



From the Testimony of Judith Becker about Children of Mixed Marriages in Germany

In school, in my school, the problem was...I was in a grade of thirty children.

Q: Mixed crowd or only religious children?

A: Totally mixed. Not only were they totally mixed, but half of them, exactly fifteen of my classmates were "*mischlinge*" - children of mixed marriages. And it was a big problem. These were mostly mothers who were Germans, non-Jewish, and the fathers were the ones who were Jewish. There was not a single exception to that. And these children had it from both sides. In the first place, our school was called the "*Juedische Deutsche Volksschule*" of Stettin which was sort of an anachronism because Jewish, yes. "*Volksschule*" means State school which it wasn't - it was private, but it was sanctioned by the State and so there was this anachronism. And all children who were considered Jews had to eventually go there, were eventually kicked into this school. I was in the grade that started more or less voluntarily, but eventually kids were kicked out of the German schools and into this "*Juedische Deutsche Volksschule*". Now in my grade, the fifteen kids who were "*mischlinge*" had it bad from both sides. Their mothers, many of them, were members of the Nazi party, were antisemites who hated Jews and did not want them associating with Jews. On the other hand, parents like my parents and my uncles and so on, didn't want their children associating with these half-Jews, you know. And my father was really the only exception of all of the Jewish parents who said: "You judge the children on an individual basis and don't discriminate against them simply because they happen to be unlucky enough to be born, you know, in a mixed marriage. And there was a girl in my class - there were several girls in my class who were important later on in the story - but one of them, a beautiful blond girl by the name of Helga, and she had invited me over to her house. I mean, she had come to my house and she had invited me over to her house and I got my father's permission to go and I went and at the door her mother, a tall, statuesque blond, greeted me: "*Verfluchtes Juedisches...*What did she call me? *Schmeiss sie sofort raus - die verfluchte*



Juedische sau!" (cursed Jew). This to a friend of her daughter's. Later on, we had a boy by the name of Norbert Zahler whose father was Jewish, mother wasn't, and on the night that we were deported, they were also brought - he and his father and the mother and the younger children were all brought to the prison for deportation because he was apparently of Polish origin, the father. He could have been of Polish origin a generation back like my father was, but they were considered "*Ostjuden*". And at that point, the wife had a chance to renounce her husband as a rapist and as a despoiler of the race - "*rassenschaender*" - and if she officially did that and said that the children she has were because he raped her and the only reason he married her was to despoil the races, then very often she could take the children and would not be deported. Now, Norbert Zahler's mother did that the night that we were being deported. Norbert himself was a tall, totally blond, totally Aryan-looking boy and his mother was sort of a short, shrimpy woman. In any case, she did this and we heard it, I heard it, you know, in front of the policeman and she had to say terrible things about him and denounce him. And so they wrote it all down and they let her go with the children. So she had Norbert and then she had two younger children. She took the younger children and she started to walk away and Norbert walked over to his father. So she came back and she says: "Norbert, *du kommst mit mir*" "Norbert comes with me." And he spat her in the face and he said: "*Du bist nicht mehr meine mutter!*" And he stayed with his father which I'm sure did neither him nor his father in the long run any good, but at the moment, you know, it was for him the right thing to do. I'm mentioning this to show the conflict that existed with some of these mixed marriages.

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