

HOLOCAUST TESTIMONY

OF

HELENE GOODMAN

Transcript of Audiotaped Interview

Interviewer: Josey Fisher
Date: February 23, 1981

© 1990
Holocaust Oral History Archive
Gratz College
Melrose Park, PA 19027

This page left intentionally blank.

HG - Helene Goodman [interviewee]

JF - Josey G. Fisher [interviewer]

Date: February 23, 1981

Tape one, side one:

JF: Can you please tell me where you were born, and when, and a little bit about your family background?

HG: My maiden name was Henia Flint. I was born in the city of Lodz in Poland, which had 600,000 population; 300,000 Jews; 200,000 Poles, and 100,000 Germans. The Jews consisted of basically three classes: the very assimilated class of doctors, lawyers, professionals who did not want to have much to do with the Jewish culture or Jewish language; they were highly assimilated and very seldom mingled with the other two classes. The second class consisted of merchants, apartment house owners, well-to-do people, middle class people, mostly a large group of Orthodox Jewry which had their own laws, and a rabbi, and like a community center which ruled their lives. They experienced great antisemitism in the form, sometimes of a pogrom. In the little town of Przytyk was a very famous pogrom.

JF: Can you spell that for me please?

HG: P-R-Z-Y-T-Y-K. The third class was the most tragic class. They were called the working class, and also called *chalupnik* [home manufacturing]. *Chalupnik* is a family, sometimes wife, husband, five to six children in one room with a little bench for shoemaking or a sewing machine. The wages of these families were, in comparison with today, would be about \$15 a week or less. I had visited this part of our town at a young age, 15-16, not just for curiosity, but I was always involved in studying social problems, and I have seen a family living in that one room where for dinner a pot of carrots was served, and if one child dared to take one of those carrots, he got a spanking. But, what impressed me the most, this was on Friday night, as poor as they were, the mother washed these kids, put on a patched-up little dress, made them nice little braids with a piece of ribbon, and sent them off to the synagogue with their father. There was no case of juvenile delinquency between these most poor people. No Medicare, no Medicaid, no Social Security, no welfare--many of them died quietly. Many children died from hunger, disease. That picture stuck in my mind. I did blame some of the more wealthier Jews that there was very little charity in those days.

JF: Was there a *kehillah*?

HG: Yes.

JF: That governed all three of the groups?

HG: Yes. But they were sort of helpless in a country which was basically antisemitic from both sides. Now, there are two kinds of antisemitism: one which comes from the top from the government with orders, and the other one which is deeply imbedded

in ignorant people who are taught by the Catholic Church and their schools that the Jews have killed their God. I came across that antisemitism at a very very early age. Because I was very musical, I liked to go at Easter to the Church, and there was sitting a woman with a seven-year old daughter, and I was sitting next to her and I heard her say to the child, "You see over there our God lying. The Jews have killed him and don't you forget that." I turned around to her and I said, "You should be ashamed of yourself because that is not what Jesus Christ has taught." And she said, "Who are you?" And I went out. That means that I was exposed to the antisemitism at a very early age.

JF: Which group was your family a part of, of the three that you described?

HG: Poor Orthodox Jews. My father was employed by the *kehillah*.

JF: In what capacity?

HG: He took care of the *kashrut*, of the ritual killing of the animals; in other words, he was an Orthodox Jew, but very enlightened. I must admit I have experienced a very unusual fact that the Orthodox Jewry, since my father was a member of the *kehillah*, did not permit him to buy me a piano. Because I was very talented and at an early age, my father recognized that I should take piano lessons, but the Orthodox Jews felt that if I will have a piano I will have boys and girls coming in, sing and dance, and my father, as poor as he was, we had to rent a room to put in the piano. And I had to go for many years, before I got the piano, to practice to other people. My father could never attend a concert. And that made me apprehensive and not favorable to the Orthodox Jewry, I must admit. At a very early age, at the age of 12, I dared to tell my father that I don't believe in God.

JF: What about your mother?

HG: My mother came from a very aristocratic Jewish family in Lodz. They were the first settlers in the city of Lodz. One of them, by the name Zeltsman [phonetic], was a fighter for Jewish rights, which is recorded in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*. So maybe my fighting spirit comes from there.

JF: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

HG: I had a brother from my father's previous marriage. I had a brother and a sister from my mother's previous marriage. I was the only one from their marriage. And, as I said, I have shown a talent for music at a very early age. And since my parents were poor, they could not afford, practically, to give me piano lessons, so there was a cousin in the family who started me off. But I had the great ambition to continue these studies, and I conceived the idea that after I am finished with school, I will go to Warsaw to live with my sister, my older sister, and I'll stay with her and I will enter the Warsaw Conservatory as a non-Jew.

JF: While you were still in Lodz, can you tell me about your schooling, whether or not you had any kind of Jewish education whether your family belonged to a synagogue, and anything more about antisemitism there?

HG: Since my father was an Orthodox Jew, he did not belong to a synagogue, but they had various little congregations in which he performed sometimes as a cantor; he

had a beautiful voice. And I went to public school, elementary school that was free up to the 6th grade.

JF: This was a Polish school?

HG: Polish. I did not go to a Jewish school. As a matter of fact, I only heard about Jewish history from my uncles, who told me the great beautiful stories. I listened to my father teaching my brother the Talmud. That was the only exposure, but I personally went to a Polish school. There were Jewish children there, but there was no objects of Jewish history or Hebrew or anything.

JF: Was there any experience of antisemitism in school?

HG: Not in the elementary school. I don't recall any of that. But going to high school, that was not free. There were no free high schools in Poland at that time. I still didn't want to give up that education. And, since I happened to have been bright, that's what they used to tell me, I applied for a scholarship and I won. I went to a private school, high school, which was owned by a Jewish woman. It was a very well-known high school, but they did not teach any religion.

JF: This was a Jewish private school or a...

HG: It is not exactly for Jewish children, but the majority of children were from Jewish rich families. I got this scholarship because I passed various tests, and I was so determined to get this education that the owner of this school, who was an aristocratic Jewish lady, she must have had some pity on me, because I cried and I said that I will not give up this, that I will steal hours, that I will sneak into the school, if she doesn't let me come. But I have had a few wonderful years of education, and I was able to perform with a music teacher there, and I also wrote poetry. I wrote, in Polish, the poetry to the music of Chopin. And I proved to the principal that I was worthy of the scholarship.

JF: You said that once you were in high school, that some problems began. Could you describe those for me?

HG: The problems began, that I realized that I will not be able to continue my piano studies, being Jewish. And that was a very painful thought, that I am a citizen of a country which does not permit me to continue and to study, having talent. I must say that in the high school, I became very idealistic. I believed that people are good. I became a little bit of the socialistic side, aware of the injustices of the Polish government and of the poverty of not only Jews, Poles, too. And I favored communism. At that time, it was the age of 15 or 16. I even joined the Communist Party, which was legal.

JF: This was around what year?

HG: That was the year - '31.

JF: Was your family involved with non-Jews in the community at all? Did you have any interchange during your--these years with your communistic...

HG: I never went out with a non-Jew on a date, we stayed away...

JF: Any friends were non-Jews?

HG: No, practically none.

JF: Your associations then with Communism...

HG: The first time that I joined this Communist cell which was primarily Jewish, and there came the great disappointment, because in one of the demonstrations, I noticed that the leaders from our cell never went out to be beaten up or to be arrested. They always sent us, and many of the girls have suffered a great deal. Thank God, I was not caught at that time and I told them that I do not approve, and I went out. That was the end of my experience as a Communist.

JF: Did anybody in your family, that you know of, serve in the Polish army?

HG: None.

JF: Can you tell me a little bit about the years, during the 30's, as Hitler came into power in Germany? What was the feeling in Poland at that time? What was your experience?

HG: Shall I tell you first about the study as a non-Jew? And then I will go in, with that.

JF: Certainly.

HG: At that period, I was accepted because my name was Flint, and I had big blue eyes and light hair and excellent Polish language, without an accent. So I was accepted...

JF: They knew you were Jewish?

HG: No, they did not. I studied there as a non-Jew. The application, my father could never appear there. He had a beard. My parents never heard me at any of the recitals or at the graduation.

JF: Did they accept you on your word, or did you have to have some kind of proof?

HG: No, no. I was examined. I played for them, and that Professor Joseph Tutinsky was a very famous piano professor. He liked me and he accepted me; and occasionally he used to make a remark to me when I played Chopin, in whom I identified mostly because of the melancholy, of the suffering in this music, and he used to tell me sometimes with a little smile, "You know the way you play Chopin I think you must be Jewish." And I looked at him and I said, "Well, I suffered a lot and maybe that is why I feel Chopin so deeply." He let it go at that. After the graduation, at which I played with an orchestra the second movement of the Chopin Concerto, my sister was only present, my father could not come, I still did not want to reveal until I really graduated and had that diploma in my pocket. I walked over to my professor and I said, "You know you were right. I do play Chopin like a Jew. I am one." He said, "Yes? But you are a nice girl anyway." That was the end of my career studying as a non-Jew, which was extremely painful for a girl of ideals.

JF: This was what school?

HG: The Warsaw Conservatory. In Warsaw.

JF: In what year, then, did you graduate?

HG: I graduated, it was the year 1935.

JF: Did you know of any other Jews who were there?

HG: No. I did not identify myself and maybe they didn't identify themselves, so we didn't know about each other. But it was very, very difficult to study, and as a young girl, one could not understand why this should happen. Why is it so bad, or such a crime, to be a Jew? Now that started the first thinking. Why? What are the real roots of antisemitism?

JF: Did you experience any antisemitism living in Warsaw with your sister?

HG: Since I did not socialize with non-Jews, the Jews, at that time, even before Hitler, already lived in a ghetto. They did not socialize too much with the Poles, except for the very assimilated Jews who very often did not identify themselves as Jews. But I had never known too many, or practically none of non-Jewish families, but I knew there was antisemitism since I myself was already a victim of it by studying as a non-Jew. But the idea was for me - Why? Then I realized that there are two kinds of antisemitism. The one which comes from the top, the Jews are doomed right from the start. The one which comes from the people is ignorance, and they can do a lot of harm; but when the two get together, then there is no hope. And that goes for countries even today.

JF: Did you have any association with the *kehilla* in Warsaw?

HG: No. I lived with my sister, and some of my father's family were well-to-do people--I used to go there for dinner sometimes. But that was about all. I had to practice five, six hours a day.

JF: So you were not involved in the Jewish community very much there? When do you first remember hearing about Hitler, and how?

HG: In 1933, during the summer vacation which I spent in the mountains, I came across a German young man, a German Jew young man, who one day got a telegram from Germany: "Come back immediately; they are burning your store." Then I had a little conversation with him, "Who is burning your store?" And he told me that there is a new Nazi party in Germany, and they are destroying the Jewish stores and other businesses. He left and he said to me, "I am afraid I shall never see you again." That was the first time that I heard that there is a powerful party coming up, and when I went back to my town, I told this to some Jewish influential people, what I heard and what I experienced. They said, "Ah, come on. There is nothing to worry about here. They will never come here."

JF: When did you first start thinking they might come?

HG: That must have been around 1935. I heard Hitler speak on the radio. This devil had such a power and almost mesmerized his masses when he spoke. And I heard him say, "Mr. Rosenfeld," this is how he pronounced President Roosevelt, "You can have your Jews, I'll let them go naked. You can have them." I heard Hitler's voice, and he was the most powerful speaker. He promised the German nation to return their dignity as a nation, to make them wealthy, to make them again the most powerful nation in Europe. And I got frightened inside me, that he mentioned already the Jews, not the extreme form,

but just addressing President Roosevelt that he can have that, because apparently nobody wanted them.

JF: Tell me about 1939 in Poland before the invasion?

HG: The situation was very electrified with the meeting of Ribbentrop with the Russians, in which they plotted already the division. Then the provocation in Czechoslovakia, first when he went in. And each time he took over Austria and Sudetenland, and each time he said that he has no more territorial desires or designs. And this is how he lulled all of the war. There was not a way, what he is preparing for. Of course, the Jewish question did not come up right away. After he took over the regime in Germany, in which many people say that it cannot happen here because it is a democracy, but Germany also had a democracy before Herr Stresemann¹ and many great men. Germany was a wonderful country in which the Jews grew and developed, and it was the most cultured nation in Europe. I studied German, I was raised in the German culture. That was a shocking thing that today you hear very often that it cannot happen. But he started out with ten people, and then it did happen. May I say why I think it did happen? I would like to emphasize since I have studied the history of the German Reich, and in my opinion and in many people's opinion, the humiliation of the German nation after 1914 war, the taking a nation of 60 million and leave them ruined and leave them without means, there was a good background for Hitler to come to power and to promise them so much, which he actually in one area he couldn't keep. The economy was so bad that, after all his promises which he couldn't keep, he conceived the idea that the best scapegoat would be the Jews. The German Jews were wealthy, the German Jews had a lot of properties, which he could just take over, and he started it immediately after he got into power. And then he saw that this is a very easy thing to do. Nobody protested it. The Jews did not fight back; they were never raised to fight back. They didn't have any weapons, and that is how he gave to the German nation by taking away and throwing out from apartments and throwing out from the stores and taking every conceivable thing the Jews owned, he gave to them. And to perform that, he opens the prisons and let out all criminals in Germany to perform these tasks, because, after all the German nation, a cultured nation, not all of them wanted to dirty their hands with such a job.

¹Gustav Stresemann,(1878-1929) chancellor and Foreign Minister of Germany during the Weimar Republic (1923-1929).

Tape one, side two:

JF: Can you tell me what happened to you and your family during the weeks following the German invasion?

HG: The German invasion took only a few days to conquer all of Poland. The resistance was very low. When they entered our town, they immediately took care of the Jewish intelligentsia. In other words, the most prominent people either were shot or taken into prison. In other words, their plan was to cut off the heads, to cut off the leaders, so the Jews panicked, but they still stayed in their apartments.

JF: Did you have any thought of trying to leave Poland at that time?

HG: Well, I entertained that thought, but my parents were already older and sick people, and I couldn't leave them. I had opportunities to go to Russia, but then, many people started from our city of Lodz to escape to Warsaw, which was a very foolish move. My father told me there is no escape; they are everywhere.

JF: Were you in Lodz at the time of the invasion?

HG: Lodz, right.

JF: You and your sister?

HG: No, my sister lived in Warsaw.

JF: You had been living with your family?

HG: Me, my mother and father and my brother, one of the brothers. The other brother was married with three children, also in Lodz. And my father told me there is no escape. But the interesting part of it is, that the very wealthy Jews could have left and they still did not believe what might happen to them. I asked them, "Why with having so much money, why don't you run away? I have no money. I cannot even move." And they said, "How can we leave our homes, our factories, our families. There is no use to go away." Second, there came even to Poland before the invasion, I must mention, a great Jewish leader by the name Jabotinsky. He was one of the foremost orators of our time and a great Zionist who begged the rich Jews to finance to take out a million children to safety. Apparently this man knew more than we. Nobody--they laughed, nobody believed that such atrocities can take place.

JF: What year was this?

HG: The year was 19, well, he talked about that, that was 1937, '38; but in '39 they started to throw out the Jews from the apartments.

JF: This was true in your town?

HG: My town, which had 300,000 Jews.

JF: What happened to your family in your home?

HG: Well, again, my music came in handy. I was playing Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" on my piano, and the door opens and a tall, handsome German officer comes in and gives many people 10, 15 minutes to get out into the ghetto. They were already creating the ghetto. And he heard me play, and he stood in the door, and he looked

at me and said, "Oh, you play so beautiful! What a shame that you are a Jewish girl." I say, "It is also a shame that you are a Nazi 'cause you seem to be very nice, too." That was our conversation. I don't know if I should put that in, but it saved me that he left me in the apartment, so that I could gather together my father and mother during this period of time when others were thrown out within 15 minutes. And I tried to take some things with me into the ghetto. And surprisingly, I came across another antisemitist from the local Poles: our janitor didn't let me take out anything. He said, "Now everything belongs to me, and I am taking over your apartment." I was wrapping the music, of course, the music sheets. I thought in the ghetto I would have a piano too, and my parents and my brother, we all went into the ghetto into one room.

JF: Could you take anything out of your apartment?

HG: I could have, but he didn't let me. The Polish janitor didn't let me, of course.

JF: You couldn't take...

HG: So I take a couple pots and pans and a pillow, some sheets, and the rest had to stay. He examined everything I took out. He was standing there at the big opening, the door, and he didn't let me take out anything. So we arrived at that ghetto and we had one room with a little stove. My mother, father, my brother and me, four adults in one room. And immediately--very meager rations.

JF: Do you remember how much?

HG: The Lodz Ghetto has been described in some of the books--the shock of leaving your apartment into such quarters, and the hunger, seeing your parents suffer, and, of course, we were identified by the Jewish star and a yellow arm band. I conceived the idea one day of sneaking out from the ghetto to get some meat, pulled up my hair, put on glasses, and I spoke an excellent German already. I went through an opening somewhere far away, because the ghetto was surrounded already with barbed wire. I found an opening without a guard and I went out. I went with the trolley and I had a newspaper in front of me, and I was envying these people sitting around me. Why, why can they be free and I am so scared? I finally got a piece of meat and I got back; my father made me promise that I will never do that again, because you could have been shot. Then I had a friend who was an electronics engineer at that time. He created a little radio in a soup dish which you carry around. What is this called? A metal dish. He carried around with him this radio, and he always let me know what is happening in the world, because we were immediately cut off from all the news and--the Lodz Ghetto was a little bit unique than other ghettos. We had a head which collaborated with the Germans, and his idea was to save as many as he could by collaborating with the German government. They set up their own money, which I have some mementoes from that time. I worked as a cashier in a certain store which distributed these rations.

JF: Were the rest of your family employed also?

HG: No, not my father and mother. As a matter of fact, I have experienced shocking, the most painful feelings what happened to my father in the ghetto. We were

poor people and he got caught by a, they were not called the Gestapo in our ghetto, they were called the Kripo, *Kriminalpolizei*, it was abbreviated as Kripo.

JF: These were Germans?

HG: Germans, who caught him and tortured him, that he should give up his diamonds, his jewelry, his money. He said, "I don't have anything." "Yes, yes, you are a Jew, you lived in a big city, you must have something hid." And they beat him to such an extent that he lost his mind. I took him back and I never saw him sane again.

JF: This was in the beginning of the occupation?

HG: In the beginning of the ghetto, in 19--maybe, no between 1941-1942. We went into the ghetto 1940.

JF: You were how old at this time?

HG: I was born in 1913. How old was I? Twenty-four or twenty-five, something around 25, 26. That pain is not to describe when I saw my father deteriorate to such a degree that he had to be given away to a hospital. These hospitals were doomed the next week to be taken away. They took care of all the mentally ill people immediately.

JF: And where was this hospital?

HG: In the ghetto. The ghetto had everything. But I had an influential friend who told me a night before that this will happen.

JF: Told you what...

HG: That they will take away the sick people, and I begged him. And we put on a tape on my father's mouth, and at night we smuggled him out.

JF: You smuggled him out of the hospital?

HG: Back into my one room. But I had to keep the tape on his mouth because he was yelling against Hitler, and it would have endangered the whole, all the people there. Then he died.

JF: In your home?

HG: Yes, and I was able. to bury him in the Lodz cemetery, Jewish burial, whatever that means. I was already left with my mother.

JF: Your brother was not...

HG: My brother got married in the ghetto.

JF: So it was at that point that you and your mother...

HG: I begged my sister-in-law not to have any babies in the ghetto. I had many offers for marriage, but I refused. I said in such circumstances, one should not have a family. I knew that there is a place like Auschwitz.

JF: How did you know that?

HG: From an influential friend.

JF: And what did you hear about Auschwitz?

HG: They are burning people, that there are ovens, I knew. But nobody believed me.

JF: You told people?

HG: Yes. The tragedy started in the Lodzer Ghetto. They packed in 70,000 people into that area which could hold the most 10,000. And they started to eliminate, gradually.

JF: In what way?

HG: They had a Jewish police for that. They did not do it themselves--that is the most tragic thing, that they took Jewish men into a *Sonderkommando*, a special command, and they made these people take away the children from their mothers by telling them a lie, that the children are going to a better place. Yes, they went to a better place, to heaven. And the mothers, willingly, because they suffered hunger and disease, they willingly gave away those children and babies to these policeman. That was a double tragedy, that the Jews had to do that.

JF: Did you have any contact with Poles any time you were in the ghetto?

HG: None. They have not helped. They have not done anything in our city of Lodz. In Warsaw, maybe, some parts. But in Lodz, it was completely isolated. And workshops for the Germans. That kept us alive with these little meager rations.

JF: Workshops inside the ghetto?

HG: Inside the ghetto. We had nothing to do with the Poles.

JF: In line with your comment before about your landlord, were there any other instances you knew of cooperation and help that the Poles gave the Germans in setting up the ghetto and enforcing...

HG: That was not the landlord, pardon me, that was my janitor.

JF: Your janitor, I'm sorry, your janitor.

HG: There was great cooperation. There was even a little song which they sang which cannot be translated, that now the streets are yours and the homes are ours and before, it was the other way around. The Poles sang, the Poles cooperated fully with the Germans to exterminate the Jews, with maybe a few exceptional families who have tried to hide the Jews. But you know there is always an anti-Semite who will say, I have one Jewish friend. That is a famous saying. The years in the ghetto are a specific chapter in my life, because I even fell in love in the ghetto, and I knew I will never marry that man. He was sent away to Warsaw and committed suicide by not being able to be with me together. That was another tragic experience. Then these--they used to call down the people to the street and take out a few away. I begged my sister-in-law not to have a baby, but she was not young, she was in a hurry, so she had a baby. The baby was six weeks old when they told everybody to come down. She hid the baby in the bed and put a big pillow on top of it. When she came back, the baby was dead. I begged her not to have any more children, but she didn't listen. She lost another one, too, that way. In a different way, but she lost it, too.

JF: In what way?

HG: Well, her food was poisoned. Her breasts, she couldn't feed the baby; the baby died of hunger. Then another tragic experience. One mother kept a dead baby for

two weeks in her bed in order to get the bread ration. I knew about all these things, and I said I shall never marry under such circumstances. The children who were taken away-- imagine the tragedy of mothers where a transport comes back with children's clothes and little shoes, and one of the mothers recognized her child's shoes. Why they send that back, it will never be understandable to me.

JF: They sent back the clothes of the children...

HG: Yeah. With the shoes, the little shoes, after they had killed them.

JF: And where did the mothers see this? How...

HG: They had to sort them out. Then the most tragic thing which is indelible on my memory. There were orphans in the ghetto, a group of orphans, age three, four, five, six. One day, they made a circle out of these orphans, gave them chocolate to eat, told them to sing the song, and to the middle came an assassin, with a machine gun, and just mowed them down in that circle, and I saw it. So they can never tell, this was not recorded. So now, I would like to pay tribute to the media of today who goes in to the most dangerous places and sometimes give their lives to record to the world in their living rooms atrocities which happened in Viet Nam, which happened in Korea, which happens in many places today, so that the people in their living rooms can see and react; but we had no media. This scene was never recorded. President Roosevelt, with all due respect of his genius and his contribution to America, told Rabbi Stephen Wise, "Don't tell me that they are burning your people in Auschwitz. You just wish to make me upset." He couldn't have told that if there would had been a media, like the communications today. And maybe, if there would have been, maybe so many wouldn't have been killed.

JF: Was there any effort at defense, self-defense, or resistance within the ghetto that you knew of?

HG: No. None.

JF: Was there any kind of educational programs for the children, any kind of effort to keep...

HG: Everything was forbidden.

JF: Everything was forbidden?

HG: The only thing I found was a piano in a basement. And I asked them to take it out and I gave a concert with a violinist together. And still, people could not conceive the idea of total extermination.

JF: You said you had access to this radio. Could you hear anything on it that indicated what was happening in the outside world? Or did you have any word from any other ghettos...

HG: Well, I knew that the Germans are now at war with Russia, and I told my friends that's the beginning of the end. He has not learned history of the Napoleonic wars. That will probably be the beginning of it. I knew certain things, I must admit. I tried to tell many of my friends and, still, people did not believe that there can be such a thing as a solution, what Hitler conceived, of the Jewish problem. Another tragic scene when a

transport arrived with German Jews to the Lodzer Ghetto, I was assigned to help them since I spoke such a good German. I spoke with many of them. I was shocked by what they told me. They said, "You know, if tomorrow the war ends, we will go back and kiss the German soil." But, of course, they were shocked by what they saw in the Lodzer Ghetto. It wasn't a nice place to live. But that was the attitude of the German Jews. They must have been the most shocked because they were more German than Jewish, all of them.

JF: Was there any interaction between the German Jews and the Polish Jews who were in the ghetto, or did they keep separate?

HG: Separate. Because the German Jew always considered himself on a higher level and looked down at us. That is still the case, even today. The German Jew is a different kind of a Jew. He thinks that the *Ostjuden*, that means the Jews from the east-- Polish Jews, Russian Jews--they are not on the same cultural level.

JF: Were they treated any differently by the authorities? Were their rations any different? Were their jobs any different?

HG: No, not at all. Once they arrived in the Lodzer Ghetto they were treated equal.

JF: Was there any success in outside people smuggling food or any kind of support into the ghetto?

HG: Not to my knowledge.

JF: Could you have any contact with people in other ghettos? Did you have family members in other ghettos?

HG: I had my sister in Warsaw, with whom I had lost complete contact. There was no mail unless somebody smuggled in a letter or a word. I lost contact with my dear sister, who also perished. As a matter of fact, my whole family perished. I am the only survivor of about 40 people. My brother survived for a very short time, then he died here.

JF: He died here in the United States?

HG: Right after the arrival.

JF: Any other thoughts about the years in the ghetto?

HG: There was an interesting study of cancer in the ghetto by my friends, doctors.

JF: Their names...

HG: Well, they all died. That's why it is so tragic. They had made a study of the fact that there was no cancer during the four years in the ghetto. And apparently has to do with malnutrition, because there was plenty of other diseases, TB and other diseases connected with malnutrition. But these doctors had a very interesting study which, of course, perished together with them, about cancer.

JF: There is no record of this study?

HG: No. Unfortunately, I was subject for them. I told this to many doctors who also said since the body is so emaciated and so hungry, the cancer has nothing to feed on. So apparently there is a chemical process which has to do with malnutrition.

JF: Did these doctors die in the ghetto?

HG: They, no. The last year of the ghetto there were already rumors that they are liquidating the ghetto and sending all the people to Auschwitz. I have tried to the last minute to avoid the trip to Auschwitz. I have tried very hard. Some of them did hide underground and waited for the Russian army to liberate them which they were liberated by the Russian army. The Russian army came into Lodz before other people were liberated, but I was taken away and my mother with me. My brother and my sister-in-law went with another transport.

JF: What year was this?

HG: 1944, already. August 1944. That's when the Lodzer Ghetto was liquidated.

JF: Can you tell me about how you found out that you were being called for the transport, and your experiences?

HG: Well, they just emptied everybody, everybody had to come down. And I went with my mother. And, it is funny, I again took the music of Chopin with me under my arm, and my mother under the other.

JF: And that is all you were able to take with you?

HG: When I arrived at Auschwitz with my mother...

JF: Can you tell me about the transport before you get to Auschwitz?

HG: That was my only transport. This was cattle cars, tightly shut, without water, without food. I clung to my mother, she clung to me.

Tape two, side one:

JF: This is tape 2, side 1, of an interview with Helene Goodman, Josey Fisher interviewing on February 23, 1981. Can you tell us what happened when you arrived at the camp?

HG: An orchestra played in Auschwitz and I said to my mother, "You see how good that I took the music with me. It will come in handy." To describe Auschwitz, there are no words in the human language to describe that hell, because in comparison probably with the real hell, this would have been--the real hell in heaven might have been a paradise in comparison with Auschwitz. You are immediately surrounded by people who drag you, shave your head, take everything away from you, undress you, take out from under your tongue a little golden heart which you have as a memento; and then give you clothes which are transparent, doesn't fit. And then comes the selection, and you go on a long road, and you come across a very handsome man with penetrating deep eyes.² I shall never forget his face. I came across him with my mother under my arm, and he looks at me and points to the left, takes my mother away from me and points her to the right, and says to me, "You are too beautiful and young. We can still use you." And I never saw my mother again. She probably died the same day. I will never forget her eyes, that she knew we should never see each other again. After that I was so numb, I noticed my sister-in-law somewhere in another group, and I exchanged with somebody and went over to her, to be with her together. Then, they put us into a barrack with no floor, just has in the middle a stove; with a long row of people being beaten up...

JF: Inside the barracks?

HG: Yes. And they gave you a pot of soup and you had to stand in a row of ten. Somehow I was always at the end--it was almost empty when it came to me. So I asked my sister-in-law, "How long do you think it takes to die here?" She said, "Not long, not long, just maybe a day or two." And I was so glad that she told me that; but that was not the end. That same evening, a Jewish supervisor came in who was there already for about two years; she was real mean and tough, and she called out, "Who plays the piano here?" I didn't answer. My sister-in-law put up my hand and she said, "She does." She thought I am going to get something to eat. And she comes over to me and she says, "You have to come with me. Tonight is the *Obersturmführer's* birthday and you have to play 'Happy Birthday' for him." I looked at her; I said, "How do you expect me to play 'Happy Birthday' for somebody who just killed my mother?" She said, "Don't talk. You just go with me; you have nothing to say; just sit down and play." I had to go. When I came into that place, never in my life, of course, have I ever seen such an orgy. Dogs with young undressed women. I became so numb and so that I could hardly see. I was full of grief. When she set me down at the piano and he came over to me...

JF: Who came over to you?

²Mrs. Goodman stated later that this was Dr. Joseph Mengele.

HG: The birthday child, the assassin. She said to me, "Now, play now." And I don't know what happened to me, I became paralyzed. I could not move one single finger. I put my hands on the piano but I couldn't move. And he stabbed me in my breast and in the back, twice.

JF: He stabbed you?

HG: I started bleeding and somehow this Jewish *kapo*, or whatever you call them, she dragged me out.

JF: He stabbed you with what?

HG: Well, he had a sword. I don't remember exactly. I lost consciousness; she dragged me out.

JF: This is the first night you were in Auschwitz?

HG: She dragged me out and she stuffed newspapers into my wound, so it became infected. And she dragged me back to the barracks, and I thanked my sister-in-law for putting up my hand. She felt so guilty before me. And I didn't know, but on the way she was talking to me, she felt something for me. She said, "You know, I like you. I am going to save you."

JF: This is the *kapo*?

HG: Yes. "I am going to save you. I put you through that." Next night, at dawn, you will come with me. I'll get you out from here." I said, "Not me by myself. I must take my sister-in-law, my girlfriend." She said, "Must you?" I said, "Yes, I won't go." And she said, "O.K." Four o'clock in the morning she put us out in the field to a transport, which went deep into Germany to work in an ammunition factory.

JF: So you were actually in Auschwitz two days?

HG: That's right. Thanks to that episode.

JF: Your sister-in-law and your...

HG: Came with me and my girlfriend.

JF: This girlfriend is somewhere...

HG: Is now in New York.

JF: That you knew from Lodz?

HG: Yes. We went together to school. And she saved them, too.

JF: Was this also a cattle car you went on?

HG: Oh, a horror. I was bleeding, and we were packed in there to go to work into Germany, and this was considered a lifesaver, because Auschwitz was an extermination camp. Nobody survives there.

JF: Where was this camp, the ammunitions factory?

HG: Hainichen, Sachsen, near Chemnitz. Chemnitz is a big city, so they know Chemnitz. H-A-I-N-I-C-H-E-N.

JF: Hainichen?

HG: I must say, the *Wehrmacht*, which is the soldiers, not the SS men, they were a little bit different to us.

JF: In what way?

HG: This man who was in charge of our transport--you know we were packed into cattle trains--now each train had various attachments to it, and he was with us, sitting in the front of the door so we wouldn't escape. Then we stopped and they gave us something to drink, because we were already valuable cargo to go to work. And he saw me holding on my hand on my breast, so he said, "What are you doing there?" I say, "I have a wound." He said, "Come over here, I'll take care of you."

JF: This is a *Wehrmacht* officer?

HG: Yes, and I spoke in excellent German, so he immediately he made me in charge of distributing the coffee. And he spoke to me. We discussed it. I told him what happened. And he said, "I am ashamed to be a German, what you tell me." As a matter of fact, I do have a suspicion that some part of the German population did not know all the atrocities. This I must admit. Now starts a new chapter. Arriving at the camp, also a concentration camp, in which we are separated from the Hungarian girls--500 Hungarian girls, a few hundred Polish girls.

JF: The name of the camp?

HG: Hainichen in Sachsen. Sachsen is like Pennsylvania, you know, a state. There was a famous SS woman, Gertruda Becker was her name.

JF: B-E...

HG: B-E-C-K-E-R. Gertrude Becker, an ex-prostitute. She was the cruelest thing I ever came across as a woman in my life. When we finally went to the ammunition factory, she made us stand up each time she passed by. So one of my friends had her hand in the big machine and lost five fingers, because she had to stand up at attention when this SS woman was passing by.

JF: You lived in the camp and then you...

HG: And then you went to work.

JF: Where was the factory in comparison to the...?

HG: Oh, it might have been about two or three miles away.

JF: And you walked every morning...

HG: Of course, we walked. I made myself a paper suit to keep warm. No stockings. And the German women, standing at the corners, with the fresh rolls which tear your appetite...

JF: This was the town you went through in order to get to the factory?

HG: The factory by the name was *Framowerke*.

JF: Can you spell that for me?

HG: F-R-A-M-O-W-E-R-K-E. That was the ammunition factory.

JF: Were you wearing uniforms in this camp?

HG: No, just stripes.

JF: And what were your rations like in this camp?

HG: Two slices of bread and the soup a day. No meat. Night work mostly. Two shifts, one during the day, and one during the night. In charge of us was the SS, not the *Wehrmacht*.

JF: The SS were in charge at the camp?

HG: Of us. Yes, of us, they called us the *Häftlinge*, by the way. You know a *Häftlinge* is a criminal. So the German women were standing at the corner and looked at us, shaven heads, stripes; she said, "So young and already criminals?" They did not know.

JF: They didn't know...

HG: They didn't know who we are, but they saw us and they thought that we are criminals.

JF: Was this a camp with both men and women?

HG: Only girls.

JF: Do you have any idea about how many women were in this camp?

HG: We were about 900 girls, 500 of Hungarian girls on the upper floor, and about 400 of us, three, four hundred, I didn't count.

JF: And about how many people were in the barracks?

HG: That was one barrack, which went to that factory. In that town, it was a small town, Hainichen, it couldn't hold any more. But the SS was in charge of us and their greatest torture to us, one of the tortures was that they would pass us by in the morning with those trays of bacon and eggs and fresh rolls, and we were starving, gradually, to such a point that I started to hypnotize myself that I am eating. And you know what happened? I swallowed, I swallowed, I fantasized that I am eating scrambled eggs and a fresh roll. That was the dream. You know you are deprived of your human feelings, and then it is, like getting easier. You don't feel so much the hunger pains. You sort of evaporate gradually. Gradually you get weaker and weaker, and you don't feel the hunger anymore. That must have been the feeling for many people who starved themselves to death. But the important part of this *Framowerke*, of this place of work, is that they put me in charge of a very complicated sophisticated *Schleifmaschine* [polishing or grinding machine] which it is a machine which is very precise, that they use in the apparatus, photographic apparatus. And also before that, I worked at the big bore machine which makes holes for the bolts to fit in the machine guns. So I made those holes a little bigger. That was my way of sabotage, which is a very dangerous thing.

JF: Was this commonly done?

HG: No, I did this myself. Nobody should know. But I had to do something.

JF: The *Wehrmacht* were in charge of you at the munitions factory?

HG: No, no, no, only SS. Occasionally a general came in with his entourage and looked at us, those young girls with the shaved heads--he thought I don't understand German, but I understood what he said to his companions. He said, "With this we want to win a war. Look at that. This will make us win the war?" And I understood, and I smiled a little. So he called over the SS woman and he said that she should watch me. He thinks

that I understand German. I say, "Yes, I do." So they didn't talk anymore. You could not go to a bathroom, only at certain times. And since your diet was saltless--the Germans didn't even have salt. Don't forget this is already 1944, and the Russians took over already half of Poland. You know you couldn't hold it that long, excuse me for my expression; but the--my friends were doing it right there, whatever, standing and working. So they didn't like that mess. They also didn't like the idea that women have a monthly menstrual cycle. So they put some medications in those soups that we should lose that.

JF: Up until that time, the women were having their regular cycles?

HG: Yes. Many of my friends cannot have children. But my supervisor, with whom I worked at that big machine, the *Schleifmaschine*, the next machine; we were sort like in an enclosure. He was a very nice old man. He shared with me his breakfast, and he said, "Don't eat that soup. I heard some rumors about that soup."

JF: This is the soup that was given to you at the factory?

HG: Yes. And he also used to put into my hand, little pieces of rolled up paper where the Russians are moving--so that was hope.

JF: So you avoided eating this soup that this medication had been put into.

HG: I did. I told others, too.

JF: Was your system then regular?

HG: Yes.

JF: It was no problem?

HG: But you have to hide with it as much as you could. But this old man, I shall also never forget. He was a German. He held up my hopes. When I asked him, "How long do you think it will take me to learn that machine?" "Oh," he says, "in another year or two, you will be O.K." And at that moment, a bomb comes into the factory, and we all run out. And I did see the American pilots. They waved to us.

JF: An American plane bombed...

HG: An American plane bombed in Germany our factory. And that was the end. They put us on that death march to Czechoslovakia. Why they didn't kill us also escapes me. But that was it. I saw an American pilot! They flew so low that they practically waved to us. But somehow we all ran out in time into the field, and then we were taken back to our quarters and put on death march.

JF: How long?

HG: '44 - nine months. About nine months there, and then the death march.

JF: And this was what month and what year that the death march occurred?

HG: The beginning, the end of April, it is already 1945. April 1945, between April and May. I was liberated the 9th of May. Well, we made about 20 miles a day on foot. Many fell on the wayside. The grass didn't exist anymore there; we ate all the grass that was available.

JF: They didn't give you any food on the march? Who was guarding the march? Were these SS officers?

HG: Yes, the woman and that *Obersturmführer* with his assistants.

JF: His name, again?

HG: Her name, Gertrude Becker.

JF: And the *Obersturmführer*?

HG: I don't remember his name, but he wasn't so bad as she. I must say, she was more cruel. She administered some beatings to my sister-in-law's head, and she wanted me to look at that, in my presence, knowing that this is my sister-in-law.

JF: Your sister-in-law was also on this march?

HG: Yes. We dragged each other, and my girlfriend. Many fell at the wayside, they couldn't make it. I don't know where the power comes from, but there is such a thing as an inner power and desire to survive, and here, I must tell this, that I nursed the idea, should I ever survive that hell, I don't wish to be Jewish anymore. I somehow knew I don't have a family anymore. And I am all alone, and should I ever survive and have a family, I don't wish them to go through what I did. And I nursed the idea quietly in me alone, that I shall convert after, if I should be liberated.

JF: Did any other kinds of thoughts sustain you during that time that you were in the camps?

HG: The only thoughts which could sustain you was to believe that this is the end of Hitler, that he will be punished, and the great desire to survive and to see him being punished. That was the mental stage, and in the physical stage, you had to keep yourself somehow clean, to sneak out at night to cold water to wash yourself, to make yourself a paper suit underneath...

JF: You stuffed paper in between the lining of the uniform?

HG: No, no, actually put it together somehow. We found some needle and thread in the factory, we--you know, we put it together. I was lucky that one of the SS women in the factory took a liking to me because of my German and she brought me a pair of stockings. But how can you wear stockings if everybody else is naked! It's not a pleasant thing to do.

JF: Were you aware of any religious services going on while you were in the camp?

HG: No, there was none. No. I only sang *Kol Nidre* for some of the girls, which still some survivors remember that I tried to lift up their spirits. And I remember the holiday of *Yom Kippur*...

JF: When was this?

HG: After we arrived in that camp--because you must not forget that this was August, and the Jewish holiday comes out, in that period, the beginning of September, the Jewish New Year. So I gathered them together and we sang *Kol Nidre*. Then the *Obersturmführer* comes in and says, "What are you singing there?" I say, "Oh, we are singing a song of dreaming of freedom." And he looked at us and he said, "Well, it might be near." He knew. When he finally dragged us into Theresienstadt...

JF: How long was this march?

HG: Oh, about a week. A week.

JF: How many do you think survived the march?

HG: 15 percent.

JF: Survived?

HG: No more.

JF: And when people fell by the road...

HG: They just shot them. If they were still moving, they shot them. But when you arrived in Theresienstadt, this *Obersturmführer* walked over to me and he said, "You're going to be free soon and I'm going to die. He said, "Would you testify for me that I was good to you?" I said, "No, because you work in the uniform of an assassin. You didn't have to do that." And you know what they did? They took off the uniforms and ran away. Many didn't get caught.

JF: And this was at what point?

HG: This was already 1945.

JF: The end of April?

HG: Yes, the end of April. The 9th of May, I was already liberated. But arriving there, and, I noticed a big truck with a big red cross on it, coming in, and they told me that there is a commission from Geneva, because one of the SS men called up Geneva. They had graves, big graves dug up, and wanted to eliminate us all as we arrived in Theresienstadt. It was all set up, and I noticed the big truck from Geneva, and they stopped that. I never told you that there was a showcase of children.

JF: Where?

HG: In Theresienstadt. They had about five to ten children left alive, which they showed to the Red Cross people, that they are so good to children, that they never killed children. It was so perfectly organized that it is hard to conceive that a nation at war could have a department which dealt with the "Final Solution."

JF: How were these children shown?

HG: Oh, they were in nice quarters. They had enough to eat, and they showed them.

JF: Did you see the children when you were there?

HG: No, I knew that they were there.

JF: What were your impressions of Theresienstadt?

HG: Well, we were all in one room again. I was always sitting at a window, somehow dreaming that I would see something. And I was always sitting at a window, and one day, the 9th of May, 1945, through that window, I saw a Russian soldier chasing a German soldier. And I said to the girls, "You are free! I saw a Russian soldier!" And they shook their heads and thought I had lost my mind. Nobody could conceive that you can be liberated. And ten minutes later, the gates opened, the big Russian tanks came in, with women on the top...

JF: What kind of women?

HG: Women, Russian women on the top of a tank, and a little girl, a young girl...

Tape two, side two:

This is tape 2, side 2, of an interview with Helene Goodman on February 23, 1981.

JF: When the Russian officers came in, you were telling me...

HG: One of them was Jewish, and I spoke to him and he revealed to me that he would defect because there is antisemitism in the Russian army. He wanted me even to go with him, but I was too sick and I said, "Oh, no, I am not able even to move." And then, two days, they gave us free to go around and to take everything we can from the Russian homes, in the German homes, pardon me, because the Russians had practically nothing to give us to eat.

JF: This is in the town of Terezin?

HG: Yes, at the liberation. And they had very little food, they had the wrong food for people who have been starved. One of the girls ate a whole fresh bread and died. Then typhoid came, then dysentery came. I must admit, I have to pay tribute to these Russian women doctors who carried us on their backs, and tried to save us, but they didn't have anything to save us with.

JF: The doctors who came in with the Russian troops were primarily women?

HG: Yes, primarily women. The rest was still Army, fighting, they were still fighting. And they gave us this free, so I remember I got a dress from a trunk from a Russian soldier, and we went around and we took bread. I came across a very big safe with probably two million marks in it, open. The farm was open, and I came in with my girlfriends and I said, "I remembered my mother told me that after the First World War the money was worthless," and I said, "Let's make a dinner from it." And I took the two millions and we made a nice dinner. We made a fire."

JF: You burned it.

HG: Yes. Then I was sorry because it was good money. Well, I have to put that in as a note. Well, it was very difficult. What is next? Where do we go from here? Many said they are going back to Poland. I said, "No. I cannot go back to Poland. That is a graveyard to me." My sister-in-law said, "I am going to find my husband." (My brother.) She did find him. She went, and she did find him in one of the hospitals.

JF: Where?

HG: On the border of Poland and Germany. They came later to join me. After the liberation, a man came around, an older man, who said that he is from the Jewish organizations. "Where do we wish to go, now?" I said, "I want to go to Palestine." And he signed me up, and all of a sudden, I said to my friends. "We have to go away from the Russians." I heard that the American Army is not far from here, because the Americans were pulling back and the Russians were going forward. At Pilsen, that is a famous town of beer in Czechoslovakia, and I said to my sister-in-law and my girlfriend, "Let's go," and we walked and walked until we find the Americans. That was the first piece of chocolate

I have eaten in five whole years. And they were so happy to see us, and we looked so horrible. And I was with the Americans. But, then, I found myself back in Germany.

JF: How?

HG: They took us back, to a quarantine. A camp, quarantine, Landsberg am Lech. That is the place where Hitler was in prison and wrote *Mein Kampf*, that little town. All of a sudden I found myself, again, in a camp, with barbed wire. I couldn't understand why. And a Negro tried to take me down from a truck, and I started screaming because I never before in my life was in the arms of a black man. And he tried to pacify me, and I was so ashamed later on.

JF: These were the American soldiers?

HG: American soldiers.

JF: And the camp was...

HG: Landsberg am Lech.

JF: Which was a detention camp?

HG: No, sort of a quarantine to get us all together, and then the UNRRA started to send in packages, and to rebuild us a little bit. And, it started a search for relatives.

JF: How long did it take you to recuperate physically?

HG: I was very sick, very sick, physically and mentally. As a matter of fact, I must have had a breakdown, because everybody was rejoicing and I was always crying and sitting alone, and not talking to any--especially the tragedy--I couldn't play the piano. My fingers couldn't move anymore. I thought this is it. And there was very little medical help at that time. It was not organized. It was just the beginning of the end, and I was very sick with an illness which is called furunculosis. That's big boils all over your body from dirt, from malnutrition, and each one had to be operated on actually.

JF: In what way?

HG: To open them, to lance. Everybody took a poke at me, and I couldn't lie down. I couldn't sit down so I was standing for 36 hours at a window because I couldn't lie down. I had those boils all over my body. I needed some kind of medical help, some kind of--so one gave me--an American soldier gave me a penicillin--at that time, already, the first time penicillin which would have saved me, I exchanged it with a German for a pair of shoes. I didn't know what it is. You know, we were cut off from news for four years. Shall I go on, after the liberation, or shall I stop right here?

JF: How long were you in this quarantine?

HG: Until one day they had an excursion to Berchtesgaden to see Hitler's summer bunker. It was in an eagle's nest on top of a mountain. I went there, and I met on the ship my future husband, whom I knew from Poland.

JF: You knew him from your hometown?

HG: Yes. I didn't know he survived. He didn't believe that I survived, and six weeks later we were married. And he took me--he was the president of the Jewish communities, very prominent man by the name of Jacob Gottlieb. His nephew is now the

first ambassador to Egypt, Ben Eleazar; and I married this man and we had a beautiful son, Eli, who is today a doctor of medicine in this country.

JF: Where did you marry him?

HG: In Germany, in Regensburg.

JF: And you lived there?

HG: Yes. Well, with him, it started life, a slow recovery. He had a big piano, he had a beautiful apartment from a German general, and we were very happy together. My husband was a Zionist, and he wanted to go to Israel, to Palestine, at that time. He was very active with Begin at that time. They were friends, and ammunition was stored under my bed in Germany in the '48 War, and I refused to go to Palestine because I said I am too sick, and I don't want my child to get into a war again. I just couldn't do it. I said I wish to go to America. And he went with me. I arrived...

JF: Excuse me one minute, what was it like being in Germany after the war?

HG: Very interesting. My baby was two months old, and you put them out in a carriage into the garden, and there lived a German family on the first floor, and all of a sudden I hear a scream, and there is a ten year old boy standing over my baby with a big needle sticking into his hand. I run down and say, "What are you doing?" He said, "My mother told me it is a Jewish child." And that was after the war--so poisoned were the minds of the German people. Of course, my husband took care of her. They had to move. He was active with the American government, the governors, American authorities. They respected him. He organized the Jewish life after the war with Judge Leventhal from Philadelphia; and I decided that we should come to America.

JF: When you say that you were still sick, in what way were you still sick?

HG: They still performed operations on me until a professor in Germany, by name Professor Fulk, made a vaccine for me from my own, and saved me.

JF: The operations...?

HG: Took place in Regensburg, after my marriage.

JF: And this had to do with the disease of the boils that you talked about before. Did you ever have any repercussions from the stab wounds that got infected?

HG: No, they didn't heal right. I still have very big marks of it. And I still was under--I needed care, I was depressed all the time. I could not shake off these tragic events of my personal life, my family, the catastrophe of the Jewish people, the atrocities, the thought that man can do this to man. And I made up my mind and promised myself that should I survive that hell, I would go around wherever they ask me and I shall tell. And I would like to go back to that thought that I thought I will change my religion, but this also changed in me, that I said, "Why shouldn't the ones who are guilty be ashamed?" I felt like a coward and I said, "No." I shall become a fighter. I shall fight for human rights. I shall fight that the Jews should have a state of their own, that they should not be running around like a collarless dog, and that they should be protected by their own state in case they need to be protected. And I promised myself that I will make my contribution to tell the world

to beware, and to be aware of movements which are dangerous, of people, of dictators, and to guard democracy, to fight for democracy, and to fight for the survival of the State of Israel. And I made this my life's work. And I became more Jewish than I ever was before. But not the kind of Jew who hates other nations, because the Holocaust was a holocaust of the human spirit for all nations. The people have forgotten humanities. They studied too much technology. Even today, I wish that we would go back to humanities, and how to respect another human being. The greatest shock and disappointment was for a young woman to realize that the *homosapiens* is not what it should be, and that the human being has so much more to learn, to change, to become a real human being. And it is my hope and wish that the world has learned a great lesson in Hitler's atrocities. The tragedy of the German nation is that they almost believed that what they are doing is right, and that they will save the world from Jews, who are the cause of all their troubles. Little did they realize that the Holocaust is also their problem. Antisemitism is not a Jewish problem. It is a problem of the non-Jewish world, who have to learn and to change, and my greatest wish is that this should happen in the near future and that there will never, never again be such atrocities. And when the Jews say "Never again," they mean it today. With a strong Israel this should never happen.

(Long pause)

JF: You would like to make an addition now?

HG: I would like to say how grateful I am to the country of America, who accepted me, where I was able to rebuild my life and have such a wonderful family. My second husband taught me, Jacob Goodman, not to live in the past, not to forget the past, but not to keep on living in the past, and to wallow in the sorrow forever. I have also a wonderful family. My son is a doctor, my daughter is a pianist-composer who is very much involved in the study of the Holocaust and the effect which it had on the children of survivors. She just composed the music to the *Diary of Anne Frank*. I am very proud that my children grew up without prejudice, without hatred towards other nations. I have never told them until they grew up. I did not wish, in the formative years, to poison their minds and their hearts with revenge. And I am sure that they, in turn, will make their contribution to people. Thank you.