

-TITLE- JAN KARSKI
-I_DATE-
-SOURCE- CHRISTIAN RESCUERS PROJECT
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY- FAIR
-IMAGE_QUALITY- GOOD
-DURATION-
-LANGUAGES- ENGLISH
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
-CORPORATE_NAME-
-KEY_WORDS-
-NOTES-
-CONTENTS-

01:00 He discusses his interview with Lanzman for the movie Shoa. He did not want to be interviewed but was convinced by Lanzman. His wife was annoyed about the interview.

02:00 Lanzman tried to convince his wife to agree to the interview. Believes Lanzman is a very cocky man but thinks he made the greatest film. Lanzman told him "it's your duty to make a film of what you saw.

03:00 He agreed to do the interview. He asked Lanzman if he would give him questions ahead of time to prepare for the interview. Lanzman refused saying he wanted a spontaneous interview.

04:00 He asked Lanzman "don't involve me in any political discussions or opinions" and he agreed. His wife was upset about the interview and Lanzman turned their house upside down.

05:00 He had kept silent about things he had seen in Poland concerning the Jews,.There are things he still doesn't want to remember. How was it possible that it happened.

06:00 He believes we should remember it, don't let humanity forget it. Humans have the capacity to choose between evil and good. God gives the free will to do so.

07:00 Only individuals have souls, societies do not. There is no collective soul. Everyone he reported to was sympathetic to the Jews. He reported to world international leaders of government.

08:00 Jews were totally helpless.

09:00 Jews had no country or government of their own. They were fighters but had no identity. Their identity was through he Polish underground.

10:00 The Jews only had an identity to those who doomed them to death, the Nazis. They were not seen as Jews to others outside. Jews had nothing to offer the Allies for help.

11:00 He brought Jewish demands to the Allies; hard currency in gold. Jews were let out of the ghettos for gold currency but they were not let out of the concentration camps.

12:00 No political leader after the war would want to be connected with subsidizing Hitler with gold currency so no one would accept the demands.

13:00 July 1943 he was in Washington DC. President Roosevelt gave the Polish underground twelve million dollars. He considered the a military organization.

14:00 Roosevelt gave them money to make them fight. He remembers the total helplessness of the Jews. They were abandoned by everyone.

15:00 The administration at Georgetown University wanted him to teach a course on the Holocaust but he refused to do it. Instead he recommended Mike Berenbaum, an excellent professor on the subject.

16:00 If a teacher is not qualified to teach on this subject they run the risk of corrupting the minds of young people by making them think that such things could happen. They will They will think that everyone hated the Jews. Especially the Jewish children, "everyone hates me, I must be only out for myself."

17:00 We must emphasize that after the war half a million jews survived in Europe. Some don't owe anything to anybody, they survived the camps on their own. However most were helped by individuals.

18:00 To help a Jew during the war was very dangerous. One could go to jail for it and pay a penalty. In Poland the punishment was execution. If a family was involved the entire family would be shot. An entire village would be leveled if a Jewish family was hiding there and people knew about it.

19:00 We must emphasize to children not to lose faith in humanity of individuals.

20:00 Carelessness can corrupt the minds of the young. Children must know how many people actively helped.

21:00 Their names should be known.

22:00 Make children realize that Anti-Semitism is a lack of tolerance. Where can it lead to tomorrow, to the Catholics, or to the blacks. The obedience of "love thy neighbor" teach them what good it can do.

23:00 Lanzman was hidden as a small boy during the war by a French family.

24:00 July August 1943 after the war he was back in the U.S. secretly to inform officials about what was happening. He met with Roosevelt and Archbishops.

25:00 He also met with Jewish leaders of the Jewish American Congress and the Justice of the Supreme Court. He was supposed to go back to Poland on his fifth mission.

26:00 Commentators Eugene Lyons, George Crele, Dorothy Thompson, and George Sohopski all wrote articles on the Jewish problem based on what he told them. Walter Littmen was the only one that never did.

27:00 Littmen was notorious for this. At the end of August he returned to Poland.

28:00 He was known by Nazis to be spreading lies about the Third Reich, thought to be a Bolshevik on the payroll of American Jews. He was not allowed to return to Poland by the Prime Minister.

29:00 He knew all the secrets of the political parties.

30:00 He was sent back to the U.S. openly to be attached to the embassy. His salary was five hundred dollars a month. He wrote articles to all U.S. magazines.

31:00 He delivered two hundred Lectures in the U.S. between 1943-1944. By the end of 1944 his first book appeared, Star Over A Secret State.

32:00 He never returned to Poland. The American government withdrew its recognition of the government in exile through its recognition of the Warsaw regime. He stayed in the U.S. in political exile. In 1974 he was awarded the Fullbright Grant and spent six months in Poland.

33:00 He met his wife in the United States. She was well known in Europe for her dancing. She came to the U.S. in 1949. She had spent the duration of the war in England as a famous dancer.

34:00 She started in modern dance in Germany and left when Hitler came to power. She then went to Austria and started a dancing school. After Hitler's invasion she escaped to Florence, Italy. She then left for England when Mussolini came to power.

35:00 She came to America in 1949.

36:00 She still choreographs today.

37:00 Some rescuers believed that if the Jews had stood up to the Germans more aggressively more would have survived.

38:00 He doesn't agree at all. The Jews were fighting through uprisings and escapes from the ghettos and concentration camps. They held underground positions. But they had no identity.

39:00 The outside world during the war did not see their identity as Jews. Saw them as Poles, German, or French.

40:00 To escape from the Warsaw ghetto was not impossible. In 1942, Jewish children would escape and run the streets of Warsaw looking for bread. They would return to the ghetto though because their parents were there.

41:00 He exchanged his military uniform for civilian clothes after escaping from a military train.

42:00 People could recognize Jews because of their Yiddish accent. They could not hide it. A Jew also didn't know the consequence of telling a Pole that he was a Jew in fear of Anti-Semitism.

43:00 The Jews were helpless in Poland. There were two ghettos in Warsaw; the Warsaw ghetto and Warsaw itself. Poles could save individuals but they could not stop the executions.

44:00 The only way executions could have been stopped were through Allied leadership. However they did nothing.

45:00 He remained active after the war. He went from being an employee of the embassy to political exile. Otherwise he would be an employee of the Warsaw government. He had to go to Montreal to get an entry visa into the U.S. to obtain permanent citizenship five years later.

46:00 He joined the Georgetown University faculty. He received two hundred dollars a month from a Jesuit scholarship. He was told he would have to get his doctorate to survive in the academic world. He got his PhD in two years and rejoined the faculty.

47:00 He tries to do what he is doing at the time very well.

48:00 He traveled all over the world doing research for a book for fifteen years. He now wants to retire but the Jesuits will not let him.

49:00 He is seventy four years old and still teaching because he needs something to do. Everybody wants some social recognition.

50:00 He was awarded the School of Foreign Service teacher who made the greatest impact on the faculty there. His wife tells the dean that she doesn't want him home all the time so they will not let him retire.

51:00 She guests choreographs for different dance companies today. She is seventy eight years old.

52:00 She doesn't approve of his lectures on the Jewish Problem. She wants to forget about it and not have to deal with it. In 1977 he spoke for the first about the problem to Lanzman.

53:00 Ellie Wiesel learned of him in 1981 and invited him to speak at a conference.

54:00 After some persuasion he went to the conference. Every country had sent officials and his name "Karski's report" went nationwide.

55:00 After his report a group of men approached him. Houser, the state prosecutor prosecuting "Eichmann" wanted him to come to Jerusalem for the trial. "Eichmann" did nothing to me, so I felt unqualified to take part in the trial."

56:00 He did not answer the letter but he was later told that he was there through the use of his books. He was invited to Jerusalem. He left for Israel on June 6 ,1982.

57:00 The next day he was to give a lecture at the local university. The students were unable to attend though because of the Lebanon bombing.

58:00 In Israel everyone criticizes everyone else. There are no taxis in Israel.

59:00 The whole nation is made up of soldiers. There is much confusion, fear, and terror. His wife was very dissatisfied with Israel.

60:00 His did not want to go. They spent three weeks there.

61:00 He became known in Israel and was honored at the Yad Vashem.

62:00 The ceremony took place with a rabbi. On the way to the ceremony a man introduced himself as the Justice of the Supreme Court and gave him all of the same rights as any citizen of Israel.

63:00 He received publicity again during Shoa. A British company also wanted to interview him on the Jewish problem. A forty six minute documentary. All of this publicity was not planned.

64:00 During the war he tried hard to stop what was happening. Now people are ready to know what happened.

65:00 They Risked Their Lives is the name of a photographic book being made of the rescuers. That name was chosen because that is the phrase that comes up in every interview. These people always risked their lives. Life was running away always from the Gestapo.

1:01:00 He tried to change the attitude of President Roosevelt.

1:02:00 He produced articles published by Ellie Wiesel and Walter Laquer. He has archives from 1943.

1:05:00 Videos of him and others are being done for the archives at Yad Vashem.

1:08:00 He felt that his part in the movie Shoa was incoherent and insignificant.

1:09:00 Lanzmen used what he wanted from the interview to dramatize the film. He feels that the parts he used from his interview was of the least importance.

1:10:00 Parts of his interview not mentioned in the file were that he did reach London and the United States and reported the Jewish problem and that he did meet with President Roosevelt. He believes that Lanzman is a difficult man. He only admires him he does not like him.

1:11:00 Lanzmen is not interested in the politics of the war or even the war itself. He is only concerned in what actually happened. He is only interested in his work.

1:12:00 The Poles do not like the film because they are portrayed in a bad light. They are seen as uneducated citizens. However the educated Poles lived in Warsaw during the war not near Treblinka where the exterminations were occurring.

1:13:00 Lanzmen could not help this portrayal. In the film he talked about the silence of the Allied governments.

1:14:00 Lanzmen was only interested in the mechanisms of the Holocaust and how it happened. The people that helped the Jews were of no importance to him.

1:15:00 Lanzmen did make the greatest film.

1:16:00 Ellie Wiesel imposed the name Holocaust. Lanzmen doesn't agree with that term saying it involves the implication of self sacrifice. He chose the name Shoa instead.

1:17:00 The film shows the physical nature of the event not the emotional.

1:20:00 He was born in 1914 in Lauch. His parents were middle class. His father died while he was still a child. His mother was a extremely religious woman. At the age of twelve he joined a semi-religious semi-secret organization the Sodlezia Marinaskia. His mentor was a Jesuit. He still is not liberated from the Jesuits.

1:21:00 He followed the teachings of the Jesuits.

1:22:00 He was an excellent student. He had an excellent memory. He skipped one year of school because of good grades between elementary school and college. His good subjects were History, Polish, and poetry. There was a group of five Jewish students he went to school with that were very good in the sciences.

1:23:00 These students helped him with science and he helped them all with History. They all became very good friends. He still remembers all of them vividly.

1:24:00 Sasha Goldberg was very rich and wanted to become a pianist. He did not care for anything in school he just wanted to get a diploma.

1:25:00 One wanted to get out of Poland and go to London to be a banker.

1:26:00 Another boy was a fighter. He resented everyone and didn't belong much to the group. They befriended him anyway since no one else would. These were the closest relationships he had between the ages of thirteen and seventeen.

1:27:00 He finished school in 1931. His mother did not want him to join the military right away so he went to the university. He wanted to become an ambassador from Poland.

1:28:00 He read a lot about international relations. His hero was the foreign minister Napoleon. He tried to reconstruct every day of his life as the foreign minister.

1:29:00 He was fascinated with diplomatic service. He was the youngest in a family of eight children. His oldest brother was eighteen years older than he. None of his brothers or sisters are still alive.

1:30:00 Two died while he was still very young and a sister died during the war. The others all died after the war. They had all left Poland. He was full of ambition and nationalism. He believed Poland to be a great and strong country. He was a second Lieutenant in the war.

1:31:00 His barracks were in Auschwitz. The Germans dropped two bombs on the camp so they were forced to move east.

1:32:00 They reached the southeast part of Poland on September 17 1939. A military detachment from the Red Army intercepted them and took them to Russia to help them fight the Nazis.

1:33:00 Every generation brings destruction.

1:34:00 Chauvinism is nationalism in its lowest level. It is attachment to a church, village, or state to preserve national language, folklore, or food and rejecting any foreign influence. The masses were illiterate and poor.

This was the tragedy of Eastern Europe. The upper classes took advantage of it, they never knew who would take them over.

1:35:00 He got two degrees in school. A MA in Law, School of Diplomacy and an MA in diplomatic science in 1935. He was the best student.

1:36:00 He was the best horseback rider. In 1935 he started in the military service. In 1936 he established contacts and started non-official attachments with foreign ministries. He went to Austria and worked in the international labor office for eight months.

1:37:00 He went to London for eleven months to learn English. He returned to Warsaw in 1938. He entered a course to officially gain a permanent status in the foreign office. He past all the exams, he was the best in the class. January first 1939 was his first assignment as Secretary of the Department of Immigration.

1:38:00 He became the private secretary to the director of personnel in foreign ministry. He had access to all of the personal files. On August 23, 1939 out of the blue he was summoned for military duty.

1:39:00 Two bombs were dropped on their barracks. He never even saw a German, he never fired a shot. He saw masses of people on the road, people in fear. Poland was wiped out.

1:40:00 On August 25, 1939 the Mutual Assistance Pact between England and Poland was developed. They never had help from the west. His whole world collapsed. He blamed the government.

1:41:00 Poland lost the war after two to three days of fighting with the Germans. On September 17 his unit was hit by the Soviets and they were taken as prisoners of war.

1:42:00 He escaped from camp at the end of September. An agreement was drawn between the Nazi staff and the Soviet staff for the release of uncommissioned Soviet officers taken as war prisoners by the Germans of Ukrainian or Jewish descent. They were allowed to go to the Soviet side if they wished by the Germans.

1:43:00 The Soviet prisoners of German descent or born in German incorporated territory could be sent to German zones in Poland. He got rid of his officers boots and snuck into and went into the uncommissioned officers encampment to trade uniforms.

1:44:00 The next day he asked to be exchanged to go to Germany. When asked if he didn't like it there he lied and said that he did but that he had just gotten married before the war and when he left his wife was pregnant and he didn't want to leave her alone.

1:45:00 They let him go. He was being sent to a force labor camp when he jumped from the train. The trains only went 30km a hour then. Many soldiers were jumping out during the night. The Germans would shoot at the escapees but they would not stop the train. He got to Warsaw and looked for friends.

1:46:00 The underground had already started secret activities. He was contacted by one of the groups. They knew of his good memory and knowledge of Europe and languages. He was used as a courier. His first mission was in December 1939. He was sent to France successfully.

1:47:00 There he reported to the Polish government in France recognized by the French government as Polish government in exile. They were given diplomatic immunity.

1:48:00 It took him three days and two nights to get there.

1:49:00 He went skiing over the mountains. The Hungarians were friendly because they were neutral. There was a Polish government in exile in Budapest. He also spent two or three days in Budapest.

1:50:00 He got false document from the Hungarians saying that he was a translator for the Hungarian tourist office. Then he went to France.

1:51:00 He saw the Prime Minister who took him to Anlgasea, the seat of the Polish government in France. He stayed there until April and was then sent back to Poland. He used the same false papers again only this time he went on foot.

1:52:00 He eventually got to Warsaw and brought them the structure of the underground movement. He stayed there until June 1940 when he was sent back to France. He was arrested in Czechoslovakia on the way.

1:53:00 They found film on him and the Gestapo saw him as a spy. They broke his ribs, knocked out his teeth. He could not stand the torture very well. He knew all the information at the time that they wanted to know, names and addresses. He tried to cut his veins with a knife he had on him. He was sent back to Poland.

1:54:00 He was sent, by accident, to the town in which he had started his trip. He then established contact with his organization.

1:55:00 One year later the leader of the organization was arrested and sent to Auschwitz. He spent the remainder of the war there and was liberated by the Red Army. He then joined the Communist party. He became Prime Minister of Poland, Usik Selnchvick. He is still alive. Selnchvick had saved his life.

1:56:00 He saw him in 1974 when he was in Poland on the Fullbright

Scholarship. He is retired now and is a controversial figure. He was Prime Minister for eighteen years.

1:57:00 His own arrest was such a shock. He had never before fought, never even held a gun. He can not stand violence, TV programs with it, or loud voices. He has had enough of war, war degrades people.

1:58:00 War generates hatred. People do things they otherwise would not do if not at war. They will do unimaginable things. He never realized that before this war. This is one of the reasons that after the war he wanted to run away from it.

1:59:00 He ran away by never telling anyone that he was in the war. He never even tells his students, or delivered any lectures. He berried himself at the university. Only the administrators and some faculty knew. Lanzmen was his first interview.

1:60:00 The 1978 filming with Lanzmen did not come out for many years afterwards. He thought that it would not. He had felt foolish doing it. Lanzmen had been pressing him through the interview. "He is a hard man, Lanzmen."

1:61:00 He consented to the interview after being convinced by Lanzmen. There were three categories of interviews; 1) the perpetrators 2) the Jews 3) non Jews who saw it happen.
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