

# ANNETTE MONOD-LEIRIS



Annette visitant au camp de Pithiviers

Credit : Cercil

*Partial translation of the interview conducted in Paris on September 14, 1999.*

*Credits : USHMM*

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## **Summary in English**

Annette Monod-Leiris, born in 1909, discusses her assignments as a social worker in various internment camps, such as Beaune, Drancy, Pithiviers and Voves; her life before the war, teaching in England and working in a workers' home in Evry, France; volunteering for internment camps in both Beaune and Pithiviers; switching from Beaune to the camp in Drancy in 1941; the conditions in Beaune la Rolande, France, including the barracks, over population, toilet facilities, and the food supply; other organizations and institutions represented in the camps; aspects of Pithiviers, including the medical staff, the medical treatment, the permissions for hospital visits, the daily routine of the inmates, and the facilities; aspects of Drancy, including the establishment of her office, her assistants, deportations, executions, layout of the buildings, and the facilities; being fired by the French police for "doing too much" for the inmates; being sent to a camp for communists in Voves, Eure-et-Loir, France; joining the Red Cross for the emergency team in Compiègne, France; how she helped Jews cook to keep Kosher and celebrate important holidays; the living conditions and situation of children at the camps; her participation in the liberation of the Drancy internment camp in 1944; rumors of how prisoners ate organs of the dead to survive; her contact and friendship with Jewish families after the war; and her commitment to Amnesty International. [Time-coded notes in English](#)

## **TAPE 1**

Annette: You must not find many more witnesses. Most of the witnesses are dead.

Interviewer: So we'll start by introducing you. So you were born...

## **Before the war**

Annette: In 1909.

Interviewer: Yes.

Annette: July 1909 in Saint-Quentin in the department of Aisne, my father was the pastor of Saint-Quentin.

Interviewer: And you started working at what age?

Annette: Well, like everyone else I was in school, and then in high school. And I started working after high school. I went to England for a year, because our parents thought that between high school and professional studies, we should do something else. And I went to England to Alderley Edge to teach French in an English school, Western Chapel. So there I worked for a year, teaching French, for French conversation, and then I came back to Paris. Then I started my studies in social work, at the Boulevard Montparnasse school, until I got my state diploma and after the state diploma, I had my first job in Ivry. I was a resident in Ivry. It was a center for large families, there were about 200 families. I was in charge, with a colleague, of prenatal and child protection, home care, and creating activities in this working-class center. So that was my first job. So Ivry, I was a resident in the social center of Ivry. I liked my work very, very much, and then the war came. At first, the children of this center were sent away. We feared all sorts of disasters, at the very beginning. It was a little bit shaky, and then Mrs. Campinchi called me, and summoned me to the Ministry of Justice.

Interviewer: So, who was Mrs. Campinchi?

Annette: Madame Campinchi, Hélène Campinchi, was the wife of César Campinchi. César Campinchi was the Minister of the Navy during the war. And his wife, Hélène Campinchi, was a law professor at the school where I studied social work. She had various jobs, she was assisting her husband at the Ministry of the Navy, and she

was the one who called me. She had known me as a student in the School of Social Work. She was kind enough to have kept a good impression of me. She asked me to join the Navy and to go to Cherbourg to create a center for Navy personnel. So that was the time of Cherbourg with the Navy.

Interviewer: How long did you stay in Cherbourg?

Annette: Well, from the beginning of the war until the Germans arrived. So I created, with a colleague, a residence for sailors. It went very well. We were helped by a quartermaster and two sailors, for the menial work. And we asked the sailors who started to come to this center what they wanted to find in the club house, either for the evenings or for their free time. They said they wanted an ironing board and irons. That was the first thing they asked for. Because they're very strict on the folds of their pants, the sailors, they wanted to iron what they call the chemisette as well, that's the light blue collar with blond braids. So they wanted first of all an ironing board and then to do indoor sports. In the war, indoor sports [01:04:06 Inaudible] is ping-pong, that's all there was. So ping pong, ironing board, various activities, and then they were served very little extra food, which they paid very little for. We had the best quality canned food in the sailors' home. We were...we were allowed to have the canned food of the submarines. In the submarines, you want food that's small in volume and without waste. The best canned goods are kept for the submarines. And we were entitled to the food of the submarines. So very good quality, which we sold very cheaply to the sailors who came to spend their Sunday or evening.

Interviewer: And these sailors were military?

Annette: Yes [01:04:46 Inaudible] who had done their military service in the navy, and since it was war, they were called back, their home port was Cherbourg. So they were in Cherbourg, so they came to Cherbourg to wait for whatever would happen.

Interviewer: There were only French sailors

Annette: Yes.

Interviewer: In this home?

Annette: Oh yes, it was the beginning of the war. So there were only French people, of course. There were some English, but they had their own quarters, they didn't need the French Navy. So with a colleague we created this home for sailors, Place d'Yvette in Cherbourg, which was very popular, the sailors came very willingly, found a library, found hospitality, found extra food, found the possibility, if one of them had talents, to demonstrate himself, to do a little show for his comrades. And we also found something to stimulate them, we asked Mr. Levavasseur, who was the architect of the maritime watch, to come and give a lecture on the old Cherbourg. We tried to find interesting things for the sailors.

Interviewer: Did you live there?

### **Arrival of the Germans**

Annette: I lived in Cherbourg, not in the center, no. I lived in Cherbourg and I used to come to the center, I was in charge of the center, at the reception of the center. For the sailors who came, who had found there a welcoming place, where there was stationery with navy letterhead, envelopes, warmth, the possibility of cheap food, to entertain themselves as they wanted. So it was fine, I didn't do much, they managed among themselves. I listened to those who had things to ask for, and then I created a library, well, all the activities of the center, and it worked very well. And then, the Germans arrived. Then, they told us at the arsenal, I asked at the arsenal, they told us to leave Cherbourg because it was going to be dangerous, the Germans were going to bomb. Imagine the map of Cherbourg, you are told to "go away". To the north, it's the sea on the right and on the left. So go away, where to? To the south was the base where the Germans were stationed, to the north was the sea, what to do? We went to the north anyway, one of my sisters who had come to keep me company. So we went north from Cherbourg and the first town was Martinvast. Martinvast had a castle which was the castle of the Count and Countess of Pourtalès, in Martinvast. I knew them because I am Protestant, they also came to the temple on Sundays, that is how I knew them. They had the castle of Martinvast, and they had said to us if there is an incident, come to take refuge in the castle of Martinvast. So my sister and I left from Cherbourg to Martinvast. It was terrible, there were bombings, the arrival of the Germans, on a bridge, a truck full of Englishmen completely fried, black, fried. Because a high tension wire had fallen on the truck and had burned out all of them. Finally, we arrived in town, at the castle of Martinvast, a ditch in which there were Germans who signaled us to sit with them. And we thought that maybe they were going to kill us, but we had seen so much that it didn't bother us at all. So they invited us to talk to each other, they let us

go, we went to Martinvast, to the castle that was there nearby. There was nobody in the rooms, so we went down to the basement. The Count of Pourtalès had been Mayor of Martinvast for fifty years. So all the people of Martinvast, whenever they had a little trouble, came to the Mayor for help. And that day, the whole village came, in the underground of the castle of Martinvast. My sister and I couldn't find anyone in the castle, so we went into the basement. Then we found... we were dirty, tired, you can imagine. We found the Count de Pourtalès and his wife, and their daughter, having coffee nobly served by their valet. And we -dirty, sweaty, upset- were seated with dignity and served coffee, or tea. And all the peasants were there on the floor, under the protection of Monsieur le Comte. As long as Monsieur le Comte was there, we were protected against everything. Then the Countess of Pourtalès, endured less well than her husband, she moaned "Hubert, Hubert again a cannon shot!" Then Hubert, "My dear lady, you are getting 70 cannon shots for your...no, 101 cannon shots for your 70 years like people of royal blood and you dare to complain." All she could do was keep her mouth shut. Then their daughter, the Countess of Hauteville was there too. So there were all three of them. As soon as it was possible, we came out of the shelters, we went into the castle. We were in the living room the countess, the young countess of Hauteville and my sister and I. We saw a German officer with a badge of arms walking through the park and coming to the living room where we were. He had a revolver and a toothbrush. He went up to the wall of the castle, below the living room where we were, he opened the faucet, he brushed his teeth, washed his face and then afterwards, still with his revolver, he entered the living room, and said to us, "Well, we're the ones who are occupying now, this will be our headquarters, we're going to organize things, we're asking you to prepare sixteen rooms for our officers tomorrow, you're going to

arrange...sixteen rooms for our officers." We got busy. I mean if you want, I mean everybody's telling, if you want details. In short, my sister and I stayed, as long as there was no way to get to Paris, we stayed in the vicinity of Cherbourg, in Martinvast. But we were not able to leave right away. Because there were no trains, we stayed there for a while, very pleasantly in this castle.

Interviewer: With the German officers?

Annette: Yes, we had whatever they had left us, they were victorious, what do you want? Everything went well. It always did. And even if you want a funny story: my sister and I were walking in the park, and we see in a pond some very beautiful water lilies. My sister says, "Oh, I wish I had some! She goes ahead, she tries to pick a water lily, but she had to go into the water, she didn't have anything. Out of a bush that was there, the German officer with a lot of insignia, he had boots, he entered the pond, he picked water lilies and offered them to my sister. I don't know if you can imagine what it was like, my sister was as red as I have ever seen her, she didn't know what to do. It was difficult to refuse this flower that an officer was offering her, but the officer was a German. I have never seen my sister so red in all my life. Finally she was obliged to accept this water lily given by a German officer. What do you want? We had to live with them. After that, time passed, we were able to return to Paris, my sister and I, after a month, there was transportation, and then I was hired by the Red Cross, that was the beginning of my war activity.

Interviewer: Before that, you depended on which administration?



Annette: I reported to a completely private organization, so I was a social worker in Ivry, doing Maternal and Child Protection, living in Ivry, it's a private organization, completely. It's a private work, completely. And it's very, very poorly paid.

Interviewer: A Protestant organization or...?

Annette: No...no...no, it depended on a noble lady called the Princess of Poix. It was a charity founded by Marie-Antoinette, supposedly to protect mothers and babies. It was very poorly paid but very interesting work, a private work altogether. I left when the war broke out and joined the Navy. So here I am, back in Paris, after having left Cherbourg. Of course, the Marine center no longer existed and I returned to Paris, I wasn't going to stay in Cherbourg, the center... So there I went to the Red Cross, and they hired me first for emergency services, especially in Compiègne. You're much too young to know, but there was what was called the northern and southern zones, the forbidden zone. There were people who had left to take refuge from Tergnier, from Noyons, from the north of France, who had gone to take refuge further south. And when they wanted to return home, there was no way: it was a forbidden zone. So in Compiègne, where they were blocked, we created a shelter, a dormitory, to help those who were stranded there, to find a solution and repatriate them.

Interviewer: Refugees?

Annette: French people who had been refugees, who wanted to go home, who couldn't, so we set up a shelter in the train station in Compiègne. I'll skip the details. And we also had to supply the trains of POWs that were leaving. So yes,

during that moment I collaborated, that is to say that when I arrived in Compiègne with a colleague, we were told that it was the NSV - Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt- that created a shelter for the people who were passing through and for the trains. The people who were stuck in the trains, it was the NSV that provided the service with a cart and two prisoners of war. And the NSV -Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt- is the German aid organization.

(phone call)

I collaborated with the NSV, because they took care of the refugees who passed through Compiègne very well. But the Red Cross told me « Go and find the management of the NSV, and say that now we are here, we don't need them anymore. » Because that was the time when it was said, "Abandoned population, trust the German soldiers." So the Red Cross said to me, « we don't want the NSV to do this anymore, go tell the NSV "We Red Cross, we're here and we're replacing you." » Which was done, so I went to the NSV, I saw a character, who had a fancy name, his name was Reich Master von Thurn und Taxis, just that. So I saw him, I said, "Well, we are the Red Cross, so you the NSV..." so he understood perfectly, and for a while he even provided, for the team that we were, he provided service every day, as for the NSV, a coffee cart, a broth cart, to supply the trains of prisoners of war that were passing by and that we tried to help. The NSV left and we, the Red Cross, replaced them and did the emergency service at Compiègne, until...

Interviewer: Was there already a camp in Compiègne?

Annette: No. There were prisoners of war, yes, the POW camp, Jeanne D'Arc military barracks. Obviously, Compiègne - Jeanne D'Arc, you see why they were there. So it was the Jeanne D'Arc barracks, it was a prisoner of war camp, French prisoners of war. Every day, we were given two soldiers to help us, two prisoners to help us. As if by chance, they would escape. We were given two others. It must be said that at the very beginning of the war, the Germans had too many military prisoners. They didn't know what to do with them, so one would escape or leave quite easily. So they gave us two men every day to help us. Every day they disappeared, we were given two more without any problem. So that lasted for a while, then we managed to repatriate everyone, to empty this shelter.

#### **May 1941- First roundups | Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande**

Then I returned to Paris and soon enough, there was the issue of arrests of Jews. One day Pucheu, who was Minister of the Interior, decided to arrest the foreign Jews who were in St. Gervais in what was called at the time the Paris ghetto, in the Rue des Rosiers neighborhood. They were foreign Jews, some of whom, most of them, did not know French, and some of them only knew Yiddish, not even Polish. They were almost all Polish. I mean, it was very much the ghetto. And I must admit that we could understand why, in wartime, foreigners who had no reasonable ties were arrested. Besides, English women had been arrested, it was not only... obviously, when war breaks out there are all sorts of measures to take. In these measures, all foreigners staying in Paris or in the region were arrested, including English women. Actually, that doesn't concern us, it's the Jews that we are concerned with. So the foreign Jews were arrested, and Pucheu ordered the

arrest, and at the same time he told the Red Cross, "I had them arrested, but I would be willing to allow two social workers to go and help them in the camps. " So there you go, he arrests them, and he says, "Come and get them help." At the Red Cross, they tell us that. They tell us, "Are there any volunteers to go to the camps that Pucheu has just created?" So I raised my hand, I said, "I volunteer!"

Interviewer: You were in Paris at that time?

Annette: I was in Paris, Red Cross.

Interviewer: And do you remember when that was? Was it long after? Shortly after?

Annette: Wait! So it was the arrest of the foreign Jews, it was in '41 or '42, I don't know.

Interviewer: I think you told me May 1941.

Annette: What?

Interviewer: May 41.

Annette: May 41, yes! May 41...



Pithiviers : Arrival of the men arrested during the roundup of the Billet Vert (May 14, 1941)

Credit : Cercil-Mémorial de la Shoah

<https://www.musee-memorial-cercil.fr/pithiviers-beaune-la-rolande/>

Interviewer: So the first big round-up of foreign Jews.

Annette: Not a very big roundup. No. Only the foreign Jews from the Rue des Rosiers. From the Jewish quarter, exactly. So there, yes, May 41, you are right. A colleague and I, Yvonne Cochet and I, were volunteers. We both left for the Loiret. I went to Beaune, she to Pithiviers.

She, very generous and very chic, immediately filed a report against the manager of the Pithiviers camp, saying that he was scheming. So she was wrong to do this in writing, she was fired. And I...

Interviewer: Was she right?

Annette: Yes, but she was wrong to say it in writing. You must never put things in writing, you must say them orally. She was wrong to put it in writing. So she was fired. And I was left all alone, but I stayed. So there I started the camps in Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande, as a social worker. And the first thing that struck me as a necessity, in the camps, when you are in a camp, you have to look around you to see what there is to do, you see ? I looked around and I realized, the first real concern was the kosher issue, the kosher food issue. Some of these men who, I repeat, were foreigners - Polish for the most part and very little francized - did not want to eat because the food was not kosher. Surely you know what that is. Even the pots were unholy because one day there was a mixture of meat and... well. I thought it was a little ridiculous, I told them "Listen, in wartime, eat the little you are given. " They would not hear it.

Interviewer: But you knew about the food rites before the war?

Annette: No, I learned like that, by chance, I knew no more than the others.

Interviewer: You had not been in contact with Jewish families in your work before?

Annette: No. Very few, in my house, I saw only one Jewish family, we didn't think about it, it was not at all...

Interviewer: Excuse me, were there only men in that camp?

Annette: Yes. Foreign men. And most of them were Polish, and some of them didn't even know Polish, speaking only Yiddish, very attached to the traditions. So I saw that the important thing for them at that time was the kosher food, that they refused to eat because the food was not kosher. I told them you are being a little ridiculous. But there was an incident, some of these Jews became seriously ill from lack of food. They were hospitalized, in the hospital of Beaune-la-Rolande, where I was staying. A sister was in charge of the hospital. The sister was explained by the Jews who had fallen ill from starvation why their food was kosher. She understood, she was explained by the Jews how to make kosher food, she bought new pots and pans and she made kosher food very honestly, so that these foreign Jews could eat. I think that was rather nice. In wartime, a nun, a Catholic nun, of course, who makes kosher food in all good faith, in every detail, to feed the foreign Jews. I told myself that I had not understood anything, by telling them that they should eat, on the contrary, it was necessary to change things. So since I was convinced, I went to the management. It was the Gendarmerie. I really enjoyed working with the gendarmes of the Gendarmerie, much more than with the few officers of the Police. With the gendarmes, we got along very well. So, I saw the chief gendarme and I said to him: "Here, we have to find a solution. There is a solution, it is to give those who are practicing their food uncooked. The Red Cross will donate a large pot and a large basin... well... a washtub and a large pot. They will make their own kosher food. You, Management, will give them their uncooked food, they will make their own food." That's how they ate. And then, afterwards, I also took care of the religious matters. They wanted to celebrate their end-of-year holidays, and I went to see the Grand Rabbi, in Paris, to get... that they be given what they needed to celebrate their

holidays. I realized that, in order for them to be morally strong, they had to celebrate their worship. So I helped them to install the Jewish cult in the camp. I, a French Protestant, set up...

Interviewer: That was at Beaune-la-Rolande?

Annette: At Beaune-la-Rolande and Drancy, the same way on both sides.

Interviewer: So, between May 1941...

## **TAPE 2**



Shabbat celebration at the Pithiviers camp, 1941  
Credit: [Musée National de l'Immigration](#)





Interior of a barrack converted into a synagogue in the Beaune-la-Rolande camp, 1942

Credit: [Archives du Loiret](#)

Annette: So my first job in the camp was to establish the possibility of Jewish worship, and for the Yom Kippur holidays, in particular. And that they could have their special food, I won't go into details. But I set out to help the Jews to worship.

Interviewer: Do you remember more specifically your visit to the Grand Rabbi in Paris? Do you have any memories?

Annette: Yes, not very... what was his name<sup>1</sup>? It was on rue de la Victoire... I forgot his name. Anyway, I saw him, I had to provide the necessities for the Yom

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<sup>1</sup> Julien Weill (1873-1950)

Kippur celebrations, and I wasn't allowed to carry them. Since I was not Jewish, I was not supposed to touch it. So we had to get the Grand Rabbi to delegate Jews to go to the station up to Pithiviers and Beaune, to receive objects of worship from the gendarmes of Pithiviers and Beaune - gendarmes who were accompanied by Jews. So, gendarmes accompanied by Jews to the station in Pithiviers and Beaune, to receive from the Grand Rabbi, the necessary items for their worship in September, for the celebrations of Kippur. Well, that was my first activity, and then my second activity was what I call special cases. I received the men in a barracks at my disposition, to study each one's case, and to ask Paris, the Red Cross, or the charities, to help materially such and such a person who needed it, you see, liaison from family to family. So, all that worked quite well. And then there was the arrest of the French Jews. So, that's when there was the arrest of the French Jews. Those who were called « the lawyers of the sixteenth arrondissement ». Anyway, it was the creation of Drancy, it must have been October 41.

Interviewer: 1941

Annette: I was transferred...

Interviewer: So we'll stay...

Annette: I was at Beaune-la-Rolande, I was transferred to Drancy.

Interviewer: Do you have more precise memories about the living conditions in Beaune-la-Rolande?

Annette: Yes, of course.

Interviewer: Can you tell us a little bit about it?



Interior of a barrack in the Pithiviers camp

Credit : Cercil Memorial

Annette: The men were in barracks with bunks, obviously with blankets. Only barracks, very few hygienic conditions. Outside, there were sinks, you know the zinc half-cylinders with cold water taps. So they could wash themselves with cold

water, they were as clean as they could be. The food, of course, was mediocre, but you didn't starve. And at the time of the Yom Kippur holidays, the Jewish organizations in Paris... what were they called? The school colony on rue Amelot, etc., provided the special food needed to celebrate the holidays. So, with a little bit of supplies coming from outside, from the Jewish charities, a little bit of supplies coming from the Red Cross, so that, with the supplies from the camp kitchen every day, it was just about sufficient but, well, we weren't starving. There was just the bare minimum, but they weren't starving.

Interviewer: And where did you live? You lived...

Annette: I lived in the hospital in Beaune-la-Rolande, where I had a room. And I came to the camp every day, either to Pithiviers or to Beaune-la-Rolande every day. I spent my day in the camp...

Interviewer: You took the train? Where did you go?

Annette: No, there was no train. There was on foot, between Pithiviers and Beaune, and sometimes by car, but mostly on foot. I was a vigorous young woman, a very good walker, and I did Pithiviers-Beaune with ease.

Interviewer: And you had a barrack as an office for the social center in the camps?

Annette: Yes. When I arrived, I entered the barracks, I was still very young. I must admit that I was a bit impressed by all these men who were half-naked, who

seemed to me very hairy, very dark. I was a little bit uncomfortable. I told myself that it was not my place to go into the barracks. So I never went into the barracks. I asked the captain of the Gendarmerie who commanded the camp to assign me a barracks for me, like an office. And also two secretaries who knew the language, Yiddish and Polish, because I don't know Yiddish or Polish. And most of the men who were there did not know French, so I needed an interpreter. I had two, Goldberg and Goldstein, I used to say "they are my golden men" who helped me a lot, who walked back and forth between the camp and my barracks, who accompanied the men and then acted as interpreters. Since I don't know Yiddish.

Interviewer: C'étaient des détenus?

Annette: Des détenus oui, internés, on ne disait pas détenus en ce temps là, on disait internés.



Interviewer: Were they young men or older men?

Annette: Oh yes, young and they were very good, they helped me a lot. I couldn't have handled it without them. [Inaudible] I couldn't. So, they were going back and forth and they helped me a lot, a lot. Then came Drancy, I was transferred from Pithiviers-Beaune-la-Rolande to Drancy where I settled. So in Pithiviers, there was Mademoiselle Rolland<sup>2</sup>, who was a social worker, who lived in Pithiviers and who succeeded me for Pithiviers and Beaune.

Interviewer: Do you remember the other people who... the other organizations that worked in the camps?

Annette: There were the delegates from the school camp on rue Amelot, Mr. Rapaport<sup>3</sup>.

Interviewer: So that was a Jewish organization?

Annette: Yes.

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<sup>2</sup> Madeleine Rolland (1891-1964) <http://www.pithiviers.fr/fr/information/86508/grands-hommes-pithiviers>

<sup>3</sup> David Rapaport (1883-1944) On June 1, 1943, he was arrested at 36 rue Amelot following a tip-off. Incarcerated at the Romainville fort, where he was admired by all, he was taken to Drancy on October 6, 1943 and deported the next day on convoy 60 to Auschwitz, where he died of exhaustion on July 2, 1944.

Interviewer: Was there a Protestant organization?

Annette: No.

Interviewer: There was only the Red Cross?

Annette: There was only the Red Cross. So when Drancy arrived, I was transferred from the Loiret to Drancy. And in the Loiret, it was Mademoiselle Rolland, who lived in Pithiviers, who was appointed social worker for Pithiviers and Beaune.

Interviewer: So a lady from the Red Cross.

Annette: A lady from...

Interviewer: Well, a social worker.

Annette: A social worker from the Red Cross, Mademoiselle Rolland, who was from Pithiviers, who replaced me when I was transferred to Drancy.

Interviewer: Were there also nurses who worked with you?

Annette: No.

Interviewer: How were the medical issues dealt with?



Annette: There was a doctor in Pithiviers, who was working in Pithiviers and Beaune, I forget his name. He was very, very, very good. He treated the Jews admirably, having as many as possible admitted to the nuns' hospital, and treating them very well. I have forgotten his name, it's a pity. Afterwards, he distinguished himself in the Resistance.

Interviewer: Were there visits from the families?

Annette: Yes, there were family visits and, brace yourself, there were even leaves and people came back. They had no idea how it would turn out.

RU/FE  
MINISTÈRE  
DE L'INTÉRIEUR

DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE  
DE LA  
POLICE NATIONALE

ÉTAT FRANÇAIS

11.739  
le 26 JAN. 1942 194

Réf. P.N. II - N° 27012

LE MINISTRE  
SECRÉTAIRE D'ÉTAT À L'INTÉRIEUR

à Monsieur le PRÉFET RÉGIONAL d'ORLÉANS  
(Cabinet)

CONFIDENTIEL

OBJET : Surveillance du camp d'Israélités de PITHIVIERS.

*cab. d'ext.*  
Monsieur le Commissaire Général aux Questions  
Juives me transmet la lettre dont ci-dessous copie, rela-  
tive à la surveillance du camp d'Israélites de PITHIVIERS.

MINISTÈRE DE L'INTÉRIEUR

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COMMISSARIAT GÉNÉRAL  
AUX QUESTIONS JUIVES

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C.A. N° 225  
X.V./O.D.

ÉTAT FRANÇAIS

Le 19 Janvier, 1942

CONFIDENTIEL

"D'après des renseignements qui me parviennent  
"le Commandant du camp de PITHIVIERS laisserait beau-  
"coup de facilités aux israélites qu'il est chargé de  
"surveiller.

"Les juifs iraient voir leurs femmes, principa-  
lement à l'Hôtel du Gatinais. Il leur délivrerait des

.....

"laissez-passer, et les enverrait à PARIS faire  
"des achats pour ses besoins personnels.

"Exemple : ces jours derniers, il a donné un  
"laissez-passer à un tailleur du nom de [REDACTED], N° ma-  
"tricule 687, pour aller à PARIS. Il l'a fait porter  
"couchant au Camp n° 3, alors qu'il était permission-  
"naise, afin que le poste de garde n'ait pas à le  
"porter comme tel."

Signé : Xavier VALLAT.

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DU MINISTRE, SECRÉTAIRE D'ÉTAT A L'INTÉRIEUR,

Per autorisation

*Rapchinsky*

Interviewer: That's incredible!

Annette: Yes, the captain [inaudible], who was in command of the camp, as a Red Cross captain, was giving out leaves, to the men for family reasons. And they would come back, I want to say "those fools," they had no idea how things would turn out.

Interviewer: What were the daily activities of these prisoners?

Annette: In the camp, cleaning the camp, but that's all.

Interviewer: That's all, there were no activities like the ones you described for the marine hostels?

Annette: Much less but yes, I managed to create a small library. With the rue Amelot, a little cafeteria at the time of the holidays to have the food required,

---

<sup>4</sup> Confidential "According to information that I have received, the Commandant of the Pithiviers camp allows the Israelites he is in charge of monitoring a great deal of freedom. The Jews reportedly go to see their wives, mainly at the Hôtel du Gâtinais. He reportedly issues them passes, and sends them to Paris to make purchases for personal needs."





you know what it's called, max<sup>5</sup>...  
what do I know? So no, we couldn't  
have much activity, there weren't  
many possibilities. And then quite  
soon, there was the creation of the  
Drancy camp. It was for foreign Jews  
(sic), they said it was for « the  
16th arrondissement lawyers ». So I  
was transferred to Drancy.

A Mademoiselle Monot (sic)

qui représente pour nous,

étrangers, la vraie France.

F. Zber<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Matzo balls?

<sup>6</sup> To Miss Monot (sic) who represents for us, foreigners, the true France.

Fizel Zylberberg known as Zber (born in 1909) was a painter and engraver. He lived at 32 rue du Four in the 6th arrondissement. He was deported from Pithiviers to Auschwitz on July 17, 1942 by convoy 6. His wife, Sténia Bonder, born Guta Rosenstein, was a member of the M.O.I. network and was deported on February 3, 1944 by convoy 67. Neither of them returned from the camps. c.f.

Beaune la Rolande. October 1941



Fiszel Zber (3rd from the left) and his friends from the Warsaw Academy of Arts circa 1936.  
On the far right is Ilya Schor. Ilya Schor and his wife Resia emigrated to the United States in October 1941.  
They had two daughters: the artist Mira Schor and the literary critic Naomi Schor.  
Credit: [Mira Schor](#)

---

<http://lestemoins.fr/content/fiszel-zylberberg-dit-zber> et <https://www.mahj.org/fr/programme/zber-portraits-de-beaune-la-rolande-1941-15998>

**Drancy (Decembre 1941- May 1942)**

As in Pithiviers and Beaune, I wanted to create a small office for everyone, to make my office. And then, it was astounding! I, a little social worker, without the slightest rank, had as my assistant a State Counselor, a Counselor at the Court of Cassation, in short, people who were extremely more knowledgeable than I was. And I was the one who had to organize that.

Interviewer: And these were French Jews?

Annette: Yes, it was French Jews, in particular lawyers, a large number of lawyers.

Interviewer: Do you have memories of any particular individual, names ?





From the right: 1st Senator Masse and 3rd Solicitor Cremieux  
Crédit : CC BY-SA 3.0 DE

Annette: Yes, there was Pierre Masse who was a State Counselor, there was Crémieux who was a lawyer, there was François Lyon-Caen<sup>7</sup> who was a lawyer at the Court of Cassation. Here, I'll mention a detail, François Lyon-Caen was deported and did not come back, he had a son, Pierre, who was 3 years old when his father was deported. And I have always remained in contact with them. And Pierre Lyon-Caen was 3 years old and he does not remember his father. But I never forgot his father, whom I had had as a secretary. I stayed in touch with Pierre Lyon-Caen, I

---

<sup>7</sup> François Lyon-Caen (born in 1905) lived at 3 bvd Emile-Augier. He was released from Drancy initially. He then became one of the leaders of the UGIF and was rounded up at its headquarters on August 31, 1943. He was deported by convoy 59 on September 2, 1943.

am still in touch with Pierre Lyon-Caen and his wife and family. He became a friend to me. So I knew his father, and he doesn't remember, he was only 3 years old, so he likes it when I talk to him about his father. So I'm a little part of the family. I'm going to skip that. To put it in public, maybe not. Because François Lyon-Caen still practices law... no, Pierre Lyon-Caen. I think it's better not to put that part. Because I didn't ask Pierre Lyon-Caen for the right to tell this. I think it's better ... okay? You'll avoid that part.

Interviewer: Very well.

Annette: Do you hear me?

Interviewer: Yes.

Annette: Because Pierre might say to me, "What right did you have?"

Interviewer: So, what other lawyers do you remember at that time?

Annette: Crémieux, and let's see... there was one who was in the theater<sup>8</sup>... you know I forget, huh... I'm 90 years old.

Interviewer: That's okay. So do you have any recollection of other inmates at that time?

---

<sup>8</sup> Was it René Blum (1878-1942), brother of Léon, and founder of the Ballets Russes de Monte-Carlo? He was deported from Drancy on September 23, 1942 by convoy 36.

Annette: My office was made up mainly of lawyers and business executives. There was a company CEO. It was quite odd, I was a small assistant without many diplomas. I was helped by people who were much more competent than me. Unfortunately it didn't last, I was fired. I was fired for being overly active<sup>9</sup>.

Interviewer: For over activity, what does that mean?

Annette: Yes, I did, I passed letters, I helped, I did more than what was asked of me, I was fired.

Interviewer: Fired by ... ?

Annette: By the camp management, by the Police manipulated by the Germans of course.

Interviewer: But it was the French who were guarding the camp at that time?

Annette: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: Were there any Germans?

Annette: The police. With the gendarmes of Beaune-la-Rolande, I got along very well. With the police in Drancy, not so well.

---

<sup>9</sup> In their book *A l'intérieur de camp de Drancy*, A. Wievorka and M. Laffitte explain that the vice-president of the UGIF, André Baur, asked the Germans for the same possibilities of intervention that the Red Cross had at Drancy. Dannecker gave the order to close the Red Cross branch on February 16, 1942, forcing Annette to leave the premises. She was replaced by Cécile Grinberg, a social worker from the UGIF.

Interviewer: And there were no gendarmes in Drancy?

Annette: No. With the gendarmes, sometimes they passed me things and I helped. With the police, I did not have a good contact with the police. So I was fired.

Interviewer: Excuse me, were there only men at Drancy at that time?

Annette: Only men. French men.

Interviewer: French men?

Annette: French men.

Interviewer: So there, your opinion began to change because in fact...

Annette: I saw that it was taking a bad turn. Until then, foreigners who were not in compliance, it was acceptable. But then, I saw how it was turning out, I had no idea. I was terrified.

Interviewer: And you have...

Annette: I helped as much as I could. Too much, of course, because I was fired.

Interviewer: When were you fired?

Annette: Let's see, I started in December when the camp was created and I was there until the following spring. What was the date? I don't remember. In May, something like that.

Interviewer: Had there already been deportations?

Annette: No

Interviewer: No. That was before...

Annette: There were executions.

Interviewer: Executions?

Annette: Yes. When a German was killed in the street, hostages were taken from Drancy.

Interviewer: Do you have a specific memory of...

Annette: Yes. I remember a man, I received him, he was running a funeral business. And he gave me a little calendar, in September, saying, "This is the Jewish holidays and the whole year, let me give you this calendar." Schneeberg [orth?] his name was. " So enjoy it!" He wanted me to advertise for his Schneeberg funeral home. I said, "Well, look, first of all, I don't want to die. Second, I'm not Jewish, you know." He had a little smile. Anyway, I smiled a little bit, it wasn't very charitable. And then, the next day or two after that,

there was a German killed in the streets. They took hostages, including Schneeberg<sup>10</sup>, who courageously, valiantly left, leading the others. I was ashamed to have judged him a bit hastily.

---

<sup>10</sup> Was it Edouard Schneeberg (13/4/1876) who owned a funeral home at 43 rue de la Victoire? However, the latter was not shot at Mont-Valérien but deported from Drancy by convoy 58 on July 31, 1943.

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Interviewer: They were executed at Drancy proper or...?

Annette: No, no, they were taken to Mont Valérien.

Interviewer: Do you remember the departures of these hostages?

Annette: Oh no! I wasn't always there, you see? Schneeberg and others, the Police took them away. I didn't see them leave. But it was, if you will, they would say to each other, "The chicken coop is closed, we're coming to get a chicken on market day."

Interviewer: That's what they would say?

Annette: Yes, that's what the Jews were saying. What to do about it? So I got fired...

Interviewer: Wait, can you describe Drancy a little bit at that time?

Annette: Drancy at that time...

Interviewer: It was a strange camp.

Annette: Yes, it was stairs, stairs leading to unfinished floors, in particular, no flooring, you see? Rough edges, bricks coming out, I don't really know what. So there were stairs, a stairmaster and internees in various rooms. I went there the day I arrived, and then I said to myself, "This is not my place. First of



all, I can't go and see them in the rooms, it's impossible. Secondly, there are too many of them. I have to organize an office." So I never went to the stairs again. There were heads of stairs who represented all the interneers on their floor. And they were the ones who came to tell me, "You have to see so-and-so." They were the ones who sorted out those who came to see me. The leaders were the heads of the staircases, by staircase.

Interviewer: And there, you were the only one working?

Annette: With the help of my assistants who were lawyers. I, a simple little state graduate, I had lawyers at the Court of Cassation, and others, to help me as secretaries.

Interviewer: And, were there other organizations that helped?

Annette: From outside, yes. Especially at the time of the holidays, for supplies.

Interviewer: So the same one that you mentioned before?

Annette: That's right.

Interviewer: The Amelot committee?

Annette: The school colony on rue Amelot, in particular. That's what helped the most.

Interviewer: And otherwise, there was the Red Cross and that was it?

Annette: Yes. The Red Cross, and then some Jewish charities.

Interviewer: I'll ask the same question again. Were there any visits?

Annette: No. But there were, you see, the men referred to as "the lawyers and people of the 16th arrondissement," one of their complaints was that they couldn't get clean shirts and a clean collar. They washed with cold water in their washbasin, but they claimed that you couldn't have a perfectly clean shirt collar if you washed with cold water in a washbasin. They were bothered by this. So with the help of the Red Cross, the details would be too much, we organized a laundry exchange. A truck came to Place Jean-Jaurès, twice a week. The men gave their share of dirty laundry, the women came to Place Jean-Jaurès, took the packages of dirty laundry, handed in parcels, because they had the right to parcels, and took the laundry back to be washed and brought the next day. There were two or three days of services at Place Jean-Jaurès, with Red Cross trucks and me.

Interviewer: They were the prisoners' wives?

Annette: Yes. The wives of the internees - we didn't say detainees, we said internees - the wives of the internees brought us packages and clean laundry and took the dirty laundry.

Interviewer: And do you have any memories of these women?

Annette: Oh, women... a lot of women who came for that. No. A crowd, what do you expect? Women who came in numbers. They would take their package and they would bring back the other one. No, I can't remember those women, only that I would go. If you want some funny details: I was helped -along the bank of the canal, there was a kind of pavilion with a man who was there to help potential drowning people- well, the man who was there to help the drowning people helped us to put the packages in the truck and to take out the packages. I mean, we were doing what we could but as it came up, you know.

Interviewer: Your office in Drancy, do you remember which floor it was on?

Annette: On the first floor. In the corner that we call the red castle, near the toilets. If you see the Drancy camp, it was on the far right, at the very end, in the corner. Where there was the restrooms. So, you see, there was my office, it overlooked the barbed wire.



The red castle (or restrooms) just in front of which was Annette's office in Drancy  
Credit: Yad Vashem

Interviewer: Were there any Germans? Do you remember any Germans?

Annette: No.

Interviewer: There were only French?

Annette: The police, yes.

Interviewer: Did you have any contact with these French administrators?

Annette: Yes. Not very good. Better with the Gendarmerie. There were Police and Gendarmerie. I always got along well with the gendarmes and moderately with the police. If you want a little detail, one day, my office -it's in December- my office is heated. So much the better. The next day, I was summoned to the Police to tell me "Your office was heated yesterday! Was it nice? Do you want it to be heated today?"

"Oh no! Even in the infirmary nobody has heat, why would I ask to have heat?" So I said no. Then I left and a gendarme, whom I had known in Beaune, caught up with me and said "You were right, you know! It was a trap to say that Mademoiselle Monod asked for the heat when no one had any.

But I wasn't fooled, I said I didn't want heat.

Interviewer: Where were you living at the time?

Annette: I was living in Paris, I was in the neighborhood of... I used to commute almost every day, from Paris to Drancy by bus. There was a bus that took me there very easily. So I was dismissed, it sickened me. First of all, I had done a lot of work, and then I was so disturbed by everything I had seen, everything I could foresee that I had to take a break.

## **Camp of Vosves for Communists**

And then, when I was better, I was sent back to a camp, but it was a communist camp. The camp of Voves in the Eure-et-Loir where there were French communists, and Spanish red refugees, and young people who, for crime, had sold in the street the Avant-Garde which was the official organization of the communist youth. They were arrested, and they were in the communist camp of Voves.

Interviewer: And there the conditions of detention were the same as what you had seen?

Annette: Yes. About the same as with the Jews. But without deportation.

Interviewer: Without deportation.

Annette: That's the most important part, without deportation.

## **The Vél' d'Hiv' roundup (July 1942)**

Interviewer: And, you knew when the deportations started?

Annette: Yes. So I was in the camp of... in the camps for Jews... no, the camps for communists. Then there was the Vel d'Hiv, so there I knew it, I went there, I saw that one could do absolutely nothing on the spot, there was pandemonium... well, a mixture... I am looking for my words. Everything was jumbled, no organization possible. There were too many people, it was not possible! But I was

told that they were going to direct them to Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande, which had been emptied by the deportations. They had hastily deported the foreign Jews from Pithiviers and Beaune to make room for the overflow of the Vel d'Hiv.

Interviewer: So that's when you knew that the camps were being emptied?

Annette: Perfectly!

Interviewer: Not before?

Annette: Not before. I found out at that time, at the time of the Vel d'Hiv, when they made room in Pithiviers and Beaune, to put the people from the Vel d'Hiv. So, I went back to Pithiviers and Beaune, to welcome these people who came from the Vel d'Hiv.

### **Camp of Voves for communists (2)**

Interviewer: Let's stay maybe a little bit on these communist camps.

Annette: Yes.

Interviewer: So you were there for a short time?

Annette: Communist camps, oh I was there for a year. It was going very well, I liked my work very much. I was very much helped by my... as always I had an

office, I took men to help me, right? To go into the barracks, it was not my place to go into the barracks.

Interviewer: There were only men?

Annette: Only men. Yes. And it was not bad, really not bad. There were visits, there were leaves, it was not bad. Library, art clubs, in short, we created a little life inside the camp and there was no danger of deportation.

Interviewer: And these men did not work, they were not made to work?

Annette: No.

Interviewer: No. They were not subjected...

Annette: Camp chores, but that's it. No. So I would help by bringing books for the library, bringing a little bit of food supplies. And then I got fired, you'll never guess why. My secretary escaped in my trunk.

Interviewer: Ah!

Annette: Well, yes.

Interviewer: But with your complicity?



Annette: Not really. I used to come periodically with a wicker trunk, in which we brought books for the library or parcels. One day, I had a secretary, who helped me a lot, who was very nice. His name was Léger Adolphe, he was the secretary of a communist deputy from Seine-et-Marne. Léger Adolphe was my secretary. And so I had a wicker trunk in which I brought, among other things, books for the library. And he realized that with a wicker trunk, if he unhooked the copper fittings that joined the lid and the trunk, he could lock himself in. So one day, I had left my trunk, because it needed to be repaired, he had it repaired, he put himself in it, he had told the men on duty, that we should take the trunk with the books of Miss Monod to the station to send it to her. So, some men, without the knowledge of the management and mine and everyone else' s, took the basket, the trunk, and carried it to the Beaune-la-Rolande train station, not Beaune-la-Rolande, let's see... the Jews are...

Interviewer: It was in the Eure-et-Loir.

Annette: Yes. Voves, the Eure-et-Loir, at the Vosves station. And her daughter, who was there as an accomplice, opens the trunk, takes dad out, takes a ticket for dad and everyone leaves. But the trunk was there, it was the trunk of Mademoiselle Monod. When Mademoiselle Monod arrived, she was told: "Your secretary escaped in your trunk, you are an accomplice!" And then the Police questioned me all day. It's not funny to be questioned by the police, you know? We reconstructed the crime, we showed that with my trunk, it was possible. They wanted to take me for questioning in... but I protested, I struggled. They agreed to let me go. But I was not allowed to enter the camp anymore, I was fired.

Interviewer: And when was that? Do you remember when that was?

Annette: Let's see... No, I don't remember.

Interviewer: Was it before or after the Vel d'Hiv?

Annette: It must have been after. You know I've already said all the things. But now, I say it again, I am old, I forget.

Interviewer: It's not very important...

### **TAPE 3**

#### **Drancy 1941-1942 (2)**

[from 00:23]

Interviewer: So

Annette: It was good in Drancy. One day, I arrive and François Lyon-Caen, my secretary, prevents me from entering my office. I say "But come on, it's cold, let me in!" "There's a dead man in your office! "What?" "Yes, there has been a death. It's the first one, and there's no morgue yet, so your office is a room, so we put the dead man in your office."

That was meant to make me want to leave. So I went in, I saw this man lying on the floor on a blanket. My inmates, my men, my secretaries, including François Lyon-Caen, put chairs around him with blankets and I stayed there all day to tell them, "You can't have me like that! I was determined to do my job, I am doing my job! Even if there's a dead guy in my office."

Interviewer: Who was this dead man?

Annette: A Jew among the others.

Interviewer: They tried to put him there to make you leave?

Annette: To get me to leave.

Interviewer: And that was from...

Annette: Police action. It was the police who put this in my office. But they didn't get me that easily. I continued to do my job.

Interviewer: Why did they want you to leave?

Annette: But because I could see what was going on, that they suspected that I was passing on letters. And I was a witness. I was a witness, so I was an inconvenience. They ended up firing me because I was definitely passing letters. And that was already prohibited.

## **Vél' d'Hiv' roundup and the Loiret camps**

Interviewer: So, let's go back to the Vel' d'Hiv. So, you go there in what capacity?

Annette: It was a Sunday. The Red Cross notified me [inaudible] I put on my Red Cross uniform, I rushed there but I saw that there was no possibility to organize anything. It was chaos, the crowd. There was no organization possible because there were too many people. So I was told, "But they are being sent immediately to Pithiviers and Beaune.

So I went to Beaune to prepare the arrival, since there were children. To prepare the arrival. To prepare the arrival as best I could. We were a small group of Red Cross to prepare and welcome them. So there... I'm starting to run out of steam a bit.

Interviewer: Take your time, we can stop.

Interviewer 2: Would you like a glass of water?

Annette: No, I'm going to rest for a minute

[pause]

Annette: To organize the arrival of those from the Vel' d'Hiv', right? So, the men were deported first, so that left the women and children. The conditions in

which they were settled were appalling. The children were lying sometimes directly on the straw, without a straw mattress. And the skin of babies and children is very sensitive: their skin was immediately damaged by the straw. So they had strangles, impetigo, damaged skin. We don't have anything to take care of them with. It was pretty shameful to see children in that condition because, pretty soon, the men were deported and then the women. There was a period when the children were left alone. So that is something terrible. Both in Pithiviers and in Beaune. And in Pithiviers, there was Mademoiselle Hautval<sup>11</sup>. Mademoiselle Hautval was from the Montbéliard region. She had been arrested because she had, although not Jewish, worn the star and then across it - the Germans had arrested her because of this - a white band on which was written "Friend of the Jews!" She was arrested as a friend of the Jews. She was not Jewish at all. She was in fact a Protestant.



Adelaide Hautval was forced to wear her homemade insignia when she was deported to Auschwitz.  
Credit: [Yad Vashem](#)

She was from the Montbéliard region, she was arrested as a "friend of the Jews", she found herself in Pithiviers. As she was a nurse, she admirably cared for the children who died in Pithiviers. There was an epidemic of diphtheria, there was not enough serum, there were deaths. So there were small graves in the cemetery

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<sup>11</sup> Dr. Adelaide Hautval was deported to Birkenau where she witnessed the inhumane medical experiments perpetrated by Mengele. On May 18, 1965, Yad Vashem recognized Adelaide Hautval as [Righteous Among the Nations](#).

of Pithiviers. Miss Hautval did everything she could for the children, but they were deported. I saw deportations of children alone. And we never knew exactly, once the women were deported, how many children we had. Imagine, you're the gendarme, you're in charge of roll call. You have a bunch of kids around you. You yell "Goldberg!" Usually they called him Toto or Jojo: he doesn't answer. So, how do you manage to make the roll call properly? There are kids all over the place. We never knew exactly, once the parents were deported, how many children were left.

Israélites étrangers dont 875 hommes  
566 femmes  
504 enfants,

venant des Maisons d'arrêt de Nevers, Chalon sur Marne, Auxerre, Autun, Dijon, Pontarlier, Orléans, Langres, Mouline, Hauteville Bourg et diverses localités, proches de la ligne de démarcation convoyés par la Gendarmerie. La plupart de ces personnes belges et hollandais pour la plupart, avaient tenté de franchir la ligne sans laisser-passer, portant sur eux argent et bijoux. Ils ont quitté le camp quelques jours après leur arrivée.

a)-Israélites étrangers remis aux Autorités Allemandes pour être dirigés sur la frontière Lorraine : Fouille effectuée au départ par des inspecteurs de la P.J.Q.J.

Départ du 2 Août : 940 femmes - 55 enfants

Départ du 6 Août : 42 hommes- 387 femmes- 314 enfants

b)-Pour le camp de Drancy :

Départ du 15 Août : 5 hommes - 218 femmes - 1054 enfants

" 22 " : 229 " - 197 femmes - 779 -d°-

" 25 " : 205 " 135 femmes - 84 -d°-

Les convois des 2 et 6 Août étaient constitués par deux trains spéciaux, wagons aménagés: 3 jours de vivres par interne, et 14 jours dans un wagon du train convoyé par un détachement de la Mayenne.- Le convoi du 6 Août a été complété en gare de Pithiviers par un détachement de même importance venant du camp de Beaune.

La constitution de ces convois a été faite en comprenant d'abord les célibataires, puis les ménages sans enfants ou avec enfants pouvant partir avec eux.

Ne partaient pas: les hommes mariés à des aryennes, les femmes mariées à des français non juifs - Néanmoins pour compléter l'effectif de certains convois, un certain nombre de familles ont dû laisser au camp des enfants en bas âge.

Préalablement à la séparation, des mesures d'identification ont pu être prises envers les enfants : un brassard en étoffe portant indication des noms, prénom, âge de l'enfant, a été cousu sur deux de leurs effets d'habillement. D'autre part, la Direction de la Croix Rouge Française a pu obtenir pour chacun d'eux une chaînette et une plaque d'identité métallique indiquant nom, prénoms de l'enfant. Ces précautions ont permis l'identification certaine de tous les enfants restés au camp; deux seulement en traitement à l'hôpital au moment du départ de leurs parents n'ont pu par la suite être identifiés. -

Les Enfants étaient gardés et soignés par les femmes restées au camp pour le motif ci dessus indiqué, ou ayant des enfants malades ou à l'hôpital.

Interviewer: That was in Pithiviers and Beaune? In the summer of 42?

Annette: Yes, and I saw, in October 42, a deportation of children alone from the station of Pithiviers. The Pithiviers station was overlooked by a kind of footbridge on which there was an armed German who supervised the embarkation of the children alone. The mothers had already left. And the children, I remember, a little one, Jacquot, whom I liked, whom I had taken care of. So after the others

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<sup>12</sup> Translation of the last paragraph: "Prior to the separation, identification measures were taken with regard to the children: a cloth armband indicating the name, first names and age of the child was sewn onto two of their clothing items. In addition, the French Red Cross was able to obtain for each of them a chain and a metal identification plate indicating the name and surname of the child. These precautions allowed the identification of all the children who remained in the camp; only two who were being treated in the hospital at the time of their parents' departure could not be identified.

The children were looked after and cared for by the women who remained in the camp for the above-mentioned reasons, or who had children who were sick or in the hospital."

In light of the testimony of Annette and several survivors, the organization was ineffective. In addition, one can note the contradictory information concerning the parents of hospitalized children - exempt from departure and yet the children in the hospital could not be identified because their parents had been deported.



- they were shoved into wagons, you know, wagons like for cattle with big panels that were pushed and closed. So we put the children in the train, we push these big panels, it's closed. And there was a little boy named Jacquot whom I liked, he was as sweet as anything, he wanted to get off. "I want to get off! I want to see the lady! I was there and then... "No, I want to pee! I want to get off to pee!" And then I could see the tips of his fingers there. And then he left. What could we do? Nothing but to be a witness.

Interviewer: You witnessed the deportation of children at that time? But you had witnessed other deportations?

Annette: No, I wasn't at the train station and those were days when I wasn't there. The one that made the deepest impression on me was the deportation of children in October, on a day when it was already cold, and little Jacquot wanted to get off to be next to me. So that day, I understood that it was the annihilation.

Interviewer: What was it?

Annette: The annihilation of the Jews. That it was the Final Solution.

Interviewer: There, you understood that they would not come back?

Annette: Oh yes. Because we didn't know how many we had! Nor the name of each one. And what to do? Be there, be a witness and that's all. Yes, obviously, it was a terrible time. What else could I do but be a witness?

Interviewer: Did you talk about what you were seeing?

Annette: Yes, of course.

Interviewer: With your colleagues?

Annette: Yes. But there was nothing we could do. The Germans were the strongest, what do you want.

Interviewer: So there you were working...

Annette: I was a Red Cross worker

Interviewer: ... in Beaune and Pithiviers?

Annette: Yes.

Interviewer: Until the fall of 42?

Annette: Yes.

Interviewer: And these camps were emptied after?

Annette: Yes. The Pithiviers camp became a camp for political internees, black market internees, well, people who were convicted of offenses related to the war.

It was a camp for internees - oh, I didn't go there - it was for French people who had committed offenses because of the war, black market offenses, whatever it was. No, but I didn't go there.

Interviewer 2: You explained to me how the local population had participated, among others the women had participated, the stories of jewelry etc.

Annette: That's a sad and disappointing thing. Yes, in Beaune-la-Rolande, when there was the deportation of women, local women were asked to search the women. And there were some who agreed. To go and search Jewish women in order to deport them. And they took up a certain amount of... well, this is a shameful chapter. Didn't they pocket a certain amount of jewelry? I didn't want to... I was ashamed for my fellow citizens that this was happening.

Interviewer: They were ordinary French women?

Annette: Yes, who had volunteered from the village to search the women because there were only men to guard the camp. The men could not search the women before the deportation. So it took women volunteers to search the women. They were wrong to volunteer!

Interviewer 2: And the deportations of the women, it was explained to them that they were going somewhere else to prepare a new camp. So you had wondered about that.

Annette: Exactly! But yes, we did wonder because we didn't know exactly how many children we had or the exact name of each one. So how could we be led to believe that they would be reunited with their parents and we didn't know the name of each one? We realized that it was the destruction. The day I saw this deportation of children, I understood that it was the Final Solution, as they later said.

Interviewer: There were Germans present at the deportations?

Annette: Yes, supervised by the Germans.

Interviewer: Do you remember their attitudes?

Annette: Well, they closed the doors on the children, what do you want? They were told to close the doors, they were closing the doors. For me, that was the day I understood.

Interview: And so after the fall of '42, where did you work?

Annette: So there were the communist camps.

Interviewer 2: That's when you went to the Eure in fact. What you told me last time was that after Beaune and Pithiviers, you went to this communist camp in the Eure-et-Loir.

Annette: That's right. At Vosves in the Eure-et-Loir, perfectly. It was a Communist camp. So there, they were not badly treated. There were also fighters

from the Spanish war. You are too young, but there was the Spanish War and French Communist volunteers who enlisted for the Spanish War. Then, when things calmed down in Spain, they were politically interned because they had volunteered against France for the Spanish war. But that's not my chapter, I can't explain it.

Interviewer 2: About Beaune, there was also something that you could perhaps tell him. You told me about the story of Jackie and Rosette, I think. Two little children, when you asked them what their name was, they said 16 bis in Paris.

Annette: Oh yes! Rosette and Jacquot, perfectly! Shortly after the Vél' D'hiv', I found myself in Beaune-la-Rolande trying to organize things for the children. And I was looking for the names of the children. And a little boy and a little girl, very young, holding hands, I said to them:

-What is your name?

-Rosette

-And what is your name?

-Jacquot

-Your family name?

-Ah... it's Rosette and Jacquot.

-Where did you live ?

-In Paris at 16 bis.

-Your father's name?

-I don't know

-Your mother's?

That's it, Rosette and Jacquot<sup>13</sup>, that's all. Good for deportation.

Interviewer: Do you have memories of other specific children?

Annette: Of a number of children who were dirty, with strangles, in bad shape. We were not equipped to take care of them. It was shameful and lamentable to see the state they were in. Children with fragile skin, put directly on the straw, immediately have damaged skin, impetigo... it's heartbreaking! These children's camps, when we didn't even have the equipment to keep them clean. And then they were deported. But very quickly I realized the final solution when I saw how the children were treated.

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<sup>13</sup> Rose (27/12/36) and Jacques (21/2/38) Fiszal who lived at 16 bis rue Censier in the 5th arrondissement. They were arrested with their mother Ruchla née Zys (12/5/11) during the Vél' d'Hiv roundup and sent to Beaune-la-Rolande. They slept in barrack 12. Ruchla was deported by convoy 16 on August 7, 1942. The children were then sent to Drancy from where Rosette was deported by convoy 22 on August 21, 1942. Jacques was sent to the Claude-Bernard hospital in September 1942 and then to the UGIF children's center on rue Lamarck. He was arrested again and deported by convoy 47 on February 11, 1943.

[End of transcript 03:12:37 | 12:31]

## **Libération of Paris and Drancy**

[start 03:21:45 | 21:39]

Interviewer: So tell us about the Liberation of Paris.

Annette: Well, I certainly will! First, the liberation of Drancy. I say that I personally have my day of glory, on August 17, 44. I never forget the date. On August 17, 44, it was a Thursday, the Germans were still in Paris but things were not going well for them. So the Gestapo left Paris voluntarily. The German police left Paris voluntarily. It was the Gestapo who had the upper hand in the camps and prisons. They left voluntarily because the Wehrmacht had to replace them and we knew that the Wehrmacht was much less terrible than the Gestapo. So the Gestapo left and we knew that things were better. There came the role of the Swedish Consul, Mr. Nordling, who received the powers of the Wehrmacht to liberate the camps and prisons. He was given this task, but he could not do it himself. He summoned the Red Cross, the officials. We were all summoned in an emergency and we were told, "The Swedish Consul has the right to liberate the camps and prisons, but the job must be done by you. Who wants to liberate Drancy? Who wants to liberate Cherche-Midi? Who wants to liberate Romainville? etc." I said, "I want to liberate Drancy!" So, the Swedish Consul had to install a team himself. We started with Romainville because there were people sentenced to death, and Drancy because there were people sentenced to death and we were afraid that the Germans would execute them at the last moment. So, in those camps, the

Swedish Consul went very quickly with the Red Cross to take charge of the camp and tell the Germans, " Get out! " And I was taken to the Drancy camp at the end of the afternoon, the Swedish Consul and the President of the Red Cross and I, where Alois Brunner, who was in charge of the camp, was told that he was going to leave and that I was to replace him. Mademoiselle Monod was replacing Alois Brunner to run Drancy. Alois Brunner simply had to go. So he left and I took over the camp.

Interviewer: Did you see him at that time or had he already left when you arrived?

Annette: I saw him leaving. But that's all. He left glad to be off the hook so easily.

Interviewer: And did you know who he was at that time?

Annette: No. That he was in command of the camp. That he was in charge of the camp, that's all. No. I occupied his bedroom.

#### **TAPE 4**

#### **Libération of Drancy (2)**

Annette: So the Swedish Consul and the President of the Red Cross put me in charge of the camp in Drancy. But, I don't know if you realize, it wasn't just a matter of opening the door. What's outside? The Germans are still there, there



are no supplies, there is no public transportation. We couldn't open the camp and say, "My friends, leave!" So we told them "My friends, you have the right to leave if you want, but in Paris there are..." So obviously they stayed and we organized the release. It took us until Sunday - it was a Thursday, until Sunday - to organize, to check that those who wanted to leave had a place to go to, to give them a package of food from what we had found in the camp storage rooms and to find a solution for everyone. The Drancy town hall helped us a lot by giving everyone food stamps. How did they get their stamps? It is not important. So, the Drancy Town Hall helped us and, on the spot, we organized the release. Because I repeat, it was not simply a matter of opening the door, we had to find a solution for everyone. The Germans were still in Paris. There were cannons on the Place de la République. It wasn't over. So we freed them little by little. I did what I could, but with the help, of course, of the heads of the stairs and everyone else, we organized the liberation. And on Sunday afternoon, it was more or less finished. So, with a Red Cross truck, I went to the Red Cross headquarters and we passed through Place de la Concorde and then onto the avenue towards the Champs-Élysées. There were still Germans behind bushes of trees, armed but not shooting and absolute emptiness. Nothing but the Red Cross van on this enormous avenue where there was nothing and nobody. There was the Grand Palais burning, fire coming out of the windows, and nobody was looking after it. There was the Red Cross truck and me and the emptiness, it was a complete emptiness on this avenue. It was just us. So they dropped me off at the Red Cross, I unloaded everything I had as an archive and then I was able to go home and sleep.

Interviewer: The archives, were they from the Drancy camp?

Annette: The little that I had found, yes.

Interviewer: You thought of recovering the archives?

Annette: What I could to give it to the Red Cross. I was Red Cross, I was Red Cross personnel. I had to report to the Red Cross.

Interviewer: Was the Red Cross in the 16th arrondissement?

Annette: It was on rue de Berri.

Interviewer: So next to the Champs-Élysées.

Annette: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you have any memories of these detainees, these interneés, pardon me...

Annette: Who were leaving?

Interviewer: Yes.

Annette: Well, yes. There were some who carried me in triumph in the camp courtyard because the older ones had known me as a social worker and I had been expelled.

Interviewer: Ah! you saw people you had met before. For example?

Annette: And they carried me in triumph through the camp, yes.

Interviewer: Do you remember specific people?

Annette: I don't remember the names.

Interviewer: So there were some who had stayed at Drancy all those years.

Annette: Not the best ones. The ones who had schemed to be in positions of responsibility and to be needed. So it's better not to say names. The ones who stayed were the ones who were conniving.

Interviewer: So they were in positions of responsibility in the camp and that protected them from deportation?

Annette: Exactly.

Interviewer: There were many people still in Drancy?

Annette: Yes, even children.

Interviewer: Women?

Annette: Yes. And I remember that the first thing they took me to do [was] to release a man who was in the cell for some misdeed.

Interviewer: There was a jail in Drancy?

Annette: Yes, when there were punishments for I don't really know what. There was one that was there. I was told that the first thing to do was to free him. So we went to free him. And then afterwards, I stayed in an office. I organized the liberation but a kind of secretariat so that each one had the desired paperwork. I repeat myself but it was not enough to open the door.

Interviewer: Do you remember the conditions at that time? Was it the same as what you had experienced?

Annette: Well, there was still anxiety because there were still deportations. So it was the survivors who were remaining there. And we had to free them. As I said, it took us until Sunday to free them all.

Interviewer: How many of you were there to do this work?

Annette: The team? There was the Mairie de Drancy, which was invaluable, and then the staircase managers. I had hired all the heads of stairs of course, they had to be involved themselves.

Interviewer: So they left on Sunday. Was it the 20th?

Annette: August 17 is the liberation, a Thursday, and it was the 20th. The Germans were still in Paris. They left Paris only on the 21st. The Gestapo left first and then the Wehrmacht. The Gestapo was the police. They were the terrors. Whereas with the army, it was okay.

Interviewer: So there were only French guards left at Drancy, gendarmes?

Annette: Yes, gendarmes. Certainly that they helped us to liberate. But the liberation was a question of secretariat, of having the right documents. You can't be let loose in Paris, in wartime, with nothing in your pockets.

Interviewer 2: You slept there, that's the story I think.

Annette: Yes, I was told where Brunner's office was and I stayed in Brunner's room, in Brunner's bed. I found soup and chocolate cream.

Interviewer: Did you eat them?

Annette: Yes, I was hungry. Well yes, it was a great day. Then afterwards, the Germans left Paris. So, the day of the arrival, it was much later, but the day of De Gaulle's arrival, of course I was with the Red Cross on the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. We saw De Gaulle arrive and then all those who followed behind him. Then someone would yell out: "Which one is De Gaulle? "Which one is De Gaulle?" "He's the tallest! He's the tallest!" Obviously, in the midst of all the others, he looked much taller. Bidault, next to him, looked very short. And we, as the Red

Cross, were in charge of forming a line along the sidewalk to prevent the crowd from getting to De Gaulle.



Georges Bidault (left) et Charles De Gaulle  
Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Interviewer: So you were on the Champs-Élysées as a Red Cross?

Annette: Yes, standing along the sidewalk to contain the people who were screaming with joy.

### **Lutetia Hotel**



Credit: Lutetia

Interviewer 2: There was an interesting part that you could tell him, well that's the last memory I have of when we talked: you explained to me that you had run into some of them again at the Lutetia after. People that you had met in Beaune.

Annette: Yes, the Lutetia is the hotel that is near the Bon Marché. Do you see?

Interviewer: Yes, of course.

Annette: Well, the Lutetia hotel during the war belonged to the Germans who did all sorts of luxury things - receptions and so on - and when the Germans were chased out, the Lutetia hotel became a reception center for repatriated deportees. So I went there as a Red Cross worker to help welcome the repatriates. Some of them were in a terrible state and still had their blue and white striped pajamas on. And some in absolutely pitiful condition. They were put up as best as possible in the rooms of the Lutetia hotel and some of them could not stand anymore to be in a bed. They wanted to sleep on the floor on newspapers. They couldn't sleep in beds after all they had been through. And of course, some of them were very sick. There was typhus. We were all vaccinated against typhus because they brought back all kinds of diseases. They were repatriated in a pitiful state. And some of them had to be taken to the hospital. We couldn't give them to their families right away. Also, there was a big board downstairs where those who had deportees who had not returned put their names so that the repatriates, if they had known them, could provide information. And, indeed, of my men from Pithiviers and Beaune, I saw only ONE of them again, but he told me such horrible things that I'd rather not tell them.



Interviewer: So who was this man?

Annette: He was one of my internees who had been in Beaune-la-Rolande when I was there. He had been deported like everyone else and, by a miracle, he had been repatriated.

Interviewer: Do you remember his name?

Annette: Epstein.

# Camp de Beaune-la-Rolande

N° D'ORDRE *1571*

NOM

*Epsztejn* *Leiba*

PRÉNOMS

Fils de

*Isachua*

Et de

*Sarah Rozowski*

Date de naissance

*18.16.1903*

Lieu

*Glanin (Pol.)*

Nationalité

*Polonaise*

Profession

*Typographe*

Situation de famille

*celibataire*

Adresse avant l'internement

*71. Rue de Dunkerque  
Paris 9e*

Pièces d'identité

*Ausicht 49235*

*Placé à Ebensee (Autriche) le 6/5/45  
par les Américains et rapatrié à Paris  
le 25/5/45*

Motif d'internement

*En surnombre dans  
l'économie nationale.*

Autorité signataire de la décision dont il

fait l'objet

*Préfecture de Police*

Date d'arrivée

*14 MAI 1941*

MUTATIONS

*Transféré à Rethel le 1-7-42  
Paris aux St 6 le 17-7-42*

Credit : Convois du Loiret

<https://convoisduloiret.org/deporte/408-epsztejn-lejba/>

Interviewer: And he came back?

Annette: Yes. He told me what happened to the others.

Interviewer: Which camp was he in, you know? He was deported to Auschwitz?

Annette: Yes, Auschwitz probably.

Interviewer: So there, he came back and you find him

Annette: Yes, I found him at the Hotel Lutetia. The only one. Of all those I had known in Pithiviers or Beaune, I only saw that one come back. But there were others who came back that I did not see. But I only saw him.

## La Petite Roquette prison



Prison of la petite Roquette, example of panoptic architecture, demolished in 1975

Credit : CNC

Interviewer: And how did you get appointed to the Hotel Lutetia?

Annette: Through the Red Cross and also I had been a social worker for a while at La Roquette where Agnès Bidault, Georges Bidault's sister, had been interned as a political prisoner. And Agnès Bidault helped with the organization of the hotel Lutetia and it was Agnès Bidault, whom I knew in the Roquette prison, who brought me to the hotel Lutetia.

Interviewer: Was she deported too?

Annette: No, she stayed in the prison. We disguised her as a common law offender... that was the solution when women were "political prisoners", we would find them a common law offense so that they became " common law " and therefore remained in the prison and were not deported. And this is what was done for Agnès Bidault. She was turned into "common law". I don't know what crime we invented.

Interviewer: That was a women's prison at La Roquette?

Annette: Yes. It was demolished. It doesn't exist anymore.

Interviewer: And there, you were there under the same title as you were in Fresnes

Annette: Always.

Interviewer: Red Cross still doing the same work. Do you have other memories about the prison of La Roquette?

Annette: That it was run by nuns, that it was really amazing to hold nuns for so long in such an atmosphere because the nuns, from the community of Marie-Joseph I believe, never went out. They went out when there was a death to accompany their sister who had died. But they never went out. They went for years without leaving the prison. So the sisters were even more detained than the inmates. So when there was a party for the inmates, the sisters were very happy. A little story: there was - what was it called? Not puppets... you know when you're old... There was a chaplain in the East who did shows in the prisons for the inmates. And, he

comes to do shows at La Roquette. Naturally, all the inmates were invited for these shows and the sisters too. And the sisters were happy to have a show, to have a stage! So, one day on the stage, there was a gardener, a female gardener who passed bouquets of flowers to one another, declarations of love over the wall. So the sister who was next to me pushes me like this, "You'll see, they're going to make love over the wall!" When you hear a sister say that to you, you're kind of choked up. No, the sisters never went out. So they were the supervisors. There were administrative personnel for administrative matters, but to watch over the prisoners, to make them work, to watch over them at night, it was the sisters. They were good, they did everything they could, but they were deformed. But I got along well with them.

Interviewer: Do you remember meeting Agnès Bidault? Did you meet her at the prison?

Annette: At the Roquette prison and then afterwards, how she found me I don't know, she requested me at the Lutetia hotel. It was her the boss at the hotel Lutetia.

### **The Lutetia (continued)**

Interviewer: How long did you stay at the Hotel Lutetia? How long did you stay?

Annette: As long as the deportees arrived. Not very long, no.

Interviewer: A few weeks?

Annette: Yes. It was very tiring. We all got vaccinated against typhus.

Interviewer: Did you also welcome people at the station or only at the hotel?

Annette: No, only at the hotel.

Interviewer: So you were welcoming them for...

Annette: Yes, a whole team. There was not only me of course! I never did things alone, it was always a team. Yes, so there was a team at the Hotel Lutetia, a rotation because someone was needed day and night, right? There were shifts and rounds because you had to be there even at night. Some were sick. You had to keep an eye on them too, there were some who couldn't lie down anymore, who had to be helped a lot.

Interviewer 2: I know it's not very... it's something that affects you a lot, but the last time you told me what this detainee, this deportee told you. Are you sure you don't want to talk about it? Because it's important in spite of everything for the story.

Annette: Yes. It's so horrible. Do you think it should be told?

Interviewer 2: I think it's important.

Annette: Okay. One of my golden men, since I had golden men in the camps, whose name was Epstein I think... he was the only one I saw come back. Of all the men I had known in Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande, I saw one come back. All the others gassed, burned. Then we recognized each other and he wanted to confide in me, he wanted to tell me. And he told me that he was deported to Ravensbruck, I don't remember where he was deported, and he said, "We were hungry. So hungry. You don't know what it's like to be hungry, the way we were hungry. And, look, I'm telling you but... I've seen them eating the hearts and livers of dead bodies. I swear to you, Miss, I never ate any but when they grilled it, it made me want it so bad." After all, you can't judge. He was upset to tell me that, but he was relieved to tell me, you know? "It made me want it so bad! But I never ate any!" After all, the dead helped the living to survive.

Interviewer: Did he tell you other things?

Annette: The massacres in the deportation camps.

Interviewer: But you knew that at the time?

Annette: I learned from the repatriates, little by little. I realized that things were going very badly the day that children were deported alone. The deportation in October from Pithiviers when they took away the children alone. That day, I realized that it was what was called the Final Solution. To deport children whose identity was not even known, right? We know that we couldn't believe that they would be reunited with their mothers. That day, I understood.



Interviewer: So there, you learned the stories of the gas chambers, what had happened?

Annette: Yes, like everyone else by the repatriates.

Interviewer: That was in the spring of 1945?

Annette: Yes.

Interviewer: After the opening of the camps? In May, May-June. But there were not only Jews who returned?

Annette: Oh no, there were those who had worked for the Resistance...

Interviewer: There were resistance fighters

Annette: Yes, Resistance fighters and Jews. All categories. Especially Resistance fighters.

Interviewer: Yes, they came back. They came back more numerous than the Jews.

Annette: Yes, the Jews, very few came back, very few, very few.

Interviewer: And there were families who came to look for...

Annette: There was a big board with the names of people who were being sought.

Il suffit de parcourir les couloirs du Lutétia pour voir 5 ou 6 anciens rayés au crânes rasés encore pâles et exténués qui circulent devant une immense galerie de photographies, des centaines et des centaines de photos accrochées aux murs. Tous ces visages d'absents perdus dans l'immense tourmente regardent de leurs yeux de jadis, de leurs yeux gais d'« avant », avec le sourire de la vie et de la jeunesse, photos de mariage ou de vacances, qui regardent de leurs pauvres yeux de papier si on va les reconnaître, si on les a vus une fois, un jour, si on va dire ce qu'on sait d'eux, dernier fil d'espoir, et c'est le symbole de cette guerre, ces rangées de photos de disparus devant lesquelles circulent quelques survivants !

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*Bulletin du Service Central des Déportés israélites », n°9, Juillet 1945. © S. Jessua-Amar*

In particular, I saw Mrs. Getting<sup>15</sup> there. She was a social worker advocate. She had created it in the hospital. She was Jewish. She had to wear the star. She worked a lot for the Red Cross. She was deported as a Jew. And her son stayed in Paris. She never came back. And her son put up a sign at the Hotel Lutetia asking if anyone had seen his mother. But we never found out anything. So I remember her with emotion. She was a very noble lady, who had a staff, who was like an

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<sup>14</sup> You only have to walk through the corridors of the Lutétia to see 5 or 6 former striped men with shaved heads, still pale and exhausted, walking in front of an immense gallery of photographs, hundreds and hundreds of photos hanging on the walls. All these faces of absent people lost in the immense turmoil look with their eyes of yesteryear, with their cheerful eyes of "before", with the smile of life and youth, wedding or vacation photos, which look with their poor paper eyes if they will be recognized, if one saw them once, one day, if one is going to recognize them, if one is going to say what one knows about them, last thread of hope, and it is the symbol of this war, these rows of photos of the disappeared in front of which walk a few survivors!

<sup>15</sup> Joséphine Getting (née Rothschild) is the creator of the social services in hospitals. Within the UGIF, she was in charge of department 42, which was dedicated to children. She was arrested on July 30, 1943 at the UGIF headquarters. She was deported by convoy 59 on September 2, 1943. [http://www.cedias.org/index.php?lvl=cmsspage&pageid=4&id\\_article=317](http://www.cedias.org/index.php?lvl=cmsspage&pageid=4&id_article=317)

aristocrat, very lofty, a little disdainful of us ordinary little assistants. When the star was worn, it was terrible for her. She didn't dare go out alone. I went with her the first time. And then there was what was called the UGIF. Have you heard of the UGIF? She worked for the UGIF and I was the liaison between the UGIF and the camps because the UGIF gave supplies at the time of the holidays, Yom Kippur and others, and the UGIF did not have the right to circulate in the camps. I was the messenger for the UGIF to the camps. In this way, I remained in contact with the UGIF which, incidentally, gave me a little money for the trips I made, because the Red Cross paid me very little and I was very hungry. Anyway. (...) Mrs. Getting worked a lot for the UGIF, she organized, she was very good. Then she was arrested and deported. And her son tried to get news. We never heard anything. And I take pity on that. In the state in which she was certainly put, this lady - when her handkerchief fell next to her bed, she asked that it be picked up - quite the great lady, a little disdainful of us, when I think of the state she was put in. She who always needed the care of her maid. We never heard from her again.



Joséphine Getting  
Credit : CEDIAS-Musée Social

Interviewer: Do you have any other memories that are related to UGIF? Do you remember other people who worked at the UGIF?

Annette: Mme Horvilleur<sup>16</sup> who was deported and did not come back. I remember very few names. We tried to forget the names, you know, so we wouldn't give them if we were arrested.

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<sup>16</sup> Thérèse Horvilleur (née Garfunkel) lived at 123 rue de Longchamp in the 16th arrondissement. She was arrested at the same time as François Lyon-Caen and Joséphine Getting at the UGIF headquarters on August 31, 1943 and deported in the same convoy 59 that left on September 2, 1943. c.f. <https://yvng.yadvashem.org/>



Thérèse Horvilleur  
Credit: Yad Vashem

Interviewer: Do you remember where the UGIF was?

Annette: Rue de la Bienfaisance.

Interviewer: Adequate name!

Annette: Wasn't it! Obviously it was a Jewish organization, but only they had food and the ability to bring it into the camps. So I know that the UGIF was very decried. Personally, I used it because I was the liaison for the aid that they provided for the camps.

Interviewer: Why was it criticized?

Annette: Because it was said that they had collaborated in order not to be deported. I mean, they were all deported anyway. It was said that the UGIF collaborated.

Interviewer: They did a good job anyway?

Annette: They did a good job. Obviously, they couldn't help much, but materially they helped. And I went back and forth.

Interviewer: After the Lutetia, you went back to your job...

Annette : So there, I started by taking a little time-off because I was extremely tired. Afterwards, I was a social worker for the prison administration. That was that. [end 20:22 | 05:20:27]

