of our, unfortunately, part of our heritage and those who say that we must bury the past and

not look at it simply do not understand the overwhelming need that we have, those of us, or most of us, at least, who went through these periods, to remember these things and to, at least, put them into some form whether written or, as in this case, oral history and get it out of our heads into some form where it can be preserved. I think that that is a great service that your oral history is doing, because over the last few years I have had much psychological pressure inside me to get these things that I remember down on paper.

One additional fact is some explanations for why the Jews did not emigrate earlier. Why didn't they leave Germany earlier? Some of the reasons I have already discussed. Among them the fact that many of these people felt that if they were to go out into a world, an unknown world where they would have to start from scratch, where they would have to do manual labor that they were not physically or by training prepared for, that they would have no money, that they would have to be in a strange land and cut off from their former world—these were all real and frightening, but they were not all the explanation. There were additional factors, such as what [that] the German government and the Nazi government deliberately loosened the reins on occasion, as, for example, in, I believe, sometime in '34, then came the Nuremberg laws in '35 they tightened it again, and in '36 things loosened up again. And each time there was this loosening up experience, some Jews would say, "You see something is going on, things are getting a little bit better," and their will to deceive themselves that eventually things might, in fact, get better was so strong that it overcame their reservations about the reality of the situation. Plus there was, of course, as I said, the additional fact that we all know that many, many major countries were really closed to the Jews. England was by and large closed, and in order to emigrate to England, you had to have a job before you came there. This was almost impossible for many people because of problems with training and finding jobs and having the proper connections and so forth. In America, on the other hand, you could not come in if you had a job because of the idea was that you would then be taking a job away from an American. In England, they had consideration. On the other hand, was that they did not want you to be a public burden so that if you came to America, you had to protest and to be able to prove that you were not coming there to take a job. All of these were realities and limitations that made emigration ex...

Tape four, side two:

...Some South American countries: they were looking for people. Honduras, for example, they were looking for people who could do very simple manual labor and they were willing to close both eyes, as to whether the former professionals—doctors, lawyers, school teachers, etc.—were prepared to do this kind of work. There was the additional matter that many of the people who did want to emigrate were older people. They were middle-aged at most. Many of them had already gone through the First World War. They were not all that well. The young people, in some cases at least, were going to Palestine, or trying to go to Palestine. That was another difficulty, as we know. There were restrictions by the British and it was a dangerous thing to smuggle in these young Jewish Zionists. So, there were many, many aspects to this problem and I have, unhappily, found a great deal of total misconception and error and really willful distortion, almost willful distortion among the Jewish community in this country, and I am not even talking about non-Jews. I don't expect of them any sense of comradeship, or any sense of empathy for the plight of the German Jews, but I did find—I remember only just a year before I went on a weekend from the American Jewish Congress, and at the table were two women who were talking and talking and complaining about German Jews. One was saying, "I can't stand this. They are arrogant. They are snobbish and I don't want anything to do with them," and I turned to the woman and I said, "You know, I am a German Jew," and she said, "Well, of course, you are different," and I started laughing and I said, "You know that sounds very familiar to me." And at the same table was an elderly man who is a psychiatrist, a well-known psychiatrist, reads *The New Yorker* regularly and obviously not at all a stupid man, not at all an uninformed man, and he turned to me and he said, "Well, then maybe you can explain to me why the Jews were so passive during the Nazi years and why they allowed themselves to be treated that way," and he said something else which I now remember, which I no longer remember for the simple reason, I think, it was so offensive to me that I really blocked it out, and then I proceeded to give him a half-hour lecture as to what had really happened and he said, "Well, I didn't know any of this. Why don't you write about it?" And I said, "Well, why haven't you read about it all these years?" And to make it even worse, I had just now this Worcester conference in October, there was a man there who is from Austria and apparently a well-to-do Jew who is a great fan of Hannah Arendt. I suspect that he really is not that well-educated. He likes to put it on, and he and I got into a fight about some comments that she had made that I had found offensive and I, again, found this same kind of total lack of information, and I think that this was one of the [not clear] facts that impelled [compelled] me to want to write about my autobiography about those early years. I wanted to tell people a little bit about what made German Jews act as they did during those years. I also wanted to show the reality of what it was like to live under this kind of a dictatorship. It is very easy for Americans who don't understand what it is like to live in that kind of country to say they could have defended themselves, they

could have done this, they could have done that, not understanding one iota of what actually happened and I am...and I think that anyone who can, even in the slightest, contribute to clearing up some of these misunderstandings will add something to general sense of mutual understanding. I might add, finally, that I just now listened to a debate about nuclear freeze and arms in wake of the WABC movie, "The Day After," which had this enormous media hype, and during this discussion that followed, Elie Wiesel said, "We must remember the things that have happened because memory becomes our shield for the future." And I think that was a magnificent comment, and I will end with that, only to say I hope this has been interesting to you. If there is anything further that you want to know, please call on me and I...I cannot say that it was a pleasure, but it was an interesting experience and I say good night to you now. Shalom.