

LEON/EVA LEOPOLD

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LL: "...we came in 1951...I was never in a camp before, during the Nazi regime, nor after. I was in the woods...partisans...not a big group, 14 guys...I was born in Plumacz...Eastern Galiciana... my father died a natural death in Vienna...

WH: "Do you believe in the rebbe?..."

LL: "Very little. I have very - I personally, you talking to me personally? I am a very natural Jew, remember that. I am a national, a nationalistic Jew, very much. I believe in the Jewish tradition, I believe in a Jewish homeland. But I am NOT a hasid! Nor do I like them. And yet I belong to the Orthodox Temple here, not because I like it, I cannot get out...he's (the rabbi) a champion liar...but I can't get out because all the 'greener' belong to this temple. We got a 'green' temple. That's all the refugees, it's a small temple, it's Polish...Rabbi Feldman is a 'greener' also...he's the rabbi for 40 years...he gets into argument with a lot of people. But I feel sorry for him, you know, up until now, he has a son, a cripple, and his wife died, and you cannot just leave him. Because if I leave, I'm afraid you have to close up the Temple...(needs translation - talking about trying to dissolve his partnership and took the problem to a rabbi for arbitration.)."

WH: "Do you find in general, that the people who came over here, after the war, that they were more willing to take risks more than say an American Jew?"

LL: "Definitely! Oh, definitely!"

WH: "Why?"

LL: "Because we were not afraid for anything."

WH: "You didn't have anything to lose?"

LL: "(needs translation)...so, memories, I took - I'm still taking risks now, every day."

WH: "What kind of business are you in?"

LL: "Name it. But the main business is real estate, and I'm an insurance agent. For the last 30 years I'm in the insurance business."

EL: "You're not the agent, you're the broker."

LL: "Well, okay. I don't want to be a big shot. I'm just telling you what it is."

WH: "When you first came here, what did you do?"

LL: "In the dry cleaning business..."

WH: "Let me start a little bit earlier. You left Germany, you came to America by boat."

EL: "No, we came by plane. We had a baby...we lived in Berlin. Then he had to leave Germany..."

LL: "I didn't want to leave Germany."

EL: "We had (in Germany) wonderful business...and we had three (needs translation-high quality grocery stores) make very nice."

LL: "Very successful business and I was doing Black Market on top of it, on the side. And we were doing more than that. We were - even contraband. I was in West Berlin, and I heard the Russian need (?hites?) I speak Russian, I speak German, I speak Polish, I speak anything, you know. "

"(needs translation)...and I went down to the Russian sector and introduced myself, 'I'm a businessman from West Germany, and I am only involved in wholesale (?hites?) and I heard that you need it.' And he said, 'Definitely!' Right away, they connect me right away, to the big machon, and they said, 'How many can you deliver?' I said, 'How much do you need?' He said, 'A million ton.' I said, 'I don't have so much, it will take a time.' They said, 'We will wait.'...and they paid for a kilogram, one American dollar... and the dollar will be deposited in the Swiss bank. So we passed the border, now we have to figure out a way how to first of all buy the (?hites?) in West Germany, get a transport company to move it...East Germany was the enemy...so we had to pretend we are going from West Germany to West Berlin. So we figured out a way how to do it, and we made a contact, and one round, we took ten truck loads, and we brought over 200 ton. 20 ton on a truck...you become rich right away, because if you take one dollar was 5 marks at that time. And we were paying one mark for a pound and less...so there was a tremendous difference in German money so we made a lot of money, but you are hungry, you're going a second time...(LL describes in detail his second and third escapade.)...these are chances to take. Remember, this is a lot of - you ask me, 'Why we take chances for.' No one would have the guts to do it. To talk Mr. (?) and the Mayor of Berlin you know, at that time, every body was involved. And I had guts! I could go up to G-d and talk to Him. You know, I just didn't - I wasn't afraid from nobody...(LL continues to describe his business deal.)... the first time it went through beautifully and we made a bundle, it was a lot of money, at that time, in 1949, to make \$51,000 in a month..."

"But I learned those things in Poland too, before I came to Germany, also the same tricks, you know, after the war... I made money like this in Poland... (inaudible). I made so much money I couldn't count it. It was just in a bag. We weighed them."

EL: "In sacks."

LL: "She was there, we married in Poland...(Describes another venture making money in Poland by obtaining yeast secretly.)."

WH: "...when you came here, were you able to do things in a similar way here? That you did in Europe?"

LL: "No. I was sick and tired from the risks. Here, I came with money. I didn't come poor. You see all this? This is all antique silver, and I brought over 400 kilogram of that. Not 400 pieces, but 400 kilo."

WH: "Well, why did you have to leave?"

LL: "Because after the second run...(needs translation)...the mayor from Berlin...in 1948...they called the border to stop the transport...they arrest me in Berlin...and she (my wife) had a different name. And she came over to visit me in jail as my girlfriend, she had a baby for me, and they bail me out, and I packed everything, left the stores as they are, we packed everything, because we got all the papers (inaudible...) made up to go to America under 'Leopold' so we flew over to America. We left my mother-in-law to liquidate the stores."

WH: "...Why did you go by plane?"

EL: "...because when the baby was born, she was very sickly."

WH: "Who arranged the plane flight? The joint?"

EL: "Yes."

WH: "Who gave you the affidavit? Did you know anybody here in America?"

EL: "No..."

LL: "We didn't get any help from them at all. All what they did, they brought us over to Madison...when they brought us to Madison, the rabbi came and waited for us on the airport...we were dressed, like she was in a persian lamb coat, and I was dressed with a starched pants maybe, you know what it is with a (?) with all leather..."

WH: "You didn't look impoverished."

LL: "Exactly. And they were expecting to get somebody in the stripes..."

EL: "I came in high heels, I came dressed up with a hat."

LL: "We passed by inside and didn't see nobody waiting for us, because we were told in New York, that they are going to be waiting for us. So I went to the information bureau...and I said, 'Somebody's suppose to pick us up. We are refugees.' And she took the mike and called and then come in two women, and this Rabbi (?) says to me, 'Leopold?...this is a refugee?'...He took us in car, and they had in Madison, a little house, a duplex where all the refugees were brought into that house and then sent to jobs and helped them completely. He took me in and it was a dark - I was living in a vila over there like a king, you know, and now he comes in and he puts me in this house, and I ask him, the Rabbi (needs translation) 'I'm not going to stay in this dark room' I said. 'You got food!...' I said, 'You keep it.' He sees he's talking here to a different person, so next day they found me a place to live. Right away. And they want to give me a job."

WH: "But you paid for it?"

LL: "Sure...I said, 'I pay for it, it's not your business.'...I took out my shoes, and my soles, and my cuffs, I got diamonds all over...and he said to me, 'Put the money in the bank.' I said, 'Take it easy.' Then from Switzerland came right away a check for \$15,000 and I want to go cash it, and he said, 'Nobody will cash this check, you go with me, put it in the bank.' I said, 'I don't trust the bank.' Anyhow, they put me in a job...a factory...dairy... and they liked how I worked, a young guy picking up fast."

WH: "What year were you born?"

LL: " In 1918...my back hurt...so I left that job...next day they find me another job. A cement factory...I couldn't...I said 'Goodbye' to that job...so I said, 'Don't do me any favors. I don't need your jobs. You don't give me any help, I don't need no money of yours, I pay for my apartment, don't find for me any work. I want to go into business.' They said, 'You cannot go into business! You're only 2, 3 days in here.' I said, 'Take it easy.' I went down and bought a car...I said, 'I'm going to travel.' I got my Germans license....I didn't have an American license. I took my car, I'm going East back to New York. I said, 'Madison is a little shitty town, I'm not going to spend my lifetime over there.' A guy came from Berlin, you know, and you come to Madison."

EL: "Madison now is okay."

LL: "So, I went to New York...(to check it out)."

EL: "Yes, he bought a car. Now, when we came we had, we brought a camera, such an expensive camera. With all lenses, that he took it to the dealer, and he got then a new Chevy for the camera... a Leica...with about 15 different lenses..."

LL: "In America it was worth \$3,000 or \$4,000..."

EL: "He left me with the 2 children...he went to New York and all over the country. The last stop in New York, he didn't have any license to drive, (he got stopped by the police for a minor infraction.) he bribed the policeman, give him \$2 and the policeman let him go."

WH: "...how did you drive from Madison to New York?"

LL: "I bought a map...I looked at the (highway) numbers..."

WH: "So what happened when you came to New York and visited your cousin in Brooklyn?"

LL: "...they lived on Kings Highway...I was two weeks in this country...I didn't see any metsiehs from the New Yorker boys, all my friends, you know."

WH: "They weren't doing so well."

EL: "No."

LL: "They were sitting always on 42nd Street...the Diamond Exchange and whom I visit, they looking for some farm."

WH: "In Vineland, New Jersey."

LL: "And I went down to visit some of the guys who have farm, they came from Berlin..."

END OF SIDE ONE. TAPE ONE.

SIDE TWO. TAPE ONE.

✓ LL: "...to join a farm, I wasn't ready. That's not my cup of tea. You know, I'm a city man, and I'm a born business man, (inaudible) that's what I know. I can sell - I can sell snow to the Eskimo. Anything I want to sell, I can sell. I can sell you - right away this glass you gonna buy it. I can do it. That's my nature. So, I'm not going to go on a farm just to clean the chicken shit you know."

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- WH: "This was your nature from the time you were a child, right?"

LL: "It's true. It's true. Because when I was a little child, 8, 9 years old, I was selling (inaudible...) like when you have a lighter you put in this thing what's - what you call it?"

WH: "Flint."

LL: "That was illegal, for what - like marijuana here, or cocaine...so I used to go on the street (needs translation) I used to sell it, I make a living...I work all my life for myself. Never worked on a job."

WH: "So that was already the way you were from childhood already, you knew how to hustle...so if you had had the misfortune of being in a concentration camp, you would have survived, don't you think?"

LL: "To tell you the truth, I didn't know the concentration camps for the world. I thought I'm the only - my group is the only group, and I was quite a rough ?gorev? I want you to know it. I was not a hiding person. I was Robin Hood. Describe me - something that, no scare, and remember, I have no fear from nobody. Today, before, or ever in my lifetime. There's no fear."

EL: "If he used to have money, in the woods, or he has to have food, he shared it. He shared. He didn't eat it himself."

WH: "Where did you meet him?"

EL: "I met him in my city... and we were the only Jewish people in the city that time."

WH: "...I want to get back to what you said about New York. You said you saw that you saw that there were no metsiehs, so you went back?"

LL: "...I look at other cities to see which city felt the best for me... I landed in Milwaukee...in the Polish section...and I talked to Pollacks there. Right away I like the city, Milwaukee. Don't ask me why, but I like it. Of course, I saw the Polish stores and that made me feel good. And before I turn around, I found a job as a drum maker...between 1939 and 1941 I was a drum maker... a wooden drum maker...like wine barrels...I called my wife, 'I got a job.' ..."

WH: "You didn't need the job, you had money."

LL: "Just to talk, to learn the language...I was in America 5 weeks...I'm settling in Milwaukee...after one week I left and got a better job at a tractor factory and I worked over there one week...they paid me \$90 take home money...so Sunday I go out to visit downtown the Jewish section...a shvartze killed in a dry cleaning place, a Jewish family...a week later, Monday, I walked into the store. There's a bunch of Jewish - the most prominent people in town, in the store...Golda Meir's friends where were killed. That's why Golda Meir took away the children from them. I walked in and I ask in Yiddish...I want to buy the place...(needs translation) and another guy listened to me when I told them that I want to buy the business and I don't speak English, I don't know the business... he takes me by my back, very strong man, and physically throws me out from the store..."

"But the wife who was killed, her brother came from Florida to the levi, and he saw that this tall guy, this manufacturer, throw me out, and he heard the conversation..."

WH: "Why did he throw you out?"

LL: "Because he didn't want to be bothered...he thought I was a messugahaner. I cannot speak English, I don't know the business, it's the most dangerous neighborhood in town, and they didn't mean to hurt me, it's just that they didn't want to waste their time with a messugahaner. So this buy walked up to him, 'Hey (needs translation).'. '...they wanted \$15,000 for the dry cleaning store...I said, 'I'll give them \$16,000.' I wanted so badly to go into business. I cannot stand to have a boss or a foreman over me. You know, whatever it is, I just want to be for myself. I'll eat it. He told them that I want to buy the place and here's the money, and they told him they don't want to sell because I'm going to lose every penny... (but) they sold me the business."

WH: "What was the business like?"

LL: "The business was a very good business before, but because a shvartze killed them...no one, the Jewish people quit him...he had all Jewish customers...the shvartze were ashamed to come in (needs translation) so I was left with 18 employees and no money so took my car, load it up with 140 kilogram of silver, I ran out of money because I lost - at that time my expenses were \$800 a week and I took in only \$500, \$400."

WH: "You couldn't get rid of some of the employees?"

LL: "I couldn't speak to them. It was a Union shop on top of it...but I felt that I'm going to make it any how. So I needed money to operate the business...I sold it (my silver) in New York on 47th Street by the pound..."

EL: "He sold the car."

LL: "I didn't take in enough money to pay the payroll...I'm very stubborn. I said, 'I'm going to make it. No way will I give it up.' It took me 6 months."

EL: "He went to solicit merchandise himself. He went from house to house."

LL: "From door to door, upstairs and downstairs, and took a printer...he made a print, 'skirts, sweaters, pants, \$.49 Sterling Cleaners.' I couldn't speak English...the nice part about this is, after 9 years, I sold it at a profit and I went into the insurance business."

WH: "It took 6 months before it started to make a profit?"

LL: "No profit. After 6 months I start to draw \$25 a week..."

WH: "How many hours a day did you work?"

LL: "From 6 a.m. until 10, 11 o'clock at night. Every day except Sundays. Sundays too I cleaned up the machines inside..."

WH: "You have how many children?"

LL: "Five."

WH: "After 9 years you went into insurance, how did that happen?"

LL: "I had an insurance agent who always come and sold me life insurance, and casualty insurance. And he always took me out for lunch. And he begged me, he's making \$80,000 a year and goes for vacation Bahamas, and - Hawaii...he was selling for different companies. "

"And I said, 'If this shmuck can make that kind of money, I can make a (needs translation) out of it. It's true! I...said, somewhere I decided to sell the business...(needs translation-discussing selling business)... Bill Neufeld's brother bought the business...(needs translation)."

WH: "The impression I have of the group here is that people say what they feel like saying to each other."

LL: "Yah...I play (cards) every Saturday night, we have a group, 'A New American Club,' and we play...(needs translation)."

WH: "Poker?"

LL: "Oh, yeh. I'm a good poker player."

WH: "What kind of poker?"

LL: " (inaudible-? Texas robber?) is the same like 7 card stud but you get only 2 cards, and 5 cards are open...it's a very rough game. Very rough game. Very rough...we used to play in pennies. But now we play in dollars. Each game is \$50 or a \$100."

WH: "...somebody told me that they feel that the group is not as close together now as it was in the early years, but he said it's unavoidable ...that the club is not as close now as it was 40 years ago."

LL: "It's not true...I think Waldeman is the best president since the club exist. The reason why he's the best president, because he likes the job. He's a little snorty guy, (needs translation)."

EL: "He's nice."

LL: "But very devoted, because he's so proud that they call him 'Mr. President' in the Jewish Community Center. We got quite a good - very fine community here in Milwaukee. I think one of the best in the nation. If I'm not mistaken. I think so."

WH: "It has a very good reputation."

LL: "Yes. We are very well organized and very devoted Jews and we - have a great Jewish Welfare Fund, and we have a fine community. A lot of Jewish schools, yeshivas, you name it! Anything! It's a small town, with 40,000 Jews...you should see what we have here, a Jewish Community Center you can write a book about it. It's one of the finest. And we are buying bonds like - we have a Temple. With 90 members. You know how much we are buying bonds every year for Israel in our Temple? "

WH: "How much."

LL: "A hundred and fifty thousand dollar bonds from our table. Every year, Yom Kippur. The big Temples, they're millionaires, they're ...buying \$250 or \$500 bonds, that's a big metseih. By us, \$10,000 or \$5,000 - there's not many people, you know, there's just a few people... 90 people are sitting, but then every one buys a bond...some are just working people, they're buying a \$500 bond...Mr. Stein ...President of the Jewish Federation nationwide...he comes specially, he lives here by the way, and our temple is way in the - Jewish ghetto...he comes Yom Kippur, with his father davening in our temple, because he said he 'comes among Jews.' He 'never saw such a temple where every one person buys without pushing, a bond!'"

"And they buy (inaudible) they don't just promise...we are the number one as far as other temples have 2,000 members, 1,000 members, 1,500 members, we are 90 farchadat members, you know!"

WH: "Do the other ones recognize that?"

LL: "Oh, yeh!...as a matter of fact, The New American Club really opened up the Jewish people here in Milwaukee...and dinners... I brought Menacham Begin to Milwaukee...and...Meir Kahane...and we were very successful..."

WH: "...did you want to go to Israel?"

LL: "...yes..."

WH: "You were both strong Zionist?"

LL: "Yes...in my hometown, from childhood, wherever I was, I organized Betar...where ever I go in the woods is all betarim..."

WH: "So you know all the stories about (?)."

LL: "Yes. You come in my office. You'll be shocked. I got every Irgunest killed...(needs translation). I'm so extreme, nationalistic, like a (needs translation-bumstar?)...he critized Begin, for instance, and
— Begin is a good friend of mine. He was twice here in Milwaukee before he was Prime Minister. Here, in this house...Begin is a - kiss the hand, you know - is a gentleman, yes. I know Begin very well. And I like him. He's a very smart - but he talks like a statesman, like a (needs translation) leader, world's leader...he was born to be a
8 leader. (inaudible) Begin was a born leader. Shamir was forced to become, but he's a good leader. I feel very comfortable with Shamir in the government. Very comfortable. I would feel a lot better with (? Arel) Sharon."

— WH: "Do you think that it'll happen?"

LL: "Of course...(discusses Israeli politics)..."

WH: "...what do you do besides play cards in the club?"

LL: "We have cultural meetings, we got Yom Hashoah, we are preparing for the young generation after, we participate in every holidays, Israeli holidays as a group, and we play cards, we get together."

— WH: "...what happened when you went into the insurance business?"

3 LL: "...I believe in insurance, I really do. So he (my friend) introduced me to a company, Mutual of Omaha. They send me to school and I graduate from school and I came to Milwaukee and I became the top, best salesman throughout the nation. Number One Salesman...in one month...it was the hardest company in the world to sell, but I was the salesman. There's not a 'greener' family in Milwaukee that didn't buy insurance from me. There's not one...the first day...the first hour, hour and a half ...I earned \$4,000..."

END OF SIDE TWO. TAPE ONE.

SIDE ONE. TAPE TWO.

LL: "...so he (the guy who took me out selling) said to me, 'This is what I'm going to tell you right now. You made \$4,000 and I want to tell you something, that this is (inaudible). I want you should quit.' He said, after one and a half hours work. 'And I'm quitting with you. We take this business and we open up our own agency.' At that time \$2,000, \$3,00 was a LOT of money! You know what I told him? 'I can't.' '(inaudible). They spend so much money on me, I think they open up my eyes, as much as I was a shrewd salesman, you know, but what I learned in this two weeks in that school (insurance training school) no college education can give me that.'..."

WH: "Were you going - ."

LL: "I go from door to door..."

WH: "...you had an advantage selling to the 'greener.' "

LL: "It's very hard to sell 'greener' very hard."

WH: "Even if you are one yourself?"

LL: "You bet your life! - They are very hard to sell, not by me, I didn't have no problems with them, but somewhere - they respect me, don't ask me why."

WH: "They do?"

LL: "Yes, very highly. They think that I'm the Superman. Not that I'm bragging about it - and I wouldn't like to be that because they looking up. If I want to be the president I - I never push myself to be in any - even in my own corporation, I'm not a president. But I'm just saying it here, (laughs) you know. "

"And I never (inaudible) in the front, but I do organize the whole thing, but I make her, or him or you the master of ceremony or the president, but I am really behind the whole thing ...the company couldn't understand how I could sell so much. They said its impossible...so the company told the manager that he should go and investigate me, what I'm doing. So the manager went out with me one day and I show him what I do. I go from door to door and make the direct approaches, make appointments, and he...saw that I was very successful...(one story was:)...we were going door to door...and I show the manager how I do it and I ring the bell and I say, 'Good morning, lady...does your insurance pay your husband a salary in case he gets sick or hurt, and unable to work?' She said, 'My husband is deceased.' I said, 'That's why I want to talk to him at home. See, if your husband would have the disability, you would get at least every week \$100 a week. So let me talk to him right now.' 'But he's deceased.' I said, 'That's why I want to talk him!' And the manager said, 'Leon, he's dead!' And I said, 'Lady, why didn't you tell me he's dead!' And they brought this up at a convention in Hawaii...and this manager told the joke, 'And this is the guy who doesn't speak good English, brings in a month 280 (?) month.'... and they gave me every trophy, every thing in the world. I qualified within 90 days to a 24 round table discussion which was the top agent which were working for 20 years...."

WH: "...and then you went into real estate...?"

LL: "Yes...I sold a house...(but) I'm doing pretty good in the insurance business. When I was in the dry cleaning business, it was suppose to be a good business, I was making \$10,000 a year. The first month in the insurance business, I made \$10,000.... the first year I making \$45,000. That's 30 years ago...I was making more than the president of the company. They all were talking about it...and I could make more. Even today, I sell life insurance...and health policies, which people walk into the office, I don't go out...people call me...it doesn't pay me to go out..."

WH: "You still work?"

EL: "My G-d he still works! He's up at 6 o'clock in the morning. He goes to the Center. He exercise, he swims, he goes in the sauna - ."

LL: "Two and a half hours exercise every morning."

WH: "Why do you keep working?"

LL: "I love it! I love every minute of the day and I work every day until 10 o'clock. I never come home before ten. NEVER! And Sunday I work, I have open houses, I love it!"

WH: "You mean for real estate."

LL: "Yes."

WH: "What are you selling? Private houses?"

LL: "Condos, private homes, condominiums, businesses, as a matter of fact yesterday I sold a building...I'm the only guy in town that insure everybody. I don't care if you have cancer, heart trouble, age - give him to me and I'll give him insurance, and it's legitimate!"

WH: "You made it through the war by doing what? Hiding?"

EL: "Correct."

LL: "...let her tell you the story how she survived. It's a tragedy."

WH: "How many children do you have?"

LL: "Five...One is 45, Goldie is 40, the boy is 35, another daughter is 29, and I got another 23...four daughters and one boy...I wish we had twelve. I love my children. We have wonderful children."

EL: "One lives in Phoenix, and she's in the realty business...she's married and she has three children...the second one is Goldie and she's a big business woman...opening 600 designer shoe stores...she's married, two children...all my children married Jewish."

WH: "It can happen to any body (to marry non-Jewish)."

LL: "No. It cannot happen here. They wouldn't live - I wouldn't let them live a minute!"

WH: "Did you tell them that before?"

LL: "They know it. They would not (go out with anybody not Jewish)."

WH: "A lot of survivor's children married goyim...why do you think it happened?...Why were you able to avoid it?..."

LL: "I don't think they would even DARE to go with a shaygetz...we have execptionally nice children. Very polite children. Not bad children. Just good."

WH: "Did they ever rebel against you?"

LL: "NEVER! Respect? You want to see a respect from children? Like in the old country. High respect. Even my daughter from 45 years old, and my son from 35 years old, if I just look on them. They know what it is, and they will NEVER! They NEVER! Anyone opens up their mouth to me or to - G-d forbid to her (Eva) (inaudible) They know they will have to deal with me. They have very high respect for the parents. "

"Not that they are scared. We are very good to them...now I have money...I don't need it...I work to keep busy. Everything that I do...I put it in their name. All the children are equal partners..."

WH: "...did you find that the American Jew in Milwaukee is jealous?"

LL: "No. They used to be...we are talking now with the Russian generation what come here. The Russian is more successful than we were. Don't forget it. They more aggressive, they more intelligent, better learned, better educated. The new aliyah from the Russians. Much better class people than we are. We were all immorals, uneducated, (inaudible)...the guys who came into the concentration camps, they are completely morons, I mean, - my partner couldn't write his name in Latin. Only in Yiddish. That's all they could read, is just Yiddish."

WH: "So how did they do so well?"

LL: "They got me for a partner!...I had five 'greener' partners. One was working in a junk yard...one was a schneidim. And I had a dry cleaning place...Walter Neufeld is a capable guy as far as this line of business...his partner was a junk dealer, he couldn't write, he couldn't read, and he couldn't get a job no where. He was a schmiel. So he took a horse and wagon and he bought junk...Walter went into it with him...and it was a good combination. One is a producer, and the other one can sell it. Or make from this junk what he produces, make gold out of it. They - most of the Jewish people, the reason why they went into the junk business, because that was the most simpler, with no need of money, but its a - junk is Jewish gold. Take my word for it."

WH: "What do you mean?"

LL: "Scrap metal is not scrap metal. It's Jewish gold. They all - I would say, millionaires. Every body looked on scrap, on junk, it's gold in it. It's all gold... This always was a gold mine business...all the goyim bring into the junk yard in the car, they got copper in it, and silver in it, and name it..."

WH: "...and they went into the grocery business, and real estate..."

LL: "Remember, that we had more guts. I don't know whether more 'sachiel' the American people, they talk always from the depression... recession...all what they talk about. (needs translation: aich ley, ha yom, ha yom.) Today's is today. The best day of the world. I don't want to think what's gonna be tomorrow. And I don't want to talk about the past, because yesterday doesn't come back any more.' "

WH: "Do you ever dream about the war?"

LL: "I don't. She does...she wants to go back to the town where she comes. She wants to see. She has such a - story..."

WH: "What happened?"

EL: "When the war broke out I was 9 years old. I was born in 1930... Potokzloty...we were in a ghetto...my sister was older than me...she was different. I was the shlepper...I didn't look Jewish...so I used to shop... get water...we had a bunker, I have a friend (still today) in Chicago that we lived - did everything together... me, my sister, my mother and my father...we were in hiding..."

END OF SIDE ONE. TAPE TWO.

SIDE TWO. TAPE TWO.

WH: "...did you think that you would ever get out of this?"

EL: "Yah! I always - ."

WH: "How come?"

EL: "That's me."

LL: "I also believe that I'm going to survive. Even other people walked up to me in the ghetto and said, 'Mr. Leopold, take my son! I got only one son. I'll give you all the money you want. Take him with you. I know that you're going to survive.' "

EL: "I just knew that I'm going to survive."

LL: "There was burning, people were being shot, and people walked up and gave me money, I should take their children with me. I did walk out with 4 other guys. I knew that I'm going to survive. I never was afraid. (inaudible) I used to hide myself out. And people, when the action come, instead to go into a bunker, they run over to the house where I was, and they followed me. And we shoot ourselves out from the ghetto. I was a bandit."

EL: "I knew about them...they had a reputation in the ghetto."

LL: "The Bandit. They were afraid because our city was the first liquidated city of Jewish people. A few boys from our city survived, everybody (else) was killed, the whole families, so we didn't give a damn from anybody. We were not afraid from the Jewish police, we were not afraid from the Ukrainain police, or from the Germans. We used to shoot ourselves out...(and when we told other Jews what was going on) the Jews didn't believe us. One German Jew said he was going to give us over to the Gestapo for spreading the lies."

WH: "You stayed in the woods the whole war?"

LL: "Two and a half years...the whole time."

WH: "The guys you were with in the woods are some of them still alive?"

LL: "They all alive...they were all very devoted Zionist..."

WH: "Did you want to go to Israel?"

LL: "I went in 1947...couldn't make a living....I didn't want to be a farmer. I - don't think that way. I want to be an industrialist. I wanted to be a big industrialist. Laudromat. You know, but - my dream was always to be an industrialist...there was something in my blood...(I'll make aliyah) as sure as one and one is two, I'll come there and finish up my life there. I'm still feel, even I'm 70 years old, I still feel young...I'm in great shape (physically)..."

WH: "...and your other children?"

EL: "Jack went into the business with me..."

WH: "Do you go to Israel?"

LL: "Every year, sometimes twice a year..."

WH: "...what's the most enjoyable thing for you?"

LL: "To work...if everything goes smooth I get scared. I'm looking for trouble...I talk to a day, about 200 people, a day! Without stopping... then there is (Myra) Miriam...she went to Israel...met and married a Frenchman...so they live in Paris..."

EL: "(talking about her mother) She's 85 years old. She works."

WH: "She works? Your mother's 85 years old, she survived Europe, and she works?"

LL: "EVERYBODY works in this family. EVERYBODY! There's no cockening around here (wife laughs)."

EL: "She loves it...works in a (retail) store. Everyone calls here
'gramma'...she was (written about) in the paper...it keeps her going."

LL: "It's not the money..."

EL: "She always was a hard-working woman."

WH: "Tell me about your experience - ."

EL: "My sister died (typhus)...in the bunker...we, my mother and father,
hid in an abandon house...when I went out in the snow (to get
provisions from gentiles) I covered myself over with a white
sheet...(as camouflage) until somebody passed by..."

LL: "And carried...(back) whatever food she collected from those good
Gentiles. Now, the reason why I ask her to talk, there is a lot of
'greener' here, complaining about the Poles, the Pollacks, that the
Pollacks killed the Jewish people there, responsible for what was in
Poland...but I state, I'm saying, from a fact, from my own experience,
that if there weren't be the Pollacks, NONE of us would survive. NONE
of us! None of us. Even Walter Peltz, he talks about the Pollacks
bad, but I tell him, 'How did you survive,' and he says, 'By a
Pollack.'...those people who were not in concentration camp, they were
saved by Polish people, and a lot of Polish people were murdered,
hung, burned, shot to death, because they were hiding Jewish people.
I said, if it would be the opposite, Jewish people wouldn't do that
for the Polish people."

WH: "...of your four closet friends, now, are all of them from the old
country?"

LL: "Yes. I don't associate with American born - I do associate with them, but on a friendly term, just 'hello,' 'goodbye,' and when we go to the ORT it's mostly American friends, we go to R'nai R'nith with mostly American friends, we speak to each other, but not - association means, we go to your home, you come to my home, we go to the New American Club...(inaudible). I belong to the Jewish Center...I stay only with Jewish people..."

WH: "...what's your friend's name in Chicago?"

EL: "Rouza Goldberg...her husband's name is Leo...lives in Skokie..."

LL: "My wood's story I didn't tell you. My children want I should write a book about it, because, when I say to you when I used to come into a village, any Ukrainain who done any harm to a Jew has to hide. I was not afraid from the police, or for Germans. I was waiting for the Germans..."

END OF SIDE TWO - TAPE TWO.

END OF INTERVIEW.