

Pete Seeger

"My Name Is Liza Kalvelage"

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My name is Lisa Kalvelage, I was born in Nuremberg
And when the trials were held there nineteen years ago
It seemed to me ridiculous to hold a nation all to blame
For the horrors that the world did undergo

A short while later when I applied to be a G.I. bride
An American consular official questioned me
He refused my exit permit, said my answers did not
show
I'd learned my lesson about responsibility

Thus suddenly, I was forced to start thinking on this
theme
And when later I was permitted to emigrate
I must have been asked a hundred times
Where I was and what I did
In those years when Hitler ruled our state

I said I was a child or at most a teenager
But that only extended the questioning
They'd ask where were my parents, my father, my
mother
And to this I could answer not a thing

The seed planted there at Nuremberg in 1947
Started to sprout and to grow
Gradually, I understood what that verdict meant to me
When there are crimes that I can see and I can know

And now I also know what it is to be charged with mass
guilt
Once in a lifetime is enough for me
No, I could not take it for a second time
And that is why I am here today

The events of May 25th, the day of our protest
Put a small balance weight on the other side
Hopefully, someday my contribution to peace
Will help just a bit to turn the tide

And perhaps I can tell my children six
And later on their own children

That at least in the future they need not be silent
When they are asked, "Where was your mother,
when?"

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