

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Interview with Frieda Belinfante
May 31, 1994
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PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Frieda Belinfante, conducted by Klaus Müller on May 31, 1994 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Santa Fe, NM and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview may not be used for commercial or non-educational use without the express written permission of the interviewee or the executors of her estate.

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FRIEDA BELINFANTE
May 31, 1994

Q: Would you tell us who you are, and where you come from, and where you were born?

A: Do you want me to start?

Q: Yes.

A: Well, I was born in Amsterdam in a house that I don't remember because we didn't stay there very long. The house that I remember is the second house where we lived and that was on the _____ in Amsterdam. I am the third child in a group of four that were born to my father and my mother. Later on, I learned that I had a half brother, but I didn't know that when I grew up in the early days. I am number three. My oldest sister was named Dortha. We called her Dolly. The second sister was Renee, and the third girl was I. I was told that I was in a hurry to be born. The fourth child, fortunately for my mother, was a boy. She had hoped for a boy when I was coming, but it didn't work out. I have a lot of qualities that could have been a boy, but I was a girl. The last child was named Robert Paul. I have only one name. Renee has only one name and Dolly has only one name, but my mother had two names for her favorite boy that was finally born. After that, no more children. I would like to talk about my parents first, because the family was quite an unusual family in a sense. My father was the oldest of a family of ten and my mother was the youngest of a family of about nine or ten. I don't even know. We had too many uncles and aunts to know much about them. But I know my parents pretty well. My father was destined to be a doctor by one of his uncles. I think the only rich uncle he had, and the uncle was going to pay for medical studies, so he was asked what he wanted to be, but he had to start medical studies, and he did. But when he was in the middle of it, he became, what we called in Holland, a major when you're 21. Then you could find for yourself what you wanted to be. He decided he was not going to be a doctor. He decided he was going to be a musician, which fit his nature, I think, very well, because he was very vain. He liked to show off. He liked to be admired, and he was admired in his life.

Q: He was a musician; what instrument did he play?

A: He studied the piano, and he was poor as poor can be because the uncle immediately withdrew his support because he had not followed his medical studies. When my mother grew up, she being the youngest, she was the last to get married and she was also a very beautiful woman. I think the reason they both married didn't promise happiness. I think it was to be expected, but I discovered later that they were not really happy with each other.

Q: Why was it expected that they were going to marry?

A: Well, because I think the motives were wrong. I don't think that they had the right idea about why they married. As I said, my mother was a beautiful woman, and she had several

boyfriends. She was not in love with my father. She didn't really meet him long enough, but there is another member of the family that I have to mention, and that was my favorite aunt. My mother's only unmarried sister. Her name was Aunt Wannett. We called her "Tante", which is Aunt, Nett, Tante Nett. She was a wonderful character, and she was a member of our family because she didn't have one of her own. She lived with my grandmother because she did not have a family, but she had adopted our family as her family. The reason why is that in those days a girl didn't find a husband fast enough, they would have to find an occupation, because they had to make money. They had to earn a living. So, what she did is she took piano lessons from my father when he was a piano teacher, and became very much in love with him, but he didn't with her, because she was not as beautiful as my mother. Probably the reason she wasn't married was because she was the least beautiful of the family. So, there was this unmarried aunt which I thought was a wonderful person. I was closer to her than I think I ever was to my mother.

Q: When was she born?

A: She was one of the older sisters. I don't know in a family of ten exactly where she fit, because I was rather neglectful of the rest of my aunts and uncles, having about 20 of them, it is hard to keep up.

Q: Are both of your families, your father's family and your mother's family come from Amsterdam?

A: Yes, they did. My father's family was full Jewish, and my mother's family was full Gentile. Actually, neither one was educated with religion forcefully. So, the families had no contact. The grandfathers and the grandmothers didn't have any. I never knew my grandfather from mother's side, but I knew my grandfather and grandmother from father's side. In the early days, my father and I would go there for dinner on Friday nights. The Jews were more or less of _____ dinner on Friday nights. So, but that's early memories, and I don't remember much of that.

Q: How were you raised, more Jewish or more Christian or not religious at all?

A: The marriage?

Q: No. How were you raised, more Jewish or Christian?

A: That comes next. We were raised without any particular religion. My mother had gone to church when she was a girl, but there was no church in our life designated to be ours. When I asked my father about religion, he said something about it, which I thought was very wise. He said, "There are lots of religions in the world, and you can read up on it. There is the Koran, there is the Jewish religion, and there is the Catholic religion and the Far East religion. When you grow up you will read what there is in the world, and if there is

something that appeals to you that you feel that you can believe in." In other words, he didn't impose anything, which I have appreciated all my life. He left that to our judgment, and I happen to haven't felt the need for a church. I thought the sky and whatever I don't see and whatever I don't know, I try to formulate it. So, I have no religion.

Q: But, did you know when you were a child about Jewish culture or about Christian culture, or was there nothing --?

A: Oh, yes, I read up gradually, because when I went to school and met other children and found out that really in Holland one was Catholic or Protestant or Jewish.

Q: Which school did you go?

A: I went to the _____ School. I went to -- the school situation was funny. All of the Belinfantes had children and my parents of course, too, were very brilliant students. You had to be the first in the class when you are a Belinfante because that was easy. Learning was easy for all four of us. I didn't do very much my best and neither did my older sister, but we got by with what time we spent to learn. I was very naughty.

Q: In what sense, naughty?

A: Oh, I was very hard to be disciplined because I knew -- the pace of learning was so slow, because you had to have the average possibility of the children and I did terrible learning. My sister has a memory, it's fantastic. I called her a bookshelf, because whatever she read, she knew. So, she never had to learn. I did have to learn, but I didn't always do it. I was usually distracted with other things. I was always interested in my school mates, and I got bored with the Temple that we learned in school. My oldest sister was the least gifted, Dolly, and she died very young, unfortunately, peritonitis that wasn't treated -- I mean appendix first was not removed, and they put ice on it and in two days she was gone.

Q: When did she die?

A: She was fourteen, and I was eleven at that time.

Q: Do you remember the year?

A: When she was fourteen, I was eleven, in 1915, I was eleven. I was born in 1904, so I should have been eleven. I don't figure as fast as I used to. Then, a strange period happened in our life. Because when my sister died, my mother was terribly sad, and I remember that they came back from the hospital and said, "Dolly is gone." I remember that vividly. It's hard for children to understand that a child is gone, but we didn't have much communication after that. There comes the first sign that I thought my mother's directions were not the usual reactions, because she was very very sad the moment that it happened. I remember that and

the days that followed right after that, that we never saw my mother much. I think she died in the spring or early summer -- I could look that up, that date -- but after that there was a vacation in school, like every summer, and we three kids were sent to a _____ and mother did not live with us during several weeks. I never understood that. The only time that I understood it a little bit I think, is that it all hit at the time that the marriage was already on the rocks, because they divorced when I was 11 also, but not right after.

Q: That was in 1915?

A: In 1915, yes.

Q: Your parents divorced?

A: Divorced, and I remember that there was not any hardship or any fighting and they have always been on speaking terms ever since, as long as my father lived, which was not very much time. It was in 1923 he died. But they had been on friendly terms. But we children saw that things were not right. Of course, the way I look at it now, is very different from the way that I looked at it when I was 11 years old, because that is when it happened.

Q: How is the difference? How did you look then and how do you look now?

A: Because when you're under 11 years old, you don't really analyze your parents and how happy they are and what might have happened before they parted company. I didn't analyze them. I know what my father was like, and I know what my mother was like to us, to me, mostly. What you don't do is analyze what they did. Why they acted like this. Why I know there were problems. Any child feels when there are problems. And the problems are hard to describe because I would have to start back and tell you that at a certain point we found out that my father had a son before he married my mother and that was our half-brother. He was a merchant marine so he was gone first to a school, like the marines get their education, and then he was out at sea. He went to the Dutch Indies, and then he came home occasionally. So, that was the other addition to the family.

Q: When did you hear about that.

A: Probably when I was under ten. When I saw him, and he came, he was our brother Hugo, but for us he was like a man. He had come _____, and then to the Dutch Indies and other trips, and so he became more and more a member of the family. It was not too long after that, we got into the first World War, and that's when he was called in the service. He was more home. And I would like to stop.

Q: You just told us about your half brother you met around when you were ten years old, so that was shortly before the outbreak of World War I. How did you meet him? Do you remember that?

A: How did I meet who?

Q: Your half brother?

A: Yes. When he came back from any trip, we met him. It was very often in the summer. My sister Dolly, the oldest one, had always bronchitis. She was always sick in the climate of Amsterdam. So, we spent summer vacation, which was officially six weeks, about three months out of school and went to the east part of Holland, the high part of Holland, _____. We just made up what we didn't get from school, because as I said before, we learned easy, and school was not that demanding. In fact, I remember very little from what I learned at school. And what I did learn is of no use to me, except the languages. We started in fourth grade with French and kept going and in fifth grade we added German and in sixth grade we added English, and they all went on. I only have schooling to seventh grade.

Q: What was the name of the school?

A: _____ School, and it was in _____, the same street that my father had a music school later on, so that street is very familiar to me.

Q: Was it a public school?

A: Public school. The reason I was mentioning all of that is that I was so naughty, I told you before, my father was threatened that I would be sent away from the public school which meant that I would have to go to a private school, which he could ill afford. So, for the first time that I remember, he talked like we say here, like a Dutch uncle to me and said you better shape up because I can't afford to put you in a private school. I have always been very conscious of the fact that I was his favorite child. And the reason was because I was quite a bit like him, and I also was the only one that had enough musical talent that he thought I would become a musician. In fact, in the early days, all of us had music lessons every week. All of us had to study music in the same room. So we had to divide. There was a schedule for the week. Every child had to mark down which time he wanted to practice in that room, because you had to fit in. Dolly played violin until she died. She was the least talented, and Renee played piano. So my father thought I should play the cello. So at an early age, about 10, nine or 10, I started with the cello. So, for my brother Bob, there was no other instrument that my father could think of, so he played the piano again. But he thought for me that the cello was nice because we had a trio, a violin, piano, and cello. We have pictures of where we sit around the piano and all of us played together.

Q: And your father gave musical lessons?

A: No, he was too busy. He had a music school, and so we got lessons from other people. I get later to my lessons, because that is quite a story.

Q: Let's go back to school. Why were you threatened to be sent away from school? You said earlier you had sort of boyish qualities. Had that anything to do with that?

A: No, I was just bored, and when I got bored I would think of things that I could do that would keep me amused. I had a cousin who was very naughty, and she was sent away from school. She was about my age, and she was the daughter of one of my sisters. My mother's family was closer known to us than my father's family. We didn't seem to agree. My grandfather was an unpleasant man and my grandmother, I don't think she smelled right. You know, kind of a feeling of not belonging in that family. That was very strange.

Q: How did your parents meet?

A: My parents met -- that is a very nice story. My favorite aunt, as I said before, was the only unmarried aunt that I had.

Q: What was her name?

A: Aunt Wannett, but we called her Tante Nett, and Tante Nett had to take a profession, I told you. So, she found my father, when he was not married yet, as her teacher, and fell immediately in love with him, like a lot of women did. My father had tremendous success with women, and he behaved like a Spanish _____. He wore a black flabar (ph) and caveat like you make a bow tie. Not like the stiff tie that people wear. He was anything but stiff. He would take his hat off with a beautiful gesture whenever he saw any one of his female friends or students. He had an imposing appearance. As I said, they all were in love. I have a picture of his class of students, there's not a man in there. They're all women. So, I'm sure he was very attracted to women. So, when Nett came home, she was raving to her little sister, Georgette, which was my mother, George, for short, nobody says Georgette all the time. Then she was raving about Aury, Aury Belinfante, you should see Aury. He is just wonderful, and he plays the piano wonderfully. Why don't you take lessons from Aury, too. Nett was somebody who'd always think of how she could help other people. And she was passed the hope that Aury would ever look at her, because she was one of the least good looking girls of the family. That was probably why she wasn't married. I think she was a darling person and a wonderful companion. But she took piano lessons until she finally had -- not finally, she did it very fast, in two years or something she got her diploma and became a piano teacher at my father's music school. But she was telling her sister, her favorite sister, because it was her youngest sister, because she took my mother out in the ring, so to speak, and told her that she should take piano lessons whether she liked it or not, so she could meet Aury, this wonderful man that everybody fell in love with. So, there is the picture you have. Georgette was sought after because she was a little haughty, and a little hard to get, and she was a beautiful girl. Somebody must have said to Aury, why don't you get Georgette, because she's hard to get.

Tape #2

Q: We stopped at the moment when you were just telling us that your aunt told her younger sister why don't you take piano lessons and meet Aury Belinfante, and so they got together. Was that very fast or how did that happen?

A: It happened pretty fast because she only took a few lessons. Mother didn't play anything much, and she wasn't really talented. She didn't go to take lessons from Aury, because she loved to take piano. I absolutely remember how she played. She played with her little finger going this way and back and forth, and it was funny to hear my mother play the piano. She had a rather nice singing voice, but she wasn't really musical. But she immediately caught fire when she met Aury, because he was such an important man, and he played so beautifully and could give concerts.

Q: Where did he give concerts?

A: My father was one of the most prominent pianists at that time. Later on, he was the first one who played all of Beethoven 32 sonatas, which is three volumes high in _____ from memory in a cycle of six concerts. That was at the end of his career. That's how important a musician he was. He was a very important man in the circle of teachers. He started the federation of music teachers in Holland and was the director until he died, which was 25 years later. He gave concerts every season until he died. In fact, he gave concerts in between his illness of which he died, which was colon cancer. He was, right away when you met him, you knew he was an important man, and he felt himself to be a bossy, important man. I mean, the things would happen the way Aury wanted it to happen. I can give you an example. My mother was completely, I would say submitted herself completely to what his will was, and most people did. On their honeymoon, he decided where they were going to go. They were going to walk with backpacks in the Black Forest, and he didn't ask what she wanted, absolutely not. That was it. So, they did it. Unfortunately, my mother followed, because he was a domineering, almost tyrant. In those days, the families lived a little bit more like that. That has changed in the time of my life to a very different situation. The father was the boss, no matter what. He was the bread winner. He worked hard, and everything had to do with what Father wanted. He bought the best clothes and he got catered to first, so he was used to that.

Q: When did they marry, what year?

A: They must have gotten married, just two years before they had my sister, Dolly.

Q: Around 1900?

A: I would say so. They went to _____ in Germany, and walked all day up the mountain and got to a little inn and wanted a room and dinner, and so they sat down to dinner and my

father looked around and thought, well, the facilities are pretty primitive, so he asked if he could have a bath. And yes, he could have a bath, but it was good he asked before dinner, because they had a wood stove and it took a half an hour at least to get the water out. So, they could light it right now. So, I'm glad he asked. This was the story my mother told us. So, then, my mother said timidly, "Aury, do you think it takes another half an hour for the next bath?" He said, "What, you want a bath too?" That was never forgotten in the family. I mean my mother never forgot that. That instead of saying, I want a foot bath first, she was meek from the very beginning, and he was the boss and that was it.

Q: You told us about the two families of your father and your mother didn't quite come together, why not?

A: Never, because they had nothing in common, I think is probably because the Jewish part was pretty religious in a sense. I don't know how much they went to church. I couldn't tell you. But the family of my father -- first of all, their father was not very family conscious. He had one son who kind of made it in the world, his name was _____, we called him Uncle Ralph. He was the director of Amsterdam Hotel, and he did well in his life. And there were lots of aunts. The uncles were not important and some of them were not very culturally interesting. He and Ralph were the ones of the men, and they had a few aunts there. They all married Jewish people. My father was the only one who married a Gentile and was completely not religious. And I don't know much about the others because my father was himself not very interested in all his brothers and sisters. I don't barely know their names. I mean I really have to fish into my memory to know the names of my family on my father's side. And the children I don't remember at all. So, we didn't get together as nephews and nieces. But on my mother's side, yes.

Q: How was it at public school? You went to public school?

A: Everybody went to public school. There was no religion in public school. There was no discrimination in public school. Everybody in the neighborhood went to that school. We walked to school, and we walked home for lunch. The times were from 9:00 to 12:00 and from 2:00 to 4:00, and my school was right near the Museum of Modern Art, which is still there in Amsterdam, and _____ was the director, not at that time. That has a nice big, I would say corner where you could play ball. We played ball. It was a girls' school. It was not a mixed school. We never had boys at school. But we girls would play ball games after school when it was still light, about 6:00, and I tore my muscle one time from throwing the ball too forcefully with my right arm, and had my arm in a sling and had to write left handed because that takes a long time to heal. I did everything always to the nth degree of my possibilities. I never was careful. I always say I can do it and try it. Jumped on vehicles, like the state cars when they are full speed going by. I ran with it and jumped on the running board. I was that kind of a person.

Q: Maybe we can move on a little bit in time, but first, your parents divorced in 1915, and I

would like to move from there very quickly to the late 20s, but first you probably have to explain with whom did you go on living with, your father or with your mother?

A: My father moved out. My father moved out and took some rooms nearby in _____. My mother lived practically all her life in the _____, one block down from _____. That's where we spent our time. And we girls, my sister died, she was not with us anymore, and my sister and I took turns spending the weekend at my father's place, which was just a few rooms on the _____, which he had rented. He gave his lessons, and we spent the weekend, helped him out and had lunch with him and straightened up his rooms and what have you. And so, then in those days, my half brother was more prominent in the picture, because he did not go back to being a merchant marine because of the World War interruption. When he came out of the service, when the war was over, in 1918, my uncle, an uncle from my mother's side, Uncle Dick, who was a broker in coffee offered him a job and educated him quickly to get his brokerage. He made a living that way. He stayed in Amsterdam, and that's when the time came that he was morally supporting my mother and from morally supporting, he became also mentally supporting. They became a couple without ever getting married.

Q: Uncle Dick and your mother?

A: No, no. My brother, my half-brother.

Q: Your half-brother and your mother?

A: Yes. But my mother liked to surround herself with younger men and compensate for her unhappy marriage, because it was obvious it was an unhappy marriage. That also became tense, because when my brother came back and became a coffee broker, that was the time it became different situation. Because my half-brother, Hugo, fell in love with my mother, like most of these people around my mother.

Q: How old was he? When was he born?

A: I don't remember. He was about 18 when I remember him coming back from his trips. So, he must have been in his twenties somewhere.

Q: So, he was born 1890. At the outbreak of World War 1, he was twenty?

A: Yes.

Q: Your father died in?

A: 1923, and he became ill in 1920. He became ill at the time on one of the Sundays that I was spending with him, and he told me that he had bowel obstruction. I said, "Since when?" and

he said "A week." I said, "Are you crazy. You have to see a doctor immediately." This was a Sunday, because I was there for the weekend. And he said, what do you mean, I've never had a doctor. I don't have a doctor. He had had never a doctor, nor a dentist. He was a most healthy man. Strong, not too tall, but muscular and strong and physically strong and enormous stamina. He could work hours and hours and years and years and everything he decided. He was disciplined and strong willed, so he never had a doctor. And I said, we have to find a doctor, today. I mean you have had complete bowel obstruction for more than a week, and he said yes, and nothing helps it. I remember he would always walk through the room and kind of poke his abdomen, he had trouble. So, I called a professor at the _____ Clinic. There was a famous professor whose daughter studied with him, and I said who I was and I said my father is ill. He said he had to immediately come in. So, he went in because I called him. I was 17, 16 or 17 and they operated immediately and found that it was cancer obstruction, which he had let go too long. That family of the professor whose daughter was studying at the conservatory he had was at that time something like 16 years old or 17, and she was not even 20, I remember that, and that develops into an entirely different story that happens, which I can't tell, which he had that operation and he got up and over it, temporarily and he wanted to give his first concert with me, which was earlier than I had intended to. But he wanted to present me to the public, so he gave a combined concert. In between the first operation, but he knew there was a chance that it would come back, and it did. So, he had a second attack of the cancer, of which he did. I found out later that there was a lot more that happened in between.

Q: In the early 30s how much had you been aware of the change in the political climate, and what was going on in Germany after 1933?

A: I had been very interested in all political things that were happening in the world, and the reason that I was even more aware of it than the average Dutchman, I had a Russian co-student in my study and my father had the conservatory, she had voice lessons there. She was a Russian family, what we called "White Russians." You know what that means. They had escaped the communism when she and her sister and her parents, she and her sister were under 20, in their teens. In other words, the parents had taken the two girls out of the country, and they were not adults yet, but she was engaged secretly to an older person, who was a very prominent man in Russia. He was what we called and what Holland would call a minister of the money. He had a high communist job. So, they had really turned the girl away from Russia. So, of course, you become interested in what's going in the world if you have a Russian best friend. She wanted to get there when she was 21. I think that was being major in Holland. I was only 17 or 18, but we were very thick friends, and I loved her to pieces. I really wanted to do anything for her, and she was getting sadder and sadder because her fiance didn't believe what she wrote that the Dutch authorities would not even give her her papers when she became 21. The reason they didn't want to give her the papers was because she was a Russian refugee, and she should be happy to be accepted by the Dutch and all that and so forth and so on. And I thought this was the most uncalled for action. She was 21. She was an adult. She should be able to make her own life, and when I

saw something like that, I got busy. I said I'll help you. I'll get you to Russia. At first she didn't think so, well, I did. That was my first false passport that I made. I saved my money. I got another friend to help me. I saved more money and I got her out of the house secretly at 6:00 in the morning. I did everything, and I got her to the train and I put her secretly, the clothes that she had to take in the depot at the Central Station at 6:00. I shared my bedroom with my sister Renee and I bossed her, just like my father bossed everybody. I said in no word am I getting up at 5:00 tomorrow morning. No word to the family. Nobody should know that I get out of the house, and I did. And I got her to be quiet. She was always afraid if I talked like that, even though I was her younger sister. And I got her out of the house, and I got her to the Central Station, and I got back home. And after a week, I got a letter from Berlin, from Ellen, my friend, that she's stuck and she hasn't heard anything from Russia, and she doesn't know what to do. This was the time that my father was in the hospital, and every time I wanted to do something, my father always said it was okay, and my mother always said ask your father. She never said okay, and I was still living with my mother, but I was on my own. And I went to the hospital and I asked my father, and I said I wanted to find Ellen, and he said, I want you to find Ellen. Yes, but I'm not telling you where I'm going. And he said, that's okay. I said, parents all stick together, and I want to stick with her, and I said I'm not going to tell you I went to Berlin to keep her company, and I promised my father if I can and he's not following through I will bring her back, and he said I hope you will. I did go to Berlin with the night train and I got out, Sunday morning at 6:00 in the morning, and I didn't even have an address. I only knew she was with a cousin from _____, that three brothers lived on the Berlin on the _____. That's all I knew. At 7:00 in the morning I stood on the _____ in Berlin. Do you know what that means? Houses and more houses and I didn't even know where I was. Do you know what I did? I went to the police officer in the neighborhood, and I said do you have anybody with three brothers, Russian brothers that live here by the name of Robinowitz (ph)? Do you have anybody here? And he looked and he said yes, I have an address for you. It was not where she was, but it was one of the other brothers. I stayed with her in Berlin, and I went back then finally to _____. I didn't bring her back, but I didn't have to. She got married to that man. I met that man. It's all in my history. I mean I have pictures of her with that man. His name was Sasha Nuvitsky (ph). He had come to _____ in Germany later to meet him. That's just one little aside, but that's why I was interested in what happened in the world. I knew what happened in the world. I usually knew these things. I knew also when the war hit Holland. I knew exactly what had happened in Germany because I was living that life with her in Russia. I knew about life in the world, not life in Holland. It was only in my mind a tiny little corner.

Q: What did you think in 1933 when Hitler --?

A: Well, I knew what was happening. I knew what was happening and I saw that as if it was happening everywhere. It was spreading right away. My teacher that I later had for conducting, which was one of the few group teachings I've had, was _____. He was a famous conductor in Germany. Not Jewish, but seriously against all what happened, and he

left Germany and left a beautiful career and went to Switzerland. I later found him, because he was one of the few conductors that taught conducting. Most conductors don't teach.

Q: Did you feel in 1933, did you think that Holland would be threatened also?

A: Oh, yes. I was prepared for that. I saw it coming closer and closer, and when I had my vacation, just in 1940, Easter or something at that time, I was going to an island where I had a sort of a tete a tete. I have a cabin with friends and I had worked also with other friends. I had met the French ambassador through American friends of mine and they were involved in espionage, and we knew that it would be Germany that would attack Holland, although we supposedly don't know whether it's going to be England or going to be Germany, but I knew it was going to be Germany and that they needed to go to Holland to get to England and Northern France. So, it was expected by us, I mean people who think a little bit. It was not a surprise to me. Nothing that happened in 1940 was a surprise.

Q: How much did you know when we go a little bit before we talk about 1940. How much did you know in the mid 30s about what was going on in Germany about persecution?

A: Everything, everything, because I knew what happened between Russia and what happened between Russia and Germany and what happened in the world. I mean I wasn't concerned what happened in Holland. I sat next to a high military man on the ferry boat that got me to _____ on the day before my birthday, which was May 9th. I took my convertible up to the island of _____ where I used to spend my vacations. I also had a couple of people, friends, who were raising flower bulbs, involved in espionage thing I had going with friends, an American woman married to a Dutchman who was working for the American Embassy up to the War. That's another story.

Tape #3

Q: We've had your family background and your education to the moment your father died in 1923. We heard that you were like the only one within your brother and your sisters who was really musically talented. So, what happened in the next ten years after 1923? What was your education?

A: Well, the education was really finished when my father died, because I had had my musical education since I was ten. I started with the cello when I was nine or ten. I had kept that up. He was a very bad teacher. My father didn't know anything about strings. He was a wonderful pianist, but he didn't have a very wide knowledge about the other people and how they taught. He was a good teacher himself, but the funny thing is, that he didn't, had to go with what went. My second teacher, the first did nothing much, but the second one was the first cellist of _____ orchestra, but he was a jerk. He was a funny guy, and he was also a teacher at _____ Conservatory, and he was a four flusher if there ever was one. He was never on time. He would be very jovial and say, "All of you kids are waiting for me? Wonderful," because he was an hour and a half late for his lesson. He wanted to marry me because he was a widower. His wife had committed suicide. When I knew him better, I could understand that. It was a farce. The whole man was a farce, but he had a big cello, and he had his big hand around the cello neck, like this, big tune teaching was absolutely nil. He told my father stories that he could take me to Brussels, and I could cook. Come out in six months with the first prize. This was all stories. It didn't amount to anything. So, the first one was mediocre. The second one was the first cellist, but he was kind of -- and I had only -- my father was still alive, and I had only a couple of hundred dollars left, because the money was completely gone. With his two operations, and he was very ill. I went and asked my father, I said, "I would like to go to Paris, because I've heard a cellist which I think is absolutely wonderful." His name was _____. He had some Dutch background also. He was a world famous cellist. And, I went to Paris because my father always said yes, if I asked him something. My mother said ask your father, and my father said yes. He let me completely decided what I wanted to do with my life. I never had a no from my father. I went to Paris. I wrote a letter to _____, and I got a note back, yes, he would be there. I came in with my music, and he was still not ready for me. He said, "Play something." So, when the curtain went up, I played something. He came in and he looked not very pleased with what he heard, and he didn't seem to be in a good mood. And I thought oh my God. Well, he said, "What else do you have?" He looked at my music stand, I had put my music in there. I said, "Well, I have this." He said, "Play that." And I played it, and he said, "That you can't play. What else do you have?" So, I took another piece, and he said, "That you can't play either. What can you play?" And I said, "Nothing. That's why I'm here." Suddenly, his face just started to brighten when I said that. He said, "No wonder! No wonder, you hold your bow wrong. You hold your left hand wrong. With these short fingers how can you do it. You have to be up here. And how about this bow?" And I said, "Well, my teachers said I have to hold with these two fingers." So, to end the story, it only last for a few days. I had money for five days in Paris, and I came back a couple of times.

He was the dearest person of the teachers for me. He became a very good friend. He has had me as a houseguest. He has had me for dinner. I have had an apartment of a co-student that he had had, who was very wealthy, who let me have her apartment in Paris in my summer vacations. I was his houseguest. He didn't give me lessons, he just had me in the house, and we became friends, very dear friends. He met later my husband, and he gave a cello class in my home, when I was married. In other words, he's part of my life.

Q: You started to tell me, I think if I remember, that after the death of your father, you also had to make a living?

A: We were poor as a church mouse.

Q: What did you do?

A: Well, my best friend, girl friend, was a composer _____ of whom they have made a documentary, because she was a very talented composer. I met her when she was in her early twenties and I was only sixteen. The same four fluser marks who taught me to hold my cello like this, had a love affair with her, and I was a high admirer of this wonderful, beautiful looking girl, composer. She is younger, four or five years younger. One time, after my lesson, _____ said -- my lesson wasn't much, but it was over, he said, "I'm going your way. Would you like to walk with me?" _____ in Amsterdam and she lived there. He had to go somewhere. That's where he went. I had met her very much, I knew her, but you know, we weren't friends. But that day, we became friends. He came in, and I can still see him with his winter coat on. He didn't even take that off, and he put a package on the mantel and he left. I lived one block away from where she did. And he said, "Are you coming with me or do you want stay?" And I said, "I'll stay." And I don't know why I said it, because I had no right to stay. I just came with him as his student that lived the next block. But I saw her face completely freeze, what is this brat doing here. She is staying here. And she looked at him as if she could murder him, and I felt something in the atmosphere like she was just as white as a sheet. And he left. And I thought, why am I here? I didn't know at first. And I saw that she was -- didn't know how to get rid of me. And she didn't. And I looked at her and suddenly I said to her, "Why don't you tell me everything?" And she did. That was that he had cheated her. He had more than one woman on the line and that she thought that she was pregnant. And what he had put on the mantel was some medicine that he had promised to bring her to get rid of the pregnancy. And why was she pregnant, because he had said that if they hadn't tried out whether they would fit, then he wouldn't be interested, and it was an absolute way out to get rid of her, because I knew that he had another liaison with some violinist of _____ Orchestra, by the name of Betsy Slick. I never forget because I know what's going on for some reason, I know. Because as a sixteen year old that doesn't know her very well, and she was already a known composer and had already written a cello concerto for him. And then to say, "Why don't you tell me everything?"

Q: Why did you stay?

A: Because I felt that there was something for me to do. She told me that story, and I kind of took her a little closer to me and she said, "Why did you stay?" Because she said "You'll take the whole load off of me. I have a feeling like I'm on a submarine with you. I don't think of him anymore. I don't know what it is." I said, "Well, I do, because I love you, and I know you're suffering." She said, "Are you coming back?" I said, "Yes, after dinner." I had to go home because my mother expects me for dinner. And that's how our friendship started. We had lived together for seven years. She was a very talented and very attractive person in the beginning. But she was very egocentric. And she called me Mommy and Pops. She didn't call me by my name. Mommy and Pops was father and mother. She had never seen her father. He died when she was in the cradle, and her mother was very possessive. I want to know where my daughter is, and I want to know where my daughter was last night. She was one of the head piano teachers of the _____ Conservatory. She was a very busy woman. A very talented piano teacher, but she was bossy. Her only child, and because I felt she needed a little protection, and so I've always had this feeling that where's there a need, I want to help. You know, I got Ellen to Russia to meet her fiance. I've always been an outgoing person, and I've always been a doer. I just have to do something.

Q: Did you live together in these seven years?

A: Yes, and she had several men friends. She was very attractive, which was fine with me. But Mommy and Pops, I had to defend her against her mother, who was so bossy.

Q: When did you meet her exactly? Was it when you were sixteen?

A: Seventeen, maybe.

Q: 1921?

A: Yes.

Q: And then you moved out of your mother's house?

A: Oh, yes. I was out of my mother's house from '17 on because I lived in Holland in a one room. See, what happened, this was before my father died. I met _____ before my father died, because he died in '23. I met her when I was studying with _____, and I had come to Brussels to study and _____ had come to Brussels to be with me, and took me to go out to dinner for a couple times and then went back to Amsterdam. But, I got, when my father died, I got a job _____ because _____ had a cousin who was the conductor of _____ Orchestra, and that's my first job that I got already before my father died, because there was no money any more.

Q: What did you do in Holland? What was the first job?

A: I played the cello, and when I became friends with _____, that was the time that my father was in the hospital. I knew her already. We talked about that time, but we never mentioned my friendships and my relationships. When I met her, I was ready to make money, because there was no money when my father was in the hospital all the time. So, all the money that we had _____ went for the illness. So, everybody had to make a living. And Renee, my sister, who had such a fabulous memory, in one half year got her diploma to be a school teacher. And I had the cello, and _____ was the one who said I'll take you to my cousin who is _____, who is the conductor in Holland. And she took me there and, of course, he engaged me. So, I had a job when I was seventeen, and I moved to Holland. And I was on my own. Of course, I was always on my own because I did it always the way I wanted to it anyway.

Q: And then you moved back to Amsterdam to live with her?

A: Yes. There was an electric train, so I went -- sometimes I was in Amsterdam overnight. When I had my friendship with her, she lived in some rooms that she had _____ and I lived in Holland. But sometimes I had a day off and I would go to Amsterdam, which means nothing.

Q: Did you ever grow up together?

A: She wrote a second cello concerto and dedicated it to me, and I played that even for _____, but that fell through, because all the cellos of the concert orchestra go to the kids having an extra rehearsal for this concerto that she wrote. I almost played it in Amsterdam, but I played it in _____ on the _____. I played it in other places, but she dedicated it to me, because we became very fast friends after that. Sometimes I stayed in Amsterdam, sometimes she would come to Holland. It all depended on who was free. And then later, we rented a flat at the corner _____ -- well, it doesn't matter. We had an apartment together. But we stayed overnight sometimes to just be together, for the weekend or something. And she saved all this, she had a room and board and she always got a lot of fruit, and I can live on fruit. I don't have to have anything else. And she would save that for me, and she would put those dishes in the closet. And in the morning I had to get the train to get to Holland, to the rehearsal at 9:00, so I would get up early and live on this stored fruit, ice cold. That was my breakfast. When I went to Holland I had the rehearsal at 9:00, summer or winter. I was even there when _____ was hired. I was demoted because _____ was the great cellist, and of course, I have no hands to play the cello. But my father didn't even know that hands had to be big enough. I had a double joint here. I had to work very hard to hold my own cello.

Q: You said you lived together for seven years?

A: Actually, we met John Falcon (ph), who became my husband, and he was the one who put me a little bit more on my own feet. He said, you do always if you know nothing and you've always arranged it for other people for things to go well, but he said, you're a musician yourself. You need to get a little bit -- he picked me up and I played in a movie theater, one of those silent movies to make money. He said you have to attend to your own self. That's when I met _____ to boost my ego a little bit about my music. See, I felt that I was small talent and my hands were not right. So, I didn't spend much time for myself ever. Then _____ came to visit us and admired Falcon very much, because he was a wonderful flute player, the best I ever heard in my life. But he could play forever, but he was asocial, I mean, he didn't care about moneymaking. He didn't care about his clothes. He didn't care how late he went to bed. He would practice until 2:00 in the morning. He was a real Bohemian. But he made up his mind that he couldn't live without me, and he wanted to marry me. And I said, "I'm not the marrying type really." And he said, "I don't want to live without you." And one time he came in with a revolver and he put it on the mantle and I said, "What are you trying to do?" And he said, "I don't want to live without you." I said, "I told you I'm not really the marrying kind. I don't think I can love a man that way. I don't think so. I just always have great admiration for women." He said, "Well, that's what it is. I want to be where you are." So, I said, "Well, I guess we better get married." And we did. As soon as we were married, he was changed. He had been very happy, very playful, very outgoing, nonsense making, like a _____. If someone had a glass of beer, he would stick his finger in foam. I mean he was always doing something naughty, funny. When we were married, he got less and less happy. To make a long story short, because there's not much to tell, because he never spoke about anything that went on inside of him. If I said something about his nature, would you like this or you're very fond of so and so, he would say no. In other words, he could not be open. He could not be touched. His inner life was his. And so we became quieter and quieter. We never had an argument, and we were so outwardly happy, a couple. I mean I was happy and he was happy, because he was playing the flute, always and always. He was teaching. We lived in my house, where I was before. He moved in with me, and so _____ and that was the time that my half brother was very ill and had brain cancer and was dying. There was another moment of financial trouble because of his being sick and not having any money. So, I wanted to get all of us together, my sister and my brother, who was a doctor, and do something financially all together for him, for the sick half brother. And I said, "Joe, I have to talk to you." And he said, "Not now." And a couple of times later, I said to Joe, "I would like to talk to you." And when he said again that he didn't have time. Then I said, "Well I guess I have to make my own decision," because we both were making money. And he said "I don't know what the difference is." And I said, "What do you mean? Do you want a divorce?" And he said, "Yes." I said, "Why didn't you speak up?" And he said, "Well, you wouldn't have understood." I said, "You give it one chance." He said, "Well, you wouldn't understand it." I said, "Well, it would be fairer to give it one chance." He said, "I've never felt comfortable with you." I said, "Maybe I do understand." And that was all that was ever said. I moved out. I went to my mother who lived a half a block down. I still remember how I walked out. I had put prunes and apricots and I took the pan with me because I knew that he didn't need

it, and I moved into my mother's place, and I said, "Mom, would you like me to come live with you for a while?" And I said, "We're going to have a divorce."

Q: You said that you understand that he didn't feel comfortable with you?

A: Yes, because I'm just the opposite of what he is. I am an open person, and I'm a very romantic person and I'm telling people exactly how I am and what I am not. I said it is not a good idea to get married, and it wasn't. But he said, no matter what I do, no matter what I feel, no matter what I say, he would say I just don't want to live without you. Now, what do you do when a person threatens you with a revolver. I mean, I was in a way very grateful for his love and for his devotion to make me into some musician. We had a quintet with _____. We played music, I played with _____ a concert with him and the harpsichord and flute and viola. We did things together. He had an orchestra and he wanted to be a conductor and I let him do that. I encouraged him, but he was not a conductor, because he was unable to be a leader. He was not a leader. He would ask to play softer with a finger on his nose like this and say, it's still too loud. I said, "Why don't you swear a little and say for God's sake, can't you play it *pianissimo*." He tried to be a conductor. He had the ears of a musician. I have not heard anything like it. His musicianship was absolutely fabulous, but he was not pushing anything. And he said, "I don't pay them." I said, "You don't have to pay them to play soft." Musicians should be playing soft, but he was not a fighter. And he would always say no when I would say you're this or you're that or -- he had a great admiration for _____, the composer. They all took lessons from _____ and _____ took lessons from _____ and _____ took lessons and _____ took lessons. That was the time that all these young gentlemen -- in the 40s.

Tape #4

Q: When did you marry and when did you get a divorce?

A: I think I married in '31 and it was a very informal marriage. No party, we just walked to the office where you have to sign certain papers. There was no fuss, no bother, because we just wanted for ourselves, we wanted to have that license.

Q: It was a license?

A: Oh, yes, we were married.

Q: And you were divorced when?

A: Five years later, in '36. It went very amiable. I was very fond of his mother and his sister. He had been catholic, but he wasn't catholic. His mother and his sister was catholic and they lived in _____, and we had a nice time in the beginning. He told me all the things about his life, and he brought me home to his family. We have been on friendly terms ever since. We have not visited because it is a little painful for him. I asked him, "Do you want to make music together, regardless. I mean, if I continue to be your friend?" He said, "No." He would rather have us not see each other. And he stayed with that in the beginning very strictly for his own good I'm sure. He wanted to get over. Because it was a break, and he said to me, "I've never said that I didn't love you." In fact, he went to his mother and his sister and said "We are getting a divorce, but I don't want you to change your feelings that you have for Frieda because --" But he got married to an old school friend of mine, who was also a musician, and her father was a member of _____ Orchestra. It was a couple that were friends of ours, they divorced at the same time we divorced, because there was something happening, something shifting between the husband and wife situation. I had a nice friendship with the violinist, who was married to his second wife, and his second wife, the violinist and I were old friends for a while. That's when it happened. That's when the shift happened. He fell in love with the violinist. The violinist and I were very good friends, but that was only very short lived.

Q: Did your marriage with John Falcon change your friendship with Henrietta _____?

A: Well, yes. She resented -- she was possessive, I was her private possession. Yet, when I said that I was going to get married, she said "I'll be there for breakfast." She thought I was her right, to have the part of me that she thought that she needed. Do you see what I mean? So, we stayed friends for a while, because he liked her. He liked her, he called her sweet, because he said she is so thin. I don't know how she got that name. He was friendly with her. I don't know what happened much later, because we kind of drifted apart. He didn't want to see me. He didn't want to make music with me anymore. He used to give concerts with other people, as I told you. He wanted to cut it off. He wanted to get over me.

Q: Did your friendship with Henrietta _____ diminish or --?

A: She really pulled away gradually because she considered me kind of her private possession. Because she didn't make the room for me that he had made, so I was a little bit of a loss for a while, a little bit. I had some other friends that took over and, you know. I had other friendships that filled my life. I'm very romantic, and I go overboard with what I do for people. It's no half measure as far as I'm concerned. So, I've had other relationships, but not right away. That didn't break it up. That was already there. I had already strong ties with other people. And that's what he said was fine. It was fine, but it wasn't fine, and it wasn't enough for him. He needed somebody that looked up to him. He married the second time, then there was another five years for him, which I didn't participate in at all, and then he married for a third time. For the third time, he married some woman who was a very strict catholic, whose mother I played with who was also a musician, and the girl was 12 years old when Joe and I were married. She was student of his in her teens. I remember that one of the times that he was giving her a lesson, he gave her lessons while he was lying on his sofa. And I thought, this is kind of funny, because I would never lie on the sofa when I teach. But I didn't think too much of it. She was only 12 or 13 years old then, and then he married the violinist. I went to school with her, and I knew her since she was a girl. That failed. He got a divorce from her. Then, in the third period after that, he wrote me letters once in a while about musical things, and he wrote me that one time that I was going to Holland to see my mother again. He said that I'm playing that time that you're going to be in Holland. I'm playing in _____. He said, I can get a ticket for you although it is a sold out hall, but I'll get you a ticket if you want to go. I said, "Sure, I'd love to." I got the ticket, and I sat with his wife, because that was the only ticket he had, next to this third wife. I looked down in the hall and I thought this is funny, because people know me from the time I was playing the cello with him and people know his wife. I thought they will say there's Mrs. Falcon number 1 sitting next to Mrs. Falcon number 3. Isn't that a funny situation, because we were probably both known by the public. He said when we go home I would like you to come to the home to visit, and I did. So, we were on very good terms then. We went to the home when the concert was over -- I mean when the visit was over, he said "I'll walk you home" because my mother didn't live very far. I said, "No, I can walk alone." He said, "No, no, I will walk you." He put his winter coat on and we walked and I said, "Well, Joe, how was your second marriage?" He said, "Terrible, it was a mess. She was a mess." He was very happy, and he had come back to being strictly catholic, because that family was strictly catholic, which was a far cry from what he was before when we were married. His mother did this before she ate her dinner. He would say to his sister's kids, "Quiet can't you see Grandma is phoning the Lord." He was mocking. When he married, he married into a very strictly, strictly catholic family which surprised me no end. But he went all the way -- his whole character needed something else. He always claimed he needed me, he needed to be where I was. He wasn't -- we never were on the same wave length, do you know what I mean?

Q: How was your musical career developing?

A: That was doing fine, much later. I've always been a persistent person. I don't take no for an answer. If it cannot be done, I would say, "We'll see." That's how I saved my life, because when I had to get out when all the other people were caught, except some weren't, myself, I decided I was endangering everyone who gave me shelter. My house was searched, and I found it after the war sealed and searched by the Gestapo, and it was in the hands of the Gestapo almost twice. The first time I could talk myself out of it and the second time I ran out of it, and you can read that in the paper that I gave you.

Q: We didn't talk about your professional life in the 30s before we come to the --?

A: You can do that if you want.

Q: How was your last -- you were starting in the Holland Orchestra and you were --?

A: I was there for several years, and I was asked to play solo because I was the first cellist for the first years until _____ came in. That's when I almost gave up that job. I did play solo with the orchestra and set a date, and then my father was almost dying. I had to postpone the date. Then, finally the conductor said, you better set a date and do it because your father lives much longer than the doctors predict, same here, and so, I set the date. Sure enough, I played on Thursday night, I played solo and there was a concert repeat on Sunday. I saw my father on Wednesday and I said, "I play tomorrow and I'll see you Friday," and I did. I played Thursday, and I visited him Friday and he said, he whispered "Do you play Sunday?" and I said, "Yes, I play Sunday afternoon." He died Saturday, and I did play Sunday, like in dream. I did play. But, after that soon some very dramatic things happened, maybe I'll talk to you about later. Do you want me --?

Q: I would like to have an overview. You were playing as a cellist, but did you work in Amsterdam? When did you get involved in conducting? I don't know this part, but especially in the 30s.

A: This all happened in 1923.

Q: Can you move forward in time?

A: A big drama happened right after he had died, and he had talked to me about that, that he very much of a fear that his girlfriend, who was the daughter of the professor, that I was talking about before, was in love with me and he had an affair with, which was very much against the wish of her parents, because he was so much older. He was 53 when he died, and she was in her early 20s. But he was very much of a vital, working man, until he got sick. But, he was sick for about three years because of his repeat cancer. He was in his late 40s when he started the affair with this woman. He was telling only me that he was afraid that

she wouldn't want to live if he died. I said, "Oh, Dad, people say that, but they'll get over it." I don't think in her case she did. She committed suicide right after he died. She was a strange woman with a fixed side to her character, and he knew that. That was something I only found out after it happened. And she did it in his house, in his room, and my mother found her. They had to smuggle out the corpse. The parents didn't want to have a notice, not even in the paper, that she died or nothing. It was all hushed for years, because I know the parents. They're not alive anymore. She had some brothers, and they took care of it. They took care of all of the ramifications and my half brother helped my mother with the situation she found. Because, I told you, my parents weren't ever not on speaking terms, so my mother went down there, because she thought maybe she could do something after her ex-husband died and didn't know what she would find. All these things are so terribly dramatic and sad. You can't imagine all this going on in a life, but it all belongs together. We still have to come to what happened to my brother. It's the second suicide that happened in my family, in my close range. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Q: I think I want to talk about your brother later.

A: Yes.

Q: Can you give me an impression of how you lived in the 30s, you were doing musical stuff, but also how much did you discuss with your friends, what was going on in politics in Germany, in Holland, excuse me. Can you tell us about the changes after 1933, did you discuss with your friends what was going on in Germany after 1933?

A: Yes, I can tell you about it. People are usually kind of escaping that. They didn't like to talk about it. I knew about it and the more it came close, the more I discussed it. People were afraid that the Germans would just walk over Holland and things would happen. But we did discuss, especially the artists were the friends that I had. I mean, they were almost all in the arts. Like the people you have seen that gave their life for it, but many of the artists were thinking about _____. We knew it existed in Germany, and we talked about, and what it meant. _____ meant that you had to follow rules and that it was against all Jews and you couldn't play Jewish music for the musicians and so forth.

Q: Was there also anti-semitism right after 1933 in Holland?

A: Yes, we knew that.

Q: Also in the Netherlands?

A: There was some and there was a discussion very often about people that said "It's different in Holland. They are not against the Jews. They are just Russian Socialists. They are Socialists. They are not against the Jews." That's what they say now, but wait until they feel that they are on top. That isn't openly admitted. There were members that argue about it. In

fact, we saw parades, you know, demonstrations, people along the street promoting the _____, and we said well, that's what they say now. But don't you see, they have Jewish people walking in those demonstrations. Yes, because they did not want it to be the same way in Holland. I said how naive can you be. You can't believe that. Everybody that says it is not going to be against Jews is just to get the movement going. So, I never believed that you could tell everybody honestly it's different. It's not different. It's just little by little and don't believe it.

Q: Were you ever confronted by anti-semitism because your father was Jewish?

A: No, I never thought about it. We never thought about it, because neither of the parents was very religious. And as I said, my father said you believe what you want to believe, and I believed that it was beyond my comprehension. To me, we have no comprehension what is beyond us and I still feel that way. I don't know where to go beyond what we have. We only have five senses. There are animals that have much more senses. I mean elephants know more than we do in certain directions. And bats do, and insects do and they say it's instinct, but it comes from somewhere. But I can't talk to them, so we live in different worlds, so how can you say -- that's why I sometimes laughingly say I'll ask the beard, and the beard is my concept of God. It's a popularized somebody, the pope and the beard is the same. We manufacture some being that is bigger than we are and wiser than we are, but we don't know.

Q: Beyond religion, your family name Belinfante, did you ever have difficulty?

A: Oh yes, some people knew that there was _____ Jews and they're different from Polish Jews, and I said I don't know, to me all human beings are the same and they're all different.

Q: But you were never disliked as a person because people said Belinfante, you must be Jewish so that pupils, students --?

A: No, we didn't talk about it. We never had much talk going on and never even felt that people -- when I grew up in Holland in the first half of my life there was no conversation about anti-Jewish people. I have always avoided religious conversations because I didn't know what would offend people. The best thing to do is to leave people alone to have their own solution about it. And if that's what you want to -- I had a conversation one time with a woman who wanted to get to understand what I was thinking, and she always -- we were told, and I said, "I'm not asking what you were told, what are you thinking, what do you feel?" And she would just say, "Well, I was told" and I said "I don't go by what I was told because what I am told is what somebody else thinks. I think what I think is just as good." And I've always taken that attitude. My opinion is just as good as yours. I said that to my father also. He never said to me you had to do this or that or had think this or that. He said to read, you can read about things and make up your own mind. That was one time he was telling me that

somebody has seen you and asked me is your daughter engaged and I said, "Why did they ask you?" And he said, "They had seen you walk arm in arm with a boy and people don't do that unless they are engaged." I said, "Oh, they don't? I do." He never said don't do it. I said, if I do it, and I do, but I'm not engaged to this man.

Q: I think I understand, but I want to know because with your name Frieda Belinfante --?

A: Some people who do say that is a _____ Jewish name. I say, "Yes, that's my father's name. That's where it comes from." But nothing else is discussed. I never had the feeling that I had to discuss it.

Q: But you were never confronted with anti-semitism personally?

A: No.

Q: Where people said, " You're Jewish, I don't want to have --?"

A: No, absolutely not. And not getting students and not getting relationships with parents, never had have it. It might have been hidden, but they never came out with it, never.

Q: Do you think because you told us earlier that you told everyone well if you think socialism in the Netherlands is without anti-semitism you're wrong. It will come here slowly by slowly also. Was that because you had a Jewish background?

A: No.

Q: But you were more sensible to that, sensitive?

A: I know what exists. I'm not blind for knowing that there must be people around that probably say it, but they wouldn't say it to my face, so I couldn't say that they said it. I have never been confronted with it. Never had people say, we'll you are half Jewish so I won't have anything to do with you, no. Personally, I have never felt that. If people have a conceived idea why they don't want to have anything to do with me, I'm not inquiring of trying to find out why, because if people don't want to have anything to do with me, that's fine with me, then it's not my kind of people. I mean, if people demonstrate any hostility without explaining it, well, they're free to choose. But I've never had it thrown at me, never been said at me. Never, not in any way. Maybe some people who analyzed me say, that is your Jewish side, that's not offensive. But lots of times, people said why weren't you very much like your father. And then I would point, yes I am. I had friends that said for instance Belinfanting all over the place, and that means quit bossing me around or something. But it never had to do anything with Jewish. I don't meet with hostility that is anti-semitism, personally. I can say that is a Jewish characteristic. People say that is a very Jewish characteristic what you have and I'll say, "Oh, is it?" I'm not even aware.

Tape #5

Q: We stopped -- maybe you can explain to us how it developed that you became the first female conductor of a professional orchestra? How it developed, this career?

A: Sure, I can easily do that. Well, I did some conducting in schools, like teachers will do, like music teacher, singing teacher who do a little something. I was asked by a parent of one of my students would I like to do a little of that, conduct a little choir of kids and maybe a little orchestra of the kids. I said yes, and I went to see the principal and apparently he had two candidates for that high school. One was a man and he happened to be one of our best friends. This was during the time I had been married. We had a very good music best friend of the family, a very musical family _____, who wrote a book about all the Bach pieces. He was very knowledgeable. He was asked and I was asked by this other mother. So, he had a male come to one of them and he said well they are awful these kids. They are really just -- they're hooligans, as soon as the bell rings. They are hard to handle so I think I am better off with a man. So, he took the man, and it happened to be a friend of ours. The school was not even in Amsterdam. It was in _____. And I said, that's a change I can't make for you, so if you want a man, take Hans. So, Hans took the job. I didn't see him too much during those years, but when I run into him, I said "Hans, how are you doing at the high school?" He said, "Oh, I give it up. I can't stand it. They are terrible, those kids. It is too much for me." Right after that I got a call from the head of the school, would I come in. Am I still interested? I said yes. So, I did. So, that's really where I conducted the first -- because I took those kids, and they were no problem at all to handle them. Hans was such an easy going fellow, such a dreamer. He couldn't handle that. So, I gave a performance with those kids, and the students of Amsterdam, sung in the choir that I was conducting heard about that that I gave a performance of a piece by _____, which was called _____, and it was such a success. The kids did a wonderful job. So, I got a phone call from the singers of the Amsterdam University. Would I conduct a choir? I said, fine, I would. So, I did that. Then comes a big list of festivities, a big concerto hall. I had to commission work. I commissioned the work. That became a big performance. 110 musicians and singers on stage. That became a big affair. So, I climbed up, but still there was no women conductors in orchestra. After the performance was over, the students that had formed the nucleus of the strings of the orchestra, said I wish we could go on with this orchestra and maybe add something to it. I said, well, why not. So, we did. So, finally I had an amateur orchestra with mostly not only girls, but doctors had joined it, and amateur players had joined it, so, when are we going to give a concert? I said, well, soon, we can rent a small concerto hall and give a concert. We did. This all went during the 30s. That concert, fortunately, was attended by an agent a Mrs. Boz (ph) head of concerts for all. That meant cheap concerts. She said to me, "We never find an orchestra when we need one." Because she heard the concert and she said to me if you can do that with an amateur orchestra, can you imagine what you can do with professionals. I said, "Well, I wouldn't get professionals to play for me." She said, "Why not? We need a small orchestra in Amsterdam and we don't have one." I said, "Two people have tried it and it folded. I

wouldn't get anybody to play for me." She said, "Why not try it. If you try it and it is received well by the press, I have work for you." I did. So, I tried it. I set a date, I rented a small hall. One day, my best friend, hiding behind the newspaper that she was reading, said, "I have to talk to you." I said, "Go ahead, talk." She said, "You can't do that. You have a good name as a cellist. You can't just do that, get up there and say I'm a conductor. Why would you be a conductor, you haven't even been trained as a conductor." I said, "No, but I've had my eyes and ears open. I think I can do it." We did start that orchestra in May to rehearse and train, and I had the orchestra, but I had never performed in public with it. She said if you do that, you're going to be canned. You're going to be out as a cellist too. You'll ruin the good reputation you have. How would you be a conductor, you buy a baton and you are a conductor. I said, "No, that's not exactly. Anyway, thanks for your advice not to do it, but if I think I can do it, I will do it." She said, if you get a good write up in the paper you're greater than _____. I said, "I'll remind you of that." So, anyway I did give the concert. That was a November date, and it was very much a success. We did well and I never had a score on the stage, everything from memory. We had worked hard for it. She had the _____ I think and I had _____ and the morning after the concert I heard my write up in my paper and she heard it in hers, and I went around the corner where she lived and we visited. I said when I came in, she said to me, "How is your paper?" I said, "Mine is fine." She looked sheepishly at me and said, "So, is mine." I said, now it could be better because we could use the write ups as publicity. So that's how I named it _____, the Little Orchestra. And we had several years of it, because the first performance was '38 and '39 and in '39 I went to Switzerland to study some more with my teacher _____, and in the end _____ of twelve men and me, I won the first prize, which the first prize was to conduct the orchestra of the Swiss _____, but it never come off. That was my prize. That was the end of my conducting, because that was in 1940.

Q: When did you come back exactly to the Netherlands?

A: Well, I was back from Switzerland before, 1939, in the middle of '39, I was back in Holland when the war broke out. Because I had already joined the group of _____ and _____ and these people.

Q: What did this group do?

A: I had joined the cultural commission. In other words I was approached by _____ several years before '40, and I had acted a little different from _____, for instance because I wasn't trying to tell the other artists what to do. He did and he tried to influence them don't cooperate with the Germans because they don't do anything now, but later on you will be railroaded in to doing this and that and the other and I must never do anything, because the moment the Germans got into the country, I said to the orchestra, "Boys, there is no orchestra. We have never existed." Because I knew that it would be a gradual process, and you don't know when to stop. You get talked into it, and that is exactly what happened. I completely disappeared from the musical life and immediately started to prepare myself to

do other things that needed doing. In other words, to ask people how they were standing politically. I tried to feel my way with everybody, and who I could trust and who I couldn't trust and just continued teaching when that was possible. Because there so many people so upset, and I had a fear of what would happen that I didn't teach that much even. But, I completely withdrew from the public life. I was asked then by _____ during that period would I represent the musicians in his group.

Q: What was this group exactly?

A: It was the CKC that is written up in the book about _____.

Q: Can you just explain it?

A: That was following up what they for instance did and published and spread among artists don't do this and don't do that. He was telling people that they would be gradually railroaded into the German cult. That was only the beginning, and he wrote this letter, I think a monthly letter and _____ asked me whether I would be part of their resistance group and represent the musicians. Be the head of the group that would take care of the musicians. Because what they did, there were many people that had to continue working to make a living. If they couldn't work and do what the Germans told them to do, then they couldn't make a living. So, they became immediately in need of support. So, they had all prepared that, but we musicians didn't have that problem, because I was teaching. So, I made a living, maybe a little less, but not considerably less. So, I was a little bit more of an exception. _____ did city assignments like wall paintings and murals and he had nothing. So, he wouldn't make a living unless he would do what the occupational army prescribed.

Q: Can you explain what they prescribed and this Nazi German culture, what did they wish artists to do?

A: Well, they had assembled funds for this opportunity to support.

Q: No, what did the Germans do? What did Germans urge artists to do in the Nazi German culture?

A: They would tell you what you could and could not do. The people who did not join the _____ didn't get any work. So, they were poor. The heads of the group like _____ saw the lay of land before it happened and so they established funds to support artists that would be out of work during that time. And other needy artists, I mean it was mostly artists of all types, architects, painters, writers, so anybody who needed money would get help from that group. That was during the years '40, '41, '42. Then in '43 it became much more serious. During those years, I had prepared myself to do something different. I had prepared myself to get i.d.'s as soon as they came out. I.D.'s without a J on it and also i.d.'s with the J replacing them. I mean I would say to Jewish people, I can make you one

without a J because I had made that one for that Russian girl. I was very good at falsifying things. Steady hand to take the glossy part, because the picture had two layers. It's a thick thing, a picture, a passport picture. And the other side, this is the picture, the other side was a seal under which was the fingerprint, the fingerprint on the seal. So, you had to keep the fingerprint because we didn't have the fingerprint of the one who gave his i.d. to you, so I had to take the glossy part off without injuring the back part, the seal, which I was good at. And then, the picture had no stamps on it, stamps, because there were two ink stamps, one in this corner and one on that corner and I had to falsify that with two different colors of ink sometimes. So, you had to have a steady hand for that. That was my main occupation.

Q: When did you start to falsify i.d.'s and did you work together with someone doing this?

A: No. I did it all by myself, because I had always done that before all by myself. So, that was my occupation. To get i.d.'s for other people, to find hiding places ahead of time and do whatever there was to do.

Q: But did you work together with other people?

A: No. I worked together with _____ to dispense the printed ones that we made in the middle of those five years, because there was no printing before. I did some work before that. That was very tedious work. It took a lot of time. It was also hard to get people to give you their identity card and go to the office and ask and say I lost it or it was stolen. I gave them all kinds of advice. Just say it was stolen. I was in the swimming pool. I can't go swimming with an i.d. because I have to hang it up in the dressing room, and it's gone.

Q: Can you tell us who _____ is with whom you worked together?

A: Well, yes. He was called "Ticky." We all called him Tricky. He was a gay man and very obvious, I mean, everybody knew it who knew him. He was very shy and kind of an inferiority complex. He didn't think he was good enough for this or that. He was very retiring in his personality. But, gradually I learned what was really this man's problem and we worked, as I told you, I think, as a team. Because, together we did the real ones, the printed ones and went out together or had people come to my house and I would take a fingerprint and he would do something else. I learned a little bit more of who he was by knowing him better. Because, like I said, he was kind of a shy retiring -- and I was not a close friend of his before, but in that group we became very close. One time we had a conversation about the danger that was over our head and he said, "Do you think that we will see the end of this war?" And I said, "I don't think so." And he said, "I don't think either." He said, "Do you mind?" And I said, "No, I don't." He said, "I don't either." So, I knew exactly that I had a partner who had the same point of view that I had. I might have added that I'd rather give my life for something than give it for nothing. When I get a bump on my head I die too, and I have not done anything with my life. I want a high price for mine. He said, "I think the same way." He felt inferior about his being a gay man. I have

never felt that way. I have never been apologetic about the way I am. I always felt I'm as good as the next one, but I could never get him to feel any different because he felt that way all his life, very apologetic and not accepted. I've never felt that.

Q: Did you talk a lot about his experience as a gay man and your experience as a gay woman?

A: No, I never even mentioned it. Because it doesn't make any difference to me. I have always met every human being like an equal. I think a human being is a human being, however he is born is how he is born and has to live with it. I have never felt any discrimination, personally, I haven't. I have only experienced I think there was a discrimination for people's action afterwards, after things happened. Maybe that's the reason they treated me this way or that, not very much.

Q: What do you mean afterwards?

A: After the damage was done. I mean, I have had some bad experience in California, when I came to the United States and I think I had the evidence that was some gossip about my sexuality that it was not what it ought to be as they saw it. In other words, there was gossip going on, and I saw somebody getting a telephone call who was trying to find out if my contract with the Philharmonic was not extended, and I saw her go to the telephone and very surprised because they had never thought of that. So, somebody must have been telling her something to change that facial expression, because she was trying to find for me. Why didn't they give me a new contract and then she got the gossip and was very shocked, and I made my conclusions what she was told. But that's only my perception.

Q: Were you careful yourself? I mean, being a female conductor so early, and one of the very few female conductors, were you careful whom you told about your private life?

A: I never told anybody anything. I just lived my life and I never explained anything. I didn't belong to any kind of group. It's not like it is here. It's just well, as I told you when I found out _____ asked me why do you do that, well I said because I love you, and I have said that to other women too. And I said to my husband to insist that he wanted to get married, otherwise he would shoot himself, I said then I don't have very much choice do I? And so, I told you, I don't think I can ever love a man like I can love a woman. I always put the women on the pedestal, not the men. I don't know why, but that's my nature. Well, he said, that's right, you told me that, but I still want to live where you live. And I said, "Well, if that's your choice and otherwise you're going to shoot yourself, I think you better live." So, we married and we had a very good relationship, especially musically, because, he took me under his protection to get me to concentrate on my music, because I had something to offer he found, and that was his mission. We made music together. We played concerts together, and we were very good friends, but I was never as carried away and as romantic as I can be the other way. I've had relationships with women that were always coming to me, almost without exception. I have never approached women all the time. It just so happened

that I decide to help them or do something for them or something, or take them out of a situation that was detrimental to them or something. I protect them. I have always done things for people. I'm not happy when I can't do that. I feel very lonesome if there's nobody around that I can help and love and protect. And I don't understand people that can only live for themselves. I can't understand it. Where do you get your happiness? Where do you get your satisfaction? What do you do with your life? What do you do with your strengths? There must be somebody who needs help. There always is. And I've never failed. I've never been alone. I've always helped people, whether they were worth it or not comes out later. They haven't all been worth my effort, but the effort was worth it. That's the way I look at life. But I have had wonderful experiences, and I have had awful experiences, but it all balances out. I mean, I have had most wonderful, very romantic -- you make your own life. Nothing makes it for you. You make your own life. You live your own life and that's making it. I mean what you hear me tell you is my life. That's what I did with it. And I know also what I didn't do with it, because there are a lot of things that I should have done, maybe, could have done, maybe, but it is only very short, and it gets shorter when you look at it. The longer you look at it, the smaller it becomes. The more you think I wish I had another 90 years, because there's so much --.

Tape #6

- A: The German occupation, yes, from '40, I really led a little bit of a different kind of life. Something that was really up my alley. I had never had that much contact with all the artists. There was a little socio -- you know, a little group that was called, I think we called it the Kring (ph). There was a cafe where you could have the magazines and go in the afternoon when you're through working, and where you found each other and take a little drink and find the newspapers and read. That's a membership that was \$100 and I had never really spent that much for a membership like that. I always worked hard, but I was doing a little less work, and I joined that. I became a member and that's the kind of life that I thought was kind of fun to live. Read the magazines and meet the people there and on days there I met there I saw more often, because I really never had time to spend a lot of time with the people that I knew. And I did have more time, because I was teaching less and less, and did other things. These people had prepared themselves for these occupational years, and I did my way, with my i.d.'s, preparing and working. So, I was asked to join that group by _____, that resistance group. In other words, I was told what they were doing, and I was telling them what I was doing. So, we all got acquainted, and I had a student who had a brother, a Jewish student, and he is one of the people I brought to the group. I brought in Rudy Lumgar (ph) who was one of the people who was executed. He worked as my right hand man during those dangerous years. In other words, when we were preparing the destruction of the files in City Hall, Rudy was one of the workers. And Rudy brought in a whole bunch of his friends, young men who were called the _____, who the group had rat poison, and that was the name for the newspaper that they gave out. The underground newspaper was called _____. So, I knew all of that. And Rudy became my in-between man. Me, Rudy, headquarters, because they didn't want women in the attack on City Hall. We never got an active part. I only got the part in the preparation. They met once a week, first once a month, but that was not enough. It became once a week, and later, we didn't meet, because it was too dangerous. But, I would get news through Rudy. And Rudy didn't know where I lived, and I didn't know where Rudy lived. But we had always from week to week, a point on the street somewhere, where we would meet each other. If one of the two would not show up at that hour at that point, then we knew, disappear. That means change how you met last or change where you are known to live. It all depends. Some people were hiding earlier than others because they knew they were on the list. So the house wasn't really sealed and some people's house was not sealed yet. So, at the time, the day that I didn't see Rudy when I was supposed to see him, I didn't go home, and I didn't go -- I knew he would be found. I knew something was wrong, so I better disappear. And that's why I wasn't arrested, because they had my address, but they didn't get to my house early enough. So, when I came back from the war, back to Holland, I found my house sealed by the Gestapo. Nothing touched. Nobody had ever been in there. They didn't find me. They sealed it, so I couldn't go back home.
- Q: Was this plan developed to protect the population, why did you want to protect it? How was the plan developed to attack the population register, and why did you want to destroy the

population register?

A: Well, because we were given all regular i.d.'s and the Jews had the J on it, so if you gave them a false one, you had to make a fake number on it, because all the ones were numbered and had a duplicate in City Hall. So, then at one of our monthly meetings, right after we had done all that and dispensed all these false one, we were in the process of doing this all the time, because we had an unlimited number of false cards. We could give any Jewish person, a false identity card, but there would not be a duplicate with the same number in City Hall. So, when we realized that there would be thousands of false cards in circulation, then in the meeting we said, we have to destroy that, because when one person discovers that this card is false, they'll know that there are false cards in circulation. So, that's when the plan immediately got taken up.

Q: Who had the idea?

A: I think I did. If I remember well, I said, "This is getting too dangerous, because everybody is carrying false cards." I was carrying false cards myself, and for three months I was disguised because when my living quarters were sealed and searched, they found pictures of me as a man, disguised as a man, and a friend of mine had the same figure, the same height and I had a three piece suit that fit me to a tee, except this, what I have here, had to be matched down here. So, I was a little heavier set little man, and I had to buy a hat, the smallest hat that I ever found, and it still had to have a band in it to fit my little head, and I had to go to a barber shop and have a haircut that was really a man's haircut. I still remember the day I went there. The _____ there was a big men's barber shop with lots of barbers cutting hair, and I had to make the effort to get it all straightened out, and I really looked pretty good. I went out for the first time in my disguise and I went to get a haircut right away. I bought glasses, just window glasses and I put that on and I went into the barber shop and I took my hat off and put it on the hook, and the barber walked up to me and said "What do you want sir, shape or a haircut?" And I said, "No, just haircut." And he didn't bat an eye. He gave me a hair cut, and I got my hat. I had a cold and it helped to get my voice a little down. I talked like that all the time, and I got used to it pretty soon. For three months I was disguised as a man and very successfully so, because I lived on _____ number 64 and my mother lived at 44, and I passed my mother several times, during that time, and she never recognized me. I also didn't take my hat off for her, but she wouldn't have recognized me anyway, because nobody did. I bounced even into somebody because I was standing at the exit of the railway station at _____, and I bounced into my husband's second wife, who I went to school with, and she did not recognize me. I really was -- I was a very naturally looking young guy. The only thing is there is an advantage to disguise as a man when you're a woman because you look ten years younger. Everybody thought I was pretty young looking. He asked me "Shave?" and this was really to laugh about, but I didn't laugh, because I was too tense. That was my first outing to get my hair cut. I lived for three months with two of my students. Two girls, one was a writer _____ and _____.

Q: When did this happen? When did you disguise yourself as a man?

A: It was right after the other people were arrested, and I couldn't go home anyway, because I didn't have a home. I disguised as a man, and I lived with them and tried to continue to do what I did before and that is distribute more identity cards and travel. I traveled back to them all the time. And they gave me shelter all the time. Then, of course, after it became obvious that I was bringing everybody my danger by being there and the raids were worse, the nights that they took a block and circled it to find people and counted the beds that had been unmade. I mean it got very difficult. That was the end of '43. I felt that I am jeopardizing everyone wherever I go, as a man or as a woman, it doesn't make any difference. They took people off the street to go to working camps. So, that was the year that was the most eventful. Every day was eventful. I distributed things with the train _____ disguised as a man. I made myself the name Hans _____ on my i.d. I came in there, in a hotel and found that it was completely filled with the occupational army, and I nursed that cold that I had and I had my voice low and it was dinner time that I arrived in _____. I had to distribute food coupons and money. I sit down and haven't inscribed my entry in the hotel, and so the waiter comes up to me and says, "Sir, I have to have your i.d. I'll do it for you. Give me your i.d. I'll put your name in the book." And I give him, and I'm sweating because he doesn't come very fast back to me. And I eat my soup and I get really nervous. And he came back and he had me in the hotel, and I relaxed. But I mean, I've had moments that I got a little nervous, but most of the time I didn't. We ran out of money. See, all the time that I was still working in Holland, I had contact with _____ because he was not gone. One time he asked me, he said we are very short of money. Do you have any source that you can help us with money. And I said, "Well, I have some people that I know that are very wealthy," and one was Mr. Heinka (ph.) My mother was a good friend of Mrs. Heinka, and I didn't know him well, but I knew he was a music lover, and I had an instinctive feeling that he was on the right side. But, you know, you have to go by what you feel. I didn't know him. I knew her. I had brought the kids some Christmas presents disguised as Santa Claus, and we have that in Holland, December 5. Anyway, I went to see Mr. Heinka and asked him if he could help us financially. And he said, "How come you trust me?" I said, "Well, I go by faces. That's all I have to go by. I don't know." He meant how do you know I'm on your side, because he was not in our group. He was just an acquaintance and had all the money he wanted. He said you're right. He said, "But you know I have a problem, because I have my office riddled with Germans looking over my shoulder, breathing down my neck, want to know where everything, where the money comes from that is spent," he said, "I'm not my own boss anymore." He said it's very difficult to do, unless he said, "Do you have an idea?" I said, "Maybe I do." He said, "You do?" I said, "Yes, I have an idea, buy my cello. They're pretty costly and I have no way to use it. I can't play now. They would find me immediately. Who's playing cello. I have no time." He said, "That's a wonderful idea." And he did. So, I brought my cello, and he gave me the money that they asked for. And of course, after the war, I got my cello back. There was no problem there. It was not long before I left because I felt -- and then one of the two girls that I stayed -- see this was the time that we had to do everything in such a hurry. That night, we had to

print food cards, I mean our group did. I didn't do all of them, but I knew what was done. I stayed one night in one of the attic apartments, where they had hid because I knew they could not look again. They had been there before. There were bullet holes in the walls. I mean I stayed anywhere where I could stay without jeopardizing people if I could. But it became harder and harder and harder, and so I thought I have to get out of here because the day is not far that I am found. And I worked also for the group 2,000 which was headed by a friend of my sister's. Her name was Coby _____ and _____ was a high one in the Masons. He, the father and his son -- well, I forgot his name now, but he was killed by the Germans, because they had it very much in for the Masons, too. And Coby _____ I have made many false i.d.s for before we got them printed. I think she died _____ at the time. Anyway, I stayed in different places and more and more had the feeling that I have to get out before I jeopardize other people that give me shelter. And that's when I decided to leave the girls, and then one of the two, the writer, _____ said she wanted to go with me. She used to live in Northern France and she wanted to go back there. She had a friend there. I said that's fine with me if she just follow me, be with me. And so, but I had a pinched hernia at the time, because we had an iron bed that was camouflaging the trap door where I was supposed to disappear if there was to be a raid, and the house would be searched. And that iron bed was terribly heavy. I must have torn something and got the hernia and had to be operated. I didn't dare travel with it. We had to find a doctor who we could trust, because I was going to be operated on in the hospital under a false name, and I must disguise myself back from man to woman and gave myself another name and another i.d. and I was Louisa Fermana (ph), and I went to the Nun Hospital, and there was a doctor recommended to me who was on right side. I had an operation early December and the Mother Superior, she asked me for my food ration cards, and I said I don't have them. And she said, "Just write your family to send them." I said, "I don't have them, I don't have a family." And she do like this and she said, "Oh, I understand." Now, if somebody else asked you to say I have written home to send them, and by the time the answer comes it will be all right. She knew I had no ration cards. And so I got my hernia operation and I don't know how many days after that, but it couldn't be more than ten days after that, I got the sign that I could leave the country. And I had to follow two men that would come out of the train in _____, at a certain day, but don't go with them, and don't show that you know them, but you'll see two men and they'll go to a house. That's how my trip started to Switzerland. And I walked all over the borders because every border, Holland, Belgium, especially Belgium France was five miles forbidden zone. So, it had to be done on foot through the woods. I left at the end of December and I arrived in Switzerland February 12, snow this high. I walked about 12 hours in the snow and I avoided the men who was the messenger between our gate and Belgium France. In other words, he was the messenger who did this all the time, contact people when they are on their way or stuck or something. He brought me money a couple of times. His name was Tony, and he asked me whether he could go with me. He was Jewish, and he was also very Jewish looking. And he said, "But you know, I'm so Jewish looking I'm conscious of that and I don't want to jeopardize you." I said, "Tony, by the time they see us, it doesn't matter whether you look Jewish or not." I said, "We've had it. Sure, you can go with me." But that was from Paris to Switzerland he

asked me that. I mean, I didn't travel with him until the trip from Paris to Switzerland, but it took that long. See, the trip was interesting in a different way because we walked for 12 hours without stopping. He wanted to stop all the time. He said "I'm exhausted." I said, "There's no stopping in the snow. We have to walk until we stop somewhere in Switzerland." And we did. We never stopped from 9:00 in the morning until 10:00 at night. And then we got to jail in Switzerland, which is another story. But that's the trip we took and that's the work I did. So, I don't know what I could probably tell you more about those years.

Q: Can you give us an idea about the take on the population register. You started to tell that you came up with the idea --?

A: I said we have to destroy it. And then they started to all agree. We have to and we have to do it now. I said we have to start immediately because that takes a lot of preparation. You can't expect to do that in a jiffy. I mean, I knew it was guarded. We all knew that. I mean, they were expecting all kinds of things from the Dutch, from the Resistance. So, they had two policeman outside. They had one night watchman. They had one motorcycle coming around the block to see whether the policemen were still doing their duty. They had an arrangement with the night watchman that he would be available for telephone calls checking up. In other words, we had to find out how this office was protected. And we found out more and more that it was terribly protected, terribly much protected. So, everything had to be counteracted with another thing. So they made two police uniforms. They had to find out whether all the captains were known to the policemen, yes or no. They had to find out what happened inside. How were things guarded, protected. And certain things they found out almost everything, but one or two things they didn't find out. One was that they didn't find out that the Germans called in every so often at night to see whether the watchmen were still there and whether everything was okay. And so, when they finally had it all prepared, they knew how to cope with all the few things that went a little bit different from what they expected. But they had expected to have everything prepared enough, and they did successfully blow the thing up. I remember I was on the roof. It was going to be done at night, as soon as it was dark. I think it was on a Saturday, and I was on the roof to see whether I could hear something, because they didn't want any women there at all.

Tape #7

Q: You said it's becoming too dangerous. We should plan something to do against the files in the population register. And that happened. But you also said but women were not welcome or excluded, why?

A: I think because the main attackers were policemen. And to be disguised as a policeman for a man is easier than for a woman, less chance. Also, because it was physically a pretty hard job. So, I think they had a very good reason. However, women could have brought in some of the explosions, some of the things that were not too heavy to carry. They principally said no women. There was no question about that. And I think that the superiority of the men that is not quite dealt with in this world. I think eventually it will be, because I think they are doing a good job by having possibilities for women to have men's jobs. And not saying this is just appropriate for men because women don't do a good job. There is no such thing. There are some women that do a better job than some other man that might be very masculine, strong muscles and everything else. But you can find a woman very easily that's superior to him. Not every man is better than every woman. But they think so, some of them.

Q: But was there any discussion?

A: No. I don't think so. The women have played a part. And there are some women who also were caught because they had been working at the plan. But none of the women were asked to do anything that night that they had the attack take place. That was a man's job. And so, I think the women didn't expect. I would have liked to be part of it, but --.

Q: How was the attack then prepared?

A: The attack was prepared that we had to for one thing, we had to find how to get a leak in the personnel who could tell us exactly where the cards or tickets were held and how the procedure was inside of that part of the building. And we did get that. We found that out. We had to have a tailor that could make two policemen uniforms. We had to find some leak in the police force that would tell us whether the officers were known by all the policemen, yes or no, and so forth. We had a lot of preparation to do. It went on for months. But the first things that had to be done first to find the material that policemen uniforms are made of an to get certain parts of the uniform of the police people and that's one of the reasons that that traitors got in because one asked the other and another asked another and pretty soon it was _____ that was asked for some police helmets and he realized what the helmets were needed for and he could make \$10,000 to give information. So they held it up. It was too many people involved in other words. There were so many people involved that it became very dangerous. And that's what happened. See, we couldn't be so selective because we needed so many special things that nobody could provide without asking maybe an acquaintance. I mean the tailor was caught. The professor -- I know the tailor was caught

and so forth. That's where the danger is. When you get so many people involved and then you get stuck and you have to ask some outsider, did you have any way? And they think so and that one is fine and that one is fine, but the next one is not. That's very simple. They had too many people that knew it.

Q: Was the attack successful?

A: Very successful. And of course, everything went according to schedule, except a few details which is interesting from a purely rubber policeman standpoint. The difficulties that showed up were of minor importance. It went off without any problem.

Q: Who was leading the attack? Who was the leader of the attack?

A: The leader of the attack actually was _____. The next man to him was _____, who was not caught, but who died later. He got shot in the back. He was more of a -- he was not a quiet man. He was more of a show off. I'll show you what I can do. He wanted it known, whereas _____ was very quiet about what he did, very modest about what he did. But he got his satisfaction, to show what a gay man could do. And certainly wasn't any less than a strong man with a real masculine nature would do. Lots of those wouldn't do any of that. That's what he had to have felt like, I'm sure. Because he felt good already during the time that we worked together. He didn't feel like he used to feel according to his own writing and his own speaking. He would have never said "No, I don't mind giving my life for it." when he talked about it.

Q: Did other members of the group know that _____ was gay and you were lesbian?

A: I think so. We had a meeting and we were just having a coffee break, and I don't know what brought it on, but we were talking about handwriting and that you could tell from handwriting whether a person was a woman or a man. I was curious and I think _____ said that he could tell. So, we all decided to write something down, something that you couldn't tell whether a woman wrote it or a man, and passed these slips of paper, mix them and then _____ would look at them and tell. And when he came to my handwriting, he said that's a woman. I said, "That's mine." He said, "I'm sorry, Frieda." It's kind of funny, because I thought that he would say, that's a man. Because I was strong enough to think my handwriting might be a problem, mix him up. That was funny. I never forgot that. Yes, we did a lot of preparation during several months.

Q: Did you talk with _____ or did other people talk about him as being a gay man, openly gay or about you as being lesbian?

A: No, I never talk about such things. I have never been curious about how people feel about what I am or who I am. I never felt necessity to make an announcement. I remember myself being startled when people would throw it at you when you don't ask. I mean, for God's

sake, life is not all open. I remember meeting one time a _____ agent, and she give you a hand and at the same time say her name in a very aggressive way like "I'm a lesbian" and I thought, who asks? Who cares? That was my thought. I would never do that. I had a cousin of _____ who was a lesbian. And she gave me a handshake like that and said, "Hollander." That was her name. Her name was Maize Hollander. For God's sake, who cares. You know what I mean? It's not always in front of my mind what I am and how I am and how I react to things. So, I think it's throwing something out that nobody asked you for. And I have never felt a danger. I never felt a reason to be curious in people. I never had anybody ask me. I would have been surprised. I would have said, "Why do you ask?" which I usually say when people ask a question that I don't want to answer. Then I say, "Well, why do you ask? Why this interest?" You know Bobby did it one time very nicely, she had a meeting at her home and she had a lot of gay people there. And one of my students who is not gay at all, is very normal man in his whole lifestyle and had been married and had children, for some odd reason when he came in, he kind of sidled up to her and said "Aren't there an awful lot of gay men here?" And she said, "If you're interested, let me know, I'll introduce you," which I thought was very astute. Because she wanted to indicate that she didn't care what people are, how many there are. I mean, she's far beyond that. And so, he was feeling ashamed I guess, because he didn't know what to say. So, he kind of took off to another corner. I think that's a very nice thing to say.

Q: But for _____ it was important that he be recognized as a gay man within--?

A: No, what I really think was the trouble with him was that he was too conscious about what the part of the population was thinking knowing that he was gay. And I have never been concerned about what people think of me. I mean the moment you start to be concerned about what people think of you, you sink. Because there are lots of people that think the wrong thing about you, no matter what, in what direction, on what subject, on what character type. I mean they'll be people who like you and people who don't like you. If you don't care, you don't care. So, if people think that I'm no good because I'm lesbian, or they think that _____ is no good because he's gay, why should he care? I've never found trouble finding people who like me. And the other people, I don't want. You can't have the whole world like you. And that's why I always say my opinion is as good as the next guy's, the next person. You don't have to be right for everybody or liked by everybody. You have your hands full if you're liked by a lot of people. You have too many friends already. Who knows? But he was thinking along the wrong lines and met the wrong people. He was born with an inferiority that because he was different, and I don't think that it has to do with whether you are lesbian or gay or this or that. There are people who don't like to be considered something, different, too high, too low, too fat, too thin. If you care what everybody thinks, you should be above that. That's the way I am. That's the way I am put in this world. I didn't make myself. Work with what you have. Try to get what you can get. Try to do to yourself what you can improve. Don't cry over spilled milk. This is the way I am made, I can't change it. I can lie about it to protect others, not to protect myself. I wouldn't do that. But to protect others, I would lie about, yes, because I have no right to give

their stand in life as mine were, give their weakness or if you want to call it that, or their different nature a way to other people, no. That's why I would never do things like this 60 or 70 years ago. I would protect -- if there was something to protect, I would feel it was my duty to protect. Any questions?

Q: What happened after the attack of the population register?

A: It got destroyed. It was very much of a loss for the German Occupation, very much. They were very upset about it and that's why they were determined to kill those people.

Q: Were the group betrayed or how were people caught from the group?

A: Well, _____ was picked up as number one. He was very protective in a sense by _____ who lived in the same house where I later lived after the war. He also was inspected by the Germans and so was he. Because they were very impressed with his attitude. His attitude was absolutely heroic. When he was arrested, they came in and said, "In the name of Hitler, we arrest you followers" or something and he said "In the name of the Queen of Holland, I'll follow you." I mean he was not even startled and he was a support for all other people that were arrested. He was a moral support. He was absolutely what he planned to be. This was it. He did what he said to me he would do. He was very satisfied with that solution, that he would give his life for that. He would prove that you didn't have to be a heterosexual person to be heroic or to make an offer of your life. He wanted to prove that point, and he was satisfied for himself that he had the opportunity to prove that. And he had the strength to be a moral support for all of the others.

Q: How many people were arrested from the group?

A: Twelve.

Q: What happened?

A: There were more people arrested, but the women were not killed. I think they got some jail. _____ wife gave some part of time like in jail or something to save his and he got away the same time that I did. But there were very few people who were really in on the whole thing, the preparation that were not caught. There was a big list. Have you seen the list, because I have it here. The German Military Judgment, have you seen it? Well, I have it.

Q: What happened to these people who were arrested?

A: That were not killed, you mean?

Q: No, no. Were they killed immediately?

A: No, no. They were kept in jail until the execution, which was later. It wasn't very much later, but I think I have the dates somewhere.

Q: Was there a trial?

A: A military trial, yes, because the whole story is written down in German. I have the whole story in German written by _____, and it's all what was done. They described the whole thing. How these people, how the uniforms were taken and they disguised themselves as policeman. It's all in German and I'll show it to you.

Q: How did you learn to know that _____ was arrested?

A: Because I had arrangement with Rudy, who was my right hand man, that if he was not able to because he was caught. So, I knew first that Rudy was caught. I didn't first know that _____ was caught. I found that out by finding out that others were caught a couple of days later. But when Rudy didn't show up, who was my personal right hand man, and brought into the group by me, I knew something bad has happened, and in a few days I found out.

Q: And then you went into men's clothing to hide yourself better?

A: I think so because I knew they had been to my house and had -- because I knew my house, I couldn't live there anymore. So, I knew that I had to do something about it. Because they had taken pictures of my house. No, I had been a man before. I had been a man before, that was already before that I had been a man and they had pictures of me. So, that's why I had to disguise like a man. But I don't have any pictures anymore so I don't know what happened to them. When I had to leave, that was when every single time I had been somewhere, the people would tell me that the Gestapo, some people told me that the Gestapo came and asked, was I there and they said no. And they said she must have been here and they would say I haven't seen her for months, lying of difficult it was. But they would come a couple days after I had been there. So, they were on my trail and I felt that I was jeopardizing too many people that gave me shelter and I didn't know where to go. I knew I would be caught pretty soon. So, I knew that I wouldn't be of any help to anybody and maybe be the cause of somebody being killed along with me. So, I decided I had to leave, and that's when I decided I was going to go and I let them know I was. And then I took the operation and rested up from that in _____, because I didn't work either when I was in the hospital. And right after, I went and I said, I'm leaving. And the doctor that operated, the surgeon that operated on me said, "Where are you going?" And I said "I'm supposed to go to England. I'm supposed to be picked up in Northern France by a plane" and then I found out later that the Germans had intercepted our code and so I could not get word about whether that plane would land in Northern France to pick me up. And so, I didn't get a plane, so I was stuck in Paris and I had to find my own way. I sat in Paris for the longest time and Tony came back

and forth from Holland, Brussels, Paris, and I had to find my own way because he did not know a way either. I mean, in other words, they run out of a way to get to Switzerland. Because the one that I had used in the past had been found out. So, I sat in Paris for the longest time. And I had a friend in Paris and she picked up the phone one day and she said in the phone to me "I know of way to get" and I said, "Hang up the phone, I'll be right over." Because that always dangerous, anything you said on the phone could be overheard. So, I went to see her and she said I know a couple that has found a way to get to Switzerland. I have just heard it from a friend and this is the name. I forgot, I don't know. It is a young couple, they have found a way, but you have to go through a river. You have to wade through the river, which makes the border between France and Switzerland. And I said, "I'll go, get me the address." And she did. That was in _____ and they were very young people. She was a very innocent looking sweet blond woman and her husband. They must have been in their early twenties. And I still remember it as I sit there now, she was peeling an egg, a hard boiled egg for breakfast and the egg was over boiled and was green, the yolk was green and she had never seen that. She said, "Oh" and she dropped the egg and she said, "I can't eat this. Look at the color of this egg." And I laughed because it was so funny because you can eat it fine. It just doesn't look very good and I said have you never seen a green egg? And I looked at her eyes and I thought this woman is all right. She is just an innocent young girl, but she is never going to be a traitor. I could tell right away how her eyes looked. So then they proceeded they had found out a way that you could get, that it was pretty hard because it was winter. It was February. We had to walk five miles out of the border. You had to walk five miles and then you had to walk all the way north until you get to the place where the bridge was from Switzerland. And the river, the bridge and then you're in France, well, because the bridge was blown up. So, it was only a blown up bridge, and there was a place, a farmers family lived out in nowhere. So, I went with Tony there and we got off the train and we started to walk and we found the farm. And there was snow this high. And there was nobody out. It was a blizzard. And we had to really walk. All I remember I had with me was my music satchel with one towel because I know I had to wade through the river and so I took a towel with me. That was all, and what we had on. I don't know why I had nothing else, but I didn't have anything else, and a silver cigarette case that I had inherited from my half brother, which was heavy silver, which I had gotten from my mother. And my shoes had just a heel, what you call oxford or something, you know, just walking shoes, not even heavy snow shoes, nothing. That's what I had. That's what we all had left in Paris and I took that. And we got to the farm, and there was a husband and wife and they said we'll give you breakfast. It was maybe 9:00. And she said, give me your shoes because they are wet and your socks and I'll dry them in the oven while you eat your breakfast. And then the farmer looked at me and said in French, you'll never get there. It's too hard. I thought, well, I can give it a chance and we ate our breakfast and I got my shoes back from the oven. He said there's a young man coming on skis and he's going to --.

Tape #8

A: The river was not visible from the farm. We finished our breakfast. I got my warm shoes out of the oven and put them on. We decided that we were going to leave, and I told you that the farmer said you're not going to leave Germany. That means you will never arrive in Switzerland. And I said, "Well, I'll take a chance." And anyway, we got to walking and out comes a young man on skis from the _____, he said he was from the Marquee which is the French Resistance, so the farmer said he will guide you and tell you where is the best way to cross the river because it gets shallow at some point, and he knows, so follow him. That's how, we thanked the farmer and his wife and we went behind the ski and after maybe a half a mile, he told us where to cross and he went back. What we had to do is we had to take our clothes off completely and bundle them up and hold them on our heads. I said to Tony, now Tony, you're much taller than I am, so if the water comes to here with you, it comes to here with me. But if comes to here with you, I'm under, so go slowly so that I can watch it because I don't swim and so I would be under the water and that would be the end of me. I thought it was kind of fun and he kind of smiled and said he'd take it easy. He said he kept his shorts on and I looked at him and I said, "I don't keep anything on." He said, "Well, it just my old fashioned nature." And I said, "Well, you're wrong because when I am across I brought a towel and I can dry myself off, but I have nothing wet to put on. You'll have to put those shorts back on and they will be wet." Well, he thought it was nice that he could keep his shorts on and he walked in front of me and we got across. It was so cold. It was ice cold. And of course, when it's ice cold and wet, you don't get yourself dry whether you have a towel or not. It's just impossible. So, we were there for the longest time. I think we must have been at least 15 minutes to 20 minutes to get something on even though I had a little towel, but we did get it on, and we got our shirts back on and we were on the other side. We were actually in Switzerland when we crossed the river, because that was the natural border. But we didn't have much profit from that, because on the Swiss side, there was an absolutely steep mountain, so we couldn't get into Switzerland and hide. The forest was completely filled with snow and trees and no way of climbing. So, we had to walk along the river in full sight of anybody. I mean, if there would have been border guards from the Swiss side looking for us, they would have seen us. If there would have been people from the French side, we haven't met anybody that whole day. It was absolute silence. It was gorgeous. It is a trip I will never forget. It was the most wonderful quiet trip of ten or twelve hours that we walked, because we arrived finally to the bridge around dark, 8:00, 9:00, and then we had to walk up the road. See, the road would go down to the bridge and that would be the river, the border, but the bridge was gone. So we walked there. So you could only walk in the water or you walk up the road but there was no road after. And so we had to walk up the road and we must have looked like lost tramps or something. Pretty soon we came by houses so we knew that people were seeing us. And finally, we came to a little cafe and I stopped there and I said let's try to make a phone call. And I got in there with him with Tony and I did have no money, nothing. No Swiss money, no french money. I don't know if Tony had any but anyway, I know I didn't have any. I only had the silver cigarette case from my half brother. The first we talked to was the innkeeper and he said the phone is upstairs. And I go

upstairs and sure enough there is a phone on the wall and I try to call the Dutch consulate and the telephone lady gives me somebody else and she said I will try for you what I can get somebody. I said to the innkeeper, keep this cigarette case for me until I pay you because I have no Swiss money. He knew right away we were refugees. They had called that there were refugees coming up the hill. Pretty soon the border police came on skis and he took the phone out of my hand while I was waiting for the telephone girl to get me somebody from the consulate. By that time it was 8:00 or 9:00 and of course there was nobody there, and this guard that came in, took the telephone from me and said, "You have no right to telephone here." He was very unfriendly. So, I didn't have anybody to talk to. Then we went downstairs, and his wife and daughter of the border guard came in and said to him, don't you see these people are exhausted. Don't you want to offer them something to drink. And he did. He followed what his wife said, and he ordered a carafe of wine. And of course you can imagine after the whole day walking in this high snow what you feel when you drink some wine. I felt like I couldn't get up off the seat. But pretty soon I did and he said we have to take you to jail. I said, where is jail. And he said it's quite a ways from here and I see you don't have any skis. We go on our skis but you will have to walk. We will take it easy, but you will have to walk to jail. Well, I don't know how we did it, but we did. We walked to jail and we got each our own cell, Tony and I. I never saw Tony any more. I had to stay in that cell about two and a half days. A policeman came and took pictures and asked whether I had any way that I could prove that I was a Dutch subject, because I told him that I was Dutch and I've been in Switzerland. And I said "yes, I can prove that. I've studied here with a man by the name of _____" And he _____ and I was had a room with the mayor of _____ who so happened and he said it was enough and he took a picture and he left another night in the cell and then he came back and said it's verified. The references that you gave are verified. And he said something like it's none of your business. And they had to send Tony back in the snow. And I knew that I could have saved his life, but I didn't know it then. They asked me were we a couple, were we engaged to each other or were we married or were we engaged. And I said "No, he's just a friend." The Swiss did not keep men anymore, only women. And I could have saved his life by just lying and saying we were a couple, but I didn't know. I didn't know how mean the Swiss were at that time. They were afraid that they would lose a little bit of their Russian food that just started to become a little tighter, like sugar and coffee and things like that. They had plenty to eat. Because at the top of the shortage just before the war was over, I think the food supply had come down by one percent in the whole population. So, one person had less because there was hardly any refugees coming in any more. February middle of February at that time, all the people, the 160 Dutch people that I met when I got to the camp in _____, nobody came after me any more.

Q: That was in 1944?

A: February, 1944. All the people that were fleeing Holland, but a long time before. I was the last one to arrive of the Dutch.

Q: Do you know if Tony survived?

A: I know he did not. I saw him right to his death. And the worst part for me is that I could have saved his life by saying yes we were engaged.

Q: But he was sent back to France?

A: They threw people back over the border. I don't know how they did it.

Q: But he was given over to the French police?

A: I don't know what they did. If they sent him to France, there was not even a road.

Q: But you never heard of him?

A: No, never heard from him.

Q: What was his last name?

A: I don't remember. I don't know if I ever knew because I worked with a lot of people that I didn't know the last name of. I may not have asked him.

Q: What happened to you after you were released from jail in Switzerland?

A: Well, I got out of jail into kind of a clearing place where they had to have me stay for "x" number of days to see if I brought in any germs, any sicknesses. My knees were swollen up like pillows, like this from the walk in the snow for ten or twelve hours because you had to walk like this. The snow was so high and nobody there. Nothing was trotted down. We had to find our way. When we hit the river, we knew that we had to follow the river until we came to the bridge, but I was pretty run down with my legs. When the doctor saw how I looked, they said you could have lost the use of those legs if you would have gone much longer because you over exerted your knees and that's why it's -- it was like strawberries. So, it took me a long time to get feeling a little better, but I didn't get sick. And I finally got into _____ is a big hotel at the top of a mountain and that's what the Swiss gave for the different embassies. There were German refugees, Belgium refugees, there was Dutch refugees. The Dutch had 160 people in that camp and so when I was finally cleared of not bringing any sicknesses, they sent me to the camp and I stayed there for a while and then I got annoyed with this kind of life and I wanted to do something and I sent a telegram to my sponsors in the United States that told me that wherever I was in the world I could call a telegram send something to New York to _____ Garden in New York which is a big business firm, money business firm and tell Harold that I needed money and he would send it. And I did. And Harold died not too long after the war was over, but his son lives right here in Santa Fe. One of the two kids that they had, they had two boys, and they were

my friends and they also worked a little bit, and he was one of the Jewish people that did not have any fear and was acting wonderfully because when I heard that my mother's house from a stranger who called her on the phone when I was just visiting my mother. I didn't live with my mother, but I was visiting my mother, that was just about ten days or twelve days after the occupation had taken over, I said to my friend, I was taking a walk with my girlfriend and I said, let's stop at my mother's because she lives alone and she wondering about my brother, who is a doctor on the other end of the country. And of course every telephone connection was broken. We didn't have a chance to talk to him. And he had a Jewish wife, my brother, so he was considered Jewish. She did go with me to see my mother. And as we are there a phone rings and I look at my mother while she is answering it and I see her absolutely like this and then she hung up and the telephone call was from a stranger who came on a bicycle all the way from _____, which is near _____ to tell my mother that my brother and his wife had committed suicide. And of course, that was all we heard. He was a stranger and brought the message. And my friend was there and I said to my mother what do you want me to do. Do you want me to go and see and go there? And she said, "Yes." And I said to my friend, will you stay here, then while I go to the other end of the country, if I can. And she said, "Yes, I will." So, I took off with my bicycle to the Amsterdam Hotel which is the headquarters of the Occupational Army since 10 days so it was still in an upheaval there, but the military men had taken over that hotel of which my uncle was there, which was a very strange coincidence. But of course, he wasn't even there. I drive my bicycle to go there and I run into Mrs. _____, one of my students and friends. The couple was my friends, and the boys were kids. She stopped me and I said "Don't stop me. I have a very important thing to do." And so she said, "What is it? You look terrible." That's the news that I got and I'm going to the _____ Hotel, because I have to have a permit to drive to the other end of the country because all the roads are blocked. Nobody is getting through with a car and I have to get permission. So, she let me go and I went to the _____ Hotel and sure enough there is military people sitting, and I said to one of the officers I would like to have you give me permit so I can drive my car. I want to see, we get this news and I want to see whether my brother is still alive or what. And he's starting to type me a permit and the door opens and here comes Harold, the father. She went home and told her husband and he got up and he had worked on the American Embassy, full Jewish man, and he stands with the officer and he commandeers and he said you take that thing out of that machine. That woman is not going alone through the country. I am going to take her with my car with the American flag on it. And the officer takes the thing out and he does exactly what Harold tells him to do. And I never forget that moment. A full Jewish man that goes in there and says you take that out and she is not going to go. I am going to take her. He was completely bluffed. He did it, took it out, gave him the permit, he went with me, but unfortunately my brother had already been dead and buried, but she woke up because he had covered her up after he had gave her the injection and she lived for a while in hiding. So, that's another whole story, much longer than I am telling you.

Q: That was your brother Bob?

- A: That was my brother, Bob, yes. I never saw him again, but he left a note for my mother and said, "Mother don't grieve about us, because we could have never been happy in a world like that." And I thought to myself, I would have said, "Bob, the world didn't change. The bad part just came too close." As long as it was far away, you could still live and think of your students, because he never left the place where he lived, because he lived in that place where our bridge was blown up, he would have been trapped and he left that place because he didn't want to leave his patients without a doctor. That was the type of man he was. Because he didn't know when the Germans were coming, and people would say don't stay in this place because you will be trapped when the bridge is blown up, because they knew that Holland would have been that strip of land that would be immediately Germany. You would be trapped. But he said, I don't know when that will happen so I can't leave my patients. So, when it did happen, then he thought oh this world is no good anyway.
- Q: What happened when you sent the telegram, did you get money or -- in Switzerland, when you were in Switzerland and you sent the telegram?
- A: No, I went to the camp for a while, for quite a while. I took the camp life and I started a choir and made people sing. Finally, I got a little bored with camp life.
- Q: What happened then when you sent the telegram to the States?
- A: I sent a telegram to Harold that I was in the camp and that I would like to do something with my life rather than sit there and wait until the war was over and would he do what he promised me to do and that is send me some money because I would like to buy a clarinet and take clarinet lessons which would come in for my future as a conductor, to play a wind instrument.
- Q: And he did?
- A: Yes, he did. Later on he was my houseguest because he didn't have -- his home, of course, was stolen by the Germans and I helped him recoup a lot of his things. I saved his piano and I saved a fur coat of his wife. I mean, I was doing -- when he left Holland, I was still there, and I took care of what I could help him with.
- Q: But did you leave the camp after you got the money from him? Did you leave the camp?
- A: No, I wrote to the consulate and I said that I would like to have private support, to live privately so that I could practice. I was getting tired of these 160 people who didn't do anything and they were starting to gossip about me and about my being a lesbian and treating me -- in fact there was a couple and I had gotten a cello while I was in the camp. I had gotten a cello. Somebody rented it for me, so I could play again, and I played a concert there with a visiting couple that played violin and viola. So, we played _____ as a concert, and I started to come alive again, because I had felt that I wasn't even alive. I felt that I

would never care about music anymore. This lasted about a couple of months. I felt dead inside. I thought I would never make music anymore. And then suddenly, I came kind of to myself and started that choir and then got a cello with somebody's help. Then one of the people were gossiping about me, which I didn't know, wanted cello lessons. And I said, yes, I can give you cello lessons because everything was for free and you can practice on my cello that I have. Then, I found out that they were gossiping about my life style. I called them back in and I said, -- oh, I know how I found out. They had told the only lady that had a private room, because there was just one bed open in a nice room for two and she said that she didn't want to share the room with me because I was a lesbian, and I said "Oh, that's why I am in the attic where the personnel of the hotel sleeps." I didn't realize that there was -- I liked private room that the help gets better than the double room that the high guests get so -- I called them in, one of the cellist in, the couple and I said, I'm not going to give you cello lessons. You're not going to practice on my cello. You don't want to have anything to do with me. Now that I know what you did. You told that lady that she shouldn't accept me in the room because you know who I am. You protected her from sharing her room with a lesbian. So, I don't give lessons to free to people like that, so it's finished. No cello, and then they were very ashamed. They were very taken aback because I read them the riot act and what was going to happen. Shortly thereafter, I got a little tired of being in that camp.

Tape #9

Q: First, how did these men know about you being a lesbian?

A: Well, first of all I was a woman musician and people know things about people and are always gossiping about people that people know. So, they were acquaintances of people that I had known in Amsterdam. They lived in Amsterdam. I found that out somehow that there was a reason they had one of the house cleaners room upstairs instead of one of the guest rooms. Then I found out that there was one lady that had a double room all to herself. I found out why I didn't get that one, because she had told that woman don't accept a roommate because she is a lesbian. Don't accept her as a roommate. Somebody told me that. I don't know who did, but I heard that. I thought, huh, huh, and you want free cello lessons, well, that's the last one I want to give free cello lessons to. But, I'm going to call them in and tell them why I made that decision, and I really told them off and they really went -- like we say in Holland -- went with their tail between their legs, their tail behind their legs. They took it pretty serious, my scolding. I said, "Don't ask me for anything." But, I didn't like the atmosphere in the camp, and I didn't like to stay there all the time. The Swiss were not very nice to us when we went out. They couldn't pick the cherries. The harvest was so enormous that we were allowed to go out and pick cherries for money. Of course, we could never take a job, but if we picked a cherry to eat it, the door would open from the house over there and they would -- "Don't steal our cherries." The floor was filled with cherries, but give it away, no. I've never liked the Swiss. They didn't accept us astute people. When I unwittingly caused Tony to lose his life, after this trip, I can never -- it bothers me, my memory.

Q: You remember very well the trip but there are some parts that you seem not to remember anything.

A: I don't remember what I did all the time in Brussels, except that they took -- you're going to have to see that story, you might be able to include that in this here. There was one time in Brussels Tony came and said, "You speak English don't you, very well?" And I said, "Reasonably well," and he said "I am stuck with these five pilots here in Belgium that I shot down and have been given civilian clothes by the farmers around, and they don't speak good French or anything and they need to be fed."

Q: You were just telling us about when Tony came and said "Do you speak English."

A: I said "Yes, I do." He said, "We are stuck with five American pilots that are shot down and are given civilian clothes, but I cannot get them -- they have to be fed. They have to eat something. Can you take care of taking them to a restaurant" because nobody had food anymore, free food. There was only one little restaurant nearby where I would get dinner and not have to give coupons. "Can you take them there, but you can't sit down and speak English." And I said, "No, that's not possible. What we'll do is we won't speak at all. We

will just act as if I'm with people that are deaf and dumb, deaf-mute, and I will do some motions like that and hope that there is nobody that knows the language, because I don't know the finger language." And that's what we did. I said I'll ask them ahead of time what they would like to order and then I'll take them but we won't speak, but we'll do this and I'll have them nod or something. That's how we did it. We never spoke a word, until I got to my room, then I asked them before we went what they wanted to order and then afterwards I spoke with them, because I spoke -- my English was --. There was one man who couldn't speak at all. He was in shock. He didn't say a word. That was the only time that I saw them, when I took them to dinner and then they took them away. I don't know how they got them away, that night or the next day. That's all, but I still see their faces in my mind. I remember that very well. I don't remember very much from the period that I spent in Brussels. I remember vividly when I left Holland on my crossing into Belgium, because we had a tiny, tiny man, way smaller man than I was, and his name was Pete, that's all we knew, and he lived right at the border. He took us over the border at midnight, and it was walking from _____ down to the border wherever we took off. He lived about three houses into Belgium, and so when we got four or five houses before the place where he lived, he did this, "Don't speak, be very quiet." And he opened a little gate and went into a garden and he said follow me and there was a little boy we had to take with us. I never knew who the boy was, but we took off with Pete and the little boy. I think he was pushed on a bicycle because it was so far to walk. Then we walked that border and got into that fence and behind the houses and walked over the border that way. The door was open and the light was shining over the highway but the Germans were playing cards and probably drinking beer and didn't pay attention to what was going on in the highway and didn't hear that the little gate was open. We walked behind the houses over the border, because those houses were not separated. It was just a road. Then we went through another gate and got to Pete's house, House Number 3, maybe or 4 and we went inside and he said, "This is my house and this is my wife." He was a little man about this high. And he said but I have no guest room, you'll have to share the bed with me and my wife. My wife will be in the middle. You don't have to sleep next to me, but you can sleep next to my wife. The others were on just a sofa or chair, and we were in Belgium. The next day we went to Brussels. I never saw Pete again. I don't even know where to find him, because that would be years past. But that is how I got over the border in Belgium, and I stayed in Brussels and was assigned a room. I don't remember any of it. I only know that I saw Tony occasionally. Then I remember how I went from Brussels to Paris. I just had to take the train and stop at _____ and take the afternoon train to Paris. I decided that was good because that way I would be in Paris and give me time to find my own hotel, because I didn't have any help in France. That was all broken down. The road had fallen apart, you know what I mean? I was one of the late people that got out of Belgium.

Q: What happened in _____?

A: Yes, something happened there. As I am in _____, I was traveling with one of the two girls I had been hiding, the author, the writer _____, who had lived in Northern

France and who wanted me to leave her in Northern France. She didn't want to go to Switzerland. She just wanted to take the opportunity of my travel and stay in Northern France where she had a friend. So, I said, that's fine, why not. So, we took the train and that was when there was an air raid and everybody had to get off the street. The street cars stopped, everything stopped because there were planes overhead. So, I missed the afternoon plane to Paris, and I said, that's pretty bad, because we have no hotel in Paris and we don't know where to stay and it is not prepared. We had crossed the border Belgium France and the arm of a pilot that had been shot down there too. In other words, they had to get across the border, but the way we did it, I was arm in arm with one pilot, and she was arm in arm with another pilot and we just looked like some people who had lost their way. We didn't look like two people who were crossing the border illegally. So, we made it to _____ . What we didn't make was the train. These pilots, they had an evening train, and they did not want to know us as soon as they were over the border, because they were very vulnerable too. So, they said, "As soon as we are over the border, we don't know each other, and don't talk to us." And I said, "That's fine." So, we missed the train, but I thought that's okay because I have an address here if we get stuck from the Secret Service and I can go there and get help and they'll take me in for the night. So, I said to _____, you wait here, I will go there. And I go there and it is on the sixth floor in a very crowded street where there are lots of shops and people walking and I get there and I climb up six winding stairs, it says in the article and I find the place. I ring the bell, and the door opens and I here in perfect French "Entre Madame" which means enter lady, and I look at him and it is _____, the only Gestapo man that I know who was arrested me in Amsterdam when I came into my neighbor's house by mistake, walk into the Gestapo and who had arrested me there and to whom I had played the dumb woman and got out of it. You can read that in the article.

Q: Can you tell us again, what happened in Amsterdam and then what happened in Lily?

A: Well, in Amsterdam there was a couple that lived across the street, a Jewish couple, that didn't show up to pick up their passport which I was distributing all the time. Some people came to my house to get it and some people I went to their house. These people lived across the street, and they were supposed to be at a certain hour at my house, but they didn't show up. I go, after everybody else has been there, I go across the street and his name was Robert Burke, and he was one of the colleagues that owned the department store _____ in Amsterdam, and instead of fining Robert Burke, I find that I entered in the Gestapo. I tried to withdraw and leave and he said "No, no, no" and he locks me up in a room. We'll get to you later. They were trying to find money because these were wealthy people that they were visiting to see what they could steal. I said, I'm just a neighbor, never mind. I know I'm stuck in the hands of the Gestapo, so I think I don't know what to do. Sure enough when they were ready two of them come with me to my house. Oh my God, I don't remember, do I have lying around any i.d.'s or what. I saw something sticking out on the piano between music. Anyway, I start playing the dummy. I start doing all kind of things that mean nothing to distract them. When I distracted them enough -- any way I get out with them.

They arrested me, and I keep on playing the dummy. I say I don't understand the laws. I don't understand my father was Jewish and my mother was not, and I'm not considered Jewish, but my brother is because he has a Jewish wife. I don't understand any of you. This is in the car going to Gestapo headquarters. I play as if I'm not afraid, but also I am very dumb. I don't understand the laws and I don't understand -- do you mean I can't visit? Oh yes, you could visit your father. I said, "But my father could not visit me?" That's correct, he tells me. Then I take something else that was dumb, because I knew all these things. I played stupid and more stupid and not afraid. I sit in the back seat and these two Gestapo sitting in front and they take me to the headquarters and I'm stuck. They take everything I own away and they called some car to take my possession and my food out of my refrigerator. I'm arrested. My mother knows that. She lives in the next block. Everybody knows that the Gestapo is right here and they took Frieda away. I went to headquarters and I'm keeping up my comedy, my stupidity. I don't know why they released me. I don't look that stupid, but they thought so, luckily. So, finally, after all my stuff is gone and I don't know what to do any more. I have to get out of here, I have to, and he doesn't know what to do with me either, but he has to find out what I know about the other people, so I designed an escape. The next time I see him walk I said "Mr. Kurt, I have something to tell you that I think will interest you." So, he calls me in. He thinks I thought of something that is important. I said you were talking about this family Kahn, that is the co-director of his business and I think you are determined to know something about money, but I know they have a lot of money, but I said he never had any money with him because a funny thing is that some people that I know that have a lot of money they don't carry their money with them at all. When we would be out he would ask me do you have any money because I just don't have anything. So, it turned out that I would always pay for something that was unexpectedly for sale that he would want or we would be stuck and stay for dinner and he never had money. That all I told him. He got so impatient with this dumb woman that told him a story that had nothing to do with what he was after that he takes his keys -- my keys that he has taken from me -- and he throws it on the table and says "You can go home." He said to someone, "That woman can go home." I said, "What do you mean, go home. You have taken everything away from me. When I come home there is nothing in the refrigerator. I have nothing to eat. Everything is out of the cupboards." He said, "That's right." So, he takes the phone and he calls up someone and I hear him say that all the stuff that you took out, get it back to _____. I come home, I can't even get an automobile. I had a horse and buggy loaded with my stuff coming home. That's the same man that opens the door in Lily, the only Gestapo man that I have ever talked to. Can you see how ridiculous the coincidences are in my life? I never tell people that because they must believe I make this up. It is too unbelievable, but it is true. I ran for my life. When he opened the door in Lily and said "Entre Madame" in perfect French, I said back in French "_____", this is not what I'm looking for and ran down the stairs. And as long as I hear him run after me, he's not going to shoot because he can't shoot and run at the same time. I get out in the street, which is very crowded, and I go into a store that is very crowded and I hide behind a stand that is full of belts. I will never forget. They were hanging there and I stand behind, and I look at the door and it doesn't open. He didn't see me go in. I

stayed there a long enough time for him to give up, because he wouldn't run in the street too long. I got out and got back to the little cafe where I had left Denee and she said, "You don't look very good. You look very white. What happened?" And I said, "Well, I have reason. We have to get out of Lily, because I don't trust it. He knows I'm here and he was after me." So, I went to the train, and I find the two pilots that we crossed the border with, who said don't talk to me anymore and don't talk in public to us, and I said I walked by them kind of sideways, and said "I have to tell you that that address that they gave me as a resistance stopover is not good anymore. Tell the headquarters, because I know you go somewhere where I don't go." And that's all. I walked by and never talked to them again. We reached Paris, Denee and I around 11:05 and it was curfew at 12:00 and we had no hotel. So, you an imagine how we ran through Paris to find a hotel that we could stay in. But we found it at five minutes to twelve in a little side street off the _____, and I stayed there for a while. I had a friend in Paris, and that was the friend who called me on the phone and said -- and her name was Bepp Bolk, and Bepp called me and said, I know an address and I said, "Hang up." She didn't realize that you can't say anything on the phone.

Q: I would like to make a jump and go -- when did you go back to Amsterdam after the war and how was that?

A: I went back as soon as we had a convoy back. We all went back together. We went back almost like cattle. We didn't get a hotel. We slept on straw mattresses and we were spritzed with flea powder. It was misery. I was sitting next to the director of one of the department stores. We didn't even undress. We just sat on the straw mattress and we smiled at each other and said this is not the place that we expected to go back in. We really didn't expect it. That was the first convoy that took us. And I don't remember anything of my homecoming except that I found my apartment sealed by the Gestapo and everything in tact that I left, radio and all. Everybody was without radio, but I found my radio, one of those big high ones.

Q: What happened to your friends, your artists friends who were in the Resistance Group, the people that you knew?

A: Well, the only one that I remember is _____ and his wife and there was some years in between. Then I went to the United States as Herr _____ did as I did because we did not like what we found back in Holland.

Q: What did you find?

A: We found that the people that had been riding the fences, as we call it, they were on top, and the people who had given their lives, nobody was talking about it and it didn't mean anything to anybody and we had to fish for ourselves. Things didn't change. We thought everything would be better, politically better, and nothing, nothing changed. It was a very cold shower that you got when you came back. I did get musically, I got work. I got some conducting to

do and I got an orchestra in small town, but of course I got a little satisfaction from the government from one of what we call ministers in Holland. They called me in and said how much would it take to get my orchestra back and it turned out that they didn't have any money. They were impoverished after the war, too. So, there was nothing and they didn't do anything for _____. It was the same old stuff. And the mediocre people were ruling the roost. You never heard about the people that had given their lives for it. They never made any remark about it. They never did anything or asked for the family, do you need any help or anything like that, nothing. Everybody fished for themselves and as _____ did the same thing. There was no cleansing of anything.

Tape #10

Q: Let's start where we stopped yesterday. You told us you were coming back to Amsterdam and that you were very dissatisfied with how people dealt with former members of the Resistance, and that this was for you the major reason to leave the Netherlands. Can you tell us more about it?

A: I can only tell you that the general feeling that I had of disinterest people didn't talk about what happened during the war, I just resumed my efforts to get my musical work going again, which I had left actually since the beginning of the war, because there was no orchestra to conduct and there were very few students who were interested. So, even in the five years, I had very little work, musical work, if any, the first year. So, when I came back, I had to build it up. I didn't have any old students. Some were killed, some were gone, so I didn't have a chance -- I did speak with the minister of the arts because he called me in and that was the only gesture that I noticed of that one man who knew that I had had that orchestra. He give me an assignment to try it and recreate my orchestra, and that turned out to be way too expensive, so that was dropped. Then, shortly thereafter, I got some other work in _____ and I had a write up of concerts to take to _____. They were very happy with me. That was the only thing that was happy, that I had some community orchestra, not professional, amateur, but a good orchestra. I could work that up while I started to teach again. That's all I had in conducting. But the whole atmosphere to me was dull, very dull and unexciting, and people were not talking about the past. They were not talking about what happened, and of course, I didn't feel like talking about it myself. I was glad that there was peace. But nobody was mentioning those five years that I remember. They were just doing their own thing and trying to make money and make a living, but in a very dull kind of atmosphere. There was no enthusiasm anywhere. I felt unfamiliar. My mood was do something different, and there was nothing really different.

Q: Were you recognized for what you did for the resistance?

A: No, absolutely not. I didn't talk about it and nobody talked about it that I remember. Everybody was trying to get his feet on the ground and get a job and make a living. The people that had not taken a strong stand were kind of on top. I mean, they were the people who did well. I was not a political figure myself. I was not a person that was concerned in politics. I was not in a party or anything like that.

Q: Do you know if now people in the Netherlands do know about your years in the Resistance and what you did? Is that documented?

A: I don't think so, because the reason that I say no is that students of mine have heard me talk about those years and went to the different centers like the _____ and the Holocaust Museum and they said your name is nowhere.

Q: At the Holocaust Museum _____ in Israel or which one?

A: I think there are displays of names, and I looked under the B and I didn't see me name, and they started to get very upset, because they knew that I wouldn't make that up, but they said your name is not anywhere. It's only been very recently that I heard that. I never knew that. I knew that somebody said your name is not in the _____. And so _____ said that she did not belong to any group, and that alerted me at first and that made me say yes, when I got the letter, would I like the story published, and I said yes. Because that was not the reason I said no before I moved here. I said no because I was still working and I thought oh why should it be documented. I'm not that very important of a person. But this made me say yes.

Q: Do you know -- we talked yesterday night about how the attack on the population register is remember in the Netherlands and that the leader of this attack in memory right now is _____. Did you know that?

A: No, I didn't, because to me it was always _____, because I knew he was the leader and _____ was the second man. So, when I got the little book about _____ that said he was the first man and _____ was not, I knew that _____ was the only one survivor for a while of the active group that did it, but I knew right away that he was not the leader, because I worked in direct contact with _____ and I never worked with _____, but I knew that he slipped through the mazes just like I did, and he continued to work. He did a lot of I would say spectacular things after that and was almost killed another time and was shot. I knew some of that story, but people would have said he was the head, I would say no he was not. He was not even there in direct planning. He wasn't even in the meeting. What is in the German _____ my name is in there, _____ was not in that meeting. He did other things. That's all I knew. But it never came to me until I heard it from you and from the book, and I never wondered why, because I have never seen the obvious omission of _____ name because I didn't pay attention. But for me he was always the first man and for me he was the great hero who was most willing to give his life for the cause. It was just an amazing performance.

Q: We talked yesterday about the reasons why the attack and the leadership of this attack was remembered differently, and one of the major reasons seems to be that _____ was known to be openly gay --?

A: Right. I didn't know it was kept a secret until later, so I understand. There is only one reason to ignore, and that is is that he was gay. There is no other reason. There was nothing wrong with him as a human being so there could only be one reason, his sexual orientation, which I think is the most dishonest and stupid thing, but I didn't know it until I found that out. Actually, I never talked with anybody about it, because it didn't come to me that it was so blatantly ignored. It is unbelievable that people dare to do that. It was so far from my thinking, and I'm so disinterested in what people do in their private life, I think we will be

very surprised if we know what the so called heterosexual people do in their private life. I think we would be very, I would say, disgusted, and surprised if we knew, which is nobody's business. Everybody's life is his own and it is not a public matter to my thinking, and I have never given it a thought. People shouldn't give it a thought because they don't know. They don't know what anybody does in his own home. So, there's no interest on my part, and I don't think there should be an interest on anybody else's part and it was overreacted about that way, and there are so many in between I would say _____ of human beings and if we started to analyze that, I think we'd be spending our time in the wrong direction. I don't think it's an interesting subject. People make it an interesting subject and they categorize people and I don't categorize people in that respect at all. I categorize people into their value as a human being. And I think, unfortunately, I meet more bad ones than good ones. I think the human race is nothing to be proud of. I'd much rather be a bird or an elephant or whatever, because I think the human race has definitely has much more evil traits in the total, not in everybody, but if you look at the amount of people, you don't find superb innocent, honest, etc. I can give you a whole list of words, but you find a lot of evil and even more so now than when I was younger. I don't think the human race is advancing in the right direction. There's more murder, there's more greed, there's more of all those things. People have lost the pleasure that comes from work, from doing things yourself, partly it's through the advancement in machines that do it for us. I don't like to have machines, I don't want a computer. I see that a computer is a great danger because people can wreck the whole system, can steal much easier. Everything is made easier. I mean, every bad thing is made easier. There's no advantage from having machines do all the work for you. We get lazier. We don't have any joy in doing it ourselves. I've known man who made, for instance, something from scratch that he could buy, of course he could buy a pocket knife or a butcher knife. He started from scratch with a piece of metal and he got great joy in doing something with his hands that was hand made and that took him maybe half a year to make that knife. I can understand it. I think that's the general feeling I have, and I think we occupy our minds with the wrong things, too. Any questions?

Q: I'd like to go back -- I really want to know exactly what was the major reason that you left the Netherlands and went to the States?

A: Because I didn't have the same feeling of joy in my work. I didn't have the same feeling to build something up. See, I have been a little bit unaware of some parts of life, because I focused on too much of what I did. I didn't include everything that was going in life. I kind of focused too much on the music and my teaching, and the world is so rich in avenues. One can branch out in so many directions. I didn't branch out very much in politics before, I told you. Music can take up so much time and give so much satisfaction and I also know that music has a tremendous influence which interested me much more to pursue than to broaden my scope and get, say, into a political party or something like that. One cannot embrace everything. Life has much too much of offer, so we always specialized in a certain direction. I felt that the atmosphere was dull. There was no general enthusiasm for everything that was done. I did my little corner. I did my music, but it was not quite the same. There was

no feeling of renewing after the war. There was no feeling of change after the war. It was all the same, and even, I would say, more dull than it was before.

Q: Were you disappointed that what meant to you a lot of work in the Resistance, obviously didn't mean a lot after the war to a lot of people?

A: Do you mean that people didn't talk about it?

Q: Yes, or that they were not interested in what happened exactly in the war years?

A: No, because I really didn't want to look back all the time for my own self. I didn't like people to talk about it too much because I didn't think about it too much. And I never expected it to be so neglected, because I didn't really go around in circles where there was a lot of talk. I was always very busy with what I was doing. And then, I didn't feel there was that enthusiasm to build up something new, even musically. I mean, people were, the right people were not enthusiastic to do anything, do you know what I'm saying? It was the same old thing, but even less enthusiasm than there was before the war.

Q: How and when did you emigrate to the States?

A: Well, I really only did it when a friend of mine, who I have mentioned to you before, Harold _____ came to Holland a couple of times to recoup what he had left and what the Germans had tried to steal and rob him of, because he was a very wealthy man. He said to me, "You are the only one I would like to sponsor. If you want to come to the United States, you need a sponsor, and you're the only one that I know who would be able to get on your own feet. Because you have to get on your own, but you have a year's time and that year I have to take care of you. If you want to do it, why don't you go with us back to the United States, this time and see how you like it." And so I did. I went with them. I didn't tell anybody. I had a Visa. I said I'm just going to spend the summer and so that's how I was really trying how to do it. I suddenly felt kind of an opening up of an opportunity to start, really start with something different and something new and I just didn't feel any interest coming in or going out to try step by step to build up something in Holland because I had lost the people that -- the two cellists, and the violinist were killed in concentration camps, and you know, there was only one man left of the whole Jewish group that I had. I mean things were disappointing to have to regenerate, so I went to the United States and until two days before I left, I worked, because I remember I was doing some radio broadcasting and I ran into the sister of one of my school mates and I said "I have no time to talk to you because I have to go to the other studio." I had my cello in the other hand and my music in the right and she said "My sister is there. My sister is in New York." And I said, "I know, I went to school with her." And she said, "Well, if you go to New York, go and see her." And she wrote her address and name and put it in, because I had no hand free to take the address, and she put it in my pocket and the next day I quit working and took the boat and went to New York, and I had the slip of paper, and I found the friend. And she said, "There you are"

when I came in, and I said, "What do you mean, there are you?" She said, "I followed your career in all the magazines that I got sent from Holland. I know exactly, and I thought one day she'll come into New York." I said, yes, not only that, she had a very nice apartment and my sponsors lived in a very expensive place. My room was nothing and it cost a fortune. So, I said to my friend, I said, Harold, I think I can find a place that wouldn't cost anything, would you like me to move there because I still don't know what to do yet. He said, I would appreciate it because they charge a fortune for a room here. So, I moved in with her and went back and forth to my friends, spent some time in New York. I met an old friend who had known my father and stuff like that. I said, "Well, what do you think?" His name was Sylvan _____ and I said, "Sylvan, what do you think of my staying in New York?" I said, "It is so crowded here and there are so many people here, so many musicians here." He said, "Well, there's always room for a good one." Well, I decided it was not something for me, New York. It was just too big. So, I talked to my friend and I said you know the idea that I would like to do is to have a car and go through the United States and visit all kinds of places and see where I would like to settle down. I said but I cannot ask my sponsor to buy a car. This was '47 and they didn't make cars. There were only second hand cars, and that would have been fine for me. But she said, "Oh, I can buy the car, but I want to buy a new car." And I said, "Well, Minnie, there are no new cars." She said, "There is a new car made. It's called a Crosley and they sell it in Macy's Department Store and I will buy a Crosley because I am principally against a used car." So, off we go to Macy's Department Store and buy a Cosely. It's like a toy, a convertible. she bought it and we took off in the Crosley. We managed on my allowance, which was the whole allowance was \$5,000 for one whole year, and of course, they didn't say I can't do this. I went all over the United States. I had addresses to go. I had recommendations that brought me criss crossed like that. Niagara Falls, the first one was the father of my Russian -- not the one that I talked about before -- but I had a Russian accompanist in Holland. She said my brother lives in Buffalo. I said, that will be my first stop from New York to Buffalo. I stayed there for three days, and I had my cello with me and my friend Minnie who paid for the car and so it was the two of us with the cello and two suitcases plus coats and things. That Crosley was loaded to here. Well, that is a story by itself that fills chapters. But we went all the way through various states. I've even been to Albuquerque, San Antonio in Texas, I mean, San Francisco Conservatory. We were on the way for a whole month and traveled everywhere. It was a wonderful experience. It was so refreshing for me. The Americans were very hospitable. I had lots of letters of introduction. It was a complete fresh beginning for me. The people didn't have any idea of what Europe went through and what Holland went through. They were very open minded and very hospitable. I stayed many times in friends of friends house. The one in Buffalo had someone in Oklahoma City, a doctor who was the brother of her husband and so forth and so on, and they would take us in as if it was the simplest thing. They were very interested in music, very interested in stories about what Europe went through and all that. It was very refreshing for me. And I decided I would like to stay, so I had to make a living so when I boarded the boat I had a nice adventure to go across because I went across by myself. I didn't go with my sponsor. He was already in the United States and I was by myself and I was interested in the Dutch people. I wanted to learn to speak English and the whole dining

room was filled when I decided that I was getting hungry and I stood at the door of the dining room looking at this sea of heads where there would be some room and way in the distance a lady was pointing like this. I looked, how strange, and she looked again at me and did the same thing. So, I walked over there and she said, "Why don't you sit here, there's a chair." She was British.

Tape #11

Q: You were just telling the scene when you were standing at the door and someone was pointing at the chair.

A: So, I sat down there and found out that she was a British woman and I thought, great. She said this is a wonderful table. Well, I didn't get to that table, because I had a different sitting, different hours. But, I met her the next day, and she said, do you like your table and I said, "Oh, no." And she said, "Why don't you go to the Purser and ask. Our table is wonderful. Somebody from Bermuda, somebody from there, all single people." And so I did. I had moved to all these interesting people and we became friends aboard ship because I didn't want to talk Dutch, so I was very happy to find a British person who was interesting and interested in talking to me and so we had two deck chairs rented for the whole trip. All I did was speak English aboard ship, but she lived in Pasadena and I was going to New York, so I we took each other's address and we wrote letters and I went with my friends to Vermont for the summer and stayed in New York. That's when I bought the Crosley. Many of my school friends bought the Crosley and she said if you drive I'll buy the car, and we drove all the way through the country, zig zag. And I had my introductions for other conductors even _____, Lake Erie, was a cousin of the famous composer, so I had a lot of interesting people to meet. So, I didn't go straight anywhere but I went wherever I had a stop and saw a lot of the United States with this girlfriend. When we got to California, which was in December, she said I had to go back to New York because my vacation is up. She worked in the Dutch Embassy. She said you can keep the car because it's no good in New York. I am a little tired of my job anyway, so why don't you keep the car and I will walk later and I don't mind to move myself to California. That is the country I chose to be and because I had contact with my British friend and she said you can stay with us because you can't find an apartment. There is no apartment to be found here. So, you have to be somebody's guest and I would love to share my home with you, but I have two bachelor brothers. I said that's fine. I love it. So, we stayed, friends and I stayed there and then I took her in the car sometimes and sometimes I went on my own because I had all kinds of introductions. I went to San Francisco to see the conservatory there and talk to the head and he said "I have something for you." I mean, I looked for work. Then I got an introduction, because we arrived in December and I contacted all the places I could, because I liked way better to live in California. Physically I feel better in a warmer country. I have arthritis and I didn't like cold countries. I visited Albuquerque and the radiator of the little Crosley froze overnight. I mean, I became a mechanic during that trip because of all the things the Crosley could not do. It was like a sewing machine. It didn't get up hill, even. It stalled. One of the pistons always flew out. I had my hat under the hood many times, but I still had the Crosley to get around. I went to visit on recommendation to visit a woman, a music critic, in Long Beach and she looked at my paraphernalia that I had from Europe and she said, "My goodness, that's a _____ background you have. You should be able to -- why don't you, it's a little bit late now, but why don't you see this man. I'll give you his address. He's going to open a music camp here in the mountains. Maybe there's something you can do there." So, I did. I

went to see this man, and he looked at the same things, my papers, and he said, "My, I wish I'd seen you earlier." And I said, "Why?" And he said, "Because you have such a wonderful background as a conductor and musician and cellist, but all the jobs are taken for next summer." And he said, "Gee, I would like to have you there." He said, "All I can offer you really is being in a cabin with six girls and people and coach the strings, but I can't give you a salary. I can't hire you, but you can come there for free and help out with whatever you can do, if that appeals to you." He said, "It's a beautiful spot. It's called Blue Jay camp, and it's like a miniature Hollywood. It has wonderful acoustics and this is our first year." He said "You can even bring a friend for free because I could use some non-professional help." I said, "I'll take it. Thank you." So, I did. Well, that started me. That is the type events in my life that I've had many of times that I just float with the stream and something comes around and there's nothing better to do comes the second time. This was the first time in the United States, because I did come in the summer thinking that I would be just a little helper. He said maybe I can even have you help out you know at rehearsal, but he said for every Sunday, I think there was six weeks of it, for every Sunday there's a famous conductor coming in, a well known conductor. One is _____ and _____ he mentioned everybody and he said you'll meet them and I said, that's fine. And I came that summer and there was a resident conductor who would come from San Diego. He lost his wife. He didn't show up. I was there. The second was Richard Lert (ph) who was also well known in Pasadena. He had an ear infection. He didn't show up. So, I became the resident conductor who prepared the orchestra all week, conducted every morning, made a program, received the guest conductor would only conduct one piece so I would conduct the program all the time and met all these conductors. I have a picture, two pictures where I stand with _____. I had an introduction for _____ from some student friend in Holland that he had studied music with before he became famous _____, and I had never destroyed that letter of introduction. Little did I know that I could meet him like this, but that's exactly how my life rose. I am there for unknown reason at the right time so I not only have a picture of that day _____ came and that he said why don't you let me hear, because I haven't had lunch, I would like to have lunch first and read my letter from this violinist and he said what have they played and I said, "oh they have a Beethoven Symphony movement." He said, "I want to hear them." I said, "Oh but they are sitting waiting for this famous _____ and then I come." He said, "No, I want to hear them. Just tell them I want to hear them." So, I go down there. We played a movement of the symphony and he sits up there having lunch and he comes down there when it is over and claps and they are sitting up _____ is clapping for them and he said "Don't be so proud of your achievement because an orchestra is what it's conductor is." And he bowed in my direction. I will never forget that, because they played well and that he bowed to me that I had prepared. Then he did his piece and I never followed through. I mean I never went and said would you do this for me or that for me, but I mean we had a wonderful time and he wanted pictures taken and I still have the pictures where he's standing with his blue overcoat in his hand because it was hot. Anyway, the next Sunday, I get another guest conductor who is the head of the music department of UCLA, the University of California, and I see right away he's not an _____. When the concert is over that means they go home and the next Sunday somebody else is coming.

So, as he leaves he says to me, come to see me in September. I said "Aren't you a busy man?" And he said, "Yes, but not too busy for you." I said, "Well," he seems to be serious, so of course I am going to see him in September and he offers me a job. This is my first year as an emigrate so I had a job. It wasn't very much of a job and it didn't pay very much, but I did get a job. So, I did that. Now comes the year I get more known and I make more friends and lived in California, which of course is very close to the movie studio world, Hollywood. So, I meet people more and more and I find my old friend Alice _____ the harpsichord player who teaches at the University of Southern California, two big universities and she said "Where is the viola _____." I said, "Oh." We had concerts you know harpsichord in the days of my husband with the flute. Flute, harpsichord and viola ____ and it was not my viola _____ it was _____. So I said I don't have. She said I'll get you a _____ and sure enough I played a concert viola _____ and harpsichord, just duet. I have to tell you a funny story about that, because I have played that in Europe and so I have among the paraphanelia that I showed everybody, I have two prospectus prints made just pictures of me in Holland to have in the United States when I get there and I carried that always in my portfolio. One is Frieda Belinfante Cello and violadagamba and I also had one that was Frieda Belinfante conductor because I didn't want it all together on one sheet because people think you don't do anything well so in New York I had offered this to an agent to look at it and she said I have one woman cellist and she can't even make a living. She said, "Do you have anything else?" I said, "Yes, I have Frieda Belinfante, conductor." She said, "That's worse." I said, "Well, goodbye." That is all the success I had in New York, but I still carried these two with me all over the place. So, I get an engagement. Somebody wants a cello and violin and piano and asked the three of us for material and I have to put here Frieda Belinfante, cello and on the other side it says violadagamba because I play both, and the other sheet was Frieda Belinfante, conductor. So, of course I give this sheet of the cello because I'm going to play cello and the violinist gets her sheet -- I still know her name, Lisa Mengete (ph), and there was a Russian pianist who had no material to give to the agent. So she said, "Oh well, just forget it." So, I pick up the newspapers in Santa Monica where we played and I see that the concert is announced and it says Lisa Mengete, violin, Frieda Belinfante, cello and Violadagamba piano. I've never laughed so hard in my life because it was so funny. I never thought anything, but unfortunately I lost the paper. It was the Santa Monica paper that said that violadagamba will play the piano. So, anyway, that's a nice story, lots of musical jokes, but this was one of the best. Anyway, I got my job at the university which was I went to see the head of the class, and he was actually more of an administrator, this man, who was the head at the time, and he was conducting the orchestra and he wanted an assistant conductor. So, I was the one. He needed a cello teacher who was also a conductor, so I go the assignment of being just that, the cello teacher which he didn't have and assistant conductor, but he was the main one. He was a bad one, because he was more of an administrator and that of course cooked my goose because at one time he could not cut the mustard and asked me to do it and I could cut the mustard and that's the end of me. So, I didn't stay there very long, just a couple of years. But, it wasn't too bad because the pay was very poor. I made \$100 a month and I had to be there when he said so, when he had an orchestra rehearsal or something. I got calls from the movie studio as a freelancer

which paid me \$100 a day, so I didn't show up on one his rehearsals, so I lost it again, the job, but at least I had it for the first year. And I got more and more studio calls and stuff, but I got ahead and made my own living after a year. Then, the same _____ asked me one time would you be able to help a friend of mine out. He is a conductor in one of the suburbs of Los Angeles and he needs a first cellist and he doesn't have one and his concert is nearby, but I'm kind of ashamed to tell you what it pays. It pays \$17, because it's one of those union -- and it's mostly for an orchestra that's not professional, but they need a first cellist and he doesn't have one. I didn't have much to do yet, so I said okay, I will help out, why not. I'll come. I don't care that it only pays \$17, but I'll do it. So, I did. I went to rehearsal and started to talk to people. One guy comes up to me and he said your name is Belinfante? Well, I talked to a friend of mine and he said you know there is a woman conductor that is well known in Europe by that name and he said, is that a relative?" I said, "No, that's me." He said, "Are you crazy?" I said, "Why, no." He said, "Well, if that's you that you play for \$17 for this jerk." I said, "Well I have no orchestra and I'm just helping him out." He said, "Is it possible that is you." I said, "Yes, I had my own orchestra in Holland, semi professional, and I conducted for the radio." He said, "Would you like to conduct?" And I said, "Of course, I would, but you can't just say, here I am. I am a conductor where is my orchestra?" He said, "I'll get you an orchestra. It doesn't pay, but I'll get you an orchestra." I said, "Are you serious?" He said, "Yes, because there are so many musicians here in Hollywood that never play a symphony that always play these noises that you see on the film, a little of this and somebody falls down the stairs, and a little of this. They don't play symphony. There is only one symphony in Los Angeles and I don't enjoy what they are playing, but it makes good money." I said, "I know it does because I've done it myself." And so he said, "I'll get you an orchestra, but it doesn't pay." I said, "It doesn't matter. I'd like to." So, to make it very short, he said, "There are rules here that if musicians get together and they play, there will be a room available for them in the auditorium, a podium, in schools in the evening and there will be a janitor that turns on the lights and is responsible. The City is paying for that. I'll get you an orchestra, but nobody gets paid. You have to do it for pleasure. There's one problem, that's music." I said, "Oh no, that's no problem. I can rent music for free from the Library, and I know how that's done." So, I said, "It's a deal, wonderful, I'll do it." And so I did go to the Library and deposit a \$100 and got music in parts. I said you tell me when you're ready, when you have your orchestra together. He did, in Highland Avenue High School I got an auditorium, I got a janitor. Nobody paid anything, it was city. I come on a given day and there was an orchestra there, complete, not too big, but complete. I got one symphony and on another symphony music and parts and we played and we enjoyed and I said, "Would you people like to come back next week?" Yes. I had one clarinet player with one leg, Glen Johnson, one of the most faithful with his wooden leg putting down on one side, played beautifully, that came back every week for maybe a couple of months. And then the same guy who got the people together, came to me and said, you know, we have a demand for a concert and we don't even have a name. And I said, "What is the concert?" He said "It's to be in the Redlands Ball." Redland is a town inland and an old lady is the head of that ball. I don't know if she owned it or what, and we go to play and the soloist that she likes the orchestra to play with and I said, "Oh, call it whatever you want."

But he said, there's very little money but it's better than nothing and all the musicians will get paid for the concert and it will pay each one \$30. I said well, I'm sure they will be glad to get \$30 because they did it for free. So, sure enough we got the concert at the Redlands Ball and _____ was the soloist and we called it the Beethoven Group. We didn't know what else to do. And I had time for an overture so she played an Beethoven piano concerto and she said that Mrs. Mullen, who engaged us, wanted her to play twice, which I found out was not true, she wanted to play twice. But anyway she had a Strauss piece for after intermission and I had the _____ symphony and an overture, so each had two pieces. I had to conduct two pieces. Well, it was the most beautiful evening and the most beautiful concert. It was in the summer and it was not a breeze. There was moonlight and the whole ball was filled, poetic as could be and she played a Beethoven concerto and she tried to conduct me and I put her hand down and I said, "This is my department." I mean she had the feeling what can a woman conductor be and maybe I better take that quickly, the roles were divided. I played the Mozart overture. She played a Beethoven concerto, and she had a husband with her that said "Darling, aren't you too tired to go right on the stage again with the Strauss piece." And I heard that and I stood there and I said, "If Darling is too tired, we'll drop the piece, but we're not going to change the program. She will have to play the piece and then I will play the symphony. We're not going to change the program." So, we didn't. So, she played her Strauss piece and I played the symphony. They played so well, because I didn't use a score. I never did. I stood in this beautiful moonlight and a little girl got up and danced in the moonlight, just completely filled the -- I think she had about five or six curtain calls after her Strauss piece, but she wanted the last success and then we played that _____ symphony and it was done really beautifully. It was the most poetic concert that I remember. I had twelve curtain calls. I mean, they just didn't stop. And Lily _____ said I must say, she has got it, about me, because she could tell. There were a dozen friends of mine that I made at the time that I lived at the beach and of course these friends are the ones that wanted, why can't we have an orchestra, so we had a meeting of the music lovers of the area, which are very few. There was a doctor, and some women friends, a nurse, and a pianist, students of mine that had come out and saw that and they arranged an evening and one of my students was a little boy --.

Tape #12

A: So, after the concert, everyone said, why can't we have something like that in Orange County, because this was beyond Orange County. This was inland. And so, I said I don't know why we couldn't have that. And so, the people that were at the concert were friends of mine and acquaintances, parents of my students that I have built up very slowly because nobody played music in Orange County. It was a barren cultural territory. I said, we have to get together and talk about it. So, what we did, this doctor, his name was Furman, he had a gathering where they listened to recordings. That's all they could do and that group came together and I said, I'll give you chamber music concert. I will ask some people from the orchestra and I will play the cello and we will just give you a concert and maybe we can get some other interested people together and come to this home music here and I will give a talk and we can start something. And that's what we did. We had a concert at Dr. Furman's house and I had my one legged clarinet player and we played a clarinet quintet and there were some string players, and then I explained that I had a volunteer orchestra and we could of course we could give a concert and they asked well what would the concert cost you and I said everybody got \$30 and I did it for free so we had \$1,500 to work with. So, they said, "That's all?" And I said, "Yes, that's all for now." So, they did get the money together. They got a little committee together and they told me to hire, to rent an auditorium and I rent an auditorium in Santa Anna, which was the best auditorium we could get and I went on the phone and called up and said we would like a Saturday evening and she said you're picking the only Saturday we have left on the schedule. We got our concert and we did it in Santa Anna and that started the Orange County Philharmonic of which I am still the only live member. The story is unbelievable because they have gotten themselves, it is such a crime really, and they have kind of eased themselves out of existence by their own attitude. What they did is I started everything that they never had. I started youth concerts. I started school concerts which I had done in Europe. It's not my first part of my career, but I had to recreate. They had nothing, absolutely nothing. But each school had an auditorium so I could give concerts in all the small towns, and it grew fabulously. Everybody wanted to be in the Orange County Philharmonic, and I was the musical director and I got a contact, and the same man who was my first president of the board was the same father of one of my students who gave the first \$100 towards the \$1,500 that started it. His name was Dick Richard. He climbed up from my simple grocery clerk to one of the most successful businessmen around. He was the one who threw the first \$100 on the table to begin this. He became our first president and everything went just fabulously. But the people are so completely uncultured, that it was very very hard to educate them, musically, I mean. They were rich, there's a lot of money there, so everybody wanted to be in on this event and they made committees. Every little town, Anaheim, Santa Anna, Newport Bridge, Little Inland Garden Grove, everybody had a committee, and I had an army of women working to start committees. One calendar year, I gave 75 speeches to promote music. I was the musical director. I had the full say of programs. I had to do this, and they finally gave me a contract for five years. I had the orchestra for eight years, but after three years, I got this contract. And everything went just fabulous. More social every year, more socialites, more money, more fashion shows, more

committee members. At a certain point, I had 500 official committee members. Ten committees of a maximum of 50 people were filled so I had to shake hands all the time when I came for a speech and it became a lot of work. It was successful. I had to repeat _____ four times because they couldn't take all the kids that wanted to come. I mean, it was really, I have stacks of good press and then my contract of five years was up in 1960 and I had that contract but there were more and more feelings of wanting something more spectacular that they brought in some international orchestras and then my contract came up for renewal and they didn't want it. Not only that, they wanted to have only imported orchestras, the Berlin Philharmonic. I had some very good friends and one time one of my friends wanted to make a telephone call because I didn't get my contract renewed, because she was for me, and she wanted to call an influential person, I think it was _____ who lived at, who was a friend of mine and she called and I heard her say, why she called and suddenly her face changed and was quite white and she said "Oh, I didn't know." That was all, because I was sitting right there and I knew it was something that she didn't want to repeat or go into conversation. So, I have a feeling that it was the gossip about my lifestyle because there was no other reason. It was successful and to go to 500 committee women that couldn't even fill 1,000 seat hall that had become so socialite, the poor people that could come originally to concerts, that were affordable or free had left the scene. It was all social. One time I was ready to give a speech, and I was going to the home where I was expected to talk to the people about the music for children and the music for the schools and music is valuable. I always had these talks that out of 75 that I gave that year, it was always about how good music is. I wanted to tell how I knew that it was deteriorating, the reason and going into this home where I had to appear, there was a car stopping behind me and two old ladies and I said, "Can I help you maybe?" And she said, "Would you tell us where the benefit is for Harry Belinfante?" I said, "I think you need to go to that house, but I'll tell you something, Harry doesn't need the benefit." Which just tells you what the lay of the land had become. They didn't know me from Adam. They didn't know there was anybody by the name of Belinfante.

Q: You said that you think your contract was not renewed --?

A: I'm convinced of it.

Q: But can you explain it a little bit more?

A: Well, because I think these people have heard probably heard -- first of all I have to say I had the misfortune that a lot of times people fall in love with me that I'd have no use for and make a nuisance of themselves. And they blamed it on me if I had affairs with them and if I don't. The women were always available, too much. I remember some of the women it was hard to get them out of my car. They would sit and talk to me and keep me up after a concert and I was not going to attack them, I was not going to do anything. I knew what they were waiting for, but I knew what they were waiting for and what they were trying to get me to do, but I still remember me sitting in the car with them, sometimes with a woman until 2:00

in the morning after a concert or something. So, I knew what they were trying to do, whether they wanted to find proof or whether they wanted to compromise I don't know, but I'm pretty sure that was what was said on the phone.

Q: Did you have relationships in Orange with other women? Did you live together with someone in Orange County?

A: Yes, several relationships, but some that were nothing. I lived together with people that I didn't have relationships with. Not any more, but I certainly wasn't very open about it that I threw it at them. I wasn't doing anything that they could say "Well, she's leading a wild life" or something. I was just behaving like everybody else, because I knew that would be bad to accentuate.

Q: Was there a difference in the moral climate in the Netherlands in the 30s and then when you came to the States, did you have to change your life to be more careful?

A: I have never been more careful. I just consider lifestyles, it's not because I'm secretive about it, because I have shared my home with several people and I have been open to the people that have approached me, the male people that approached me. I have been open and have said, no, I'm not available because I really cannot love a man as much as I can love a woman. But I've always been approached by the women. I never had to go after anyone because they were always after me. I was plagued with it in Orange County. I would come home one time and at 10:00 there was somebody standing on the sand looking at the ocean and I knew she was waiting for me to come home and catch me by myself and I said I don't know what you're doing here. These people I didn't ask for. I wasn't after people. They were after me, all the time. But then of course when I didn't follow through, then they became nasty. And I think that's what happened, just jealousy among the women. There were more than one. I didn't have an affair with more than one, it was just they kept acting, so I knew it was several people that were in love with me, but and I knew why the women was sitting in the car until 2:00. Then, I never responded to that silent request. She turned absolutely 100 percent.

Q: Were there any other female conductors in the States?

A: No, not that I know of. Not in Holland either, not in '39, '38 when I was the only woman who had a professional orchestra. I didn't ever have an all women orchestra. I had an all professional orchestra both times.

Q: So, you are the first female conductor?

A: Yes, I think so. There are several now. There is a woman by the name of Tamarkin (ph) who has been a guest conductor in Orange County, too. She has a job in the mid-west. She even took some lessons from me before she had the job as a conductor. But I don't think

anybody still can get a job in the public eye, any conductor who is gay or lesbian openly. I think they always have to kind of not talk about it. If they are very great, they can get away with it. But we have several. We have the evidence of very famous conductors being homosexual. Not all of them are, and many artists are. But when they need the public, when they need to be hired, I don't think they can afford -- I think they don't. I still think they don't. And it's not for me to mention any names. I always say what I said in the camp, in Switzerland. How do you know I am homosexual? Were you there. Did you see any homosexual act performed by me? You were present then how do you know what you're talking about? They were ashamed, because I really took them to task, I said, these are not things that you can tell for sure. You guess maybe. Well, do you know what I guess about you, think about you, not just sexually but in general? Would you like me to tell you what I think about you in public. People are dealing with it the wrong way. They shouldn't even want to know. It is a private affair. That is why it goes on without an audience. I don't make love or haven't made love publicly. I conduct publicly. I play publicly. That is for the public. That is not for the public to tell what happens in the bedroom. It's not important. And you don't do anything to a whole community. You do something to a community when you take their music or you bring them music. Right now at the University of California is a professor with which whom I got started with research about what happened to the brain when you listen to classical music and they find out that the brain is working much better even in unborn babies and in college students, and I got him started on that. His name is Gordon Shaw, and I think that is important. Research what happens when you listen to good music. That is what I have tried to do all my life, to give music to people and good music. Rock and Roll doesn't do it, Jazz doesn't even do it, but classical music is what they are using for babies and up to college students, but even babies perform better right after they have listened to a piece of music and solve a puzzle after listening to the music. They do it three times faster. That is a startling discovery, what music does for these people. That is what my life has been busy with, with bringing music to people.

Q: Did you get throughout your musical career, in Amsterdam when you were the first female conductor and then in Orange County, did you get a lot of reactions to the fact that you were the first woman who was conducting an orchestra?

A: No, I don't think so, and I really didn't pursue that because I don't think there is an essential difference whether you are a woman or a man. I think it is what you do with your life, what you do with your work, what you have servicing. I think so many people who don't think they are there for a purpose. They want to live and take. We have to live and give and we have to give in the first place, love for each other and fill the need for somebody else. We have to do something for each other. If you only live for what you want for yourself, you're not worth living.

Q: But in the public eye a conductor I still even today it is a man not a woman, did you always have to find this image?

A: No, it came my way pretty easily. That's why I'm saying I was just helping another conductor out, I was playing first cello when this other studio musician said are you a relative of the Belinfante woman? I said, "No, that's no relative conductor. They must mean me." And that's how it started in the United States. I wouldn't have said, "Here I am, I am a conductor, where is my orchestra." I knew it had to happen or not happen, but it did happen. And things are always happened and always happened to me. And it has never hurt my feelings when people gossip about me or anything like that because it's their loss that they don't know any better. It's not my loss. I'm perfectly satisfied.

Q: Did you go back to Amsterdam?

A: A couple of times to see my mother and a couple of times to take a trip. I took two trips to see _____. The second time he asked me to come, the first one I came because I was there and I wanted to see him. The second time he wrote me a letter and I knew that he was feeling bad and he thought he wouldn't live very long.

Tape #13

Q: Did you think when you were living in the States and working here, did you think a lot back where you came from about the years of Resistance, or was that something that you didn't think so much and talk so much?

A: No, I did not think too much about the past. I'm usually thinking about what I want to do with my life, and I always felt that there are levels of excitement. There are levels on which you can classify the period that you're talking about. It was very exciting to be doing dangerous things. To try to save your life and still do what you wanted to do. I mean I have a strong element I think of being attracted by danger and make it. I mean, the satisfaction of being able to face a danger and get what I want. I used to have one time handwriting analysis of someone who had never seen me and it was write on the dot. The handwriting analysis was just exactly what I think I am. But one of the things she had written was direct dangers attract you. And that is so true, because I had a satisfaction to illegal work for a good purpose. That was my justification to do it. I didn't do something dangerous without purpose, but I did do something that needed to be done, and I was right there to do it. That is what I mean. I did it when I did it illegally for my friend Ellen Schwartz. I thought the law was wrong. The Dutch government made the wrong decision to not give a person her papers because she was originally Russian. So, I took the law into my hand and changed it. I did that because I thought it was the wrong thing, the government. So, I made my own -- and create, of course, a danger for myself. I was always on the edge, but I liked that attraction. However, music contains everything, it's sublime. Excitement in music is not illegal, it is not destructive. It's lifted to another level, but it is exciting. And all the good feelings that one can have of love and joy and even of defeat, death, I know there is a composition of somebody who was thought to be dead and was thrown on the heap of the corpses and woke up, came to life again. There is music written on that event. It is not music I want to listen to. I have heard it once. In other words, everything can be expressed in music. The bad, the frightening, the good, the loving. Music can express almost anything, because it's us. We make it. We compose it or we play it, and it is on a higher level than life without. There is something in music that does an awful lot to people that they don't even know because those people don't know that they are researching them in the university. They are still in the beginning of this research that I won't know when they are done what they've come up with, not consciously anyway. But I'm very, very interested as long as I can read what they're doing, which I do. One of the professors has been here three times to tell me what they are. It's very important to me that they do that. I think that the human race has to find out a lot about themselves and correct about themselves, because I don't think they are in the right direction. That's my worry.

Q: You say you concentrate more on what you can do with your life. You concentrate more on what you do with your live, but how much do you think about your life in the Netherlands?

A: Well, I did devote my life to music and I did start the music education already in Holland. I

gave school concerts there too. But there was much more activity in the musical field in Amsterdam than there was when I came to the United States. The United States is a younger civilization. Holland is an older civilization. There has been music in the families in the homes. People have music lessons. It was way ahead. In America you had music much later, because they had to first I would say to make a living and pioneering in other fields. But I pioneered in music. I liked that, to bring music where it wasn't. I didn't get in the right place really because I think I would have done better maybe in the midwest, but I wouldn't have liked to be there. I mean, it's no use to cry over spilled milk. I may have and I may not have, but what I think is most important is to make people see how I think. Because I think they miss the purpose of life, some people do. They think there is no purpose or to try to get rich is the purpose or try to get famous is the purpose. It's not. I don't care. I care about other things. I care mostly that the people understood what I tried to give them. And they do, lots of my friends and students tell me that I do. They know what I did. They say I make it easy for them to do certain things that they otherwise wouldn't have thought of doing.

Q: We talked before that as long as you worked you were very busy and you didn't think so very much back about your resistance.

A: No, I am reflecting a lot more about my life since I have nothing else to do. Because I can't play anymore, I can't hear music and enjoy any more. I can't see very well. I can't physically do very much, so I'm very limited. My hearing is bad, my eyes are bad, so my senses don't work very well. The only thing that I can do is think straight. I mean, I always say I'm glad I have my marbles, because I wouldn't care about life if I couldn't think. If I couldn't tell you when you ask me a question, but I'm glad I can, and I tried to be here to tell you what you want to know. So you ask me anything you want.

Q: What changed exactly when you stopped working and you seemed to have much more interest to know more about the Resistance?

A: I think back, I look back on my life to see what I have done, what I could have done, whether I did some things that I shouldn't have done. What I should have said to people, I try to say things in the right place where they belong, and I tried to formulate if I had some children, which I don't, some students, which I don't, I cannot. But what I left out what I could maybe tell you or write, and I'm thinking about life and I'm reflecting and I think I've done most of the teaching the way I wanted to do it, because my students keep coming back and telling me. They're coming here and telling me. And even this professor I'm talking to you about, who is doing this research work on the brain reaction to music, he told me just recently that I had changed his life, because I had told him about coping with life and coping with knowing that I'm going to die soon. I said I'm not afraid to die. And I told him why, because how I feel about that. It's not an end, because it's all belonging together. I mean everything else that I can see and feel and hear and can communicate with is always there. It's there, it will be there when I'm gone, but I don't know what happens after, because we are so limited. We only know we have five senses which is not enough to encompass what is beyond five

senses. We talk about light years, but we can't conceive about light years. In other words, we talk about a lot of things that we don't comprehend that we really don't experience. We have some funny, I would say talent or way of putting in words, things that we really don't experience or comprehend. We are talk about light years, don't we, and black holes. You read it in the paper and you've think you've learned something, but you've not learned anything. I think we're going out too far in our talks that we think we know and forget what's right here and what we should be interested in doing. I think as humans we should try to be a nice human being first.

Q: You have been very sick and you have had treatment for cancer and how did that change you? How did you deal with this?

A: Well, when you get medicine, you are not the same person. I mean, medicine, an artificial means to deal with illness, is not the strongest way to deal with it. But I feel that I am dealing much more efficiently with my physical situation and I get more so as I get older. I told you the doctor doesn't know how I do it. The last time I saw him he said your bad counts in your blood are down. He said, "I don't know how you do it. Maybe we can learn something from you." That was the last time I saw him. He didn't even examine me. He didn't give me an medicine, but I wanted to be here to get this film done and to get the things said that I wanted to say to people. I wanted to say what I think, not keep it to myself, because I was not teaching any more. I was just sharing my philosophy. So, I started thinking more about my life of course when I didn't have to think about other people's lives and other people's skill in playing music. But I seem to give them the feeling sometimes without even knowing I do that. I don't know. I think there is a lot of unspoken language between human beings that are used and I don't even know how I use it, but I think I do. People remember what I said, sometimes much longer that I remember it myself.

Q: Did you have treatment for your cancer?

A: Oh, yes, I had all the treatment that the body is supposed to be able to take, of chemotherapy, which amounts of fluid getting in my veins and I got feeling pretty bad. I never got sick to my stomach and I have never vomited in my life that I remember, never. Some people do get physically sick in the stomach, but I was not able to do very much. Also, I didn't have any desire to talk about things like I have desire now. I like to talk to people and that's when I started to talk to people about my life a little bit and they would always ask me, tell me more, because they liked to hear the stories. Because some are very different in character than -- it's not just a story of danger. It's just not a story of my walking 12 hours but how I got the strength to do it. How I made it against all odds, nobody thought that I could do that at that point. And how things fell into place has always surprised me. It was always right there, when it was needed I would say in the flow of my own life. I mean, why was the sister of the girl that bought the Crosley and left me with the Crosley why two days before I went to the United States I hadn't seen her for years. The older sister of my school friend, Mimi, goes past me in the radio studio on a visiting tour. She wasn't even a musician. I never saw

her for years, and she walks by me and I said "Mees," and she said, "Frieda" and I said I have no time I have to go to another studio, but I'm going to the country of United States, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, either one. And she said, "Well, but that's where Minnie lives. She lives in New York." And she writes and puts it in my pocket. That's the woman with whom I go cross country and buys a Crosley automobile. Why is it that I meet that woman right there. It has always been startling how in my life these things just happen. Somebody says go and see that woman in Long Beach. She's a wonderful music critic and she tells me there is a camp and go to it anyway. And I take -- I always feel like I am a little straw that just floats and listens to some suggestions and sometimes I get stuck and nothing happens. So, I got stuck, but the wind will take me again, which is life, and it will take me on again, and I float and something comes my way. I do anything. I don't make up my mind to become a musician. I become a musician because I got a cello and I love the sound of the cello. If I had gotten a violin, I probably would have never become a musician. I become a conductor because they take me from the high school and my friend Hans _____ who taken first because he's a man and probably a man can handle those brats in a high school better than a woman, but I get the job after a year because he can't deal with, and I can't deal with it. I mean I get pushed from here to there. I get pushed from last month, I get a letter from Tony and I think I want to speak out. I want to tell my story and I tell stories to other people too. But it is always there. It comes and sometimes I know the next step was for a reason, but I find out a reasons sometimes later. But I don't make plans and I never made plans for my career or for my future in the United States, for an orchestra, it happened. Why don't you conduct, why don't you do that?

Q: Can you tell us again what the doctors said about your cancer and why they were so startled about it?

A: Because, see I know my body even. I went to teach the last three years that we live here. I went back once a month to teach my students five days and then I'm back here because our home was sold. We shared our home for about ten years, the Minkin family and I, because my home became too big, so I sold it and I built a little studio onto their place. I did that while I was still healthy. So, I got a cancer in the '80s. I also got other illnesses in the '80s, but the last time I had a lymphoma in the '80s, just when the plan came to move to New Mexico, I felt that I had cancer. And I felt that I had cancer because I couldn't swallow sometimes. And my nephew, who I had taken to the United States because he was a severe asthma patient in Holland, when he was 20, he was 50 years old at that time, and he had the same trouble, and he couldn't swallow. One of the trips that I made to Orange County to teach, because I thought I had cancer and I didn't tell the Minkins that I didn't feel good, I thought let's first move and then the first month that I went back by myself to teach I asked one of my students to drop me off at a doctor I knew, a friend of Dick's. I said, would you take me to the doctor, and she did. I asked him, I said, Shelly would you take a biopsy and look in my stomach and see what you find. And sure enough, he found another cancer. Then I asked him to get in touch with the oncologist here and they conferred about it and they were in agreement. They told me that it was a very nasty cancer. One cancer always

eliminates another. You can't have two different cancers at the same time. So, I didn't have the chance to get a lymphoma back, but he said it was a much more vicious cancer. So, it didn't look very good, and my nephew had also esophagus cancer, but he also had a big stomach tumor and he died that January after that time. That was two years ago. And I got treatments and I fought them, my kind of fight that I do, that's ignoring and not worrying about pain, just follow the program. But I know my body usually better than doctors and that's why I am surprised that I am still here, and when I come in the last time, he sees me about every six or eight weeks, but he has no medicine for me because I have had the chemotherapy and then I have had radiation and the radiation burned a piece in my lung so I take a little oxygen when I'm tired and there's no more medicine they can give. That's it. So, he send me home and said I'll see you in six weeks, and they didn't know what to do with me because in three months there was not much change. One time he said the bad markings are 20 points less than the last time I saw you. So, he went to the hospice to which he is the director and talked to all the nurses and they discussed it and they didn't know should I be treated by the hospital or should I go home and wait and see. So, I said, "I'm fired from the hospice" and they laughed because they don't do anything for me. There is no medicine for me to take. I don't take even vitamins. I don't take aspirins. I just get up in the morning and do what I can and I was very happy that you came and that there was something for me to do that I don't want to leave undone and that is so I keep myself going so to speak.

Q: How old are you now?

A: Ninety. I turned ninety, my birthday has a funny memories because it's May 10. May 10th is when the Germans walked into Holland, so I don't like that day too much. I mean the memories of that date, but I like that I can do what I am doing right now and that is try to talk sense.

Tape #14

Q: If you look back, Frieda, on your life, who are the persons that you remember most, and who are the persons you feel most close to in your memory?

A: It's mostly because of the first half of my life for many reasons. The strongest of the first adult period of my life was _____ a composer, the one where I come in and whose liaison put the medicine on the mantelpiece and left the room. The first one I really said in my life that I'm here because I love you. And I loved her for a long time, many many years. We lived together and the one who called me Mommy and Pop which I represented her father who she never had met because he died when she was a baby, and she had a very possessive mother and she was the only child of the family. So, she needed somebody. She was a lonesome person. And she remained a lonesome person because she was not a giving person. She was a person who took more than she gave which was fine with me because I had an abundance of devotion to give. I didn't feel that I needed somebody to love me as much as I felt the need to love somebody in a different way than you do as a child. I didn't have a great attachment for any member of the family, except for my aunt, who I saw every week and we played music, and I always loved her very much. She was very close to the family but in a very different way of course. But I protected Yetty from a lot of things, from herself. I did everything for her. We lived together. I didn't think of my own self as a musical talent and that took Joe Falcon to get me out of that grip that I didn't think of myself as a valuable musician. Because Yetty had an easy talent. Yetty was the one I said I love you and I devoted my life to her. And the older I became the more I was the adult and she was the child. I was a child the day that I said to her "I'll take care of you." And she said "Why did you stay", remember, because I said "I love you." That came so spontaneous but it came from so deep. That was really my first real love. And I admired her and I was devoted to her and I didn't even ask for a devotion. I was so filled with the feeling of giving of myself and so I felt she needed protection from her bossy mother who always wanted to know where she went and why and one time she wasn't home at night and she came with her umbrella and stomped the floor and said "I want to know where my daughter was last night." And I thought, this is ridiculous. She's in her twenties. She need protection. And I felt to protect, and I became the protector and then it developed more that I was everything. I was Mommy and Pops, which means father and mother. I did everything I could to protect her from her bossy mother and give her a little bit more freedom. And I teased her mother with it. I, for instance, one time told her mother that she couldn't stay after dinner she had to leave, we would have Sunday dinner with her mother because she wanted to see her Henrietta once a week at least for dinner. And when we lived, Yetty and I lived together then we had to have dinner on Sunday with Ma _____ and one time I said Yetty has to leave early and she said, "Why?" And I said, "Oh there is a meeting that she has to lead", without making it up. "What kind of a meeting?" I said, "Oh, for mother's that have only children too protective, and she's the president." By that time Yetty was already gone and then her mother caught on that I was teasing her. But I always did something silly like that. In the meantime she had taken off and I always helped her against too possessive mother.

And we had really funny word fights her mother and I because she would always criticize us. Who cleans your house? It's probably dirty, or something. I said, "Oh, no we know what to do." "What do you do?" And I would say something silly like I take a pail with soapy water and throw it over the rug and brush it to the sides and she knew I was teasing her and she wouldn't bug me anymore. She liked me but in a way she put up with me.

Q: Here's a photo of you and Henrietta at the beach?

A: At the beach in _____.

Q: When was that, do you remember?

A: Yes, that was in the good old times. We lived together for seven years or something. She always had those loose clothes. She would go places with me usually to be away for vacation. This was a vacation. We took vacations and we traveled together a little bit.

Q: Do you remember the day the photo was taken?

A: No, those things are very vague in my memory. When I see the picture I see beautiful pictures that were taken when she was composing and I know how we remember conversations like for instance she promoted my feeling of not being such an important musician by her attitude. For instance, she had a very easy talent, as I say, and she didn't have to practice hours and hours and I felt I did. We had our rooms on different floors. I had my upstairs and I heard her downstairs and practice maybe an hour and a half and then she would come up and she would say "Aren't you done yet?" And I would say, "Well, no." And she said if you went on an hour and a half, you'll never learn it. So I felt very little of my talent because I had difficulty with my fingers. I mean she had long fingers and very good hands for the piano and she had an easy talent. Sometimes I got back at her and said, "Do you know that you play all the trills louder than the rest of the notes?" She said, "What do you mean." I said, "Well, I can hear it, because I'm upstairs and I can hear. I can hear only the trills and the notes in between I don't hear so you must be playing the trills" and then she took my criticism. That was the only time that she did because she would always put my talent a little bit down, not in a nasty way, but that was her opinion. If you didn't learn it in an hour and half, because she did. She never practices for hours and hours.

Q: Look at the photo and then slowly just hold it and look at me.

A: All that early time of my friendship with Yetty _____, we got to know other people and we made friends, and we had a little chamber music group that was going to give concerts. We rehearsed every week. We got together and we met other musicians. I met other musicians and then there were two particular friends that we would go after rehearsal and have something to drink, go to American Hotel because we had our rehearsal right close on the _____, and we went with the flute player John Falcon, who was my husband

later, and _____ who was very fond of Yetty, and so we were kind of coupled off that way. I would talk with Falcon and Yetty would talk more with Peter _____ because he was always -- and there were sometimes other people with us like Paul Saunders who was also conducting, so was _____. Falcon was more or less my partner when we went out for a drink or something. One time he said, "I never have a chance to see much of you" and I said, "well, because you don't try. We only see each other at the rehearsal. You never said that you wanted to see me other times." So, promptly he came to visit me and I still see him sitting on the floor with his long legs stretched out on the floor and he said something to the effect that he liked to see more of me and that he liked me and I said, what is the trouble. He said, "The trouble is that I am engaged." I said, "Well, if you are engaged, that settles that doesn't it?" He said, "Yes, that is just the trouble." And I said, "Well, how come you get engaged if that's not what you want?" And he said, "Well, it's really my mother's doing and my brother Hans is engaged to her sister and my mother took the two girls in the house and she liked them, and I think she hoped that I would be engaged to the sister." But he said, "I'm not in love with her." I said, "Well, that's a bad situation. As long as you are engaged, you are engaged." He said, "Well, I'm going to have to break that off." I said, "If you don't love her, I think you should." And that was all the conversation at that time. And then our friendship was more based on the fact that he wanted me to recognize my own talent and give my own talent a chance and I played one time a couple of months in a movie theater, where the silent movies are accompanied by a whole stack of music this thick and a little bit of this and a little bit of that and the whole program was played to get into the movie. That was for hours in the dark playing these silent movies. But he would pick me up to carry my cello home and so forth. And he would give me a little lecture about my talent, I needed to pay attention to that. That was quite a friendship. Then he met, of course, Yetty, who I told you he called "Sweet" and he was a friend of the house. Yetty had several love affairs with men while we lived together. I mean it was not particularly a sexual bond. It was more my protection of this person which I love very much who I thought was kind of smothered by her possessive mother. That was much more what I tried to do. So, I didn't compare notes and what do I gather but John always said to me, you don't think of your own music. You don't think of your own talent, and you need to develop that. And so, I got very close to him as a friend. And then he told me that he had broken his engagement and that he was in love with me and that he loved me and wouldn't live without me and that built up while Yetty had her flings with artist friends. People fell in love with her because of her talent and her looks. I know of two musicians that she had an affair with while we lived together as friends. It was more my devotion to her because of my nature of trying to protect, trying to rescue, trying to save people from whatever danger. It's much more prominent in my nature than the sex life per se. I wasn't jealous when she had an affair with a man. She told me and I don't remember that we had really an important sexual relation. That was how it started, but I don't know how long it lasted and I don't think it played a big part in my life. Always what I was doing for people played a big part in my life. Helping them, protect them, save them from doing this or that.

Q: What about the lady on the ship?

A: Well, the lady on the ship became my friend after I came out West. I corresponded with her from New York and from Vermont and when I came cross country, I knew that my friend who bought a Crosley had to go back to her job in New York, and so I corresponded with -- her name was Ivy -- I corresponded with Ivy and I said that eventually I probably would end up on the west coast.

Q: Did you have a sexual relationship with her?

A: On board ship, once. And it was very difficult because she shared a cabin with a woman and I shared my cabin with another strange woman. So, we sneaked out one time, and she was very undersexed. I learned that later. But she liked me very much but she told me that she was going to get married with her _____ lover and his name was Alfred and that when she got to Pasadena where she lived that Alfred would come next year. And I remember that a woman who was sitting at the single table where she had invited me was a woman from Bermuda and one time she said to me "She's not going to get married. He's not going to come marry her." And I thought this is strange that this woman tells me. But I never talked to that woman anymore, but that's what I remember that stood out in my mind. Anyway, when I traveled the United States, criss crossed it, took a whole month, I did go to the East to West Coast and Minnie who owned the car said you keep the Crosly because I can't use it in New York and I will eventually quit my job and go to the west coast too, and then you can give it back to me which happened. When we got to _____, she left me with the car and took a Greyhound bus back to New York. And then I was there and stopped at the home in Pasadena which I had written to Ivy that I would do. Her mother had died but she had room for me and she said it's a good thing I have room for you because you can't get an apartment anywhere. There is a shortage. So, I shared her home.

Q: Did she get married?

A: No, he never came.

Q: What about your relationships in the States when you came to California?

A: Well, Ivy was one, but it was a very very unsexy relationship because she was very low in her physical attraction. But we lived together. We shared a room together and we bought a house together in Westwood, because she saved -- she was the world's greatest saver of money. She spent nothing on herself. She earned a small salary. She managed sort of a thrift shop. When I asked her what is her profession, she said, "I'm an appraiser," because she put the prices on. She was talking big because she wanted to impress me. She was in her fashion, in love with me. I usually have relationships with people that started to fall in love with me. I didn't instigate too many.

Q: Did you have a long relationship with another woman while you were here in California?

- A: While I was in the United States, one relationship was Ivy, but it was as I said, sexually, it was very low, low gear. She became a little strange later when she grew older and even when we shared a home. I had all these women around me that were in love with me. I had students and people would say -- one said "I would like to be more than a number." And I said, "What do you mean?" "A number in your calendar that you teach me." I mean, there was -- and very often married women. Very often I had to be secretive about it because to protect them. I usually wasn't secretive myself because when I fall in love with people I don't mind if they know it. I don't mind telling them. But it was always on the other side that I had to be careful.
- Q: Would you tell about the married women with whom you had a relationship, would you tell us about them now?
- A: You mean it doesn't matter about which part of my life?
- Q: No, no, I mean you said you met and you had relationships with married women. Who were they, or do you want to share that?
- A: Who were they? I can only share the people in Europe.
- Q: Why?
- A: Because I'm not sure whether they would recognize who I mean without even mentioning names because they might be alive. I don't know. Their children might remember me being in the family, because I was fully accepted. The husbands didn't miss anything and they didn't know. So, I've had it in both countries, in Europe as well as here. But women would always come to me. I would never -- I can't find anybody in that part of my life that I approached first, I mean. They approached me, or they tried. There were lots of people that tried to get into my favors and they didn't. I didn't respond. I would have been too busy because I _____ a lot in the United States also. If you have 500 committee women cruising around admiring you and wanting attention and they wanted too much attention.

Tape #15

A: I was trying to be friendly and go to committee meetings and this is a very small committee. There are about eight, seven or eight women.

Q: Do you remember the situation, was it an announcement of a concert you were giving?

A: No, they were discussing probably where they would put the poster with my picture on it, or they were discussing something. I remember that we made our own posters in the very beginning. We made them silk screening in the garage. And my nephew, who I talked about in connection with his illness, he was a good one to draw pictures. He drew a picture for a poster for a concert for children with instruments on the picture and so forth. Here they are just looking at my --. What do you want me to say about this one?

Q: You don't remember where it was?

A: I remember some of the players and I remember that this was a rehearsal.

Q: Tell us what you played -- just what comes up to your mind. I think we could use the picture then when we make a better quality just to show you as a conductor. And you can tell us a little bit. This was a rehearsal and we rehearsed this and I remember the players, simple things like that.

A: I remember several of the players. I remember that this was a rehearsal and I remember some of the players. This was my first cellist at the time. His name was _____, and he even wrote to the newspaper after it was all over, the Philharmonic, about me as a conductor. He defended something. I don't remember the article, but I remember that I read an article by _____ who had sent in that particular piece and he sits right there, the first cellist. A very nice gesture of him to do that, to do, because I was not conducting anymore when he wrote that article.

Q: How were you dressed when you were conducting, like we see you here with the white, long --?

A: For the longest time I had just a straight white dress, long. I never had anything black, imitation masculine thing or anything like that. I did that more in Holland because I played for the theater many times and I was sitting with men playing the cello, then I wore something, an imitation tuxedo top, and white shirt and bow tie. But I never tried to be masculine looking in the United States for conducting. I always had a stylish and the ladies had some say in the matter. They felt I should have something more dressy. This was not very dressy. It was just white satin. But the ladies got a little more say in the matter what I should wear, and of course that was the beginning of the society. The 500 women that I had to know and shake hands with occasionally was very annoying. I mean, the society angle

was annoying for me.

Q: Do you have the picture? We would like you to say this is a picture of your father and turn it around and hold it very quietly and talk a little bit about what your father meant to you.

A: Now this is a picture of my father like I mostly saw him. He had that kind of hair and beard when I had my concert with him where he was introducing me to the Dutch public, and I have all the write ups sent to my sister's daughter to save because someone kept a _____ with all his-- I don't know who assembled all his criticisms in the newspapers, but in that book that I sent to my niece is also the write ups that I had when I was 17 and played for the first time in Amsterdam.

Q: Did you feel close to your father?

A: Yes, I felt that I had so much of his trait inherited, but I did not have the egocentric trait that everything had to go to me. I felt more that I had to watch out that I don't have those traits. That I don't boss people too much, he was very tyrannic. He wanted everything to go the way he wanted it to go. He wanted to be the boss of society of music teachers that he started. He wanted to be the president for 25 years. He wanted to write the articles in monthly for 25 years. In fact, he was the president until he died. And I tried to not be like him, because all my friends knew how he had been, because I told them. So, that's what Ivy would say, don't start "Belinfanting" all over the place. That means ordering me around, because I know who you take after. That was really funny, because I got a little warning and I pulled in my horns a little bit, because I can be bossy.

Q: Did your father always have a long beard and so much hair?

A: Oh, yes, to our great chagrin, because he would spill some food and he would sit like this and try to get it out of his beard and I didn't like his beard.

Q: But you have always known him with the long hair and a long beard?

A: Yes, for most of his life. After I was gone, after I was a student, he had a beard. This is a picture of my husband meeting with Ellen Schwartz who later, Ellen Schwartz later came to Holland and there was a rather funny mix up because she had left Holland illegally to get married when she was 21, and I was not even 20, but her husband got in touch with me later by mail and sent me a Russian letter that I could not understand to thank me for what I had done for her and invited me to meet him in Germany. And he would invite me when there was no vacation, and I wanted to go, and it was one of the times that I told my father that he did not like to hear. Because one of the times that he wanted to meet me in Germany he said I'm going to pay for your trip. I seen him several times in Germany, but the first time he paid for my trip and I saw him in _____ because he had a bad heart. He died very young. His heart, rheumatic fever or something had made him very vulnerable, so he didn't

live very long. I think he had died already when this picture came out that you showed me because I was married. That was one of the later times that Ellen came back to Holland. But the first time she came back, the authorities were wondering she is coming to Holland, well we have her listed in Holland. We don't have her coming to Holland. There was quite a confusion, but anyway they straightened it out.

Q: Maybe you could put on your glasses --

A: Yes, I know that picture of him. That is the way he looked when we went out together to distribute identity cards. I want to tell you too about Ellen Schwartz, that she came back to Holland several times after she lost her husband. He died, as I said, young. She came back to her family, even though they made terrible -- they finally straightened it out that she was legally in Holland and back and forth, and she remarried a Jewish fellow and she tried to escape with him. She was very stubborn as far as I was concerned because she knew better how to do it and she had a couple that were going to take people out of Holland in the war years for money, but he had a way of getting them to Switzerland, but she didn't want any interference or help from me. She was very stubborn and she had this Jewish husband and I still remember that she said to me in '43 or so, that she was going to follow and she said you can meet me and the couple just before we leave and give me identity cards. I had made two identity cards for them and I met the couple and I thought they were terrible. I met them in a house that obviously was not lived in. It was made up with some furniture and they were low class people, but she didn't want any interference from me. She didn't want any help from me. She was just sure of them. If those people are not right, I want to be dead. In other words, I trust them so much that if these people are traitors, I want to be dead. And I never forgot that, because it didn't sound right to me. The whole thing didn't sound right but he wanted to see me and he knew that I made an offer of illegal identity cards and I showed him one that I had made and he said, "Marvelously done, very well done." And then we parted. They went their way, and Ellen Schwartz went her way and I had a very very bad feeling about this whole thing. And she was supposed to leave the next morning and I went back home and I met Rudy and I said, "Rudy, would you do something for me. They are leaving tomorrow and they are assembling, he says he has a group of people they are assembling in the Central Station Amsterdam in the hall. Would you check up on that because they don't know you. Nobody knows you." And he said, "I will." So, he went to the Central Station and he came back to my house around noon and he said "You're right, it's no good. I've seen the group and they were singled together as a group and there was a blond woman and a man with it and obviously there were people that were going on a train ride somewhere." But he said, "It looked very very bad. I think they are deported and I think I saw that couple that you met the other day." And that is true. They were traitors. They got money for each Jew they brought to that group. And I know somebody of the family of other friends of mine had joined that group, too, because they believed in this couple. And I still hear in my ears if they are traitors, I want to die. And I don't know they must have worked on that for weeks to be friends of Ellen Schwartz and her second husband. And I immediately had the feeling they were no good. And I could not get her to even

believe me, listen to me, follow me. She knew better, and that's what happened. They must have gotten on a transport of traitors that got war stricken. I don't even want to think about it, because that was years after because I went to school with her and traveled to Berlin when I 17, and you know I was almost 40 years old during the occupation. But I had always kept contact, knew where she was. And she came back to Holland and she went back to Berlin, but she married the second time just to protect this very Jewish looking young man. I mean she was not even in love. They were beyond that. They were trying to save their lives, because that was in '43. But Rudy told me what he saw and I knew that was the same couple. And I don't know whether we found the couple or whether we didn't. I never found out what happened after I left Holland and how many traitors really were punished. I read it in a book that I got from Tony, what I found out. But they were very very dark moments in my life that I have not talked to you about, but this is one. The death of my brother is another. There are so many highlights and so many deep deep miseries that have happened that I know of that I say it's extremes all the time.

Q: Tell us on camera why you don't like to talk so very much about the dark moments?

A: Well, this is a story that is of the lowest characteristics of some humans that I hate to talk about because I hate to think about it myself. I don't even want to know how many people are walking around and playing fair weather that are able to do these things. I mean, a person who is able to make money by pretending for weeks or months that he will help you to save your life and take money from the people that want to save their life and then be the traitor who sells them to the Gestapo to be murdered when they get to the gas chambers. That is so low and so far down in the depth of evil that I hate to talk about it. I hate to think about it. I hate that they are there. I hate to remember it, but I certainly don't want to go out and tell people this because you don't learn from that. You only learn one thing and I have know that a long time and I tell it all the time in general that we human beings are the most evil creatures that are put on this earth. There is no animal that has the cunning and the wish to do that evil things that humans do. I'm not proud to be a human being. I think we have very very evil traits in the human race. I don't find an animal that even comes close to that. We use our intelligence in two directions. One is evil and I point out already why. I don't want to even repeat the story, and also we busy ourselves to look and find out what is in the universe and what is a black hole and how you can live maybe on Mars or on the moon because it gets too crowded here. I mean, we get it to crowd. We, it doesn't, we do. I mean that's the human race that doesn't see danger when it comes so close that it is impossible. I wouldn't be able to if they gave me all power because I would have to kill people all the time, and that's what we are doing now. We are killing more people, more people and we are creating more people and we diminish the real intelligent people and the people who are wise, could be wise. I think Einstein would know better what to do than any professor today. Because, they don't know what to do. If you ask people what are we going to do. I used to support zero population, but we are too far away from zero population and my contribution is not doing any good because we need money and we need help for the people that are famished, people that don't have enough. We spoil the earth and we have all these

organizations that you can support like wildlife and what have you. Why not save humanity. I don't see that we are really doing anything effective except having more babies.

Q: You said you learned a long time ago that human beings can be very evil, when did you learn that and how?

A: Because life taught me that. I mean, what I saw in the world, the traitors and the people selling people. I mean I got so close that I saw that evil. It is much worse than I thought. When I was young, I was upset, my day was ruined when I saw a dead animal that had been killed by an automobile or something and I didn't get the picture out of my mind all day of the accident that we killed an animal that was walking the center of the street. But I don't get that feeling any more. It is completely blunted because of all the things that I've seen that are much worse. I mean, I don't really cringe when I read the paper that there is a murder. There is always some bad thing on the front page. never anybody is building up the beauty. People are making music to be famous. They are not making music to -- there are some little things that are here or there that people are doing something good for somebody, but it's almost invisible from all the junk that we get to read, of the murders and the tortures and how human beings still torture each other. That's what we get. That's our food. And at a certain time you don't feel anything anymore. I know that personally because when I arrived in Switzerland and I was a refugee in that hotel with 160 Jews that had fled at various times, all I felt is that my soul was dead. I thought I will never make a note of music. I wouldn't know why, but I didn't feel anything. Nothing affected me. I didn't have any desire to make music. I thought that was past. And I think it took about three months to a year to be able to be myself again. It kind of sank down and it kind of prompted me to have an entirely different look on life. The real joy that I had as a child and the trust in human beings and the trust in humanity, that has never come back. I don't feel proud to be a human being. I think we are the evilist creature that I ever met in general. I have met wonderful people, and that's the only thing that keeps me alive, that there are wonderful people. And there are people that I immediately feel are a friend, you know, I felt that way when you came in. It is not the people I know. The people I know and want to know there are friends among them. And that is the only thing that keeps you alive is that there is beauty in human beings too, but not enough. And there is something that I wish I had never learned about, and that is the evil that is possible, the cruelty that is possible. The rest of it is terrible. I don't know why we got it, as you know, I'm not religious. I say always in joking, I don't know why the beard has allowed this. Because I think there is a very childish concept people have of God. They say God made us according - no, we made God according to us. We think of somebody, there is not somebody. There is a universe and we don't understand it and I never will, but I'm part of the universe. That's all I know.