

*Tape three, side one:*

...and I said to him, "But look this is complete nonsense," I said. He told me that he had the Iron Cross, he had fought for his country, he had nearly died. And I said, "But they don't care any more about these things." I could not believe that he could be so blind and that he could really fool himself like that. Now the fact is that, some years before in fact, shortly after Hitler came to power, I talked to him about...to him about Hitler and I said, "Doesn't it look like it's a very frightening situation?" I don't recall exactly what I said, but it was something along those lines, and he told me at the time, "Well, after all, Hitler did do some good things and look, at least, the unemployment has been eliminated, and people are back at work and it looks like he is doing some good things in the construction." And I said, "I know, but don't you see the danger?" And I could not understand that he just did not seem to...occur to him. I had a feeling that he really did not want to know, and as far as my mother was concerned, for her, the idea that she had a powerful position, relatively powerful, at least for her, it seemed like it, and made good money, was so important that nothing else really mattered. We didn't really have any other money and so we didn't have any assets. We didn't own any property. My mother no longer had much jewelry to speak of. At some point, she had her fur coat, which she sold, I forget why, and so we really had no money, but the fact is to her, having power was always terribly important and she saw if we left and went to another country, we would have to struggle and start from scratch, and there were stories coming back about people who had to work as cleaning women and laundry women and servants and so forth, and, to her, this was such horror that she simply could not face it. To me as a young girl, of course, this meant nothing. I just wanted to get out because, as I was walking the streets, as I mentioned earlier, to me the most overwhelming sense I had was as if I was in sort of a glass enclosure in a giant prison, and I could see everybody and...but nobody could see me and I could not get out. I was caught, and the only way I could keep my equilibrium mentally was to keep aware of what was happening but, yet, I had this constant sense of oppression and of being locked in. And it did not seem to me that the grown-ups or adults around me had that same impression or sense. It seemed that they kept adjusting each time that there was another limitation. It seemed to me that they would just [be] adjusting to it, pulling their little horns around them, or their little borders around them a little bit tighter and just sort of adjusting, and I suppose that this mental attitude that the Jews have always had to have of adjusting to the environment and somehow making do...and that and I guess there was the human feeling that the evils that we are familiar with are more easily faced than those that we are not familiar with, and I suppose also there was the feeling well, one day this was going to be over and it's a passing phase, and it's not going to be here long, and one day everything will pass.

And I might go back again to cover some other territory that I had not spoken about. My mother's younger sister, next younger sister, was married to a singer. He had been a

singer in the Prague opera, a tenor, and when he came back to Germany and was then for a while in a smaller...at an opera in a few other towns in Krefeld and in Dresden...but, eventually, he was forced to give all of these things up and eventually he was one of the singers who became a member of the Jewish Kulturbund that was formed shortly after Hitler came, in order to provide employment and cultural opportunity and artistic opportunity after the Nazis placed the restrictions on Jewish artists. And he was a singer who somehow or other managed to make a highly precarious living. He made a little bit money by singing in the synagogue services on occasion. It so happened that he, really, if you want to call it that, looked Jewish. He had an extremely Jewish-looking nose, if there is such a thing, and he was conscious of it and he was made conscious of it, and that made him extremely afraid of walking the streets and so forth. My aunt, on the other hand, was sort of dark blondish and had blue eyes and what might have been "looked like" the epitome of a German housewife, and she did manage to get some work as a bookkeeper and so forth and managed to keep the family together, and they went back to live in Berlin, as I said, and, then she and my mother became quite close again. And, then, she got this job at the Paltreu and obtained the job for me at the Alltreu upstairs and I was now exposed to daily pressures that were really beyond belief...the emigration that was available, as against the people that wanted to leave that was...We did not see so many people. We had a waiting room outside and, on occasion, there were quite a number of people out there waiting but, in fact, there were really not that many people, because at this time it was late '36, or rather '37, late '37 and early '38, and things had become much more difficult and the one...and I recall, each day we would get notification of perhaps, let's say, six visas that were offered for the Dominican Republic, to work at the...in some capacity, in the jungles, or to clear the forests, or I don't remember the details, but practically all the jobs offered of course, were almost invariably physical labor and required the kind of training that none of the Jews that were applying for emigration could possibly have had, and somehow we managed to evade and lie and change things and whatever and in some ways, a few people always managed to get out...but it was a constant terrible, terribly struggle. You sort of got the feeling that there was a tremendous pressure, like a tremendous water pressure coming through a very tight little faucet so that only a few little trickles are coming out on the bottom and that was the trickle of people that were being let out to leave the country.

And I remember one particular incident. I came...and I was always one of the first to come in the morning. I had to be there by 8:00 in the morning and I got there to find a man sitting there, very thin and pale and shaking like a leaf, and it turned out he had just been released that morning, early that morning, from a concentration camp, and had been given 24 hours in which to leave the country. I guess his family had bought him out. I don't know the circumstances, and within the next eight or ten hours, we had to manage to get all of his papers together, we had to manage to find a place for him, we had to manage to get him on a boat, and get him out of the country. And I recall that the man didn't say too much about his experience. He was obviously so frightened, he couldn't talk and, as I say,

he was just absolutely shaking like a leaf, and I recall that I had to fill the form out for him because his hand was shaking so much, and I started to shake myself just to see him in this situation. And, so, in any case, we managed to get him out, and there were a few other people like that and it was, still, a very sad too tiny minority and the rates, of course, of the tax that people had to pay, were varied from near zero for people like us, who had no assets, to people who had a lot of assets and it might be up to 99% of their income.

And I might also go back, since I mentioned concentration camps...I, of course, over the last several years we had heard many, many rumors...rumors were rife almost from the very beginning. I remember, in fact, my mother saying sometime in the early '30s, a year or two after Hitler came to power, that they were doing such horrible things to the Jews in these places, that some of them were so horribly abused that they would be crawling on the floor, yelping like dogs from the abject humiliation and debasement, and when, after I met this young man that I had spoken about before, my boyfriend, who incidentally also did not look Jewish, if anything they might have thought possibly that he was Italian, maybe...he was often taken for Italian, even part Negro, but, in any case, he did not look Jewish... He and I belonged to a small group of young people—all of us, I think there were about six or seven of us who would get together and go out on Sundays and go on picnics and maybe even sneak into a theater on occasion—and, in fact, I remember this one fellow who at one point in earlier years had apparently been a Communist, possibly a Communist and certainly at least a Socialist—he had talked us into going to a performance of “Hera and Leander,” a German play by Grillpalzer, and we went there to sit up in the balcony, and when we got there, I think it was standing room, and I looked down and I noticed that the entire theater was filled with blackshirts, and we looked around and here was Mr. Goebbels and his family sitting in a box just below us. We could have practically spit on his head if we had been so inclined, and it was a sort of provocative and a rather interesting experience.

But, in any case to go back, one day this same friend of ours so-called, asked us to come and visit him in his apartment. He had a small flat in the northern part of Berlin which was near the wedding and was the working class neighborhood, and we walked in and here was a young man sitting there who told us that he had just escaped from Dachau the day before, and this was, if I am not mistaken, it may have been in '36 or '37, and he had been in prison not because he was Jewish, but because of his Socialist or Communist background or whatever and somehow he had managed to escape. Now, I am not sure if that was feasible at that time, perhaps it was feasible at that time from Dachau, and he was a strong young fellow who had obviously been very resourceful, and I remember how...he didn't say too much about his experiences. He didn't tell us too much. I knew only partly because my boyfriend was so horrified at this fellow, this so-called friend of ours exposing the two of us to the danger of meeting this young man who was an escaped, you know, concentration camp inmate that he insisted on our leaving immediately and I didn't ever hear the end of that story. In any case, the point that I was trying to make was that we were

very aware of concentration camps from early years on, and we knew that the main victims were the political people, Communists and so forth. After that it went to other groups and so forth. There was also the fact that we heard about...it was always difficult to know how much of the dangers we were told about were real and how much was just imagined and was deliberately fostered by the Nazis to keep the Jews under control, or to keep the general population under control. This is something that was really difficult to say but, obviously, people did disappear and people did go away, and, but I guess in those early years that not that many people were killed, although we began to hear stories of people who had been killed and whose ashes were then brought back in urns and shipped back to their families who, furthermore, had to pay for the postage and pay for the urns, for these ashes. And I remember how that struck me as the most horrendously sadistic thing and, of course, I did not yet know how much worse things were to become, and how much more beyond all limits of imagination of sadism people could go when all restraints were removed. And we were...some of the situations that were going on...we heard about these people being in prison and I...and, yet, in some ways, somehow this did not touch us particularly, and I remember reading about, a book by a Hungarian, I believe he was an extreme leftist, I am not sure what, about...who had been released from...who had been in Gestapo hands...I don't remember now when I read the book, but I remember the book and some of the graphic details that he described and they remained very vivid in my mind for many days. And so, in any case, these were some of the stories that we were beginning to hear.

I might also say one more thing about the general population. There were very few people that openly dared to help Jews, or side with us. The French teacher who had stood up to her student in class was one I mentioned. There was one other incident that I thought...there were two other incidents in fact that I thought were quite remarkable. In my composition class in German, in public school...I think that I was about 13, the teacher had asked us to do a book review about three favorite authors, and she specified that they must all be German and, of course, me being a rebel, I refused to listen to this and I promptly came up with a review about Selma Lagerloef, who is Swedish, and John Galsworthy, who is English, and Theodor Storm, who is German, and she had said that we could only write three-quarters of a page on each, which made me very unhappy. I would have loved to have written reams about them but I couldn't, and she, in fact, the next day asked me, as the only one in the class, to read my review about those three authors. And had no, apparently, no hesitancy about my reading about non-German authors, which I thought was relatively courageous in those days, at a time when courage was really measured in some of those very small acts of personal integrity. I also had my gym teacher, who was very fond of me, and I was at one point in the 6th grade, I believe...I won first prize in a national gymnastics contest for my grade, but she called me over and she said to me, "Now Susan, you know that I can't give you the prize, because if the judges would know that a non-Aryan has won in gymnastics, they would be terribly upset and angry at me. I don't dare to talk about it to them," and she was almost in tears at having to hurt me so much, but, in fact, I didn't

care...to me the whole thing was absolutely ludicrous. I knew that I had won. I knew that the girls knew that I had won, which to me was even more important, and I knew she knew it, and that was all I cared about. I certainly was not interested in advancing the cause of gymnastics in Nazi Germany. So, I didn't need this for my ego, but, as I said, those were some of the few incidents where there was some integrity. There was also a young girl in my class—she was the only Catholic in our class in Berlin. She was from the working class. I believe her father was the superintendent of her building. She was the only one who was kind and talked to me. The other girls all totally ostracized me, would not talk to me during lunch and so forth, and this was already in a time, I think in '34 or so, or '35, when I believe that I was perhaps one or two or three Jewish girls left in the class. All the others had already been taken out. She was kind enough because she herself was also ostracized, because she was Catholic, and also because she was working class and she would have to leave the school at age 14, and so, I guess, in some ways, there was a certain bond between both of us being sort of socially unacceptable, and I appreciated that. And then there was one additional thing which was that shortly after the racial laws came up, Nuremberg, an anonymous...no, not an anonymous, a book came out in paperback or some kind of very poor quality paper, and I don't know where it was published, I don't recall who printed it and, unfortunately, I don't remember who it was that wrote the book. It was some, either a Catholic or Protestant clergyman. I think it may have been Niemöller, but I am not sure, and it was a book to refute the racial laws of the Nazi Reich, and it was such a courageous step and it had his name on it. I really was...it just comforted me so much to read that book. I don't recall now how I even got to the book, or who gave it to me. I have no idea, the only thing is that I remember reading it and I remember feeling touched by the sense that there are some decent people who still had the courage of their convictions, and, at the same time, I realized that it took more than just ordinary courage, I must add this, to stand up against this juggernaut, because very soon after the Nazis came to power they had spread such a sense of omnipotence, and of total watchfulness that everyone felt that there was just no way that you could resist. You had a sense of...that anyone who would stand up in public...it would have been an incredibly foolhardy thing to do, because, as I said, of the sense of total omnipotence that the Nazis had created almost as soon as they took over. Now, I had one incident that brought this home to me and that was when, I believe I was about 15, and I was crossing...going through the streets, going through the *Tiergarten*. I think I was going to visit my father, I don't remember, and at some point we stopped, we were stopped because Hitler was passing an extremely long block away through the middle of the *Siegesallee* in the middle of the *Tiergarten* and it was really the equivalent of two, possibly two avenue blocks in New York City and, in fact, it was so far away we couldn't even see them from where we were, but in any case we had to stop, and there were black shirts, Gestapo, I believe, uniformed and I think brown shirts, I don't remember now, facing us, and I think there was this storm trooper standing almost directly in front of me and in his holster he had a large pistol, and I remember standing there while we were being

stopped and thinking, “What would happen if I would grab this pistol and run like mad towards where Hitler is passing and try to kill him?” I realized that this was totally irrational and I realized I had never had a pistol in my hand in my life. I had no...I was a terrible runner, as I said, and I had always lost every running race because I was too slow, and the idea that I could possibly manage to get there and do this was absolutely ludicrous and, yet, it was almost like a compulsion for me to think about it and fantasize, that I would do this and I would run and I kept thinking about this and one side of my head was saying, “Well, what if you kill him and wouldn’t it be great,” and the other side of me was saying, “Yes, but even if I got up there, and if I could manage to pull the trigger, and even if I could manage to kill him, there would be ten others to take over for him, like hydra-heads, and even worse, and if they would arrest me and they would kill me, O.K.—that was one thing I must say that did not bother me in the slightest—I was not worried about being killed. At that point, I had developed the early adolescent messianic idea, I guess, that I was going to lead my people out of bondage and I was going to be the savior. It was certainly totally unjustified, but I guess it was in keeping with my age—of that early adolescent sense of needing to be a hero and feeling yourself omnipotent and so forth. But the one thing that stopped me, aside from all the other considerations, was the fear that they would, then, get a hold of my mother and my sister and that they would then be tortured and I...and that was the one thing, it was the torture that I think all of us were dreading. We had heard horror stories of eggs that were heated to a boiling point and then were placed into the vaginas of women, and some of the most horrendous stories...and, so, I knew enough about what was facing us and, of course, as I said the whole thing was a total fantasy and was a daydream. It was totally irrational and, in fact, silly, but I am only telling the story to illustrate the kind of dread that I had and the kind of sense that we had that it was totally pointless to even try to resist the prevailing atmosphere. Of course, this was true...of course, also of the Christians around us. And yet, there were some who could still behave with decency. As I said, my mother’s boss and some other people, but, on the whole, I also have to add that the Germans took to that entire antisemitic persecution like the proverbial ducks to water. And, of course, the young girls that I was surrounded with in class were perhaps...they were, I do feel, I have always felt that young women, especially young girls, can be terribly sadistic, perhaps almost more so than boys—I am not sure why, but that was my impression, and certainly it was the general sense that Hitler in fact, was brought to power mainly by the women and the emotionalism of the German women, who not only resented the economic situation but who just absolutely became almost sexually dependent on him, sexually bonded to him in some fashion. All we had to do was look at the newsreels and see the women who were listening to his speeches and you would get a sense of almost having orgasms while they were listening to him. This is not something original with me. It has been observed by many others.

Coming back to the girls in school, I do want to tell one more incident. At some point in...I believe ‘36, we were...a physics teacher was brought into our class, and he had

been shell-shocked in the First World War and apparently severely wounded and was...He was Jewish, he was an older man and he had a shaking of some sort, probably from his injuries, and he came into our class, and what the girls in our class did to make that man miserable cannot be described. I would be daily and absolutely almost in tears to see what they were doing. They would put gum on his chair, they would throw catapults at him, they would start screaming, they would throw papers, they would...It just cannot be believed because the man would stand up there shaking like a leaf with fear and with suppressed rage and with impotence and, of course, at some point, something happened. I don't recall what now, but I think it was after the Christmas holidays or something...he did not come back and I still remember that, and I saw the sadism and the brutality among these young women and how they enjoyed torturing and tormenting this poor man, and it was just really beyond belief to see the gleams with which they saw him suffer and, to me, this was a microcosm of Germany. I am among those who feel this was, at least, until now, an unredeemed people with very little sense of compassion for anyone outside their own family.

*Tape three, side two:*

Finally, I come to the events of 1938 which was a decisive year. We had all realized now, adults including, that emigration was the only possible out, and since we had relatives in Guatemala, we were able to obtain visas to leave for Guatemala, but not for several months and, eventually, we were going to go to the United States but we had to wait for the quota. In the meantime, my mother's boyfriend had to go with his parents since they were all stateless. They had *Nansen* passes as White Russians. They had gone to Bulgaria and there they stayed. They left in May of '38. They were going to go to the States also, eventually. In May, also, my father called me one night to say that he had to leave. He had been warned that he was going to be picked up that night on whatever charges and that I should come over and help him pack because I was always very good at packing, and he had to make believe that he was leaving for Belgium just for a one-day trip on a business trip, and I had to get as much as I could into his small suitcase for a one-day trip. I did, and I said good-bye to him and he went to Antwerp, and then he wrote to us from there but we didn't get much mail from him because of the difficulties of his existence and being short of postage and whatever. In the meantime, we were preparing to leave and for me it was a traumatic time also because I would have to separate from my boyfriend. Of course, I knew that I would have to stay with my family and he felt that he would have to stay with his family. His parents were quite elderly and his older sister had already emigrated to Indonesia, to some island there, but he stayed behind and they were not quite sure what they were going to do. And they had a little bit of money and, apparently, they had just not wanted to leave before. So, it was all an extremely traumatic time for everyone. It was a traumatic time, of course, because...since we felt that relationships were tenuous. We did not know if we would ever see each other again and, somehow, whenever he and I were together, we always had the sense that this might be the last time, and every time together became a very emotionally charged situation. And...we now are coming into the fall of '38 and I had to leave my job in order to pursue full-time getting the documents for our emigration. It was a tremendously complicated job and the Nazis, of course, intentionally made it more complicated. They wanted to make us as miserable as possible. There was the additional factor that if you, as a Jew, went to any kind of office, you had to wait until all the Aryans were taken care of and then you would be taken eventually after everybody else had been served in turn. In my case, again, because, of course, I did not "look Jewish," in some instances I was taken for the family maid, and one clerk, in fact, asked me if I was the maid for the family Neuländer and I didn't say too much about it, but I remember that we would have to get there at let's say, 6:00 or 7:00 in the morning and just stand in line for hours on end and wait until everyone else was served and then we would be taken care of. And it was a job that was absolutely full-time from morning till night and accompanied by tremendous mental stress and physical stress, not only, but mental stress, and somehow we managed to cope, as we usually did, and, then, what happened finally was the events of



the Crystal Night, *Kristallnacht*. And I am a little bit hazy about when exactly we heard the first rumors of what was going to happen, but it probably was on the 9th, which I believe now was a Wednesday, and it was a dark, sort of a grayish day, hazy and slightly warm for November, and somehow there was some kind of electricity in the air that we sort of had a feeling to stay at home, be cautious, don't go to the offices and so forth, and I might add, by the way, that just a few days before, my mother and I had to go together to Gestapo headquarters to get a good conduct exit, and this was something not usual and the reason we heard—I did not know it at the time—but the reason it happened was because one of my mother's cousins had at one time years before been a member of the Communist Party. And therefore, we were now involved in this kind of roundabout situation, and I will never forget...we had left instructions that if anything happened to us, my little sister would be taken care of by my aunt, and we went off and my mother, as usual, make-up and long beautiful legs and hat and dressed in her best Berlin manner, walked in and a Gestapo officer came up to us and asked her to sit down at his desk. I sat down nearby and my mother, who was always, who could be, when she wanted to be the most charming and also the most flirtatious person in the world, turned on every ounce of charm and every ounce of sexiness and flirtatiousness with this officer. I couldn't believe it, and, yet, he swallowed it whole and he absolutely got under her spell, as most men did who met her when and she really wanted to get them...when she wanted to charm them and she was an extremely charming woman, and we were there for half an hour and he escorted her out, bowed and everything else and that was the end of it. And there was not even a "Heil Hitler," I might add. It was really absolutely...when we came out, we both laughed. I was so sick. But my knees were shaking all the time and for all I know hers may have been, but she never admitted it to me. She would never admit any weakness. But I must say that I really admired her for her guts that day. It was an incredible performance and, in any case...coming back the Crystal Night situation...what was going on was an oppressive night and then somehow or another, various people came to the apartment and, as I said, my mother's boyfriend had already left, so that there were only women in our apartment so that we were considered relatively safe. And we had no money and we had no political connections, so presumably nobody would bother us, and a couple of friends, male friends, came to take refuge with us. Then after dark, my aunt with her husband the singer came, and they came after dark, as I said, with him pulling his hat way down over his Jewish-looking nose, and they told us that there was already destruction going on outside. Stores were already being looted and the sidewalks were littered with glass, and it was a pretty horrendous scene and nobody really talked very much. We were just all so overcome with the experience and, then, my mother did something that I must say I will never quite forgive her. And she is now dead four years. It was really incredible. She sent me out into the streets, and I will never forget her saying to me, "Well, Susan, you with your gentile nose, you won't be bothered. Nobody will bother you." And she sent me out into the streets of Berlin on the night of Crystal Night, the pogrom ongoing then, to buy, believe it or not, pork chops, because, after all,

the guests could not go without a proper dinner. They couldn't eat eggs or something. It wasn't as if we had nothing to eat in the house. It was just that she felt that they had to have proper food, and she sent me out to get...and the irony of it, for me to buy pork chops.

I had to walk clear through the...to the northern part of Berlin, because all the stores in our neighborhood that we were allowed to trade in...of course we could not trade with any non-Jewish stores. The Jewish stores had all been looted and emptied and I was afraid to go into any stores nearby because they might know that I was Jewish. So I had to go to the northern part of Berlin, and the wedding, which was in the working class neighborhood that I had spoken about earlier, and there I managed to find a butcher shop that was still open and I managed to get the pork-chops, and I managed to find my way back. And this took, it seemed to me that this had taken me eight hours, but, in fact, it only took maybe one hour of long, long walking, but the point is that, in the meantime, I was walking over the sidewalks, with glass crunching under my feet, and on the next street, the street parallel to the street that we were living on was the *Fasanenstrasse*, a famous synagogue, the oldest synagogue in Berlin, and it was in flames, and the fire trucks were there training their hoses on the neighboring houses, but letting the synagogue burn, and go up in flames, and the entire sidewalk across the synagogue was filled with hundreds of people out in the street, as if it was like a carnival to them. They were standing there watching this fire, applauding and laughing and having a grand old time and just thoroughly enjoying themselves. It was a most stomach-turning and horrendous sight I can imagine and something eerie about it, seeing flames light up the sky, and the firemen on the ladders, and the people standing in the reflected light, in the glow of the flames, standing there laughing and applauding, and I was walking through and tried to walk past them in such a way that they wouldn't see that I was crying. I was crying the entire time and I was so terrified that somebody would see me cry. I had my head down all the time and then I came up to near The Wedding and there was a cart. There were some brown shirts and they were beating up an old Jewish man with a long beard and they were beating him up, and there was people standing around laughing and applauding and, as I say, it was sort of like a Roman circus sort of atmosphere that night. And the entire streets, all the streets were covered with glass and here were all these stores totally looted, totally empty of their wares, and I came home and I was promptly sick all over the kitchen floor, and my uncle, who usually had a very delicate stomach, was nice enough to clean up and help and so forth, but my mother was simply incredible. She was just very ruthless about it. The next day she expected me to go out and do my usual rounds of the offices, and I said that I couldn't go out that day because I was very sick and she had absolutely no sympathy for me whatever. It was unbelievable. I must say, in many ways she assumed many of the attributes of her environment, I am sorry to say. And it wasn't until maybe the next day after her sister had talked to her and made her see the light a little bit, that she actually got up in the middle of the night and made some tea for me which almost touched me to tears, because I had never seen my mother do this

in all my years, and she apparently realized that I really had sustained a very severe shock from this experience.

And, then, the next few days, of course, were sort of like an aftermath and I said good-bye to my boyfriend. He came to the station to say good-bye to us and that was a trauma, but still for me it was sort of like in a dream. I could just not wait to get out of that prison. To me it was nothing like a horror and a prison and I hadn't wanted to live there for years and I was so happy to get out. All I wanted was just get out, get out. I couldn't wait and the last days were filled with all kinds of terrible situations because we had to sell all our, practically all of our belongings in order to raise what money we needed to pay for the tickets on the ship and this included...and also my mother told me I could not take my books along, and I had, since I was a small child, I had accumulated books people had given me, my father had given me and others, every one of those books to me was almost like a child, and for me to have to give up all those books, I...She told me that I could take three books, and it was something I never got over in my entire life. I just could not...I didn't care giving up anything else, possibly even the separation from my boyfriend was not as bad, because of my youthful feeling, I sort of felt that we would meet again and it would be all over, but giving up those books, that was traumatic to me.

We had a few dollars left, so we went quick out and got some sheets. For some unknown reason she thought that we should take extra sheets along. I think we would have been better off to buy stockings because as it turned out I didn't have enough later on, but, in any case, we got sheets and then I had to stay up all night washing and ironing them so we wouldn't have to pay customs. And, then, a man came to buy our furniture from us and, of course, realizing what our situation was, he gave us almost nothing for our furniture, and we had no choice but to accept his offer. And, then, the customs man came to supervise the packing and then the trunks were shipped directly to Hamburg to be taken aboard. And we were going to go on a boat, on a German boat, because, as I said, we did not have enough money to buy a...tickets for a foreign ship. And we would have had to buy foreign currency and we didn't have it. We went to Hamburg and there met the aunt that I had lived with some years before a brief time before in Silesia. her husband had died meanwhile and had left her a great deal of money and she was about to marry a man who was a widower with four children. My mother pleaded with her to give us just a few hundred Marks. It would have been enough for us to be able to get tickets for a foreign ship, but she refused, and I might add, parenthetically, that because she did not want to give the state his money, all of them perished in a concentration camp, including the children, because, instead of leaving this money, she was tied to the money, and she and the widower and the four children after they had got married, they all died.

In any case we got on the ship, and it was not only fourth class, it was really more sort of like steerage. All three of us were in one tiny little cabin and I was seasick from almost the first day on for many, many days, and we got into a tremendous storm where we lost one of the engines, and it was a very miserable situation and I was terribly, terribly

seasick, part of it probably because I have always had a lifelong problem with my ears and it affected my balance. And I am a terrible sea traveler, and I suffered from seasickness for many days. In any case, that was not the major problem. The major problem was that we had to eat second shift on the German ship and they threw the food at us, practically. They gave us just 20 minutes in which to eat it, and we were given...the food was ice cold by the time that we got it, sauces were congealed, and they deliberately put hairs in it and flies on it, and it was absolutely horrendous, and they treated us just abominably. It was really the next thing to being in prison, or possibly even worse, because to me, being on a ship always gave me the sense of claustrophobia and this situation heightened it. There were some relatives of ours who were also going to Guatemala and they were on the first class and second class and we did go to visit them on occasion and when we got there we would at least go in the fresh air. At one point, in fact, when I had been seasick for more than three days, my mother got a little frightened and called the doctor, and he said: "She has to get out into the fresh air," because we had no fresh air, or open air deck in our class, and I said, "Well, if I had to go to the second class deck, I would have to go through the kitchen and there was just no way for me to get through the kitchen. I would just as soon die." And, as I said, I think that the atmosphere of being in a German ship, just to me, I think it added to my problem.

Furthermore, there was a young man on board who had been in several concentration camps for almost...I believe he told me for 36 months, and when I saw him he was a tiny little, not so tiny but just totally emaciated, almost totally bald. All his teeth were missing. He was shaking the whole time and he obviously, desperately needed somebody to talk to who was non-threatening, and non-authoritative and who would he fasten on to discuss his problems but me? And he started to unburden himself to me about his experiences, and when he told me that the only reason that he had survived all those months was because he had been a carpenter and therefore was strong and muscular and with a strong constitution and was very young when they took him and therefore he had been able to survive. But some of the stories he told me about...like when somebody had escaped and they had to stand in the snow for 14 hours to wait until this fellow was brought back and then he was beaten to death in front of their eyes and there they were standing in the snow and were not allowed to so much as sit or anything. It was enough to give me nightmares for weeks on end, and I think he was...I don't now remember where he was going. He was going not to Guatemala but possibly to the States. I am not sure, but, in any case it was a horrendous experience.

But eventually, the sun came out and we came to...we arrived, arrived and because of the naval blockades, we had to go all around the coast of South Africa and come up on...or South America, rather, and come up on the side and go along the South American coast and come up in the Caribbean and then come to Guatemala that way and eventually we managed to come to...After two years more we came to the States. I might add, in Guatemala, at the time, they had a very large German population and the dictator then in

charge, a general, was friendly to the Axis only because much of the trade was going...the coffee exports, much of it was going to Germany.

I had initially gotten a job, in the President's office, with the Censorship Office, as a translator because my aunt was the wife of a jewelry merchant and watchmaker and she was an extremely beautiful woman, or had been in her earlier years, and had a very high social position and was very close with the President, as she had been with all the other Presidents before, and of whom there were many, I might add. And I am not sure exactly what her connections were with these various people, but whatever they were they redounded to my benefit, so I am not going to question it. In any case, she got this job for me, but, as it turned out, I really did not know enough Spanish to be a translator. I had only taken a few months of night school Spanish, so it was a little ludicrous for me to be a translator but, in any case, I did...they gave me a leave of absence to study Spanish, which I did. In the meantime, war had started in Europe, and they did not want to hire a foreigner for the government so then they gave me a labor permit, which was very hard to get in those days, and I became a saleswoman at a department store that I had spoken about earlier, to sell cosmetics, and after that, later, we went to the States, and now, I will go back to tell about my father's experience which was pretty horrible.

He had gone to Belgium, as I mentioned, living without papers, and eventually when the war started, fled ahead of the German Army through France and was eventually arrested by the Vichy French and placed into Camp Gurs and there, as he said, he would have probably starved to death, died, or frozen to death, if it had not been for the Quakers, who gave him blankets and supplied him with some coffee and some money and on occasion gave him some postage stamps so that he could communicate with us and so forth and so on. Then we managed to get a visa for him to go to Cuba, which was the only place we could find for him to go at that time. On the strength of that visa, he was sent to a camp near Marseilles, Camp Les Milles, which was a much better place. And there he stayed for a while. In the meantime, however, we came to the States and, irrationally, he decided that he did not want to go to Cuba if we were in the States, because, as he said, he would rather wait until he could come to the States directly. How anyone in his position, knowing what he must have known about this situation, could make this kind of irrational decision is beyond me, and my uncle in Salvador, who was a very wealthy man and who really disliked him intensely for whatever reason, had provided the guarantee for us for the visa...he could not believe...he wrote to me and said, "Now I wash my hands of your father and this is absolutely ridiculous and don't bother me again," and I had to go, figuratively speaking, on my hands and knees and plead with him and say, "Look the man was sick in his earlier days and I don't think he has ever gotten quite well, and his experiences have unhinged him slightly. Please don't hold it against him," and then I had to go back and plead with my father to see the light and he then agreed. And, in the meantime, he, of course, wrote himself now he knew that the Germans were coming towards Marseilles and we should please hurry up and get him out of there. And the Quakers were sending us cables: "Please

do something,” and it was a horrendous situation to put us into...this was in ‘42, I had just decided to get married. I had met a young man who was then in the service and he had proposed and I was very much in love and we wanted to get married and we had next to nothing. I was then earning a living, if you want to call it that, of maybe \$14.00 a week and my sister could not work. We were all living on next to nothing and it was a horrendous situation. We really couldn’t do much and, in any case, he kept writing and saying, “Please do something,” and, of course, he himself had destroyed his chances but, again, I cannot blame him. It was simply the circumstances had just unhinged him. He had just gone through too much in his entire life and eventually he wrote and his last letter said, “I know that the Germans are coming tomorrow and I know what is going to happen to us. I only know that I am not going to go along with them. We are supposed to go on these trains, but I know that I am not going to go along with this.” I am going to go the way my father went and, as I mentioned earlier, his father had committed suicide. In any case, he...then I contacted the Quakers. It was a desperate time, and, again, I had gone to the Cuban consulate in the meantime and asked to have a regular visa so that he could leave immediately, and I was told that Cuba and France had just broken diplomatic relations a few days before, and by a matter of a few days his life was lost because it was just now too late.

And he...while he was still writing to us, “Please do something,” we knew that there was just nothing left to do. It was simply impossible and I contacted the Quakers in Philadelphia and we agreed that this was just a hopeless situation. And then we heard nothing further, and we assumed that, you know, he had been deported and, of course, we already knew here about the cattle trains and what was going on and what was happening, and I got the strong impression, I might add this, from his letters, that he also knew what was ahead of them. It may well be that there were many people who really did not know what was ahead of them, and it may also be that he was not certain that they were supposed to be gassed, and I don’t know whether that in the summer of ‘42 they were already gassed or what exactly was happening. I think the gassing began in ‘42. Prior to that they were shooting them, if I understand it. Whether he knew that death was awaiting him, that I don’t know. I do know that he knew about the cattle trains, and that he did know about the concentration camps, he might not have known exactly what the ultimate fate was going to be.