

-TITLE- SEBASTIAN MENDES  
-I\_DATE- OCTOBER 28 1987  
-SOURCE- CHRISTIAN RESCUERS PROJECT  
-RESTRICTIONS-  
-SOUND\_QUALITY- FAIR  
-IMAGE\_QUALITY- GOOD  
-DURATION-  
-LANGUAGES-  
-KEY\_SEGMENT-  
-GEOGRAPHIC\_NAME-  
-PERSONAL\_NAME-  
-CORPORATE\_NAME-  
-KEY\_WORDS-  
-NOTES-  
-CONTENTS-

During the interview, several names and documents are mentioned whose connection to the story seemed somewhat obscure. Because the accomplishment of Mr. Mendes' parents is so extremely (saving approx. 30,000 Jews and other refugees by issuing them visas free of charge from the Portuguese consulate in Bordeaux), it might well be worth having a transcript made to clarify this information.

01:00 -Father was born in 1885 in Beijos, Portugal. Was Consul-General in Belgium before moving to Bordeaux.

02:00 -Father grew up in Portugal, attended University, married a cousin, practiced law, and entered Diplomatic Corps with twin brother. Both very successful.

03:00 -Father lived all over the world. Sebastian was born while father was Consul-General in San Francisco in 1923. Father was transferred to Bordeaux in 1938. While on vacation in 1939, parents sensed the eminence of war.

04:00 -Sebastian is #10 of 14 children 9 are still alive.

05:00 -Brother, who has a different surname, is a member of Robert Jackowitz's committee, which referred the interviewers to Sebastian.

06:00 -Brother has different last name as judge just arbitrarily picked one of his middle names as a surname when brother was naturalized.

07:00 -When 9 months old, Sebastian moved to Brazil. Last child born in 1933. By the time family moved to Bordeaux, she had died. Family is Catholic.

08:00 -Another brother died as a young adult, so there were 12 children total. One brother sent to Portugal in 1937 to study, as having Portuguese education was important. Sebastian feels San Francisco society prejudiced against him because he is a Portuguese Catholic with a foreign accent and education.

09:00 -In 1962, he contacted NBC and Rabbi Schulweiss.

10:00 -wrote to NBC about being in a television program. Feels life has been difficult because of what happened. When he needed help, Rabbi Schulweiss referred him to a friend, but nothing came of this contact.

11:00 -Rabbi has been kind to him. After 1939 vacation in Denmark, parents decided the situation in Europe was dangerous, went back to Bordeaux, and on to Monaco.

12:00 -In 1939, parents returned to France with two of the older brothers who were university students. Rest of the family stayed in Portugal.

13:00 -In Portugal, he was returning home from school on the bus when he was his brothers walking down the road with a group of blond people. He got off to talk to them.

14:00 -Belgian government officials and university professors were with them. He found out they were Belgian refugees, and that there was a war. It was June, 1940.

15:00 -Father had received order not to help refugees, only to issue visas to those with transit visas for other countries. Father/mother thought this was wrong. Sebastian had some knowledge of problems Jews faced.

16:00 -Parents thought gov. instructions were against Portuguese constitution and decided to issue visas free to those who asked.

17:00 -As Consul-General, father had issued visas and false passports for 1.5 years before the war. In 1940, Portugese dictator recalled him to Portugal.

19:00 -In 1940, father arrived home and was fired. Was promised early retirement with compensation, which never materialized.

20:00 -With no source of income, family forced to sell off family properties. Within 3 years, they had lost everything. In 1949, mother suffered several strokes.

21:00 -In 1954, father died impoverished in a public hospital of pneumonia.

22:00 -Sebastian wrote a short book about his parents. Not publicized.

23:00 -Only had basic information for book, so he added some fiction. Sold 1400 copies. Sister approached Israel government with it, and Ben Gurion recognized their father.

24:00 -He apologizes for being emotionally upset. Ben Gurion had trees planted in his fathers name in three different spots in Israel. He moved from Portugal to England during the war.

25:00 -He mentions shooting of Leslie Howard. With his brother (also born in California). He went to London to join American army. This was June, 1943.

26:00 -He and brother wanted to show dictatorship they wanted no part of it. He took part in invasion of France, and went with the advancing armies as far as Fulda, West Germany.

27:00 -After war, he spent two weeks in Lisbon with his family, and than caught an American military transport from Paris to California, where he could only find low-paying jobs.

28:00 -In California, encountered difficulties with discrimination. First lived in a boarding house, then later married, He has three sons.

29:00 -Eldest son an artist, 2nd a photographer.

30:00 -3rd son a bicyclist.

31:00 -Shows picture of Richard, 3rd son.

32:00 -Because of difficulties, he and his wife moved around California a great deal.

33:00 -He sought a job as a bank inspector, but he didn't want to be away from his family often, and the job required that he traveled. He took a position with the post office, which treated him well, although he compares it to a concentration camp.

34:00 -After 22 with postal service, he retired and planned to return to Portugal, but his son bought him his house in California.

35:00 -Glad he stayed in U.S., but he gets restless. He and his wife might travel when he receives reparation payments which by law the government in Portugal owes to anyone who suffered under the dictatorship.

36:00 -Portugese Prime Minister awarded his father the highest gov. honor posthumously when he visited D.C.

37:00 -Damages owed by gov. might bring in money soon. Wife a painter.

38:00 -Wife's mother died two years ago. Shows framed letter of citation from congressmen, and the city of Long Beach.

39:00 -Shows pictures of parents.

40:00 -Interviewers read documents furnished by Sebastian. His parents saved approx. 30,000 people.

41:00 -Inaudible dialogue about documents

42:00 -He published his book about his parents himself

43:00 -Speaks about documents, unclear what they are.

44:00 -Rabbi Brown invited him to a ceremony honoring his parents in Long Beach.

45:00 -A rabbi in Beverly Hills invited him to a ceremony honoring his parents at the same time, so he did not attend the one in long beach.

46:00 -Rabbi Brown sent him a videotape of the ceremony he missed.

47:00 -His parents did this because they loved people, believed that Christians should give their lives to help others.

48:00 -Speaks about his son the photographer.

49:00 -Movie producer has been in touch with him about filming his parents story.

50:00 -He says it is an important story.

51:00 -Producer contacted him through a congressman's office.

52:00 -Father ordered his employees at the consulate to issue the free visas.

53:00

54:00 -Never regretted what his father did. Says Christian teaching emphasizes sacrifice for others. He doesn't know if he could have done it. Mentions a letter from a New York attorney. Unclear why.

55:00 -Interviewers read documents written by Sebastian about his parents.

56:00 -He wrote that his father wanted to be on the side of God vs. man, not man vs. God. Father thought he had received a divine message to help those seeking to leave. Father thought that if 1 Catholic (Hitler) could make so many Jews suffer, 1 Catholic could suffer for to help those Jews.

57:00

58:00 -He says that his purpose in writing the book was to give it away, to disseminate information about what happened.

59:00 -His children are very proud of their grandfather.

60:00 -He thinks people have rejected his story about his father, and so has the Catholic Church.

61:00 -He speaks about his brother's involvement with the book. Somewhat unclear.

62:00 -Was expensive to publish the book, but he did it out of love for his family.

63:00 -Brother had a connection with a newspaper who published an article about his accomplishments.

64:00 -A relative wrote to Attorney General Edwin Meese about his parents accomplishments.

65:00 -His brother presented the book Sebastian wrote as his own work.

66:00 -An other brother wont' talk about what parents did.

67:00 -He's been contacted by a museum in Berkley, CA and by several congressmen concerning his story.

68:00 -He wrote Portuguese president.

69:00 -His brother said he wanted reparation payments to go to Jackowitz's Committee, but Sebastian wants damages paid to him as publishing the book was very costly.

70:00 -Brother traveled to Israel to encourage people to continue work to honor their father.

71:00 -Rabbi Brown paid his travel expenses for him to attend ceremony honoring father in D.C.

72:00 -show pictures of ceremony.

73:00 -People used to resent him, he was very unsure of himself.

74:00 -He thinks a documentary was made about his father in Israel, but his lawyer said it cannot be shown in the U.S.

75:00 -Never had regrets about what his parents did, even though he suffered because of it to a degree. He had a great deal of respect for father growing up.

76:00 -He doesn't know how the Rabbi in Long Beach found him.

77:00 -With regard to the Holocaust, thinks children should know about taking care of each other, loving fellow man, respecting laws of God. Through his own effects, he sees his parents' work becoming

acknowledged.

78:00 -Shows program from Long Beach ceremony.

79:00 -When he joined the American Army in 1943, he didn't think it was so bad as he had food, clothing, and shelter, while his family in Portugal did not.

80:00 -Wrote this book under a pseudonym.

81:00 -Met Rabbi Kruger in 1940 in Lisbon, who later went to New York. Unclear who Rabbi Kruger is.

82:00 -Pictures of a ceremony for his father.

83:00 -Agreed his father deserved to be honored.

84:00 -Picture of him with a woman saved by his father.

85:00 -Picture of sister with Ben Gurion.

86:00

87:00 -Interviewers ask to borrow documents.

88:00

89:00 -Shows original copies of book.

90:00 -Interviewers look at book, no dialogue.

91:00 -Ends.

.END.