

-TITLE- GITTA BAUER
-I_DATE- JULY 24 1988
-SOURCE- CHRISTIAN RESCUERS PROJECT
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY- FAIR
-IMAGE_QUALITY- GOOD
-DURATION-
-LANGUAGES- English
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-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
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-NOTES-
-CONTENTS-

01:00 Unfortunately, most of the Christian Rescuers' awards were given posthumously. She was a young rescuer -- 20. People who were in their 50's at the time would be dead by now. She thinks it would have been better to start this action (of giving awards) earlier, but people didn't know there were so many German rescuers.

02:00 The Israeli embassy called her because her friend who was living in Berlin told them the story. She called her friend and asked her if one could do that, because she had not done what she did for an award.

03:00 Her friend replied, "There are so few people in the world who know that all Germans weren't bad." This answer was what made her do it. At first, she wasn't happy about it because, during the war, all she was thinking about was saving this girl. She had many Jewish friends in Berlin. In her sister's class, there were three Jewish girls who happened to be her friends.

04:00 When she talks to people her age around her town now, they declare they had never met a Jew. She doesn't believe this - their parks must have had benches which said Not For Jews and their restaurants must have had these signs too. All of them saw what happened during Krystalnacht. They must have realized.

05:00 Now these people say yes, this must have happened in big cities like Berlin. She knows that the town she lives in now had an active Jewish population with synagogues and cemeteries. The Jews weren't very popular because people thought they had been cheated by them. When she came to New York, she lived in Harlem during the time of the big riots in 19670

06:00 She realized that the blacks are like the Jew at the corner. At the time, anti-semitism of blacks stemmed sometimes from economic reasons. Later, when the Palestine question, Jesse Jackson, came up, it was often from political reasons.

07:00 In 1933, out of 22 doctors in Berlin, 19 were Jewish. So of course, the others would say that the Jews were taking their business. Her aunt had a girlfriend who lived with her who was Jewish in Berlin. So she met the whole family. The girl's father died in 1942 in a Jewish hospital, before he could be taken, fortunately. All the others in that family were rescued somehow and they went to Amsterdam. Her aunt went with them. She gave shelter to them, etc. The family planted four trees for her in the woods in Jerusalem. She died in a Jewish home in Frankfurt. Although Christian, she was allowed to live there because of her friends in Amsterdam. She said, "I have lived with Jews, I will die with Jews."

09:00 Gitta's family was a very simple and normal German family. It just so happened that her aunt had Jewish friends, and through her they met them and learned their history. When her aunt's friend died, the twin sister came to her and said, "My daughter is in danger." What else could she say but that she would take her? This stemmed from no big moral reason or big religious reason. The lady was a friend and needed help.

10:00 Her medal was for both her and her sister. For them, it was a very normal thing to do. They knew it was dangerous. Elsa was the name of the daughter they took in. This was in 1944, when she was 24 and Elsa was 21.

11:00 She was lucky to be born into her family. Her father voted for the Democrats -- the Liberals. Her mother voted for the Catholic party. Her oldest sister, if she had been allowed to vote -- she was too young at the time -- would have voted Social Democrat. They constituted the opposition to the Nazis.

12:00 She really didn't do anything. It was mostly her father's teaching. He was a simple man like Hubert Humphrey. He was a druggist. She remembers seeing the SA, the stormtroopers, when she was ten years old. She was with her father and she asked him, "What are these people?" He replied that "They wanted war again." This was always in her mind. He did other things -- he took her and her sister to the museums. This was before modern art was banned.

13:00 At the museum, they went through Lieberman's exhibit. He is Jewish, although not modern. In Berlin, he was the greatest. They saw so many things before 1933, when these things were forbidden. But by that time, these were already in her mind. She was born at the end of 1919 in Berlin. She is now 68 years old. Her family was maybe not an ordinary German family.

14:00 In 1933, her father lost his job. This was a terrible dishonor for him, he felt, because he was unable to support his family. There were four girls. It was during the international Depression. In Germany, it came a little later than the US's. Their's came in the early 30's. When her father did find a job, it was in the building trade.

It was simple and he never earned much.

15:00 Her mother was very active. When the Nazis closed the Catholic schools, she went to the mayor of Berlin and said, "I want to send my girls to Catholic schools." Of course this didn't help anything, but it shows you a little bit of her mother's character. Her father was Protestant, but the children were raised Catholic.

16:00 Religion was very important then. She was in the Catholic youth movement. When they were forbidden in 1935, her group tried to gather other groups together who were also forbidden. It was not to try resistance, but to try to immunize them against Nazi teachings -- give them a different perspective. The younger children had to be in Nazi groups. In 1942 she was arrested. Her whole group of six girls and one boy were arrested by the Gestapo. They had hoped to find a Communist group, which they weren't. When they found out that they were just a harmless group singing folk songs and praying, which is what they told the Gestapo, they let them go.

17:00 When Elsa came in 1944, they called her by another name, Adele. She was half Jewish. Her mother was Jewish and her father was a Christian.

18:00 He was a brave man. He was a civil servant. In 1933, he was told to divorce his wife or he would lose his job. He did not. He lost his job and somehow muddled through without it. This was his back-ground. She must tell this story because it is so strange. They had a black sheep in the family. He was in the SS. He was a cousin of hers. During this time, in the early 1940's, he lived in Berlin and came to eat at her mother's place.

19:00 There was a kind of tolerance. Everybody tolerated each other. They tolerated her Protestant father and he tolerated them. So they tolerated this Nazi, who was just a dumb Nazi! Elsa had difficulty graduating from her school as a half Jewish girl. Especially since she wasn't good in physics, mathematics, etc. This SS cousin of hers gave Elsa instruction so that she could graduate from high school. I believe, although he never told us, that he had some- thing to do with our release from the Gestapo.

20:00 She is sure he did something. Also, he knew that Elsa was Jewish. Before the war, he had known all their Jewish friends.

21:00 In 1944, Elsa was good enough to somehow be drawn for Hitler's labor unit. She was drafted to it. In the office there, she made herself Aryan. She found stamps and ID cards and went and worked as a secretary at the Luftwalker(?ph). One night shift, she was woken up by her superior and the woman said, "Would you believe it, an attempt has been made on the Fuhrer's life!"

22:00 Elsa replied, "Is the pig dead?" Because then the war would be at an end. Of course, this woman, a strong Nazi, went and told the commanding officer what she had said. The officer called Elsa and said that he would have to pass this knowledge on to his superiors. But he would leave her alone for 15 minutes so that she could think about what she had done. He left; the door was open and she fled. Immediately, the Gestapo was at her parent's house searching for her.

23:00 Margaret, Elsa's mother, came to Gitta and her sister. They were the only ones there at the time -- her mother and younger sister were in the country side because it was the time of the big bombings in Berlin. Her father was with his building firm out on the road all the time. They never told their parents. She knew that they wouldn't have said to send Elsa out, but she didn't want to put the burden of the knowledge on them.

24:00 When her father came to Berlin, they had friends from her group take Elsa to their home and shelter her. Her friends never asked questions and just did it. They were afraid of one thing. After she had been arrested in '42, in '44, after the attempt on Hitler's life, many people were arrested by the Gestapo just on the suspicion that they might have had something to do with the conspiracy. It could have happened that the Gestapo might have remembered them.

25:00 Elsa stayed with them the last nine months of the war. She always called herself "Gitta's baby" (actually, "my baby") because it took nine months. Although Elsa's mother was Jewish, because she was married to a Christian man, she was in less danger than vice versa. This was because a Jewish man was seen as a danger to the German blood -- the Aryan race.

26:00 This is such strange thinking that one can't really follow it. She found things a bit similar in America with racists toward Negroes. A black man and a white woman is very bad, but a white man and a black woman is seen as acceptable.

27:00 In 1933, the burning of the Reichstrak(ph) in Berlin on February 28th was the signal for the Nazi party to go ahead.

28:00 So they knew, whether from the paper or different sources, that the Social Democrat leaders were arrested. The Communists and the trade union leaders were also arrested. All of a sudden, it was a political movement towards suppressing everything that could be in opposition to it. That the Nazis were anti-Semitic they knew from the start; the Nazis never made a secret out of it.

29:00 They also heard from Jewish friends that, although they themselves had not been molested, they had heard that others were.

There were pictures in the newspaper where Nazis had dragged Jews through the streets of Berlin and had tied a sign, Jewish Pig, on them. For the first time, it was talked about boycotting Jewish supermarkets or other little shops. The first signs came on the benches in the parks, Jews Not Allowed.

30:00 The whole atmosphere was anti-Jewish -- even if you didn't see it yourself. This was in 1933. Then, in 1936, he was one of those who was absolutely enthusiastic about the Olympic Games in Berlin. At the time, Hitler stopped everything that would be bad publicity for the regime.

31:00 So in 1936, there was a kind of slowing down, especially since the US came with so many black athletes. Jesse Owen was the most popular man in Berlin at the time -- although Hitler didn't shake his hand. They didn't even realize this at the time because they didn't have television. But then came '37 and especially '38. Then, a German diplomat in Paris was killed by a young Jew -- Greensbaum (ph).

32:00 That night, it was absolutely ghastly. She walked through the most elegant street in Berlin and well -- this was why it was called Krystalnacht -- she walked through glass. Of course, they knew that the stormtroopers had plundered the shops. You could see that they were empty. It wasn't just hatred or for political reasons -- it was just stealing. One of her sister's friends was visiting -- her father was a rabbi who taught in her school. He was a very soft man.

33:00 He had tried to save the synagogue in Spandau(ph), the part of Berlin where she lived. They beat him and tried to tear his beard off. He was lying in the street when he was found. The friend eventually went to England with her family.

34:00 Her sister exchanged letters with this friend for a time until it became too dangerous. This was Krystalnacht to me. This rabbi was such a courteous man -- she and others had liked him. He was not dead, but terribly beaten up.

35:00 Also, he was a very honorable man. To lie there in the middle of the street! They didn't have many Nazi friends so she wouldn't know what they were thinking -- if they were proud of what they were doing and so forth. Her friends were mostly those who said how terrible it was. But Berlin was different from other places, she believes.

36:00 Although Berlin didn't have a vast number of Jews, it was more cosmopolitan -- more liberal. Her friends were equally disturbed as she was. Also, there was a feeling -- what would foreign countries think of Germany? Were they all barbarians? Would they think they were all barbarians?

37:00 The following year, the war began. That changed things. Because even people like her father, who had been a soldier in the first World War -- when her group said the war would be lost; that it had to be lost -- he didn't like to hear this very much. Even though he wasn't for another war, it was the country he had to stick by, not Hitler.

38:00 But she remembers that on June 22, 1941, when the Germans invaded Soviet Russia, that he finally said, "This is a lost war," because it was the same situation that Germany had been in during 1914-18. Her father's misgiving was the same dilemma that many of the conspirators -- the high officers and aristocracy -- who made the attempt on Hitler had. They had sworn an oath. Whether he was a devil or not, that was their country. They had to defend it.

39:00 Although they were not attacked, they attacked Poland. For any, it was a difficult situation. She thinks the war against the Jews was well hidden during the war. She heard the name Auschwitz on BBC or Radio Moscow, not in Germany. All Berliners knew about the concentration camp Sachsenhausen(?ph).

40:00 Everybody said, don't talk so loud, you will go there. Sachsenhausen(ph) was near Berlin. People in Munich must have known what was happening in Dachau. Her aunt in Amsterdam had given her a journey to Amsterdam after she graduated. Her aunt gave her lot of books by immigrants like The Soldier of the Moors by Wolfgang Langhoff.

41:00 She read a lot of books about Germany. She was so deeply impressed that was afraid to go back. She asked her father if she could stay in Holland. This was in 1938. He said no, she must come back to her family. He was expecting a war and he wanted his family around him.

42:00 Thus, she knew much more than the average German did because she had read these books about concentration camps and what happened there. In 1942, Jews began being deported from Germany. She was glad that her friends had gone to Holland. Their father had died in 1942 before deportation and she was glad because he was very old and she couldn't imagine what they would have done to him.

43:00 That family survived. Margaret survived. Edith, her twin sister, was already dead. Henny, another sister, lived in Amsterdam and was part of the Underground. She had three boys. Two were in the Underground and one went to America and fought. He was a soldier in Berlin.

44:00 The boy who went to America became a teacher at New York State University. He is now retired. Half of the family lives in Berlin, half in America.

45:00 He has written a book about young Jews in Germany. He left Germany around 1937. She would give it to every young boy who wants to know how it was. One of Margaret's friends had sent her a postcard when he was deported. He had somehow managed to post it. It said, "I'm going, we won't see each other again." Also, her sister had colleagues who had been dismissed from their jobs.

46:00 During the war, clothing was rationed. Food was obtained through food stamps. The Jews didn't have ration cards, so they (Gitta and others) made collections of clothes and food so that the Jews could survive. But to survive for how long? And one day, they were gone. Except those that were safe somewhere.

47:00 She has a lot of books about the Holocaust. About the whole Jewish question of Israel.

48:00 (Interviewer talks about Jan Karski and asks Gitta if Roosevelt and Churchill had said yes to him, that they would drop leaflets to tell Germans what was going on, would the German citizens have done anything?)

49:00 She doubts that. But instead of saying the Allies are terrorizing our cities, the Germans would have had a direct contest between the bombings and concentration camps ; a direct answer to what they were doing to the Jews.

50:00 She thinks it would have helped. Their cities were in ruins in 1945, but people claimed it was because of terror attacks. Many people after the war said that Hitler was alright -- if only he hadn't touched the Jews.

51:00 This was not really feeling for what Hitler had done, but that then they wouldn't have suffered as much if the Jews had been left alone. The whole end of the war was absolutely terrible. They knew it would be terrible; they had a saying: "Enjoy the war, the peace will be terrible."

52:00 she thinks that if the leaflets had come down and had said directly on them you know -- we are doing this because the Jews are being deported to Auschwitz, then maybe the name would have finally come through before 1945. She doesn't know. The deportations were done at night. The railroad people and civil servants just packed the Jews in at railroad stations at night. Then they went on this long journey, and when they arrived, there was the SS.

53:00 She always thinks that these railroad people must have known. When she looks at photographs of the trials of officers who made the attempt against Hitler. .there were so many people sitting in the audience. Who were they? What did they do? Were they called because they were Nazis? She knows that Chancellor Schmidt was one of those called as an officer.

54:00 She doesn't think he was a Nazi because his whole background

is Social Democrat. But, there were many, many people. This is what makes her wish sometimes that she had stayed in America. Her generation is absolutely lost. They must die first and then maybe. . . Her son was born in the 1950's. She is half Jewish. Her husband was Jewish.

55:00 Her son told her that his fellow students envied him -- that he had parents who were NOT Nazis. That means there are a lot of parents around who were.

56:00 When the Hollywood film of the Holocaust came to Germany.... They had documentaries and everything, of course. She didn't think there would be such a reaction! It wasn't as if television had put a code of silence on the whole thing. They had a series called "The Yellow Star". When Hollywood came with the series which showed ghastly things, all of a sudden, because it touched the nerve of the younger generation, their questioning began. They questioned their fathers -- Where were you? What did you do? All of a sudden they woke up. Isn't that strange? She was in New York at the time and she didn't expect it. She had thought Germany had done a lot on radio and so forth to let people know what had happened.

57:00 In New York she lived among Americans. Her German colleagues were mostly younger than she was -- too young to have taken part in the war. They had been glowing children in Hitler's Youth -- but not in the war.

58:00 20 years ago she didn't feel it as much. She came back to Germany in 1984. She thinks since 1984 the war has been more present for her and for Germans It is a different generation growing up who is asking its parents what they did. Her son is 38. His generation is most afraid that there might be another racist regime.

59:00 Her son asked her, "How will you know when the Fascists are coming?" She answered, "When stormtroopers are marching through the streets and when Jews are attacked because they are Jews. Then you better be careful, but it may be too late."

1:00:00 He grew up in Germany. Her older sister lived in Washington. Maybe because he had visited America, his eyes were more open. Then, also, his father was Jewish. Strangely enough, his father didn't want his son to know that he was of Jewish origin. But she said, "What are you going to do if he becomes an anti-Semite? We have to!" He was ten years old when she finally wrung it from her husband that she could tell her son.

1:01:00 Her husband said, "I don't want him to feel Jewish. I don't

want him to feel persecuted." She said, "He won't be feeling that way." She took her son and his cousin to Exodus, the movie where Jews were heroes! Then, she told them when they asked her where these people came from in Exodus, "from German concentration camps." She went on to tell them that in one of them named Auschwitz, their grandmother, grandfather, and one uncle and two aunts had died.

1:02:00 "Ahhhh," he said. "Does that mean I'm Jewish? Or half Jewish?" Her son's reaction was that he wanted to know everything about Judaism and Israel. This was exactly what she had wanted to hear.

1:03:00 There are not many Jews living in Germany anymore. Her son lives in Frankfurt. He doesn't have the opportunity to talk to many Jews. He is a surgeon in the hospital in Frankfurt.

1:04:00 She met her husband after the war, in 1945. He had come back from Switzerland. She became a journalist after the war. She had always wanted to, but with Hitler, you couldn't do it without compromising yourself. There is a whole generation of '45 journalists with good names in Germany today because they hadn't compromised. They didn't know much about journalism. They had to start from scratch.

1:05:00 She was sent to the Nuremberg trials. There she learned things that many of her generation did not know. Maybe she is too harsh with her generation.

1:06:00 It is very painful for her "to face the burden of her generation." (the words in quotations are those of the interviewer). The older she gets, the more painful it gets.

1:07:00 The Nuremberg trials were absolutely terrible. To know that you are one of the Germans! In America, she could have become an American, but she didn't want to. She belonged to this. . . The trial was absolutely ghastly. She never expected anything from this group of criminals she saw there, but what finally came out! To know that for twelve years they had been ruled by these gangsters and not done anything against them. That is not easy to wallow.

1:08:00 She thinks Walter Lacquer wrote a book about why they did nothing about Auschwitz. He is Jewish; his father was a very prominent professor. She has met him in New York. She thinks it is a different story what they (the Germans) did and what the Americans did not do, but she thinks the Americans could have helped and saved . . if they had done something about it.

1:09:00 The Americans didn't even bomb Auschwitz. They were able to.

1:10:00 (Interviewer talks) The trouble was the British gave Palestine to two groups. Israel has changed everything. Now, Jews

have a country. She hope not too many are coming to America. She has a friend, a television correspondent, who told her that many people were standing in line in Israel in front of the U.S. embassy for visas.

1:11:00 (Interviewer talks -- asks Gitta about living in New York)

1:12:00 She worked in Hamburg. Her English was good enough so that her editor asked her if she would like to go to New York, so she did. Her husband was dead. She asked her son and he said for her to do just as she wanted. She went to Harlem at the height of the riots in the late 60's. Nobody could tell her why they did that and what was on their minds when they did.

1:13:00 She went to Adam Clayton Powell, a representative from Harlem, and she asked him, "Do you think I could live in Harlem?" He said something like, "What do ya mean? I live in Harlem!" She replied, "Congressman, you pass for white, but everybody knows you are black! So it's a different story!" He advised her, to go to a home for single black woman which belonged to his church. It was in the midst of Harlem. He recommended her to the people who were in charge of the home.

1:14:00 She lived mostly with young, single, black women who had come from the South. At first they weren't very happy about her, but after a while they became friends. Through Adam, she went into the political scene and campaigned for him. She met a lot of people: simple people, political people, church people -- they always saw to it that she got safely home at night.

1:15:00 Nothing happened to her ever. It was strange, when she had to leave Harlem, people looked so different to her. Living with blacks for months and months, she felt strange among whites. The blacks are very warm people. They accepted her. She got a Pulitzer Prize for one of her series she wrote while living in Harlem.

1:16:00 She has no inhibition at all as far as race is concerned. None. This helps her a great deal. It helped her in Harlem that she was not an American and that she was a woman. She was not a danger to them. White men are dangerous to them.

1:17:00 (Interviewer asks if there was a time when the SS suspected she might be keeping someone). Yes. The biggest difficulty was during the alarms -- the bombings. She couldn't leave Elsa in the house. Elsa had to go to the bomb shelter in the cellar or to the bunker. The trouble was, at that time, every German woman who was not over __ and didn't have small children had to work. People were nasty when they realized that someone who should be was not working.

1:18:00 The people would denounce you. If they saw Elsa at the same time every day and night -- this wouldn't do. So they sent her to

the bunker at night and the shelter during the day so different people saw her at different times. Sometimes they said she was ill or she had a vacation if people asked.

1:19:00 They lived on one ration card. For two people, this was not easy. But they had a friend who had tried to desert to the Americans. He was caught and sentenced to death. This was at the end of the war. A friend of his prevented all the documents necessary for his sentence from going to the court, so he survived. But he had given them coal and sacks full of potatoes.

1:20:00 Finally, she was drafted to a German office at the end of the war. She was a typist. The soldiers working at the officer were either half blind or had lost an arm or a leg, because this was the only way they could work in Berlin. Most of them didn't want to hear about the war -- they had enough.

1:21:00 She told them that she needed food badly, and one soldier helped her. He knew that Elsa was half Jewish and he still brought food. If you knew who to trust, you could do it. Sometimes she would find a piece of bread lying in the front of their door. After the war, a woman who lived upstairs told them that she had suspected what had been going on, and whenever she had extra bread she gave it to them. Nobody had denounced them. These were all good people.

1:22:00 It wasn't just her and her sister helping. There was this woman --there were more than just them.

1:23:00 This book by Valen Zinzanger(?ph), it's a pity that it's only written in German. After the war, Elsa became a teacher and is now retired. Her father died. Her mother is still living at 93 years of age. Her mother's sister died at 93.

1:24:00 We are friends. Whenever I'm in Berlin I stay with her (Elsa) and whenever she comes to West Germany she stays with me. We didn't make too much of it. (The fact that she saved Elsa's life). It was something that one did. She was grateful in a way, but. . it's something you don't talk about.

1:25:00 They have so many things now. It's good that it went alright. But they won't linger on it. They do talk about the funny things that happened. Her older sister had a friend, a German soldier. She invited him over. Usually, they had a feeling of who was a Nazi or not. You smelled it. Strangely enough, her sister hadn't smelled it. He developed into a real Nazi. Nasty.

1:26:00 There was Elsa sitting and Dr. Schiller sitting. They were talking about Jews. He asked her (Gitta), "You wouldn't marry a Jew, would you?"

She said, "Why not?" And he used a nasty word or a Jewish girl and said, "I never would! I would smell it!" And there he was sitting

next to Elsa and flirting with her! Funny things like that, they talk about.

1:27:00 They were young and just tried to get through the war. Both of them. Elsa had put up a big map. They listened to the BBC. They always wagered how long it would take for her to be free. Elsa left the place just before the Russians came. She did this because they were afraid the bridges would be exploded. The town was only connected to Berlin by two bridges.

1:28:00 Elsa made it to Berlin and stayed with a distant aunt. The bridges were exploded. They were cut off from Berlin.

1:29:00 She lived in New York for 17 years. This was full of work. Every day she had at least two stories to write. She didn't have much time to think. (About the past).

1:30:00 She remembers her father telling her about World War I without any hesitation. Not bragging, but not apologizing. It was just as it happened. But the war generation of 1944 did not talk about the war. Especially those who came back from Russia. They had seen too much. Some of her friends were in the war. Those who survived did not talk. Most did not survive, but she had letters from them. They all said it was horrible -- not human.

1:31:00 Whatever it was. . . in France, as wars go, it was normal. But in Russia apparently, so many things happened that they did not want to talk or write about it. They just said it was not human anymore. Many soldiers were apparently drafted to shoot people -- some partisans, all the Jews.

1:32:00 She was arrested by the East Germans in 1950. Both her husband and her were arrested. They were living in the Eastern part of Berlin. She was imprisoned for four years and he was in Siberia for five because they were considered the opposition.

1:33:00 Her son was just two months old when she was arrested. They wouldn't tell her what had happened to him. They said for her to tell them that her husband was an American spy and then they would let her know where her son was. In the fourth year, she was allowed to write a letter. Her father wrote back and there were greetings from her son in the letter, so she knew that he was staying with her family. . . ear later, her husband came back. He was very sick. He didn't live long.

1:34:00 Now they are trying in East Berlin to make amends to the Jews. It is strange. It didn't help that her husband was Jewish at the time. Some Jews were just released from their jobs; others were arrested. She was taken because of her husband. She was never indicted.

1:35:00 She never saw a prosecutor. The East Germans just arrested her. When the trial of her husband came, two Russians interrogated

her because of him. He had made friends in Switzerland who at the time were in opposition to Hitler. Among them were Americans. This made them suspect he was an American spy. (Interviewer says this would not have happened to her if they had lived in West Berlin)O
No.

1:36:00 (Interviewer asks her if she ever spoke to blacks about their anti-Semitism). Yes, she did. Also to the Arabs at the UN Libyans.

1:37:00 When the Libyans started their anti-Israel tirades and she was sitting next to them, she always told them, "I am a German of this generation which killed six million Jews. You cannot talk to me like this." And they understood! Would you believe it? They said, "Okay, alright, alright." This was the Libyan ambassador. He was a rabid anti-Semite.

1:38:00 When she was in Harlem, anti-Semitism was not yet really developed, as Jesse Jackson brought with "Hymietown" and things which he said and later regretted so bitterly. She knows him, she went to his house with a group of foreign correspondents. He was a very nice man, but that was before his political ambitions. It was mostly the Jew at the corner who took more than they had to pay at other places downtown that bothered those she spoke with. She said that there was more stealing in Harlem and home-breaking and so forth, and somehow, somebody had to pay for it. "We have to pay for it -- the people who go to his store."

1:39:00 They agreed with that. During the time she lived in Harlem, mostly during '67-'68, anti-Semitism was not yet fully developed.. It was not yet a fully developed political anti-Semitism.

1:40:00 The Black Muslim leader during that time, Elijah Muhammed, always said that Jews, Muslims, and Christians always had the same God.

1:41:00 She is sure that it would have made a difference if Germans had spoken out sooner against Hitler's anti-Semitism. Unfortunately, she believes that the majority of Germans were anti-Semitic anyway.

1:42:00 Not that they wanted the Jews to be killed or deported; but in a sense they agreed with Hitler. The Jews held all the big and good positions and many people, especially educated people, resented the fact that the Jews were so good in their business.

1:43:00 The whole entertainment business was dominated by Jews. For example, there is Max Reinhart(ph). Directors were mostly Jewish. She points out that the Americans have inherited them from the Germans. The Nobel Prize people and doctors as well.

1:44:00 Everybody had to flee -- the whole elite. This is why Frankfort will never be the same to her. It had a Jewish elite. So did Berlin,etc. With it gone, there was such a let down. If there

would have been protests. . . She points out Thomas Mann(ph) as being an anti-Semite, even though his wife was Jewish

1:45:00 He would write stuff like, "Oh, that cheap Jewish youngster," in his diaries.

1:46:00 In 1933, the majority of Germans were slightly anti-Semitic.

1:47:00 (Interviewer asks how she was able to escape this). She can only repeat what her father said when she asked, "What are Jews?" He said, "Jews are people like you and me, only with a different religion." And that was it. This was the rule in their family. She knew so many Jews and they weren't a danger. They were friends. She realized that indeed, they were no different.

1:48:00 The teachings of the church weren't a big theme to her. The story of Christ being killed by the Jews; well she can say that the Catholic Church, especially its youth movement, was free from anti-Semitism in a religious way. Maybe not in others, but they didn't blame the Jews for the Bible story.

1:49:00 Her Catholicism is no longer as important to her. It got lost along the way.

1:50:00 It is because of the stiff moral theology. Like today--the Pope tells people not to take the pill; they must have children. This was one of the things -- she was a young girl who wanted to live her way. She went to confession and told them what she had done -- this or that -- and they said to her that she was not allowed to do that and must promise not to. She couldn't. Today she's not religious at all. She's agnostic.

1:51:00 She believes the church is a good thing. She gives money to it, but that's all. There was a play against Pope Pius XII by a German which blamed him for not doing enough.

1:52:00 Catholics believe the Pope is a representative of Christ. She wouldn't go that far. She knows people who survived in Italy through Church connections.

1:53:00 She remembers a monk in her church who prayed for "our brothers from Abraham's tribe" publicly and openly. They all prayed with him. He ended up in a concentration camp. There was also a bishop who preached against the euthanasia program during which many Jews were killed.

1:54:00 She agrees that the euthanasia program led to the genocide of the Jews.

She learned this during the Nuremberg trials. She didn't know this before. She only knew that people were killed who were called "not worth living." This bishop preached against this. When the Gestapo

arrested her, she had a heap of his sermons in her house to send away to soldiers.

1:55:00 Her mother was very bright; she threw them out the window. This helped a great deal. Her mother was very brave. She went to the mayor; she also did this: When the Gestapo were in her house looking at her books, one SS said, "I see that you have many books, but you do not have Mein Kampf." Her mother said to him, "You look at me and tell me that you have only read Mein Kampf and nothing else." She was courageous.

1:56:00 She thinks that she has a little of her mother in her. At the time, she was young and had no fear. The Gestapo was in her house because it was the time she and her group were arrested.

1:57:00 After the war, she told her parents she had kept Elsa. They wondered what might have happened if someone had found out, but when she asked them if they would have sent Elsa out to the street, they said no. Her father died when she came back from the second prison in 1954. He was 65. He had taken care of her son beautifully. Her mother died ten years later. She was 75. They had both taken care of her son.

1:58:00 She was very sick when she was arrested. She had a nurse for her son. This nurse was very courageous, and took him over to West Berlin in a carriage to her parents. She saw the Berlin Wall constructed in 1961. She was living in Frankfort at the time.

1:59:00 In New York, she wrote articles in-German to send back to the German paper.

2:00:00 (She showed her articles in a cabinet; also, a sculpture by Valerie Maynard which she purchased in Harlem).

2:01:00 (Interviewer asks her what she would want children to know about this time)?

2:02:00 She talks about a TV entertainer named Hans Rosenbaum(ph). When he died of cancer, her granddaughter's teacher told this about how he survived -- he survived with the help of two old German ladies who had hidden him. ---- (Tape stops)

0:00-01:00 Her granddaughter told-the whole story of the Jews, because this teacher had taught it through this well-known entertainer. She thought this was wonderful. The young generation in Germany will be different, and is different already. Her granddaughter is now twelve. She was ten at the time she learned the story. She knows her grandfather was Jewish.

01:00 Look how they fought in Frankfort. During construction work,the workers found parts of the old ghetto there. All the university professors and young people fought for the construction

to be stopped. But they didn't know what to do with the site. You can't rebuild the ghetto -- it was not a nice place.

02:00 You can't say it was well worth remembering. It was well worth remembering that Jews had to live in a ghetto. The Jewish community in Frankfort came to an agreement finally. Whatever would be built at the site, a monument would be placed. Yes, she thinks there is an interest in the young Germans about what happened. This is her great hope.

03:00 Her friends were not negative about what she did. There was a big article about her in the local paper after she won the medal. There were lots of articles.

04:00 A friend of hers who was a young officer had gone to the front in January of 1945. He was from her Catholic group. He had stopped by her place to say that he was "going to the victory." She told him, "If you win the war, this girl is going to die." She told him Elsa's story. He was the one who wrote the Israeli embassy and recommended her for the award. She had no idea he was going to do that.

05:00 The testimony was written by Elsa. (She shows article from local 06:00 paper). Shortly after the article-came out, she went to her history seminar, which is very large. Her professor pointed her out and said that, of the senior people in the class, they had someone who was very special. He told the class the story of what she had done during the war. All the other students clapped and banged their desks. She was dying, she was so embarrassed. Some of the young students had been suspicious of the older people studying with them, but at least they knew that she was alright.

07:00 Her testimony was in French. (On the award). She would have expected it to have been in English.

08:00 The first time she met any other rescuers was at the Israeli embassy. She was the only old lady there who was not posthumously honored. The others were children of the award winners or relatives. She did know that one of those who hid Elsa's family in Amsterdam was honored by the queen.

09:00 Holland doesn't like Germany, because it lost a lot of Jews to the Nazis. Also, because of the German's stiffness and humorlessness. When Holland beat Germany at football, you can't believe what happened! They won the war, you know.

10:00 (Interviewer talks)

11:00 During the war, she only knew Germans who were protecting Jews in Holland.

She knew a young boy, a friend of Elsa's cousin, who went to school for Jews who were preparing for immigration to Palestine, etc. It existed until 1937.

12:00 This boy said to her when he came to see her in Berlin on his way to Portugal: "But our boys are fighting beautifully, aren't they?" He felt German. She owes her first visit to Israel to a senator in Berlin, Lipschitz, who made it a custom that all retribution cases and rescuer's names should come to his knowledge.

13:00 He called her one day and asked her if she wanted to go to Israel. This was in 1960. He said he had read about her. The Jewish community had a fund set up for rescuers to go visit Israel.

14:00 He was half Jewish. He was saved by the German army. They shoved him from this company to another so that he would not be found by the Gestapo. He didn't like to hear anything bad about the German army. But he said he had paid for it, for he had lost an arm while fighting.

15:00 Elsa had applied for retribution. When she did, she told the story of how she was denounced by the Nazi woman and how the officer set her free, and how Gitta helped her. This was how Lipschitz saw the case.

16:00 The German Jews, whom she had thought she would fear most in Israel, were very tolerant and nice. But Russian and Polish Jews hated her with a venom. She can understand that. She was traveling with a group of Protestant women who always prayed before dinner. She didn't. One time they asked her to sing with them. So she sang.

17:00 When this happened, they were staying at a Catholic home where Jewish survivors lived. They were old people -- some German. These people heard them singing and asked them to sing German folk songs for them. Would you believe it? (She is very choked up). There we were singing, and these survivors of what we had done were listening and crying. It was. . .

18:00 She knows they missed Germany. This was why it was easy for her not to think they were different, for in all ways, they were German.

19:00 One of Elsa's cousins had gone to America after the war.

20:00 He had been in the Underground in Amsterdam as a young boy He had terrible depression and went to a psychiatrist The psychiatrist said to him, "Why don't you find a nice synagogue?" Now, this cousin is a very active member of a synagogue. He may not totally overcome his memories, but he's now in good shape.

21:00 She always cries when she talks about those things. She doesn't want to, but it is so painful. Okay, Elsa's alright -- but so many others!

22:00 This makes her so ashamed! This word (she points to her award): "Who saves one life, saves the whole world" -- my God, she is still deeply ashamed for her country. It doesn't help her that

she was able to save one life. They did it!

23:00 She's supposed to go to Israel and plant a tree. She would like to do it -- she plans to go next April, maybe.

24:00 She had been invited to this dinner where she met the German ambassador to Israel, who she knew from UN days. He invited her to Israel to plant a tree. He said she should talk to groups in Israel. (Her voice then lowers). She knows she would not be able to do that. She would just break up.

25:00 (She and interviewers talk about Jan Karsky, who broke down in Shoah, and who later felt that Lanzmann had made a fool of him. They had done two days of interviews, and Lanzmann selected the 45 minutes when he broke down. The interviewers said no, it showed your deep feelings). You think people wouldn't mind if I broke up?

26:00 The shame will never go away.

27:00 (Interviewer talks about Alice Miller's hypothesis that harsh

28:00 upbringing of German children led them to be cruel and obedient).

29:00 We are known as a country not friendly to children. Americans say this.

30:00 She and her son would go to Italian-restaurants with his children because Italians love children -- they don't mind if they make a lot of noise, etc.

31:00 She was never beaten at school. At home, her father never touched his girls. Her mother would slap them around a little. This made them hate her when they were kids.

32:00 They were lower middle class family. She knows of families where the father did the beating. At her school, it was not allowed. She went to a conservative school which wasn't Nazi-influenced. She graduated in '38.

33:00 When it was made obligatory to join the Hitler Youth, the headmaster was very conservative and tried to save his school from that

34:00 At her school, the history books were excellent -- no Nazi history books.

35:00 Her aunt, who had done much more than she ever did, came back to Germany for awhile and lived in a small hotel on the same street where the Franks had lived.

An American passed her one day and asked her in German, "Where is the Frank house?" She told him that he was standing in front of it, whereupon he spit at it. This totally broke her up.

36:00 (They talk about blacks killed in Civil Rights movement such as Andrew Goodman and Mickey Scholl(?ph) who were killed in Mississippi, she thinks).

37:00 Like here, the young people in America just don't know what happened in the 60s with Civil Rights.

38:00 (Interviewer talks)

39:00

40:00 (Photograph of Gitta taken)

.END.