

[BEEP] I wanted to ask you, even though you didn't follow the Olympics at the time, what kind of team did Germany present in the high jump here event.

In the high jump, usually, they're always three competitors for each event. Three in the dash and three in the shot-put, and three in the long jump, and they only had two girls in the high jump, and that was a little bit unusual. And a long time later, I found out that the team was told that Bergmann is injured and cannot compete.

But I also had a suspicion that they were trying to maneuver this whole thing, because a letter was sent around that those who were in the-- Olympic candidates should not expect to be chosen, some of them and that they did not measure up, and in some events, there would only be two competitors. And I think that was really done for my sake already, because they were already trying to get rid of me somehow. Maybe, I'm not sure, but it seemed to be very unusual that there would only be two girls in the high jump.

When did you get this letter?

I think a letter came in the winter before the Olympics. I'll have to check the date.

What role, if any, do you think the 1936 Olympics played in bolstering the Nazis for what was to come?

Adolf Hitler tried to use these Olympics as his propaganda vehicle to show the world how powerful he was, to show the world how unified Germany was, and I think he tried to scare the world into not standing up against him, somehow. That's the way I have to look at it. The Olympics were a great success for Germany at the time, and they built this beautiful stadium.

People found work due to the Olympics or help the Nazis through to succeed.

So you think he did gain from--

He definitely did gain from it, and I've seen it written in a book someplace about how the Olympics are supposed to bring the youth of the world together and that somebody made the remark that, in 1936, the youth of the world came together in these Olympics, and four years later, they were coming together against each other in a battlefield, then the war started in 1940.

You mentioned that your immediate family was able to get out of Germany. Did you lose friends or family members?

Unfortunately, my husband's parents and many of his relatives were not able to get out, and we really tried so hard, and we had to battle people here to help, and there was so little help to be had. My husband has very rich relatives over there. They had the jewelry store in New York and were very rich, and I approached them for papers for him, and they refused. And I made out his papers for him.

I mean, I got him out like-- it was really not quite honest got him here, but we didn't even think about approaching them for his parents, because we knew they wouldn't do it. And we tried to get them into Cuba, and people would buy visas for Cuba for \$400 and we got two visas for them, and just when their turn was about to come, these visas were found out to be phony, and that avenue was shut off so. And they were also a little bit reluctant.

My father-in-law never could understand that this could happen to him. So he said, I've been living in this town forever. We were friends with everybody. They can't do anything to us or nothing is going to happen to us, and then when he did realize that he should have done something it was too late.

There were many-- I don't remember how many relatives. I think of at least 15 or 30. I don't remember how many and in my family too some. And friends.

Who didn't have the notion of getting out?

Right. It was-- the American people, a lot of them did not kill themselves. They made all the big speeches how helpful they wanted to be. Like my sponsor, when it came down to it, he wasn't so anxious, except my brother who-- that was the father of the motion picture industry by name of Carl Laemmle. I mean, he's a very famous man.

He came to the United States from Laupheim, and he made out 300 affidavits. Anybody who approached him for papers, he made them out, and he wasn't sure whether these people weren't going to sit on his pocket eventually, but he was wonderful. But I think the American people, in general, were not very generous in that respect.

When you think back about 1936, what you must do occasionally, what sort of an impact do you think it had on your life, these experiences?

I think it made me a lot tougher to face what I had to face, and my fear was very, very hard in the beginning. I've worked as a housemaid for \$10 a week, and even though life was a lot cheaper then, you couldn't get very far with \$10 a day. My husband worked as a house painter. Being a physician, he worked as a house painter when he arrived over here.

It made us, I think, tougher what we went through. And it might have helped us, even though it was a pretty tough school to go through.

Anything else you want to add?

Well, one thing I should mention maybe. I recently got a letter from the German National Olympic Committee, and they invited me to be the guest of honor at the Atlanta Olympic Games from July the 19th until August the 3rd, and although I have never gone back to Germany and they had invited me before for some other occasion, I have accepted this invitation, and I think it'll be a very emotional thing for me. But I said to my husband, what goes around comes around, and I think I've got to make my peace with this thing at last, even though it gnawed on me all these years.

And every time the Olympics come around, I get mad as hell again. I say, why? Why did this happen to me? But I've got to make peace before I go I'm going to go, up or down, I don't know. So I'm looking forward to that, and I think it was a very nice gesture.

They have tried to-- and the town where I come from also, they have tried very hard to make amends. They take care of the Jewish cemetery. Not a single Jew went back to that town, but the citizens of the town take care of the cemetery, and they have Jewish artists come and they have all kinds of activities to do not to let the Jewish life that once was there die, and I think that helped me too, because even though I would have never, never thought of going back, I was invited three times from the town to go.

And some people went and had a very good time. I said, no, I will never set foot on German soil again, and I won't. I don't know how long I'll last, but I'll never go back. But I did accept that invitation, and I'm looking forward to it.

One last question, I guess. Do you think-- this is typical producer. Just one more question. Do you think had there been more of a public reaction, boycott or whatever, that it would have made any difference in terms of what followed the Olympics?

Any boycott that would have happened would have influenced only the Olympic games. That it would not have been the huge success that Hitler expected from it, but Hitler and Nazis, they would have gone on no matter what, even if only one other country would have shown up to participate in the Olympics. I don't think it had anything to do with what he wanted to accomplish. He wanted to conquer the world, and he would have gone forward no matter what, and I don't think that the Olympics, in that respect, had anything to do with it.

In retrospect, do you think-- do you have any feelings? I mean, you didn't have much choice in Germany, but do you have any feelings about German-- the Jewish athletes in other countries who did participate that maybe they should have stayed home?

Well, there are two train of thoughts. They could have stayed home or they could have come and showed what a Jew could do. As a matter of fact, I think the high jump was won by a Czech Jewish girl, and I think that was like spitting in Hitler's eye. See? The Jews, they can do it.

And I think there was some that didn't come, and that was whatever they wanted to decide about their lives. But I think they only hurt themselves, and it didn't make an impact. I think it had more impact for the Jews to go there and beat the Germans than to stay home and say I'm not going. I have that much respect for myself that I won't go.

I don't think that that was the-- the ones that did it, I respect them for it. But the ones who didn't do it, they have my respect too, because they did what I would have them. Beat the Nazis.

Thank you.

Thank you.