

Jules Seidenweber 2/25/89 #5 Page 1

TAPE ONE---SIDE ONE.

Q: Your date of birth?

A: January 8, 1920.

Q: ...you lived in Minneapolis?

A: ...yes...

Q: ...you retired?

A: Yah, I retired.

Q: ...how many brothers and sisters did you have or do you have?

A: One sister.

Q: Did she make it through the war?

A: No.

Q: Older...?

A: ...four years younger.

Q: You have children? How many?

A: Yes...two.

Q: The city in which you were born”

A: Lublin. I grew up in Radom...

Q: ...Your parents, what did they do? First of all, were they observant Jews?

A: Yes. We were observant. Not Hasidim but we kept kosher. My father attended services...

Q: ...wore a yarmulke?

A: ...not outside...but at home...

Q: What did he do?

A: He was a salesman in textile business – one time he had his own...

Q: Would you say he was middle class?

A: Yah.

Q: How far did you get in school?

A: (inaudible) graduated high school...gymnasium...I went to a Polish school...

Q: ...did you go to Hebrew school at all? Did you go to cheder as a kid?

A: I went to cheder and I took also classes in the afternoon (inaudible).

Q: ...hoe big was Radom?

A: ...not quite 100,000...the Jewish population was about 25%.

Q: ...during the war, were you in an extermination camp or a concentration camp?

A: I was in concentration camp.

Q: Which one?

A: We were in phases...we started with a ghetto and then the removal of the greater part of the people from the ghetto to the extermination camp, and then another phrase again, the Germans had a very good plan and the plans were more or less the same, but they were not identical. And in almost every city again, they did it a little differently. You see, our city had two ghettos. They couldn't put all the Jews in one ghetto in one place, okay, so there was a ghetto, (inaudible) big ghetto, in the area of the greater Jewish concentration (inaudible) and that was the worst part of the city...(inaudible)...Jewish life was very vibrant and very active and very big...

Q: So you were in the ghetto in Radom?

A: ...the ghetto was closed in Radom April 15, 1941. So I lived in a big ghetto, and I worked in a small ghetto (inaudible). And, we could go out to work from the ghetto and we had to go in columns in groups. Unless you had a pass, you could go out and walk in the streets. Not on the sidewalk mind you, on the street, next to the curb...

Q: You were also in a concentration camp – which one?

- A: Dachau, and prior to that (inaudible) Baihingen/enz...
- Q: Were you also in what we would call a Labor camp at any point?
- A: ...when we were in the ghetto, that was a labor camp to us because we had to go to work...
- Q: What about your parents, were they in the ghetto with you?
- A: Oh, yes. My friends were till the liquidation of the ghetto. My father was sent away, so was my sister, my mother, fortunately was not sent away because she worked in shops...and she knew how to sew...
- Q: Did she survive the war?
- A: She survived the war...this was the first step to survive the war. You were not sent away. (inaudible) but that, there was no guarantee that you're going to survive...she made it through the war. She's not alive any more...she lived in Israel from 1948 to 1960.
- Q: And where were you? You were here?
- A: I was here...
- Q: ...at any point, were you in hiding?
- A: Not individually, no.
- Q: Did you ever have occasion where you had to try to pass yourself off as a gentile?
- A: Well, yes. But that was even before really, things started going (inaudible)...there were certain occasions you know, we had to wear arm bands, okay, that was a little later maybe in December, November, 1939 but prior to that...I didn't look very much Jewish then, and...I pretended I wasn't...
- Q: After the war, were you in a D.P. camp?
- A: Yes.
- Q: You were liberated from Dachau...?
- A: Nothing is simple. If I tell you I was in Dachau last, doesn't mean that I was liberated in Dachau...fortunately, I was not sick enough, I mean not – I'm not saying this facetiously, I was not sick enough to stay in Dachau when the Americans, American Army was closing in and the Germans took us out, I don't know – two, three thousand Jews (inaudible). They put us on trains. On beautiful

first-class trains, and the rumor had it that we were going to Switzerland and as an exchange, that Himmler had some kind of idea that he could save himself and others. So Switzerland supposedly, that was a rumor, that Switzerland agreed to allow a certain number of survivors in (inaudible) 'cause they saw the hand-writing on the wall, the war was coming to an end. But the fact that they put us on – not on cattle trains, but in passenger – trains. In Dachau, outside Dachau, they gave us (inaudible-coals?) to put on our stripes. They gave us for the first time ever, a Red Cross box, a shoe (inaudible) box with some goodies inside, we hadn't seen for five years, you know, or more. That sort of strengthen the rumor, you know, that maybe we were going. Well, as it turned out, we didn't go to Switzerland, but we went closer to them. We went to Austria, believe it or not...the end of it is, they took us to Austria, and then in Austria, they were really on the run. They left us, they put us in a corner, in a place in the middle of nowhere. Between the mountains, alps, and some creek and water, a triangle, and we thought that the end, because it looked really bad. As it happened, this was the 29<sup>th</sup> of April...the guards ran away and they left us alone so we started marching north...we decided to go back...

Q: And eventually you wound up in a D.P. camp?

A: ...I didn't right away...we (hid in the mountains)...the next day was May 1<sup>st</sup>...we were liberated by the Americans...we said, 'No more camps for us.' So we settled in a room behind some cleaning establishment...we went to work for American army units, American army mess for officers...

Q: This was after the war, but when did you come to the United States?

A: ...in '50...

Q: ...I'm interested in knowing in what D.P. camp you were, and who helped you get to the United States, which organizations, and what it was like coming over here, I assumed you went by boat, right?...

A: Right...

Q: ...I want to skip a little bit ahead...

A: ...that maybe what you're looking for, but if I don't give you the back – what happened between '45 and '50, then you'll miss something, I think.'

Q: Okay, tell me what you think is important.

A: ...I wound up in a D.P. camp in Stuttgart...I started going to school again...(inaudible)...I could have come to the United States in '47, '48, '49, but instead I went through the school, and my wife started to go to

school...(inaudible)...they had a program for Economics for the first two years (inaudible).

Q: Did you meet her there?

A: No. We were married in Poland, in the camps.

Q: In the camps?

A: ...each person has a different story to tell.

Q: ...you met her in the camps?

A: I didn't meet her in the camps. I knew her in Radom...we were neighbors.

Q: So you were already married by the time the war ended in effect.

A: Right. – I didn't know whether she survived or not, she didn't know I survived...

Q: ...You did mention something very interesting just a moment ago. You said to me that you could have come to the United States but you didn't. You chose to finish Hofshueller? What was behind that decision? When you say, you could have come here...

A: People went to Israel, too. Palestine then, before aliyah back...

Q: Did you think after the war of going to Israel at all?

A: Yes.

Q: Tell me about that. What went through your mind. In other words, what were you thinking about, why didn't you go ultimately?

A: Well that's a good question. My mother eventually, she survived the war, I told you that. She eventually went to Israel.

Q: In '48.

A: Right. And I did not want to go prior to finishing school. 'Cause I lost enough years during the war. From the time I graduated from high school and the whole thing, and I wanted to do something concrete for myself, so that's when – now I'll start a new life, I want to be something. (inaudible)...my education, so that was my aim, and then what happened was the (inaudible) had representatives in Stuttgart...they were pressuring young people to go to Palestine...so I said, 'Okay, but first I want to finish school.'...they understood, they knew they'd need engineers, too.

- Q: ...you were studying engineering...(needs translation)...technical advanced school...
- A: ...recognized it's someplace between a bachelor's and a master's
- Q: ...when you finished...in what year?
- A: ...I got a degree...they call it 'Diplom Engineer.' ...and I finished in 1950.
- Q: Your mother had gone to Israel in '48. Was the plan that you would join her there?
- A: Yes, my wife and I. But in the meantime, my wife's father and brother went to the United States.
- Q: So you had to make a choice?
- A: We had to make a choice. And what happened, is that the situation in Israel was very, very bad. And, -
- Q: Economically - .
- A: Economic situation, there were no apartments, food was a (?meyerdink?) I mean, you can live we found out on little, but...we had no money...the D.P. camp was liquidated because most people left for...the United States...Canada...Palestine...we kind of struggled, but went to school. We decided we wanted to go on and we did.
- Q: How did you get to the United States?
- A: So, then, once her father and brother were here...I said, 'Let's go to America, first, and then we can decide later on wanting to go to Israel.' Well once we came here, and you know, in America here I got a job.
- Q: ...you got here by boat?
- A: I got here by boat.
- Q: Where did you leave, Bremerhaven?
- A: Right. Right.
- Q: And what was the name of the boat?
- A: General Hersy...I was even a Room Leader on the boat.

- Q: What is meant by a 'Room Leader' on the boat?...First, let's start from the beginning. The boat was an army boat?
- A: It was an army boat, they converted for transporting D.Ps.
- Q: I assume that your father-in-law got you the visa through the help of HIAS. That he went to them?
- A: Well, they were looking for people who wanted to go to the United States. – Actually the HIAS and the JDC (Joint Distribution Committee)...
- Q: Who paid for the transportation?
- A: They paid. And the United States. That was the D.P. laws. That's where the General Hersy comes in. They didn't pay, I'm sure they didn't pay for the transportation. The United States under the D.P. Act provided probable the cost for the transporting these D.Ps.
- Q: Where did you sleep on the boat?
- A: ...it wasn't that bad. I can't remember now. It was a medium size. So that was the room I was the leader of that. Supervise them, was cleaned up, and the beds were made. –
- Q: You were appointed as a leader?
- A: I was appointed as a leader.
- Q: To make sure that everybody else kept it clean and –
- A: Right...a friend...said, 'if you can, just volunteer that you want to be a Room Leader, you get some privileges. Small ones. And then of course, you would not have to do so much the work as the rest of the people.' It was much work. Cleaning up, and seeing that, you know, that everything - .
- Q: Was this a common practice, that on each boat, as far as you know, there were Room Leaders?
- A: Yes.
- Q: And the Captain appointed them?
- A: No...under the auspices of the (?Unrath?)...so (?Unrath?) people were on the boat. And there was a hierarchy of some kind, you know, two, three, four, I don't know

how many they were. So somebody was in charge of establishing this system of Room Leaders, or Compartment Leaders, they called them.

Q: Do you remember how many people were on the boat?

A: Between 12 and 14 hundred.

Q: Your wife was in a separate section?

A: The women's section was separate...

Q: How many days did the voyage take?

A: Twelve days. We started about, it's kind of ironic, you might say, well, it's kind of coincidentally, it's a better word. On September 1<sup>st</sup>, that's the date when the war started for us in Poland. In 1939 the war started, in 1950, eleven years later we were leaving Europe for the United States – and we arrived on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September. We arrived actually, the 11<sup>th</sup>, to be accurate about it. The rules, they don't let you disembark in darkness, and so forth, and it was also pretty stormy. We had some stormy days. That was a - .

Q: Did you get seasick?

A: I got seasick. That was a stormy season in September...by the way, it was Rosh Hashanah, too. So we left on the first day of Rosh Hashanah. Well, we disembarked.

Q: Wasn't this a problem, I mean for those who were really religious on the boat?

AL: ...well. I don't know if anybody who was religious then...number one, only the portion of people who came over were Jewish. The great majority was not.

Q: No?

A: No, of course not. The D.P. act says, 'All D.P.s so there were more Poles, and Ukrainians...and Lithuanians, and...Russians.

Q: If this is the case...on some boats, most of them were Jewish, and on other boats, most of them were not. Now, in your case, most of them were not. Didn't you think, and I'm sure it must have crossed your mind, that maybe this guy you're looking at was some guy who killed Jews during the war? This Ukrainian - .

A: ...but you had no way of knowing. I didn't like them, but I was certainly very skeptical about the whole group of Ukrainians. They could have been bastards in the commandos for the Germans where were killing Jews – executioners. But - .



- Q: But you had to sleep in the same room with them.
- A: Well...I had no choice...I went to school this was a question that some people ask, 'How-how-how can you be in the same room, and sitting on the same bench with Germans who could have been executioners.'
- Q: Where?
- A: I went to a German school in Stuttgart...
- Q: What do you say to them when they ask you?
- A: I said, 'You can't tell.' Okay you walk the street, you live in an apartment or something, you don't know, unless you have some proof, and in the meantime, you behave, well, you can't avoid them. Some were nice and some were staying away. Even professors were bastards. Anti-Semites (inaudible) you felt it in their talking...
- Q: When you were on the boat, did you have any interaction with the Ukrainians? Did you talk to them, or you just kept to yourself, and - .
- A: If they were in my compartment, and I was responsible for the cleanliness or whatever, I'd say, 'Hey, can you do this and that,' (inaudible)...that what (inaudible) our contract was.
- Q: What did you do all day on the boat?
- A: Nothing special. If you were sick, you were in trouble. If you went out I mean, there were several days I was sick. But my wife wasn't. She was one of the few on the boat because the majority on the boat were sick in certain areas, and then we got over with, so...we have pictures.
- Q: ...what did you eat on the boat? What did they serve? Good food?
- A: Yeh, oh, yeh.
- Q: It was pretty decent.
- A: As a matter of fact, on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, before we arrived in New York, they gave us a nice dinner for Jewish, kosher dinner, you see, I don't know if there was any Jewish person on this boat with the 'Unger' people. Apparently there might have been. But sometimes, many times, they would identify themselves as Jewish, and sometimes they wouldn't. But I would assume, they did ask now who's Jewish and they set up tables for us. That was a good number of Jews on the boat. And we ate a dinner with – even gefilte fish, you know from

cans, but that's alright. You know, they gave us a very nice dinner. This was on the eve of Rosh Hashanah,,,

Q: Was anybody davening? Did they have any services?

A: ...yes, there were...we were sitting and the boat was going like this, because the sea was pretty stormy, and the tables had those little barriers around them, so that when the boat will move sideways, if we didn't hold on to our plate, the plate would slide down to one side. (inaudible) asked, 'Did you have a good dinner?' 'Yah, we had a good dinner,' this time and we ate you know, I like anybody else...

Q: Did anything unusual happen to you during those 12 days while you were on the boat as you think back about it?...did you meet anybody special on the boat? Did you meet anybody on the boat that you later had contact with in the United States?

A: Well, it's funny you asked that. We met two sisters and they were coming from Italy, okay, and while we talked with them, and we just said, 'Where are you going?' and it turned out that they were going to Minneapolis...now...we were not going to Minneapolis. My wife and I were not assigned to Minneapolis...

Q: These sisters, were they Jewish?

A: They were Jewish...one of them was coming to Minneapolis because her boyfriend...she was coming here to marry him, which she did. And she lives in Minneapolis. We see them. And the sister, we see less...

Q: What were you thinking about? When you were on the boat, I assume you spent most of the time with your wife. Were you thinking about your plans, like that you'd want to work as an engineer when you came to the United States.

A: That was my desire. And you don't make plans. I mean, how can you make plans? And, if you don't know what (inaudible).

Q: But you knew that you had a family. You had a father-in-law - .

A: Yah, my wife's father and brother, they worked here.

Q: They are also survivors?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: They came after the war to America?

A: Oh, sure. My brother-in-law I mentioned to you was in camp with me all the time. We were together. He was the younger. My father-in-law has a story of his own. He is, or was rather, he was a survivor of Auschwitz for a very long time...(needs translation – also inaudible)...

Q: So now, when you came, what port did you come in to, New York?

A: We came to New York.

Q: Do you remember the first thing you saw when you came into the harbor? What did you see? How did it strike you?

A: ...number one. (inaudible) I remember when we got off the boat, and we went through the medical checks several times...before they let us off the boat, that I remembered. We went through our x-rays again. Medical check again. The last time, you still were not sure whether you were going to – you (inaudible).

Q: Did you have any injuries?

A: We had no problem.

Q: You didn't have any injuries during the war that were permanent?

A: I didn't have any injuries in that sense. No. But you never knew what was underlying. What was on your – we knew our hearts were damaged in that sense. But otherwise, we were hoping we were okay, but you never know. So we got through, 'Oh, Thank G-d we are here!' So we stepped off the boat, we are in America. And - .

Q: They were pretty nice to you, the examining offices, the immigration officials?

A: Oh, yeh. Very nice.

Q: Did you go to Ellis Island first?

A: No. Ellis Island was closed up...so, once we got off, we were off. And at that time, we knew a lady from the J.D.C. from the Joint Distribution Committee, or maybe that was from the HIAS. Once we are here, the HIAS took over.

Q: Met you at the pier?

A: (illegible in original transcript copy). They met the group, and I think that we had to have some bags...so she helped us (inaudible) she got us a hotel.

Q: Do you remember which hotel?

- A: ...it was a very run down...dumpy place.
- Q: So, you were there for how long?
- A: I don't remember because then they moved us from the hotel and they took us to the HIAS shelter on - .
- Q: 425 Lafayette Street.
- A: ...yes. That was miserable! Uch.
- Q: Why? Tell me about it.
- A: Because you were in a room with about 400 other people.
- Q: 400 people?
- A: I don't remember now, but there were many, many people...men separate from the women, so my wife didn't want to be together. I'm exaggerating probably, but there were a lot of people in the same room, you know and the noise, and you were just sort of – it was all impersonal. It was terrible. But we really - .
- Q: Tell me a little more, like the people didn't care about you, or did you feel that they did.
- A: I didn't know the people...
- Q: The HIAS.
- A: By that time, I felt that they didn't really care very much – you know, because if you are part of a big group, they just couldn't handle probably...(inaudible).
- Q: Do you think that they were well-meaning, but they were just overwhelmed?
- A: They could have been well-meaning, but I would say that they were overwhelmed and you know, it gets a little bit indifferent after a while. We were not the first group. They probably had been working with groups like that since 1947 maybe, you know, since 1950, so for three years already, so you know, you get a little bit careless...
- Q: Your father-in-law was where?
- A: He was in Minneapolis.
- Q: ...you said you didn't intend to come to Minneapolis, but you - .

A: ...I didn't say that...HIAS assigned not here, not in the United States. They assigned before you left...

END OF TAPE ONE—SIDE ONE.

TAPE ONE---SIDE TWO.

A: ...I know in Stuttgart, Mrs. Levine, that was her name, Laura Levine, she had been there for some time, well, we knew her very well.

Q: An American?

A: An American woman. She spoke Yiddish too, very well. So, she was the one who was working on our cases, and visas, and that's one thing that I will never forget. Her-her-her attitude about my finishing school. And she said something, 'I don't care interest in that.'

Q: Yes, yes.

A: She was very negative about it because she wanted us to leave Germany at a certain time and I said, 'I can't because I have to get my diploma.' It so happened I was all done, but the Rector was gone, I don't know where he was at the time...I said, 'I have to wait for him, he has to sign it and he has to go through the whole thing.' She said, 'Oh, it doesn't matter. It won't mean anything in America anyway.' And...

Q: Dismissed it.

A: She dismissed it in a very direct and very rude way. And here I worked my head and my tail off, you know, for all these years. I was not in the Black Market. I was not doing anything – except working hard you know, and trying to come to something and she said, [It's a bunch of nothing, you know, what you are doing, you know, so might as well forget about it.] And I said, 'No, I'm not. If you want to - .' 'Oh, then you won't get a visa!' she says. 'So, I won't have a visa.' (inaudible) If I can't get a visa, I'm not going to go. So she kind of, she saw that I meant it. She was really, she was a - .

Q: Pretty nasty.

A: She's (inaudible) now. She's not alive any more so I know, but you tell, the Latin saying is about a dead person, you speak either well, or nothing at all. Well, I - .

- Q: You can't help it...(inaudible)...but you know something, Jules, it is important to know how the people were treated. Good and bad...
- A: She might have treated other people well. And in this particular case we were very disappointed there. But she was doing her job. And you would assume – we ourselves wanted to get out. That was the time when the Korean War was going on and we had enough war, so we didn't know what was going to happen, how the Russians will react, and what for. And just being in Germany was enough for five years. We didn't want to stay any longer, you know, than we had to.
- Q: So, how did you get out?
- A: Well there was no problem getting out, I just told you. The only problem we had is to wait a little longer until I got everything tied up. So, once I got my diploma, I got all the medical, all the (illegible in original transcription)....
- Q: The affidavit had been sent and made out?
- A: The affidavit had been made out. See, that was the thing. That Jewish organizations, the HIAS, or the JDC, or whoever, they were making out affidavits, as the philanthropic organizations. You could have gotten an affidavit from a private person, a relative or whoever, non-Jews were getting them from churches - .
- Q: Did you get one from your father-in-law or from HIAS?
- A: No, my father-in-law had nothing. He came to America just like we did – first of all, he couldn't get an affidavit for a non-citizen. You had to be a citizen to be able to (inaudible). You had to prove that you are financially capable of supporting – naming a person that you wanted to come
- Q: ...so you went under a group.
- A: I was under a part of the group, and this was Mrs. Levine's job in Stuttgart, to do. And she did. She did a good job in general. But, her personality is another story. (inaudible). Maybe she had so many problems, troubles, and we joked, you know, she was a single person, maybe she had - .
- Q: Needed a husband?
- A: Whether she was ever married or not but she was like an old maid.
- Q: Spinster.
- A: Spinster, right.

Q: So, how did this relate to Minneapolis? They put you there?

A: No, no, no. Now let me finish. So, we were assigned...she said, 'You are going to New York.' I said, 'Well, we want to go to Minneapolis.' 'I can't do anything about it. Once you are in America, I'll see what you can do.' Whatever, I don't remember the exact words...okay, so let's get to America first. So we did get to America, and we got through the formalities, and they established us in this little hotel for a while, and then we got to Lafayette Street. Then, we started working on it. We wanted to go to Minneapolis. And they were not very out-going, so, 'Okay, we'll help you. We want people to leave New York.' Instead, they said, 'Look, those crazy.' 'Cause everybody wants to come to New York. We send to Baltimore, we send here, we send there, they want to come to New York, you are in New York and you want to leave here and go to Minneapolis? (inaudible-?G-d knows where the Indians were?). So, we said, 'Yah, we want to go there.' So, it took some several weeks. First we didn't mind being in New York. After all, you know, you come to New York, and you are supported in a way, you know, and it was very, very, very limited, naturally, you know, but still, no, but then we got to know a little bit New York with the friends who at that time they lived in Manhattan. They helped us, they took us out, we didn't speak any English...

Q: Who took you around?

A: Our friends the ones who had come before...after about 5, 6 weeks, they said, 'Okay, now you are getting out of Lafayette. I don't remember how much time we spend...but they said, 'Okay, you can go find yourself an apartment.' So we did. We lived in - 94<sup>th</sup> Street near Riverside Drive...

Q: ...nice area.

A: Yah, the area was very - at that time we could even go out in the night and walk around. It was 1950, mind you, that's not bad. This was...the end of October...it was great - .

Q: What was it like?

A: A loving room, a kitchenette, and at least we had privacy.

Q: What was the rent?

A: I don't remember. They paid.

Q: ...in other words, they found you the room?

A: Either they found us the room or they gave us the privilege of finding the room ourselves. And these people, Lipson's lived not far, and they say, 'Look around

here, there are rooms for rent, maybe you can find – it's okay with the authorities.' So that's what happened.

Q: Where did Lipson live? What Street?

A: 93<sup>rd</sup> – I don't remember.

Q: On West Avenue and Riverside Drive you had big fancy buildings.

A: Well the buildings maybe fancy, but some of them are kind of, you couldn't see the Sound anymore out of the window (inaudible).

Q: You couldn't see the Sound especially if you had a back apartment.

A: Yah, that's right. That's what I had...we could walk down Broadway ourselves, just from 93<sup>rd</sup>...between Broadway and West End...we could walk at night and we could meet people. All the stores were open, it was really (inaudible). Today you wouldn't probably dare. It's - .

Q: Was this in general an area where HIAS found places for survivors to stay?

A: I'm not sure because – I don't know. You asked me the question whether HIAS found a place for us. They could have suggested or we ourselves found it, and they had to approve it, I don't remember now.

Q: When you got this apartment, you then decided that you were going to look for work in your field?

A: No, not in New York.

Q: You still wanted to go - .

A: This was the point. They said it will take time. That's why they allowed us to go get this apartment. So then they started working on it. And - .

Q: You had to go to their office once in a while?

A: Oh, yeh! Not only this, we had to give them reports, I think, what we are doing, whatever. Anyway, we kept after them too, because we didn't know whether they were working on it or not. So they'd say, 'Yah, we are.' And, so, eventually, they let us know that they got permission. Now, according to them, and I believe it, since we were – assigned to New York, they probably had to make some changes in reporting to the (?I.N.S.?) perhaps, alright, that we'll be leaving and going to another place. Not that we would have been prevented from it, you know, by law or something, I don't know. But maybe it was in their interest to do



something. So, it took a while. It took us 7 weeks, really, to leave New York. On the 50<sup>th</sup> day we left New York and went to Minneapolis.

Q: Did you ever hear of an organization called, 'USNA?' (United Service for New Americans).

A: No...NYANA (New York Association for New Arrivals)...

Q: What did you have dealings with NYANA about?

A: NYANA was part of HIAS...I think we probably dealt with them rather than HIAS directly, because we were in New York.

Q: Did you feel that when you talked to the HIAS people that they understood what you had gone through during the war?

A: No. They were not very friendly, they were not very forthcoming. Frankly, it is bad to say it, because eventually, (inaudible) they could have done it with more grace, more understanding, more – I don't know – I wouldn't ask for sympathy but at least more (needs translation – menschlekite?) you know? A little warmth. Softness. Many times they were rude because we were these – first we couldn't communicate with them in English, obviously.

Q: And they didn't know Yiddish?.

A: Some who worked did know Yiddish. They had to because that's the only communication unless they had somebody who translated for them. I don't know. And they kind of looked down on us, okay?

Q: Greener?

A: Not only 'greener' but you know here's the lowest of the lowest, you know. And we were very, very offended by it because we were probably higher in our own environment than some of these people were. I'm not saying this but some of them certainly, but we were very, very hurt by them, by this attitude. I don't know whether they, they became so as I said before...insensitive, because – maybe even callous because they had to do with different kinds of people for the last three, four, five years maybe, I don't know. – But I would say, if I remember, we did not like their attitude and their, their, their whole total behavior towards us. Maybe we felt that we should-not that we didn't expect anything special, just, you know, a little smile, and a few good words would have done a lot - .

Q: In what way did they show themselves to be insensitive when you think back, was there any particular incidence or - >

- A: No, I don't remember now. If you asked for something that needs to be done, 'Okay, it's all done,' you know, this kind of thing.
- Q: Leave us alone.
- A: Leave us alone.
- Q: How did you communicate in your neighborhood. Let's say you had to go to the grocery store, and buy some food or something.
- A: ...(parts inaudible)...you're not kidding. We didn't know what we are picking from the cart to eat. You know, the number one today, number two tomorrow. And that happened, really. My wife, she was a little better in English. She had taken some during the war. I didn't have time in Germany to spend on anything except studying, and here, you know, so I didn't have any time to learn English. When I came, I was completely 'green.' Literally, as far as the language was concerned. But little by little you pick up a few words (inaudible-?not?) too many. You go to a grocery store, you just point what you want, and you know - .
- Q: What did you think of America when you first came in? What was your first impression?
- A: New York – is a cute city and very interesting, but doesn't give you the best impression. We were used to (inaudible) cleanliness in Germany. You know – even the buildings you know, here you come to New York, first we live in this crummy hotel (short laughs), and we stayed in Lafayette, you know in this huge rooms and all, and the noise which, - I don't want to present myself as something special, I mean, but you stay with people, right, and they all Jewish people (inaudible) Lafayette, but not all people would have been my friends before the war, during the war, we just happened to go through the same problems, but some of them were not my type of people, so – but you are kind of pushed into a situation where you find yourself not very willingly. That's alright. I didn't have any problems with anybody - .
- Q: But what about the black people? You had never seen them before?
- A: ...yah, we saw some in Germany, soldiers...I worked for Americans...for a while...this was the occupation...it was only a few weeks after Germany was occupied...
- Q: ...so you got your first impression of Americans, really, from these soldiers in Europe.
- A: Oh, yah. That was right.
- Q: So, you had a positive view.

A: Yah, it was positive.

Q: Do you remember, when you came in, you came in, in the daytime?

A: ...the boat anchored outside the harbor. That's where had our dinner, and so on...it was erev Rosh Hashanah. But the next day we got off the boat...it took several hours...

Q: Did you see the Statue of Liberty?

A: Yah. We saw it - .

Q: What did you think of it?

A: ...we were very excited, naturally (inaudible). 'Where's - where's,' they ask, 'Where is it? Where is it?' You know, everybody want to see it. It's early morning, it's in a fog and maybe on the other side - .

Q: People were crowding the boat?

A: People were crowding the boat. I remember 34<sup>th</sup> Street...this friend...who wrote to me about getting a function as a Compartment Leader. He came to see us. And then he took me to New Jersey - the same day or the next day...we went to synagogue, you see because we came on Rosh Hashanah. Here we are. You know, just happened to be. So, those people - who brought - .

Q: What was that like?

A: That was kind of bad, because you know, you felt after all, it's Rosh Hashanah. I don't remember - you see, there was not enough time because the boat was anchored outside the port and when they came in early morning and they started going through the last questionnaires and how things checks and everything, I suspect that people from INS - from the offices in New York came on the boat and they must have done the last checks. - So, you go through all this, I don't think anybody was think of davening or anything for Rosh Hashanah.

Q: But you walked into a shul on Rosh Hashanah?

A: ...I think this friend took me to New Jersey to his uncle...I don't remember...maybe the next day, probably he took me to a shul...he lived in Washington Heights...

Q: And he took you to shul there?

- A: He took me to shul there, that I remember, yah. The next day I asked him and then, when we went with him out in the middle of Manhattan,...people were standing in line. I don't if that was Rosh Hashanah or maybe it was on Succot.
- Q: Standing in line to get in?
- A: Standing in line. I said, 'What's this line for?' He said, 'Well, that's a synagogue and people are waiting to get in.' I said, 'Waiting to get in?' He said, 'Yah, they come, they work, and they probably come for Yizkor or something. So they come in and then (illegible in original transcription) . I said, 'Really?' I said, 'This America, (inaudible – needs translation?).
- Q: What shocked you about that?
- A: Well, it was very unnatural, you know. We were not used to anything like - .
- Q: What were you used to...?
- A: You went to shul, you stayed in shul, you had Yizkor, you finished all the services, you go home.
- Q: You mean, not that you just come for one service and then you leave.
- A: Come for a piece of the service, and then go back to work, that was very, very unusual...
- Q: So, you're there, and you're there for 7 weeks. Did you find that the average American in the street was the friendly type, or not the friendly type?
- A: Yah, they were very – if you asked for - .
- Q: They tried to help you?
- A: I would say yes. We were asking directions, or something, obviously, if I asked, my English was so limited and so non-existent almost – so when I was with my wife, - 'Hey, you ask. You can ask better than me.'
- Q: So, now you got ready to go after 7 weeks, you went to Minneapolis, I guess you went to the train at Grand Central Station?
- A: ...friends...escorted us...we went on the Pennsylvania...34<sup>th</sup> Street...we got to Chicago the next morning and transferred in Chicago to Minneapolis and (inaudible) about 24 hour ride. In the meantime we found that they stole our things from us. Because what happened is our friends, unbeknown to them, they packed for us certain things, and apparently it was too big for the train. So on the train they said, 'You can't take it!' And here we are, we have to leave the train

- station. We couldn't go back. And the ticket, I don't know couldn't be changed and they would be waiting for us, so with all this, so they said, 'We'll replace it. We'll pack and repack it for you.'
- Q: Who said 'We?' The porters?
- A: I don't know who at the time. Somebody at the train station. So we hoped. We paid something for it. And we trusted these nice people who wanted to help us (laughs) – How disappointed we were –that they stole things.
- Q: This was your luggage?
- A: ...yah, one of the suitcases...so, they repacked it but certain things were missing, you know, when they arrived in Minneapolis. But that, so that was again a bad impression - .
- Q: (inaudible).
- A: - we were dumb that – I don't know. We just trusted, that's all. We didn't figure anything.
- Q: What was the train ride itself? I mean, here you were seeing the rest of America, now. Not New York.
- A: Well, yes and no. It was interesting, but then we got – the train in Chicago, transferred from one train to another because the train only went from New York to Chicago...this was November 2<sup>nd</sup>, already, you see we left New York November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1950, the next day. We were tired, you know, I mean the train and whatever, so here we go, and from Chicago as we go further west...the area was so desolate to us. It's the time of the year when there's no greenery, nothing, no leaves on the trees and we go to see the Mississippi River which we never DREAMT in our lives that we'll see, you know, here we are in America, seeing this river, but the scenery was just foreboding. And you – we thought, 'My G-d, where are we going? It looked like Siberia outside - .' Well, we arrived, and I see those little houses and farms, and so, but we didn't know what to expect. So, that was the orientation.
- Q: ...you were going at night so you really couldn't see much...
- A: That's right...
- Q: Did you meet anybody on the train, or you just sat by yourselves? Who met you when you got to Minneapolis? Relatives?
- A: (inaudible) my brother-in-law (?).

- Q: What was your first impression of Minneapolis?
- A: We wanted to rest.
- Q: You were exhausted...you didn't ride in a Pullman car?
- A: No, no.
- Q: HIAS paid for the trip?
- A: I would assume – yah.
- Q: So, now, when you were greeted there, what was that like? There must have been a tremendously emotional reunion.
- A: Well there was a year and a half, even, less then since they had left Europe, you know. They were only here about a year - .
- Q: They had also gotten in through HIAS on a group affidavit?
- A: Yes...but they were sent to Minneapolis...you don't argue unless people had some relatives, or friends, or something, then they say, 'No, I don't want to go to Minneapolis, I want to go to New York.' It didn't really matter whether it was Minneapolis.
- Q: ...do you know why they sent people to Kansas City, Minneapolis...
- A: ...they had to distribute the numbers of people to where they would be supported by your local communities...the Federations of the different cities, here it is called, 'Minneapolis Federation for Jewish Service.' In St. Paul, it is called, 'United Council in Service,'...
- Q: did they give you any money for support?
- A: They did.
- QW: ...how much?
- A: I don't remember. Once we got here...they said, 'You have a father and brother, they got a job, they are able to support you,' ...for a short time if it's a medical cost or something they did – (give money).
- Q: ...American Jews here felt that the immigrants would be better received in America if they weren't all concentrated in one large city...and they felt that the immigrants would be force to become 'Americans' more quickly if they went to small communities.

A: That's true. I'm there are people who have lived in New York all their lives and –

Q: And still speak Yiddish all day.

A: ...but they hardly speak any English. And then, you know, they did not get out of this old – country. So I would say, it's probably true. We probably learned English faster here because we were forced into it. It's true. If you live in your own environment you don't care so much. But we were living in a (inaudible) environment, and we had to go find jobs that commensurate with our abilities and our education. And little by little, we became more Americanized. True. In that respect, I believe it...but they couldn't have sent so many people here, so many people there...if the local people would not support. I mean, you need it...

Q: Were you offered any psychological counseling?

A: No, no, never. Not one thing. And I don't think we needed it from them, but the psychological – unless your talking about getting used to the United States and getting to understand what was going on. Maybe they said something in Lafayette. I don't even remember that. If they did...without trying to brag or something, we were a little more sophisticated (inaudible) than the average. We were educated, both my wife and I, and, you know, we had some sense of what we wanted to do. And, even though I didn't speak the language, but, you know, as far as our backgrounds go, so, I don't think that we needed that much of psychology. It would have been okay to get some kind of education, what's its all about. And we might have something. I don't even remember that. Maybe we did.

Q: Sometimes they sent people to night school to learn English.

A: (inaudible) that I did....but that's again, because...the Jewish Family and Children's Service did – I suppose if some day we needed psychological help, if they would have determined, they sent to doctor's, and whatever – but as far as English, yes, they had. They had for New Americans, English classes in the city too and I went. Sure I went.

Q: Here in Minneapolis?

A: Yah. But not the HIAS, not the JC, not the Federation established these classes. The classes were in a Junior High School, and a lady teacher taught English, and I went as long as I thought it did me some good, you know.

Q: What was that like? Did you meet other survivors?

A: Yah, I met other survivors. And I remember when I arrived in Minneapolis – in November, and I meet a couple three weeks later and I started going to these

classes and – after Christmas time I went, and I think I continued on through the end of that school year. And then that was it. I didn't go any further, because I felt that I didn't get anything more out of it then was possible. So I – by then I was learning as I worked, (inaudible) in the meantime of course, I started to work right in November.

Q: Doing what?

A: ...again, with the Jewish Family Children's Service had also, well, they had the caseworkers. They were looking for work for you. They ask for your background and so on, right, so I told them what my background was. I had a degree, 'Oh, but you do know the language? And, 'I don't know the language, but I want to learn the language. And I don't expect to become a full – fledged engineer right away,' but so, whatever. Well, they found a job that had to do as much with engineering as whatever – putting up television antennas on roofs. That was my first job in Minneapolis.

Q: ...you worked here...as an engineer?...

A: ...working at different jobs, it didn't take me that long. In December, - 1951, which is just a little over a year after I came to Minneapolis. I came November 2<sup>nd</sup>, and this was December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1951, I was hired by the utility here. The Northern State Power Company, on a probationary basis, because you know, my language, my background, and so they didn't know, so they said, 'We'll hire you to try for six months.' Well, I stayed there 33 years and 2 months.

Q: Wow!.

A: That's was when I retired. So, I kind of proved myself somewhat (inaudible). Obviously, I got up in my status and so on. My wife, on the other hand, she went back to school here, because when she came, she was not completed – she had not completed her studies. So she went back for a master's degree at the University of Minnesota and got her master's degree in Economics. Political Science and Economics.

Q: ...what did she do with it?

A: But then she went as a, she couldn't get a job. Because this was something that the international companies – at the time, they were really not hiring Jews. And they not wanting women. Jews maybe, but she was a woman and then a married one. So they told her. 'We can't hire you.' Now, they wouldn't say that.

Q: Your main language now, when you speak, when you read. You read in English everything?



- A: Oh, yah, that's (inaudible) many years. Even if I write letters to my friends in Israel in Polish, I have to use the dictionary, you know – yah, my Polish has gotten so poor.
- Q: Did you belong to any organizations...here..and which ones?
- A: There was a Newcomer's Organization...lasted very long, a few years. I was a member.
- Q: ...what was it called?
- A: 'New Home Club.' I think that was what it was...
- Q: What did they do? They had parties?
- A: They just got together, and talked and that time probably talked more Yiddish than – there were some people.
- Q: Had any activities? Any dinners, any parties?
- A: ...I wasn't really active. I just came to a few meetings. I wasn't – my father-in-law, I remember, was more active, but he's gone...what other organizations do I belong? Well, there was in our synagogue, Married Couples League.
- Q: You belonged to a synagogue?
- A: We've been members for many years...
- Q: It's a Conservative synagogue, right?
- A: Yah, yeah.
- Q: And how often do you go?
- A: Very often...
- Q: Every Shabbas?
- A: Almost every Shabbas. Not 'almost' but every Shabbas, every Yom Tov.
- Q: Your name in Europe was a religious one...
- A: (illegible in original transcription).
- Q: I assumed you believed in G-d throughout.

A: Uh – umm (indicates a yes).

Q: Do you think that your belief in G-d played any kind of role in your own survival?

A: (long pause) I think so. It's, ahh, kind of a hard question, as you said, because it was a dichotomy to not believe in G-d, you know, here you see those terrible things happening, you know, and yet you hang on to this little thin thread of hope and hoping that G-d will help me, you know, that's, will it? You know that's very – so it's a who deserves that, you know, how can you believe in G-d when you see all these terrible things right in front of your eyes. Including your family, relatives, friends, everybody going. So you sort of – and yet you hang in with this idea that maybe not that you hope that you'll be the only one, but maybe things will change. You waiting more for to be a witness of the enemies damage – demise. Then you hope that you survive, you know.

Q: But how do you explain that the Holocaust took place, if you do believe in G-d?

A: I don't know. Nobody can explain. The very religious have an answer that's. you know, we sinned, and we – don't know what's happening. G-d has some, I don't know, his own designs in the Universe and this is a part of it, so. If you want to explain it this way, maybe it's true, maybe it isn't true, maybe this is a good explanation, who knows.

Q: Do you accept that?

A: I really don't know whether I'll accept that because it's – what will happen a thousand years from now, in the long term design, is not (illegible in original transcription). But, it is a very, very difficult problem, you know, to - .

Q: Do you think about it?

A: - to reconcile the things that one went through with the fact that well, I'm here, you know, but everybody else may not be, but I am, and you know, gone through in spite of everything. How do you take it? It's – it's – it's must be something – higher power, so you believe in G-d's design. But what, what am I? A little tiny bit and G-d designed that I am here. This is, you see, this is the part of the guilt feeling too, that you know, that I am the only one from the family. It's very, very difficult – but you hang on to it, - .

Q: Why feel guilty, if you didn't do anything actively to have it turn out this way?

A: Well, you know very well, you know that a person even in normal times, that a member of the family dies, you know, and the rest of the family sort of feels guilty, (inaudible) maybe we should have done this, or that, or else you know, if a younger person goes, and an older is alive, they see he's gone, or she's gone, and I am still around, whether it's a mother or a grandmother, it happens. So this is

the same – well, it's even more so, because I'm the only one. The only one from my father's family to (inaudible). There's nobody that I know, (inaudible) that anybody from my father's side. From my mother's family - .

Q: No relatives?

A: No relatives from my father's side – AT ALL.

Q: They were all killed?

A: ...as far as I know, there's nobody on my father's side...

Q: Did you ever feel guilty in that your mother went to live in Israel and you didn't join her?

A: Oh, sure. But she came once to visit us here when the children were very small. And we were planning to go see her, visit her. Unfortunately, I never did when she was still alive because I just couldn't afford. Now, this was in – she came here in 1957, my son was a year and a half, and my daughter was three and a half...she stayed here 2-3 months and went back. And, I don't know, we hoped that this was in '57, I had been only working about six years – then we had bought a house, and all things. We just couldn't – my wife wasn't working then, and the kids were small, so it was very difficult, but you know, we managed alright. And then we thought, 'Oh, our plans, we'll go to Israel, we even planned, - you'll with the children, will go first, and then I'll come later, take vacations so we (inaudible).'well, my mother's...(inaudible)...but they had support, moral support, because – my mother remarried, you see, (inaudible)...

Q: When? After the war?

A: Oh, yah, sure. Met also a man from Radom. He lost his wife during the Holocaust...so some moral support. (inaudible). So, we planned that we'll go. Well unfortunately, it didn't come to it because three years later, my mother died. And believe it or not, I found money to go to the funeral. I went to my mother's funeral. They waited for me. That's another story. So I – that was my first trip to Israel.

Q: Some way to go on a trip.

A: ...so all they plans were wiped out. As they say in Yiddish, (needs translation – people want to do, they plan, and G-d laughs).

Q: ...were there any people here in Minneapolis who had a very strong influence on you, in the early years when you came here?

A: No. You mean - .

Q: A rabbi, a leader, a friend or somebody.

A: No, I don't think so.

Q: Did you talk much about the Holocaust in your experiences in the early years?

A: No, people were not interested...occasionally something would come out in conversation...our children knew...

Q: You told them.

A: We told them if they ask any question - .

END OF SIDE TWO---TAPE ONE.

TAPE TWO SIDE ONE.

Q: ...you ride to shul?

A: ...yes.

Q: But your house is kosher I assume.

A: Yes...two sets of dishes. You know, it's not as strict as a Lubavitcher, but it's pretty, okay, you know.

Q: ...do you ever have nightmares?

A: Occasionally, something bad.

Q: Did you in the beginning?

A: In the beginning (inaudible).

Q: And then it got less?

A: It got less, yeh.

Q: You were 25 when you came here, right?

A: I was 30...

Q: Do you ever feel that you experiences anti-Semitism in America?

A: Oh, there were some remarks in the office where I worked, occasionally – not strong ones. Occasionally – I don't know what's behind it. But I didn't hear, and what I didn't know, it didn't bother me. But I could have felt maybe certain things, you know. It was more a matter maybe of jealousy that here you know, here's this newcomer who doesn't speak perfect English, you know, this kind of thing, and maybe their responses could have been a little different. But, not really, I can't complain about that. If anything, you know, some people would come after years that I had been here, my English was not too bad, and I knew how to spell much better than some of the people. They would come and say, 'Hey, is that alright?' and ask me in a sentence, and so on, so in that respect, that improved.

Q: What achievements in life are you most proud of?

A: I don't know. That's ahh, achievement, I think that the fact that our children are well- educated and decent people and have their professions. We are all four of us are professionals, and they have professions, and they are successful you know, 'course the two grandchildren, so far - .

Q: You have two grandchildren?

A: Yeh, one each. My daughter has a son at the same time, and our son has a daughter.

Q: Your daughter...at Carleton College, what does she do?

A: ...she's an attorney, a lawyer. She practices.

Q: And your son in Boston?

A: My son is a computer engineer. Electrical engineer...

Q: So they've done well.

A: ...my son-in-law is...a professor.

Q: You are in good health?

A: ...yeh, at my age, yah – Baruch HaShem – (inaudible) could be worse, could be better.

Q: You're 68, right?

- A: Right.
- Q: You were never in the hospital or anything?
- A: ...oh, yeh, I been in several times, different things, but – had a little heart attack in 1980. Thanks G-d.
- Q: But not a big deal?
- A: ...not too severe.
- Q: ...and that was the most serious thing?
- A: Well, that usually would be – I had other things, but they were not - .
- Q: And, your emotional health is good, right? You feel good, and you're basically a happy person.
- A: Yah – I am basically a happy person. But, see that this feeling, of, call it whatever you want, guilt, or whatever it is, this is the emotional. I had a sister who was loved very much, and my father obviously too, but, you know, a sister – we were very close. And she was four years younger and when she went she was 18 years of age. And every so often, you know, I think, what did I deserve – why did I deserve to remain and this beautiful girl did not, you know. Or other people for that matter. Not only my own family, and that, that – when you ask about emotional things, or dreams, or, or nightmares, this is probably the hardest for me still, you know. Just to comprehend, and to just to reconcile myself that - .
- Q: Isn't it tied in, in a way to the question that we raised before about G-d?
- A: Yah, I told you, we don't know. This is – this is – and I, you know, (inaudible) I wonder often, could I have done something. And I do everything I could have, and so on and so forth, and –
- Q: ...she wound up in...
- A: She was taken away.
- Q: She was taken away?
- A: She's taken to Teblinka - .
- Q: You don't even know.
- A: We, we know pretty much. We didn't want to believe it at the time...

Q: You lived in a private home?

A: ...my own home...it's paid for a long time...we expanded it, we paid every penny. We don't owe anybody anything.

Q: ...what do you define success?

A: Good health, and nachas – from the children, and you know, that's good (inaudible) for all of us. Not only myself. And that's nachas and you know, I also worry very much about Israel. I have been a Zionist, and my wife, from my youth on, I wound up here, but Israel is very dear to me and I really have worries about - .

Q: You worried about what's happening now?

A: Happening now, what's been happening, and the future doesn't look very bright – I should say probably bleak at the problems, not that they wouldn't survive (inaudible) but the problems are very, very real.

Q: How often have you been there?

A: ...five times.

Q: You can't live there now, right? You have your children here, and you have your roots here.

A: I don't know, maybe I can. I have hopes that maybe one of my kids will settle there.

Q: Do you give money to support Israel?

A: (inaudible)...I'm not only giving, but I also, I'm involved in it as much as possible for the Federation, you know, getting pledges...

Q: Are you involved with any organizations that are not specifically (illegible in original transcription).

A: ...well, I am a member but not involved actively...(inaudible) Electrical and Electronic Engineers...(inaudible).

Q: Do you consider yourself a cautious person?

A: Yah, I think so.

Q: Are you the type who's more willing to take risks?

- A: No, I am not a cautious person – conservative.
- Q: If you had to choose between a job that provides security and one that is more challenging, what would you pick?
- A: Well, I already did...I stayed on with this job rather than looking – or maybe bigger challenges or whatever...
- Q: Do you think that if you hadn't come to Minneapolis, if you had been elsewhere in the United States, do you think your life would have turned out better or worse? Supposing you had stayed in New York?
- A: Oh, about the same. Well we made many good friends here, we probably (inaudible) in any other places too, because we are outgoing people, and financially, I don't know – we're not rich by any stretch of an imagination, we are maybe comfortable and that's all. We were not looking for riches. This is not our main aim in life.
- Q: Do you ever feel that having lived through the Holocaust that it's as though nothing terrible can really happen to you. That it's like you've lived a charmed life?
- A: I don't think in that – I don't know why I am around, and others - .
- Q: Do you think it was luck?
- A: Oh, luck can be (?escape?) to G-d to, if G-d looks at every person is (illegible in original transcription), you know, future – whatever. Then it's G-d. If it's just a matter of coincidences, and the matter of survival was luck, that's – you know, there was no – nothing that you could do, no matter how you used your wits and be smart, and you know figure out all in ahead of time, on occasions you could, but as a whole, you never knew. You could 99% of the time you could do all the right things. But this one time you didn't. You couldn't, because it was not in your control. In other words, our lives were not directed by ourselves, and whatever you did, (inaudible) see, if I do this and this okay, I can probably survive. There was no such guarantee. I'll give you one example. It doesn't mean anything as far as life is concerned, but you could outwit somebody and I went (inaudible)...having photographs of your nearest – your parents, your sister and so forth, was a great thing to have, because many people just walked out of the houses, or things were taken away from them, in camps and they had none. I had a few photographs, alright. And I, one time in this camp...an S.S. officer..I made a pocket myself, and I had these pictures carrying here and they were bulging...so he saw me and stopped me...and said, 'What do you have here?' ...I showed him...he just threw them on the floor and...slapped me my face but he didn't do anything with the pictures. So from then on I carried them in my shoe...when we came to Dachau...our shoes had to be dunked in the water in case



you had something...we were standing in line...instead of staying in line...we kind of by-passed, and they didn't see. I saved the pictures. What they call, 'Luck,' this whole word, or whatever – (inaudible).

Q: It was really both...(needs translation: You got to be in the right place at the right time. And you got to do something. Weren't there times when you probably did save yourself by doing something?

A: Yes I did...anyway, would you believe that these pictures, that somebody tried to steal the shoes in Dachau...at night...the shoes were under my head...as I slept...a Ukrainian tried to pull out the shoes and I screamed...the shoes were there, but the pictures disappeared...

Q: You never found them again?

A: I did. This is the beauty of the story. It was beshert. The pictures were wrapped around in tracing papers, you know for draftsman...one day, I walked and somebody yelled out from the next block, in other words, they had big steel grates, you know you couldn't communicate – you weren't suppose to. 'Hey, did you lose something?' And I said, before I had a chance to even say 'Yes, yes!' A package flies out from there. I never knew how the package got there. I didn't know who the man...was who recognized me, because my pictures didn't look like I...and I got the pictures back. How – what did you call that?

Q: Amazing.

A: (inaudible)...so this is beshert...(needs translation): 'Who directs him? Is G-d sitting in, in, in, with this long, white beard and say, 'Hey, this guy's going to have his pictures, or he's going to have his – life?'

Q: You think so?

A: I don't know. I don't know. Who knows. Never – nobody ever came back.

Q: ...you children you sent to afternoon schools?

A: ...yah. They went through the whole program...

Q: Are they fairly religious, would you say?

A: Well my daughter is more than my son is.

Q: Your son-in-law is more also?

A: My son-in-law and my daughter...but my son and his wife are less...he – he – she doesn't care if he works on Shabbat...although he tries not to tell me...he's not observant he used to be...

Q: What do you think happened?

A: I think college...

Q: Where did he go?

A: ...here...

Q: ...what do you do here in your spare time? Read books? Go to movies?

A: ...I am treasurer of the (inaudible - ?Tech Miel? Society)...I am a life board member of the Talmud Torah. I am the chairman of the Transportation Committee...Ritual Committee of the synagogue..I am involved...with the Federation.

Q: Do you think that now, as a result of all these Holocaust films and everything that American Jews have a better understanding of what the survivors went through?

A: Oh, yah, they understand...schools got interested in, and that's where my wife got involved in our high school...

Q: Would you buy a German product?

A: Well...

QL In other words. You don't feel too strongly...how do you feel about Germans who were born after the Holocaust, who had nothing to do with this, technically?

A: Well, that's true, it depends on what they are now.

Q: Do you think that there's something specific to the German people?

A: There's no question about it. You live with the Germans, you see that they are very chauvinistic and very (inaudible).

Q: Aren't the Poles big anti-Semites too?

A: Of course! I don't like them...

Q: Do you think it could happen here?

A: Well, (he ponders this question) it can happen, probably, but it's a long-shot. It's a, it's a less of a possibility because people are of course imbued with other things and only chauvinism. And you see those anti-Semitic groups, and the white power party, and - .

Q: What do you think of them? Do they scare you?

A: It scares me by a lot...they showed them on television. I would rather object even though, you know I am for freedom of the press and so on and so forth, but I would rather see that they don't give these the publicity, because on one hand, it may do some good that people are aware of it, but on the other one, they bring more members you know, so - .

Q: What did you think of the Viet Nam war?

A: ...well... we went through stages because we thought maybe it was necessary, and then we found out that it was just a - .

Q: Were you politically on the scale?

A: I am moderate-liberal...

Q: What did you think of Watergate?

A: ...we were very, very upset, and the whole thing it was just, we have been a voting citizen from the Day Ones, after I became a citizen. This is 1956. I haven't missed an election, a national election...state election...well, our city maybe might have missed some.

Q: ...of all the politicians you saw here, in all the years that you were living here, which one impressed you the most?

A: Hubert Humphrey, no question about it...he was a mensch...

Q: Which one made you the most nervous?

A: ...Gene McCarthy...he spoiled it for Humphrey to become President. And, he changed history...

Q: What about Nixon?

A: ...(needs translation – he sighs)...

Q: Kissinger?

A: ...I don't like Kissinger. Nixon did more for Israel maybe than other people might have thought...

Q: Reagan also...

A: ...that's right...

Q: ...don't you feel a little funny, here you are a liberal to moderate, right, and you want to do the morally right thing, and all these conservative guys are better for Israel than the liberal guys half the time. Doesn't it put you in a conflict – you worry about Israel?

A: ...yah...it's kind of hard to reconcile...this is the old question. 'Is it good for the Jews?', right?

Q: It's a question you ask.

A: That's right. And we ask that ourselves. So if it came to voting I don't know. I probably wouldn't – I know I didn't vote right (inaudible)...there's no question about that - .

Q: You wouldn't vote for Jackson either, right?

A: No – (laughs seriously), oh, this son of a gun! No. No - .

END OF SIDE ONE---END OF TAPE TWO.

END OF INTERVIEW.