

-TITLE-MARGOT ZEIDLER  
-I\_DATE-SEPTEMBER 4, 1990  
-SOURCE-SAN FRANCISCO HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
-RESTRICTIONS-  
-SOUND\_QUALITY-  
-IMAGE\_QUALITY-  
-DURATION-  
-LANGUAGES-  
-KEY\_SEGMENT-  
-GEOGRAPHIC\_NAME-  
-PERSONAL\_NAME-  
-CORPORATE\_NAME-  
-KEY\_WORDS-  
-NOTES-  
-CONTENTS-

1:01:06 Margot was born on April 15, 1914, in Germany. three months before the outbreak of the First World War. Margot live with her grandparents until 1920, while her father was in the German Army.

1:04:25 In 1933, Margot begin working in a department store. This job lasted for a couple of years. In July of 1936 she left Germany for South Africa.

1:05:06 Margot's parents were very religious. She grew up in what she calls a Kosher household. She went to religious school twice or three times each week. She also remembers singing in a church choir.

1:08:04 Margot's family observed all the Jewish holidays. Her parents' friends were mostly other Jews. They did not mix well with Christians and others, although Margot say she did have some Gentile friends.

1:09:29 Margot does not remember any incidents of anti-semitism from her Gentile classmates at school. One of her high school teachers, Dr. Hesser (ph), turned out to be an active nazi. She remembers seeing a picture of him after the war describing him as such. margot did graduate high school, but did not go on to college.

1:11:05 In 1932, Margot was verbally harassed for being a jew on board a train to a ski lodge.

1:12:14 Margot had one older brother, Leon Simon, who lived until 1985.

1:13:20 margot remembers a boycott of Jewish stores in her town taking place on April 1, 1933.

1:14:29 In 1934, margot and her friends and family discussed the need to leave Germany because of what was happening to the Jews.

1:16:06 Her brother Leon and her future husband had earlier gone to South Africa. She followed them there in July, 1936, after first going to Italy.

1:17:30 in 1934, Leon and a group of youths were taken hostage for ten days because of an illegal gathering of their youth group. Leon had been hit over the head with a chair during the arrest. One boy was killed in the incident, according to Margot. She says it was the uniformed local police who took the young men into custody.

1:19:45 Margot's family decided that she and Leon would leave Germany first. Her father was briefly detained in the concentration camp at Buchenwald. She has trouble remembering the name of the camp, but it finally comes to her. He was captured on Kristallnacht.

1:22:56 her parents came to South Africa in April 1939. Compared to what happened at the concentration camps later, her father was treated well at Buchenwald. Her father convinced the family's doctor not to commit suicide in the camp. People often took their own lives by running to the electrified fence surrounding the camp.

1:24:25 her father was released from Buchenwald after only ten days' imprisonment because his visa for South Africa came. Miraculously, people with visas for foreign destinations were being allowed to leave Germany at that time.

1:25:55 Margot and her family settled in South Africa because her further husband (who is never named on the tape) had relatives there. The United States would not be allowed to leave Germany at that time.

1:28:15 Margot's two aunts did emigrate to the United States. Another aunt settled in Paris.

1:29:07 Margot and Leon were glad to leave Germany for South Africa because the situation for the Jews was only getting worse in their homeland.

1:30:20 Margot travelled alone, taking a train to Genoa and staying the night at an inn run by a Jew. She then boarded a huge passenger ship bound for Cape Town.

1:32:06 Margot says she has never personally met a survivor of a concentration camp.

1:33:59 Margot was concerned that she would never see her parents again after she left Europe. Her parents' trip to South Africa took six weeks. They travelled in a German boat!

1:37:02 Margot and her husband lived with her parents in Johannesburg until the birth of their daughter, Jean. Margot says there were many Jews living in South Africa at this time.

1:40:11 Margot's in-laws were imprisoned at Treblinka. Their application to go to the United States was rejected because of her father-in-law's bad health.

1:43:29 Margot had studied English for three years at school, so she had no problem picking up the language. She says she had less success with Afrikaans.

1:44:24 In South Africa, Margot's father did not work any more. Her brother worked for a jewelry company. Her husband ran his own business.

1:45:35 Margot and husband later had another child, Alfred.

1:45:54 Margot came to the United States in 1962 after her husband had earlier visited his sister in Concord (California?) and fell in love with the place. Margot and her family settled first in San Francisco and later in Daly City, California.

1:47:31 Margot is ashamed that she did not tell her children much about the Holocaust. Later, when her daughter asked about it, Margot told her what she knew of the Holocaust.

1:49:35 The Holocaust will never be erased from Margot's memory. It made her more aware of the evil people do to others, she says.

1:50:16 The one time Margot and her husband went back to Germany, her husband hated the trip. An old school mate of Margot gave them a tour of Margot's hometown.

1:54:42 Margot noted that it seemed strange to see so many foreigners in Frankfurt nowadays.

1:55:33 Margot initially harbored a lot of anger against Germany for what happened to the Jews. She says she still could never return to live in Germany. Margot thinks the reunification of Germany is an awful thing. It will make Germany too strong within a decade.

1:59:01 Margot's husband foresaw the violence that was forthcoming in South Africa. Even though they had an easier life in South Africa, her husband thought it was important for their children to see the other side of the world.

2:01:48 Margot's father had been an officer in the German Army during World War I. He was a member of the imperial guard, an uncommon position for a Jew to hold.

2:03:56 Margot is grateful that she did not have to go through a concentration camp. Margot is angered and frightened by the anti-semitism that is still rampant today.  
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