

4/28/89

LS: "My father...was in the (Polish calvary)...Germany...army... we came from Poland...I was born in Bejene (?)."

WH: "Don't you think it's hard for Americans to understand what really happened there?"

LS: "Yeh..." (Looking at pictures from youth and she is asked):

WH: "And none of them - do you think they (the kindergarten class - mostly Polish gentiles) would have helped you later on?"

LS: "No, not one. My mother knew a lot of Polish people but they were afraid...they didn't want to risk their lives...they were big antisemites...my father was in sosmowich Ghetto...I was in arbeitslager a working camp...every woman was called 'Sarah' and a man was 'Israel'..

WH: "This packet of letters..."

LS: "No body has. I'm the only one I think from all the survivors...(who saved these letters and pictures)...when they took us to concentration camp...Grosrosen...I hid them (the whole time)...in straw...I was thinking this is the only thing what I can save."

WH: "Did you think at that time that your parents wouldn't make it?"

LS: "No."

WH: "You thought they would?"

LS: "Of course. My parents were young."

WH: "Yet you held on to the letters."

LS: "Yes."

WH: "You were an only child?"

LS: "Yes... my brother passed away from natural causes before the war..."

WH: "You were born in 1927... in Benjene...the Ghetto started in 1943...(My parents were there)..."

"I was picked up from the street for the transport...in 1945,
May 8th I was liberated...Grosrosen (concentration camp)...we
were sent out of the camp to work..."

WH: "...What were the conditions like in (?labor camp)...did they
kill people there?"

LS: "If you were sick...overnight you didn't see them (the next day they
weren't around)...they were sent back to Grossrausen to be - ...we
worked day and night...my job was spinning - weaving...I always was
(my work) perfect...I worked with only Germans - I was the only
Jew..."

WH: "Your parents - they were Hassidim?"

LS: "Modern. Religious. Very religious..."

WH: "As a child, were you a happy child?"

LS: "Oh, yes...my father was very strict."

WH: "If someone started up with you in school, did you fight back?"

LS: "No...depends...everybody was afraid from them (gentiles)...I went to
a goishe school because they had no place in the Jewish school...Oy, I
went hell there through...the priest used to come and used to talk
that the Jews killed the Jesus and all things and after that lesson my
life was in danger...(they said) I'm the killer - the G-d killer. ...I
was 7 or 8 years old...I was beaten...it was a very hard life in
Poland for us, for Jews. Couldn't even describe...I'm talking (even)
before the war...constantly fear we lived...we had pograms...they
demolished our business and apartment and killed people while we hid
in an amore..."

— WH: "...when you went to shul on Shabbas in (?) did you go by places where goyem were - did they see you going to shul?"

LS: "No. the Jews in Europe used to live together even before the war - like a ghetto...everything was where the Jew lived.. the Polish people lived away from us..."

WH: "I think that...you kept these letters all these years is a miracle...did you take them with you (now, today, at the time of this interview) because you were afraid you would lose them?..."

LS: "I was very attached to my parents - especially to my mother and that was like I would be with them."

WH: "...you wouldn't leave them - (why?) ..."

LS: "No. Whenever I go I take (them)...I read them all the time..."

WH: "...did you read them this yom tov..."

0 LS: "Not too much...holidays comes was the worst time for us, for the Jews...they used to take Jews...any Jew...only in the holiday ...especially Rosh Hashonah I am out...lost parents at that time"

WH: "You were in the camp until 1945...then you were liberated -

LS: "That day we ran out of the camp and we went to the city...the Germans run away...afraid of the Russians...so there were a lot of empty apartments...we went to a Jewish (agency) and was told we could go any place we wanted we didn't have to pay...so we went back by train to our home...the Russians on the train were raping them (the girls) and killing them...they were like savages and my friend meet two boys she knew from Poland...when the Russians came to us we said they boys were our husbands...they didn't touch us (then)."

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WH: "Did you see a difference in character or personality of the Russians or the Poles..."

LS: "They were nice...very nice...when we were liberated they told us not to eat the food...that it was poisoned..."

WH: "...they weren't antisemites...?"

LS: "No."

WH: "But they were raping and killing 'cause they were animals!"

LS: "Yes, they were hungry...they walked many miles...they were very exhausted..."

WH: "...but they raped and killed...do you think it's not because the people were Jews?"

LS: "No, (not because they were Jews) because they need it...I don't know what was it..."

WH: "In these letters...what did your parents write about? ...what was going on?...to stay strong...you shouldn't give up.."

LS: "I should work hard...they always give me hope..."

WH: "Did your parents speak German?"

LS: "All the Jews did...my (parents) speak Russian, too...from the first World War."

WH: "Then when you came back (to your home town) you found out (about your parents death"

LS: "I cried day and night...no body (in the town) was left... Polish friends I visited (when they saw me) crossed themselves. They couldn't believe I was alive..."

WH: "What did your father do (for a living)?"

LS: "(Had) like a general store...and...Jewish organization (?) helped us live in our home town (after the liberation) the Poles didn't help us-."

WH: "How did you come to America?"

LS: "went to the American consul (in Warsaw)...we had family in Houston, Texas (mother's sister and brother)...they came long time before the war...around 1915...(before we left)...we went to Auschwitz to say prayers... it was terrible...it was 1945...my friend and I were together..."

WH: "Did you think at that point to go to Israel?"

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LS: "No...my family was in Los Angeles..the consul told us to send telegrams to our families (in America)...and to 'hope'.....(for an answer)... ..in the meantime we were smuggled...(my friend and myself)... through Chechoslovakia...our goal was to get to the American zone...we paid nothing...we had no money...the Yiddishe (?) agency arranged everything...on the train the Chechoslovakians (women) gave us clothes - food - whatever they had on them they gave away - and...in Prague...they killed Germans and those that sympathized (Chechoslovakians)...we went to Munich...to a DP camp ...(it was there) I saw my aunt's telegram from the USA...I almost died...I wrote back right away...she wrote to my uncle in Paris...a man came to see me at the DP camp said he was sent by my uncle and he was a smuggler and was to take me from Germany to Paris...I was shocked...I didn't know anything...what to do?.. I left with him and another woman...we had to wear (military) uniforms...and walk separate from him...(so he wouldn't be caught if we were)...a transport of English speaking army

men asked us if we wanted a ride (across the border) and we went (with them).. (We couldn't speak one word English)...arrived in Paris...(waited in a Jewish section for my uncle to get me)...they were such mean people...we were sitting...cold...they were having breakfast... they didn't even ask us if we want coffee or something...after a war like that...Jews should be like that?.. finally my uncle came ...I lived with them for five years...it wasn't so wonderful to be in my uncle's house. It wasn't so good...sometimes I used to say, 'it was even bad in concentration camp' (she jokes!)...I was waiting to go to the United States. That was my only hope...my aunt was mean to me (Lola is crying)...I think she was jealous because my uncle paid attention to me...because of what I went through...ne felt sorry for me...my cousin used to say, 'it's not for long'...I waited for the Polish quota (my turn to come to America)...if I hadn't gone to Paris I could have come to America (sooner) in 1947."

END OF SIDE ONE OF TAPE ONE.

TAPE ONE - SIDE TWO

LS: "They want to put me to jail (in France)...so we had to pay certain amount money to legalize me...after 5 years I came to US. I work, I saved up my money and I came as an immigrant...I came with the Ilse de France boat, which I came to get the same time that time was Erroll Flynn was on the boat."

WH: "Did you talk to him?"

LS: "Yeh, he signed me his picture..."

WH: "This was a nice boat?"

LS: "Yeh..."

WH: "How did you happen to come with that boat?"

LS: "I pay for the ticket, I came legal. I had a passport, visa..."

WH: "HIAS was not involved?"

LS: "No...they mostly helped people who were in the camps...I came private...in 1950...my aunt sponsored me...she wanted to bring us before the war...had affidavits..."

WH: "Why did you decide to leave before the war - you knew already what was going to happen?"

LS: "My parents, yes, we saw it's very bad - it's not getting better. My father, his dream was to go to Israel. We want to go so badly but my mother says 'no' she was afraid the climate was too hot and she had a sister and brother in U.S. ...my father's father came to U.S before the first World War. He was very wealthy - he had men's suits - (owned a) factory. (America)...wasn't frum enough so he went back."

WH: "When you came on the boat...the boat came into N. Y. - do you remember what it was like when you first came in?"

LS: "It made a good impression on me. Yes. I liked it."

WH: "...you saw the Statue of Liberty?"

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LS: "I don't remember. I think we passed by. I don't remember if I saw it. Maybe I did. I don't remember. They were waiting for me, my uncle in Paris he belonged to a society (of friends from Brejene) and the president...and his wife ...(I knew them from France)...they were waiting for me...they arranged for me to stay by them for a few days...in the Bronx"

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WH: "Did you have any kind of permanent injuries as a result of the war?"

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LS: "Yes. Oh, yes...I have back trouble. I fell from a truck. My broken back...they were taking us on jobs...and I fell...out of the truck...on my back..."

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WH: "You told me that if you couldn't work in the camp they'd deport you, so how did you...?"

LS: "But I did. I fight it. I was so strong when it came to that 'cause I knew that's gonna be the end."

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WH: "When do you mean you were so strong when it came to that...?"

LS: "I had so much will power."

WH: "Are you that type of person that you have a lot of will power?"

LS: "Not now..."

WH: "Back then?"

LS: "I can tell you, believe you me, we didn't eat for - for years, I didn't eat. But I lived. I dream what I eat at home. From that I lived."

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WH: "When you were in the camp?"

9
LS: "They didn't give us to eat. Nothing. I was sick. I had skin infections. I have..holes in my body where I still have those...boils...from not eating...they used to give us...Sunday...a tiny piece of meat...who knows what (it was)... after that we used to all get sick. Diarrhea...but we was so strong."

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WH: "...what do you think kept you going? What do you think made it possible for you to overcome that?"

LS: "That I'm gonna be with my parents together with my family."

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WH: "That you hoped that you would see them - that's what kept you going."

LS: "The letters. My father used to write them...(inaudible #81)..."

WH: "Do you think that the letters saved your life?"

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LS: "Yes...every- one..."

WH: "How did they get the letters to you..."

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LS: "We used to send from the Yiddishe Geminda...and they used to send to the camp."

WH: "Other people also got mail - right?"

LS: "Yes...but they didn't get like me. They wasn't so intelligent. They couldn't write...maybe (their) parents (couldn't write)..."

WH: "...when you first came to America, what were your first impressions? What was the first thing you thought?"

LS: "First impression was-reminded me of Paris...you know, a bigger city, but, I don't know - free city, you know, a big city."

WH: "Was it different in any way?"

LS: "Yeh, it was, of course, you could see (it was) richer, you know."

WH: "What were the people like?"

LS: "People? I didn't like too much the people"

WH: "...in America, not too friendly?.."

LS: "Not too friendly, no."

WH: "Who are you thinking of? Who do you think of think of... in stores, subways..."

LS: "Every where, every where. I didn't know right away the first few days because I wasn't too long here, I went to Houston...(for a few months)...I felt free. Jews are not like...in Poland...(Jews were here in United States) like everybody else...they were no different...I didn't see who's Jewish, who's not Jewish..."

WH: "How about shvartze? (black people)"

LS: "Shvartza - no, I was used to them...lot in Paris from Africa. They are very nice. Not the same shvartza what here - but that time when I came 1950 they weren't bad. They were nice. The shvartza wasn't like now...and to me it didn't matter. He was a mensch. He was a person to me. He was no different. The only thing, when I came to Houston and I saw what was there going on, 'oye,' I said to myself. I cannot stay there. That's not my place. First of all, the anti-semiticism is so big there just like in Europe."

WH: "In what way?"

LS: "...my aunt used to beg me I should speak very low Jewish. G-d forbid they shouldn't hear that I'm speaking Jewish. And then I saw what they were doing to the black people. I couldn't believe it ...once I was going shopping...and I sit down in the end of the bus...I didn't know that in the end was for the blacks...I sit down with the blacks...a man came over, a tall guy, a cowboy he pulled me

(she demonstrates) and threw me out from the bus... when I told my aunt she said, 'you're lucky they didn't kill you 'cause they think you are a troublemaker that you fighting for the blacks...my aunt gave her (black) maid food what we didn't eat...she (made her eat) outside like for a dog...I fought (over this) with my aunt...and she called me a communist...how can you treat a person like that like a hen, like a dog...I saw it was not a future for me...a goishe life..."

WH: "Your aunt and uncle had become like goyim?"

LS: "No. My aunt was religious...Shabbos...drove to shul...kept kosher...the children not...the Jews looked like them...assimilated...my aunt's second husband was very wealthy...he was Polish...and cheap...they were waiting for me. I came by train. I could have come by plane but I was afraid to fly...I was shocked when I saw -- I mean, I recognized my aunt right away. She looked just like my mother. She with her husband, a chauffer with a beautiful, dark red Cadillac was waiting for me and all her children, cousins - I couldn't believe it. I said, 'it must be a dream. I mean, I used to see movies in America - rich, the richness, luxuries of life. I would never believe it's gonna happen to me that. Then they took me to their home - beautiful home. They had...maid...beautiful. And his children were so wealthy this you could only see in the movies - with the butlers with everything...very rich...very wealthy Jews. But still I didn't like it. It wasn't heimesche...I want to go back to NY... get a job...try a new life...(in Houston)I worked in a factory... I used to sew house dresses...all Polish women...I had another job ...(making) wedding gowns...the first thing they used to ask me - 'what church I belong' -

what this, what that. I said, 'I'm Jewish!' You know, I wasn't ashamed. When they heard 'Jews' they thought, like I don't know, I should have horns...so I said this place is not for me. I went through too much. I should again continue the same story..."

WH: "Did they argue with you?"

LS: "My aunt, no. explain to her it's not my place...I can't...I'm not going to stay here. I'm going to Israel. All my friends who was with me in camp - they went to Israel."

WH: "Do you know anybody who came to America in those years - '45, '47, '48 and went to Israel?"

LS: "No - but I was ready to go because I was disappointed, you know, I remember when I was in Paris... I have a cousin - my aunt's son who lived in Washington, D. C., very wealthy, too, wrote me once a letter which I have at home, this letter, and he wrote me like it is. I shouldn't be disappointed. I shouldn't think that here is beautiful everything that money grows on the trees and I was so mad that I didn't want to even - I didn't answer him. I was so mad after that letter when he wrote. But then when I was here, I saw that he was right. Every word what he was, you know, he write to me. It was true. It was very hard. So what happened - I came back to N.Y. ... went back to friends (of my uncle's society)...I wrote to her that I was very unhappy - she wrote to me 'the door's open for you anytime'."

WH: "How come? They didn't know you..."

LS: "They liked me."

WH: "You were only there a few days."

LS: "But they saw I was a nice girl...they saw in me that I was honest, you know, they liked me very much. They feel like a daughter unto them because they had two sons, married sons, and they were alone. Older couple, you know. They were very nice to me."

WH: "Sometimes a friend will treat you better than a relative."

LS: "That's right. That's what she was. They were very nice...I stayed by them for weeks and I didn't pay nothing. I didn't have no job. I couldn't get a job and I ate there."

WH: "But you were still all alone."

LS: "All alone. Again alone. I'm always alone (laughing)."

WH: "Even now?"

LS: "No. Now thank G-d I have children, my husband. Now I'm not alone. But night I was mostly alone here...so they were very nice in that year...(my host) he had a lot of connections in the garment center and because I worked in Paris the same I used to work, you know, for the coats, and suits, lining."

WH: "You were already an expert by now..."

LS: "Yeh...this job, I never went back to that work. Only what I learned in Paris...I thought it's gonna be no problem for me - it's gonna be easy to find a job. In the mean time it was five weeks...and promises and promises and no job. They said that this year is very bad, and this and that. I wrote to my aunt that I'm not working and she could help me, you know, financially. She never answered me."

WH: "Even though they had a chauffer, a Cadillac and everything?"

LS: "Never answered me."

WH: "Never answered you."

LS: "No."

WH: "Did you ever talk to them again?"

LS: "No...(my host) said I should go to my society... president was my father's best friend...who lived in America and had lost his family - wife and children (in the war) - ...when he heard my name he started to cry on the phone because his daughter, he had only one daughter and we were very good friends...he cried...and said I should come to them...he lived...two blocks away from me - I didn't know...they invited me for dinner...his second wife knew my mother (before my mother was married)...they were very nice. They didn't have no children. Married after the war. And he said he's gonna help me much as he can. So he wrote a beautiful letter (sent me) to the (garment)Union...I went and told them who I am.. (that) I'm looking for a job and I need it badly...I gave him the letter...he ripped it in pieces and threw it in the basket and he says to me, 'what do you think I have jobs in my pocket?' like this. I left. I was crying and I didn't have no money."

WH: "...and you were told to go there."

LS: "Yes. He gave me a letter, he should read the letter. And he didn't even open the letter. He ripped the letter and - so, I came home and I was very disappointed and Mrs. always helped me in misery and she says, 'don't worry, you gonna get that job. And finally, after months, I got a job. A good job. A union job I got...the man from the society spoke to somebody and I worked, and I tell you, I cried day and night. First of all, I wasn't used to work like a slave here."

"I mean here you work like a machine. I mean, I work in Paris. I work 12-14 hours and I wasn't so mete (tired)...and here I work 8 hours. I used to come home I couldn't move with my hands. I was dead."

WH: "Where did you work?"

LS: "...7th Avenue..."

WH: "What did you make?..."

LS: "...linings..."

WH: "They worked you very hard then."

3
LS: "Not only that, the only Italian worked with me there and they was such antisemetic...I was so lucky all my life - even if I did a good job, it wasn't good. They used to call me and complain and the woman was a heavy woman, Italian, you know, she was...the forman...she used to give me the business...Ohhh, she used to bother me. She used to make my life miserable. I couldn't take it any more."

WH: "Why? What did she say?"

LS: "Complain she didn't like what I did...they were jealous. They didn't want me to work there, you know?"

WH: "They only wanted Italians to work there?"

LS: "Yeh, yeh."

WH: "You the only Jew working?"

LS: "The only Jew...there was a Jewish man finishing very expensive clothes...they didn't want to teach me...only complaints...I used to come home and cry, 'what I'm gonna do my best? How I'm gonna work there?'. Finally, I work there a few months, very hard. I said to myself, the only way for me is to get married and to get rid of this 'cause other wise, I'm not gonna survive here."

"So I had, I met in New York two friends of mine and we...weekends... we used to meet...that time we weren't afraid to go in the middle of the night by train..."

WH: "How did you meet these two friends?"

LS: "...through) HIAS..that was the place to meet people."

WH: "How often (did you go)?"

LS: "Weekends. Sundays...Saturday...that time I travelled on Saturday..."

WH: "(when you) used to meet there, what did you do there...what did it look like?"

LS: "We was sitting. It was a big hall. People was standing. Sitting. Talking. Asking...that was it. No activities...Just to meet. To look for people and because I came here and didn't know nobody so I want to know who was here in New York."

WH: "Who told you about it?.."

LS: "Everybody knew about HIAS. There was HIAS in Paris, too."

WH: "They had no activities, no movies, no dinner?"

LS: "Maybe they had I didn't..."

WH: "...It was just a hangout?"

LS: "...Yeh. To meet somebody. Even to meet a man. A lot of people met and got married after that...but I didn't go to look for that."

WH: "Just friends?"

LS: "Yes."

WH: "Did you go to school to learn English at all?"

LS: "Yes. Night school...in the Bronx."

WH: "Right away, as soon as you came back from Houston?"

LS: "Not right away. It happened when I worked at the factory there was there a woman who work at the machine... a very nice woman, a Jewish woman, and she was single, she was older, maybe in the 40's she lost her husband and she spoke Polish...we got friendly...(offerred to share her apartment)...I was making good money...\$73.00 a week...(plus) overtime on Sat. and (longer) hours...I used to pay (them) \$25.00 a week... I told the people (I was living with) that I'm gonna move...the because the husband got sick, and then, you know, and I felt so uncomfortable there. So she didn't mind. She says she's glad and I moved."

LS: "She lived in a nice building. Beautiful building. Beautiful apartment she had. Beautiful furnitures. Some balabusta she she was, you know, very nice...she was to me like a mother. Very nice...so...everybody knew about the HIAS...I met my friends from camp. Some of them were married in Germany. I didn't know about them..."

WH: "Besides meeting them, did you ever go places with them?"

LS: "No. Nothing. Just to meet...oh, with my two friends, when I meet them here, one, we used to go out, we used to go dancing...there was one place if I remember, I think Columbus Avenue... I saw the boys who came from the camps...they had, like, all kinds things in their minds, you know. They weren't settled, they were so free. They didn't have no family. You couldn't trust them too much, you know. And I was very careful. Oh, I was so - (laughing)."

WH: "They just wanted to sleep with you - "

LS: "No, no, no. Not with me. Oh - never!"

WH: "But, I say, 'they'."

LS: "Yes. They want this way They thought because we have nobody and they have nobody, so - out I wasn't brought up that way."

WH: "Did they seem like tough guys, these guys from the camps?"

LS: "Not tough. They were like, ehhrnn, no responsibility, no, ehhrnn, I don't know - I felt so - I don't know. I didn't click with me (laughing)..."

WH: "But did other girls go with them?"

LS: "Yeh, of course, I don't know. My two friends they didn't go out with nobody. They were like me."

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WH: "If they would ask you to dance, you would dance?"

LS: "Yes. But nothing - I used to go home. It wasn't like now, today, wasn't the same way (laughing) - and we were very, you know, European style..."

WH: "Could you tell me in your mind...what's 'European style'? What's the difference..."

LS: "To treat sex like this? ...I can tell you, I married my husband who's a witness. I never had - with no body...and I was in Paris...that is a very free life there... never happened because I knew - my mother used to teach me (laugh)...I was very careful..."

6
WH: "But you felt the Americans were more loose."

LS: "Very loose."

WH: "Even then."

LS: "Then. I mean I wouldn't say I was 'used to' but I used to see in Paris what was going on...oh...terrible...it took me years til I got used to see the free love there."

WH: "Even among the Jews?"

LS: "In France, the Jews to me they were like the goyem...the French people no difference. Just the same. It's like here. I mean, mostly the American Jews are - especially in Texas - oh - ...I never forget when I came to Houston...there too was a Jewish geminder there where the greener, the refugees used to come - there we used to have dances and activities, Saturday night...and there was a woman who...came from Poland before the war and she organized...the Jewish geminder...she want that we should meet each other...I met there somebody who - I almost got married there.(laughing) He was from Austria. Jewish boy...he survived with his mother he lost the whole family and I

have pictures.. my aunt was very against it...she said if you gonna marry him you have (live with ? his mother) - she wasn't such a pleasant woman. His mother. But he was a very nice fellow."

WH: "Did you ever find out what happened to him?"

LS: "When I told him that I'm leaving to New York he was very mad. Very mad. And he want me, you know, he want...to marry me. But, I told him so he used to write to me to New York. My aunt came...to visit us...I was already married. I had children....and she told me he got married..."

WH: "...most of the greener who came to Houston - did they leave after a while or did they - ?"

LS: "They stayed."

WH: "Most of them stayed...to your knowledge...how do you know?"

LS: "Because my aunt used to write me."

WH: "I thought you never heard from the aunt again, when you asked her for money."

LS: "Yeh, later, when I got married I'm talking."

WH: "Then she made up with you."

LS: "Yeh. When she heard that I'm getting married, I wrote her."

WH: "...so she became your friend again."

LS: "...so I said to my husband, 'you see my aunt is very wealthy, I'm sure she's gonna send me a thousand dollars.' In the meantime, she send me a hundred dollars. That was the present. My wedding present..."

WH: "Not much from her, no?"

LS: "No. Not much at all."

WH: "Do you think that when you wrote to her to ask her for money, do you think she was afraid that you would always write her?"

LS: "Yeh. But I was so desperate. I didn't have no money."

WH: "I'm sure you were embarrassed to do it."

LS: "(the women I first lived with) gave me money for transportation in that time cost...10 cents or 15 cents...for the subway...she used to give me a dollar."

WH: "Did you ever know her children - her married children?"

LS: "Yeh."

WH: "Do you still talk to them?"

LS: "Yeh, they came to my children's wedding. Which I made beautiful weddings. They never saw weddings like that. They stayed by me and they couldn't believe it."

WH: "How many children do you have?"

LS: "Three daughters...I married the cousin of my friend's friend (met on Henry Street)...I lived (before I was married) on Vyse Avenue and went to night school...I was 22 years old... after two months we were married...when I worked at the factory I thought I'm not gonna live too long if I'm gonna work too long here. I was very, very tired and exhausted, unhappy. I was ready just to kill myself. And I wrote to my aunt to Paris that; so she says to me her door's open if I want to come back. I'm always welcome...I said to myself, (inaudible) 'not back to Paris.' I was very unhappy here. Very unhappy."

WH: "Did you ever see a social worker or talk to anyone?"

LS: "No...Who? Who? What?"

WH: "You were depressed, right?"

LS: "Very depressed."

WH: "So, wouldn't you have wanted to see someone?"

LS: "I tell you, my friends were encouraging me, you know, my two friends they were nice. Very nice to me. They never let me down. You know they always used to be with me - "

WH: "Did any of your friends that you talk to today...friends who are survivors, did they ever go to a psychologist for counselling or for help?"

LS: "I don't think so...maybe we didn't know or couldn't afford it. I don't know. I had a nervous breakdown, after when I was married already..."

WH: "Did anybody help you then?"

LS: "Ya, I was going to a psychiatrist."

WH: "Are they any good?"

LS: "ahhh - help me? You know - short time -"

WH: "What caused the nervous breakdown?"

LS: "I don't know. Everything. I was lonely. Unhappy."

WH: "It just piled up?"

LS: "Yeh."

WH: "You know why."

LS: "Yeh?"

WH: "You were under a lot of stress your whole life."

LS: "Yeh...and I was by myself. Yen."

WH: "Your whole life was difficult - to come back after the war, to find you have no parents..."

LS: "And I was very disappointed in this country. Very."

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WH: "What do you mean?"

LS: "From everybody...the family, you know, they didn't have the same feelings like I'm used to a family. Very cold. No feelings, rush, rush, everybody's busy, everybody works, everybody doesn't give a damn for all this..the same thing was in Europe, too. My uncle, aunt."

WH: "You mean in France."

LS: "They were a different, maybe different way, because it's a different life there than here...I wasn't loved."

WH: "Sure, but you had a husband."

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LS: "Yeh, what I want to say he (my future husband) called me ...(to make) an appointment...we met Saturday night...he came..and we went out...in the beginning I wasn't too happy, but when he told me that he has family, parents and sister, brother, I said that this is the guy what I want. 'Cause I was afraid for somebody who didn't have nobody. You know, I don't know, I didn't trust person like that...his parent were in Israel...after a few weeks he took me to his family, his uncle and grand- father...they all were living together in the same house...in two months we got married because he want to go out from there, too, he lived by a very religious man...I have pictures of them...the grandfather says to him you're not gonna leave me before, until you gonna get married. So we were both desperate, me and him. So we got married. It was a very religious wedding."

WH: "Hassidish?"

LS: "Hassidish...on the East Side...outside (the shul) was the chupah..."

WH: "Who was your first child?"

LS: "Esther...(she's 37), Harriet, (33), and Beverly, (31)."

WH: "After the wedding, what happened then? Where did you live?"

LS: "So, after the wedding we didn't have where to live, so we rented a furnished apartment in Hunts Point. I never forget that...I love Bronx...that time was beautiful. Only Jews lived there."

WH: "So what do you mean, you'll never forget it?"

LS: "...it was a private house and there was a woman alone, her husband passed away, big house, we rented a room, and I was very embarrassed, you know, where I had come...a furnished apartment - room, not an apartment and we shared the kitchen with her...meantime we were looking for an apartment and my husband's uncle's wife's father had a house on the East Side...and he said...there's gonna be a two room apartment on the fourth floor walkup."

END OF TAPE ONE - SIDE TWO

TAPE TWO - SIDE ONE

LS: "Cherry Street...on the fourth floor we lived...it was in the back, very hard, but we were happy. We had our own place. And the grandfather from my husband he was a sick man, old man, but he gave us \$400.00 a gift - a wedding gift...a poor man, sick...first of all, he ask my husband he wants to buy me a ring or we want the money? So my husband ask me, 'what do you want, a ring or we should buy furnitures...I said, 'listen, a ring I can live without - the furnitures, we need it - we need a bedroom set, something. We didn't have nothing! So, we went and the grandfather said we should buy two beds with a night table in between, you know, 'like Jews you don't sleep in one bed.,' he said to us. I said, 'okay, what's the difference.'"

WH: "Was he religious, your husband?"

LS: "Very. Because of his grandfather. He was very religious. Such a beard he had, you know, European style."

LS: "... (Stanley)...he was not so religious?"

WH: "But he was always the religious side...I wasn't, I mean, after the war I changed changed completely, you know, I change. I was so disappointed in my life that it changed...but he was with his family and his father was observant and when you with the family's sister the whole family survived. The four children and parents which is one in a million. They were in Russia...I understand he has different feelings...you know...so we lived there and we bought a bedroom set, then we bought a kitchen set, and there was a big room, the kitchen was everything - the living room, the dining room, and ...three months

→ later I got pregnant and I had the baby, we still lived there on the
(Cherry St)
fourth floor walk up which was very - summer, you could die from the
heat. I don't know how I lived there. And roaches! I never in my
life I saw roaches, I don't know, - I, - Europe there's a different
kind. But I never saw roaches-millions (!) of them. I could never put
the oven on When I put the oven on they came out like, you know, I
never saw... roaches...from the oven. I never saw something -
millions (!) of them. Like the oven would be the nest for them. I
never saw something - I used to cry, I used to say, 'My G-d,
everything I have to taste?'

WH: "What do you mean, 'Everything you have to taste!'"

2
LS: "All the tzores! I mean, I went I was in camp...what I had with lice,
with flies, with, with, with, with all kind, you know, bugs.
Unbelievable. White lice, dark lice, what I had, were crawling all
over. It was unbelievable. So, and now I see roaches, in America, I
never saw this. So G-d help me, I cry I couldn't stand the day I
was so miserable. My husband was a painter...(in the Bronx)...found a
four room apartment on Creston Avenue."

WH: "Why did you move there if the place was so bad?"

LS: "We couldn't afford then. We paid \$35.00 rent. My husband was
making...lucky (when he made)...\$30.00 a week."

WH: "Were there other people who were refugees living there?"

LS: "Yeh. The whole building. Oh, the East Side was full with
refugees...it was the center. That time, the East Side was the
center...1951...all the yeshivas (were there)...it was "Israel" there.
You felt, you know, like you really, you home."

WH: "Aside from the roaches, did you like it there?"

LS: "Yeh. Oh yeh! Yeh! Yeh! Oh, I liked it!"

WH: "When you were there, did you get together with other refugees - did you go over to their house - did you talk to them - "

LS: "Oh, yeh, I had a lot of friends...(we) all were struggling..."

WH: "Did you talk about the war?"

2
LS: "Yeh. Even after the war...I had a friend...we used to go to Pitt Street Park...my daughter was brought up in that park... and mothers used to come with small children...I met one which I got very close with and she told me her husband didn't make a living they used to eat every day herring and potatoes. I came home and I says to my husband, 'how could people - can, people live everyday -'...and I was complaining, you know, that it was bad... Polish people?...but after that, I tell you, they went in business and they wealthy today...I'm not in touch with them today...another friend...is a multimillionaire..., they very wealthy, very cheap, too...I'm in touch with them...their only daughter married somebody very wealthy who parents live in Germany...in Germany the Jews are very wealthy...what I tell you, they (my friends) started with nothing. That's why I say if I hear from our people they became rich, you know, it's a miracle. They struggled all the life. Nothing came easy, believe you me. They didn't steal, they didn't kill. But they, they really succeed."

WH: "Why were they able to succeed?"

LS: "Because they saved every penny. We people, our people, they always think about tomorrow. We don't think about today. 'Til, 'til today we always, still think about tomorrow. And when you think about tomorrow, you safe. You, you, you have a future."

WH: "In other words you don't go to that movie, you don't buy that extra thing -"

LS: "No. Of course not. I never, you know, I mean, thank G-d, now I can't complain, I have - we started with nothing. When we got married I had \$200 on my name. My husband didn't have one penny...and the \$400 what the grandfather gave us that was for the furnitures - that was it. Because, I'll tell you why. My husband had parents in Israel. And, every penny, when he was single, he sent to Israel."

WH: "So how did you manage to get money together...as a painter you don't make a million dollars. He made \$35.00 a week and he sent CARE packages to his parents in Israel... if you had to send money to Israel...did he ever tell you he wanted to move to Israel?"

LS: "...yes."

WH: "So how come you didn't go?"

LS: "I tell you, this is a long story. I wasn't too happy about, you know, I was very hurt. Not his parents, but how he acted. We didn't and he sent the last dollars to the parents...when we were married two years my daughter was the oldest, they came to America, they stay a whole year here, his parents. They saw that the United States...they saw how we lived. How poorly we lived. And I used to go to the butcher, I couldn't pay him. I had to pay from one to another because I didn't have enough money to pay."

WH: "So you felt your husband should also give money here, too?"

LS: "Yes. But he's a very good son, he was. Very good. But too good...I wouldn't do that. I would do to my parents, but if I don't have? They (his parents) used to ask us in every letter to send this and send that...they once (asked us for)...a heater."

"It cost at that time, \$75.00 - \$85.00 dollars and I had to work three weeks, a month for that... who could afford that?...believe me, they lived nicer than we did...my husband's sister's husband was a...builder (in Israel)...my in-laws had a nice, beautiful apartment..."

WH: "You didn't want to go to Israel to move there.?"

LS: "We went to Israel 26 years ago with the whole family. We saved up a few thousand dollars...his parents...didn't know my other children. They knew only my oldest daughter... He said they were older people, 'when we gonna see them again?' ... (a few years later his mother died)..."

WH: "So you went to Israel for a ...visit...you were thinking about maybe living there -"

LS: "I liked it. I tell you, when I came back...I want to go back right away. I like better the life in Israel than here."

WH: "Why? It was more heimische?"

LS: "Heimische, beautiful, clean, you know, the houses so white, the weather so beautiful."

WH: "...so why didn't you go?"

LS: "Then, my husband was so involved in his work, you know, and it wasn't easy. And my children went to school there (in Israel). They loved it. All three went to school there."

WH: "Are you sorry you didn't stay there?"

LS: "No. Ten years ago I went to Israel which I was very disappointed."

WH: "Why?"

LS: "It's not the same. I don't know. It's not the same people. It's not the same. The Jews, they changed. That time they used to be really nice. And this time when I went they so jealous, they hate the American. Where I used to go I used to get, you know, arguments that, you know...to live in America, to come to Israel, they used to tell me...horrible..."

WH: "What, that they would think a person is crazy to go live in Israel..?"

LS: "...they jealous. They envy you when you come from America. That's what I felt..."

WH: "What would they say - that you should leave America?"

8
LS: "No, they say that you know, that we like, we have a lot of money...it's good to come to Israel for a visit, but to live in America...like somebody says to me...we went to a supermarket so...the man who was working there...he started to curse the American Jews...I gave him that time. I said, 'what's the matter, my husband doesn't stay like this,' I said, 'my husband works very hard for the money what you think?'...I don't know. I didn't feel good. I was so disappointed. Completely...after I went the first time I said to myself always,...Jews can...run a country...26 years ago I saw that the country was so beautiful. Everything grow and nice. I say this is not the same Jews. What I know."

WH: "Sephardim or Ashkenazim?"

LS: "...Ashkenazim...in Poland...what Jew was working physically? This weren't allowed. Jews mostly... were business people...but not argriculture. They didn't know about that. So beautiful grows everything in Israel. I couldn't believe it. I was so excited. I said, 'this, this is a dream!'"

"So now, you don't think you'd want to live there."

LS: "Now, it's, the country is beautiful, but the people changed! Maybe, I don't know, maybe because of the wars they got so bitter."

WH: "How about your relatives?"

LS: "My relatives? I have nobody now there. The only one is a cousin of my husband which she is still single, alone..."

WH: "When you think back on your life...what are you most proud of?"

LS: "My children. My family. That's it. This is my life. This is it."

WH: "If you could do this thing over again, from the time you came to America, is there anything you would have done different? Is there anything you would have changed?"

LS: "I wouldn't want to go through what I went through. That's for sure! ...being here...I would, one thing, I am sorry I didn't go to school..."

WH: "But you went at night."

LS: "But that was just, you know, to know the language. To go to go to learn something. To be something."

WH: "But how could you have gone, you couldn't work?"

LS: "...But I know people, they went. They even went to college too...maybe if I would have somebody who would push me..."

WH: "Do you think it's important to go to college?"

LS: "Yes. To be educated. Yes...I envied people..."

WH: "But if a person went to a concentration camp, right, and one person will say he had a job like me as a college professor, and the other one was a 'schnyder,' the 'schnyder' would live, and I would die. If you have a trade you can live."

LS: "I tell you, in that war, nobody was safe...the only one maybe had more chance like you could sing, play instrument, he could survive, maybe. That was more important than anything."

WH: "Did you ever say to yourself, 'Like I'm was sorry I was born?' after all the things you went through..."

LS: "After the war I felt like that."

WH: "'Cause, I mean, you were really all alone. You really had nobody."

LS: "...ohhh...I didn't have no teenage life, ...I didn't have that..."

WH: "But you wouldn't have had the children, right?"

LS: "Then when I'm thinking, so maybe G-d give me life that I should survive and from two people we are 13 people in the family."

WH: "It's a big thing... Esther (your oldest daughter) is married to Milton (who's) parents are survivors..."

LS: "...Milton is in business..."

WH: "Do you feel that since his parents are survivors that he can understand better what you went through?"

LS: "Oh, yeh. Yeh. Oh, yeh. More than my other son-in-law who is American born...Harriet's (husband) ..."

WH: "What about Beverly (the youngest)?"

LS: "...his father...went through the same thing too..."

WH: "What does Harriet's husband do?"

LS: "...American born...background German...from German Jews...he is in business which we helped...all the children, thank G-d."

WH: "You must have saved, though, if you're able to help..."

LS: "No, my husband is very honest. You cannot find many people like him. Sometimes I'm mad at him. Because it's too much of it. But he doesn't live for himself. He lives not only for his children, but he gives lot of money, too."

WH: "He works hard."

LS: "Yeh, he works hard. Yes. But he doesn't live for himself. That why he tells me always, you can't live for yourself. Which I know. He's right..."

WH: "What does Beverly's husband do?"

LS: "He's a salesman.."

WH: "You sent all your children to Yeshiva?"

LS: "My youngest went to Yeshiva. The others to Hebrew school. My oldest daughter she went maybe 12 years or more. She graduate from the seminar...she's very good...she davens beautifully and she knows. The middle one is not religious...but she went to Hebrew school for many years."

WH: "Is her husband religious?"

LS: "...no, but he likes it. He's Conservative."

WH: "I think for a lot of the survivors, religion was also a social thing."

LS: "Yes."

WH: "'Cause that's the way life was in Europe."

LS: "Yeh."

WH: "So you have a good relationship with your own children...all of them."

LS: "Yeh...and the grandchildren...which this is mine life too..."

WH: "Sure. It's a very important part of life. Gives you nachas."

LS: "Yeh, the best! I mean, everything is the best - grandchildren are very dear, too."

WH: "...of your best friends, are any of them Americans?"

LS: "Mostly I have from survivors...I have American, like neighbors, not close... 'cause we don't have too much in common..."

WH: "Do you think they, the American Jews look down on survivors?"

LS: "They don't like them too much. I remember when I came to this country, the American used to call me, 'Refugee! Refugee!' I couldn't take that."

WH: "When was this?"

LS: "In 1950."

WH: "Where? In a store? Work?"

LS: "Sitting in park. They heard us speaking Yiddish or whatever: 'Oh the refugees! oh, I give her right away! I give HER refugees!'"

WH: "What did you tell her?" "...I told her off! I said, 'What you mean refugees! You weren't a refugee,' I said, 'time...when you came here? You were, too, a refugee!' but that's the same thing as with the Russians now."

WH: "What's going on there?"

LS: "...we don't like them too much, either. But we don't call them 'refugees' but we don't like them. I don't know why. They're not nice people. Some of them. I'm not saying all of them."

WH: "Even though they're from Europe, too?"

LS: "They're not friendly. I don't know...they're so strange to us. I mean, they're Jews..."

WH: "When you think of the Americans and yourself, what do you think about how they acted towards you?"

LS: "Same thing."

WH: "Why?"

LS: "They hated us. I don't know - maybe because they felt maybe because we took the jobs away or something and especially when they saw that we were well up - they certainly don't like that ...I have few friends, they're VERY wealthy. They live in... beautiful homes, with...maids - refugees!"

WH: "Did you see any difference between the Hungarian refugees and the Polish refugees?"

LS: "...we didn't like each other. Never. Because I was with them in concentration camp. In 1944 they came to our camp Auschwitz...because they were liquidating Auschwitz."

WH: "So, why didn't you like them?"

LS: "Only some of them they were religious...most of them, the Budapest, were not religious...like goyim... like Gentiles and they hate the Jews. And there were a lot there with us...from third generation...somebody was a grandfather, grandmother, ..."

WH: "Not Jewish -"

LS: "But they brought them to their own camps...third generation they called them, they were Jews. And they was such a, oh, mean, mean. They used to wear, you know, crosses."

WH: "They wore crosses, but they were Jews."

LS: "They were Jews...converted."

WH: "But it didn't help them."

LS: "No. They were with us. And they used to curse us! Oh. Then we learned the language...the Hungarian language...so we gave them back, but good...the women...from Holland, France, Czechoslovakian, they were very nice..."

WH: "How do you tell the difference between the ones who come from Czechoslovakia and the ones who come from Hungary?"

LS: "...the intelligence, ...the education...all those letters...the Czechoslovakian, they used to read for me those letters, I couldn't read that..."

WH: "Is that why, when you ask the Hungarian where they are from, they always say, 'Czechoslovakia' because they think it's better?"

LS: "Yes...because they have a better name."

WH: "...what about in America? Did you see any differences between the refugees who were Czechoslovakians, or Hungarian here, and the Polish?"

LS: "They're completely different...the European people are different. They've...more feelings."

WH: "We're talking about the Hungarians and the Polish. Did you see any difference?...how?"

LS: "Selfish, mean. For themselves...I'm sorry...but that's what I think...but we don't like each other too much...maybe they say the same thing about us. I don't know. But that's what I feel."

WH: "What do you think...the difference is - why?"

LS: "I don't know. I can't figure it out. I don't know."

WH: "When the survivors get together here in this country, right, usually the Polish get together with the Polish."

LS: "Mostly, Polish. Czechoslovakians come a lot. They feel more like we are, Czechs."

WH: "But not the Hungarians."

LS: "Yeh, but I mean the Czechoslovakians. The real ones from Prague...and...Bratasiovia...this is the real Czechs... they don't speak Hungarian."

WH: "Do you feel that the Hungarians think that they are better than the Polish?"

LS: "I don't know - we hate each other. That's the only thing. I don't know why."

WH: "What happens when you get together in a shtebel, in a shul..."

LS: "I'm not saying all of them, but I think mostly...right away you say 'Hungarian' I don't know, you feel such a distance to them."

WH: "What about (inaudible) Galicianer?"

8
LS: "This I never knew in Europe. I...learn in America. I didn't know Litvak...Galicianer...(Galicianer were more Polish) ...but they say here...they selfish people...I never heard the Litvak language-the Jewish..."

WH: "What about the German Jews?"

LS: "We didn't like them either...it's not that we didn't like them, they felt that they smarter, they better than the Polish."

WH: "In America, too?"

LS: "To."

WH: "Did it change that much?"

LS: "Yeh. They're always separate...groups...that's what I feel...(to me) doesn't matter. If somebody's nice, can be even a schvartze, if it's a nice man, I respect him...but if somebody's not nice...you automatically hate him."

WH: "Until you get to know him."

LS: "Yeh."

WH: "Do you still have nightmares about the war? Still think about it?"

9
LS: "In the beginning, when I came to this country, I have terrible, terrible - I feel like I'm home, like I'm there. Now, slowly, you know, it went away from me.) But from time to time I feel like I would like to go back once... I would like to go back there...(to Sosmowich "

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WH: "Do you think you would be able to stand it?"

LS: "I feel that before I 'go' I said to my children, I would like to go."

WH: "Today, of course, you're more religious than you were when you first came here, right?"

8
LS: "I tell you the truth, if you want to know...I have no feelings. I don't know why. I do this for my husband, for my children. But I should say that I feel it, I don't know. By me everything's so empty."

WH: "Why?"

LS: "I don't know why...it's no good...I'm sometimes very miserable."

WH: "You mean if you daven it doesn't mean much. You think anybody's listening?"

8
LS: "I don't know what to say what I believe...very hard to think.

WH: "...Some people are religious by habit..."

LS: "Yeh. That's right...I feel like that...my husband feels it and I wish I could be half like him. Maybe its like this that this is his habit. I don't know...I'm very...cold... sometimes I said to my husband, 'how can you live not to believe in nothing' in me, personally. I don't show this to my children. I always have a kosher home, and yom tov..."

- WH: "...Do you think, if there was a G-d, do you ever ask yourself, 'why he allowed all this to happen?'"
- LS: "I say, sometimes to myself, maybe there was (?) beshert from G-d that I should survive that, you know, that every body from my family..."
- WH: "Did you ever ask 'why it was beshert that the others should die?'"
- LS: "That's the question...."
- WH: "Maybe that's why you don't feel so happy about believing."
- LS: "You know...when I see how they used to take small children away from the parents, I mean pulling them away, and I used to see mothers crying..."
- 8 WH: "So tell me, how can you believe in G-d then?" (she is crying)
- LS: "That's why I say I can't believe. Such a beautiful people you know religious, with payos (side-curls), I mean, the nicest people you don't see here...they went like cattles - like I don't know."
- WH: "Do you think they should have resisted?"
- LS: "They couldn't. It was impossible...I had a fight with my nephew in Israel...he couldn't understand (why we didn't fight and I said:) 'with what?'...two soldiers...and thousands of Jews and every body was afraid. We were afraid. We were different people. We never had the chance. We never had freedom in Poland. We never had nothing."
- WH: "Do you think that after you die, anything will happen to you?"
- LS: "To me? I don't believe it. There's no nothing...my father believed in another world...my mother say to me 'I be always with you'...maybe she is. I don't know. Maybe she is. And she says, 'I will never, never let you down.'"

WH: "When you were living in Sosnowiece, do you think you believed in G-d then?"

3
LS: "Oh, yeh, as a child...I remember when we used to see a Jew traveling on Shabbos... it was a tragedy to see such a thing...(a Jew violating the Shabbas)...and now, it doesn't bother me at all...I can't put a mask on me to put a sheitel or to show I'm so... I can't do that.I can't. (Talking about the meal at the Homowack- the people next to her - wouldn't leave a tip - she said she was 'sick' - I shouldn't forget. As a Jew...this is unbelievable...to have heart! What kind of heart do you have? It's a human being. I mean, I don't care who he is...you don't act like that." (She was thinking of collecting tip money to prevent (waiter?) from becoming an anti-semite)...I was sick all morning (from this) I said to my daughter, 'When I have a gun I would shoot them.' Not for me...to act like that!...I heard they were very wealthy, rich people..."

WH: "Do you like Jason? (black)"

LS: "I don't like him. I don't like schvartze period. But you have to respect them...in the U. S. it's such a problem with the blacks. I saw we had this problem in the beginning. When I first came to Houston we would go to Galveston to the ocean. There used to be a divider in the ocean. Black, white - white, black. When drink water for the blacks - for the whites. I don't know what they did to them but they no good...they taking advantage...revenge..."

WH: "Do you think the schvartze's make their own problem?"

LS: "I don't know - we have a big problem with them."

WH: "Jews or whites?"

8
LS: "Whites...and I'm afraid it's gonna get very bad..."

WH: "Do you think they hate the Jews more than the whites?"

LS: "They hate the whites period, that's what I think...I feel something
is cooking...there's so much hatred in them..."

WH: "When you said you had a nervous breakdown after you got married, why
then? You were married, you had somebody, you had a family."

4
LS: "I had and I wasn't happy. The beginning, I wasn't happy. I was
alone. I need some, you know, especially when you have children, you
need your mother's support and sometimes you need your parents
support. And we didn't have nobody. I didn't have."

WH: "How old were the children?"

LS: "...small children...maybe I was over working..."

WH: "Did you stay home for a while?"

LS: "Oye - I was sick for months. I couldn't take care of the children.
I couldn't do nothing."

WH: "Did they give you any medicine?"

LS: "...I was going a few times a week to a psychiatrist...two
years...private (no hospital)...cost us fortune of money. Whatever my
husband made went...no insurance...thousands of dollars..."

9
WH: "How did you get better? Time?"

LS: "Time and...my family doctor helped me...because I used to get
attacks...and I used to feel like everything is getting frozen, like,
you know, I didn't feel like the circulation didn't work, you know,
and 'special my head - that was nerves. And I didn't feel my hand.
Sometimes I used to touch myself. I didn't feel myself. I felt like
I'm dying. And from that I got so frightened you know."

9
"So I used in run to the street. My husband used to run after me. I was afraid to - you know, I was dying. Every day I felt I'm dying, dying, dying. That was what was in my mind and we went to our doctor, he checked me, he gave me a pill which I don't know what it did to me it helped me...like they say, 'Things in your head, they don't hurt?'"

WH: "But now, you don't have nightmares much any more?"

LS: "I do have, once in a while. I think by my parents you know, I don't see them clearly, like you know, it's so many years already that -..."

WH: "It would have been better for you in a way if you had a brother or sister..."

LS: "Of course, no that was my whole...tsores."

WH: "Could you imagine yourself marrying someone who's not a survivor?"

0
LS: "No. It was very hard. I almost did..."

WH: "What part of Poland is your husband from? (inaudible). Do you belong to any survivor group now?"

LS: "No...my husband's society I belong...his whole family..."

WH: "What's the pupose of belonging...Chevra Kadisha (burial society)?"

LS: "Yeh."

WH: "Get together for meetings?"

8
LS: "Yeh I go whatever it is ...Young Israel...Warsaw Ghetto...(Lodge?)...memorials..."

WH: "What do you think of all these people like Ben Meed, Zborowski ...what's your impression they made a big business out of it, right?"

LS: "After so many years I think a little bit too late they started...but it's better than nothing. They should have done this right away."

WH: "I was thinking...there were Jews in the camps who were not so good...
do you think they are still living here in America?"

LS: "No, I don't think so ...they were mean Jews. Ahhh. They were mean
Jews. This is another story to tell."

WH: "You wonder...how Jews could do this to other Jews..."

8
LS: "But I tell you, when you think about it, maybe they didn't have all
the choice, you know, in time like that. Everybody want to save their
own skin. You know what I mean? But they did very mean way. Mean
way. Mean way. Ahh."

WH: "Do you think that survivors here, in America...care more about each
other than say, American Jews would care?...did they have more of a
feeling for other people? Because of their suffering."

LH: "Yeh, I think they help. They give lot of tzedakah...money...I wouldn't
say all of them...a lot of them forget really what they were because
they became so rich here..."

WH: "Do you think what happened in Europe could happen in America."

LS: "Oh, G-d forbid! G-d forbid!...I don't think so..."

1
END OF SIDE ONE - TAPE TWO

TAPE TWO - SIDE TWO

WH: "Do you think the whole Holocaust was worth it if we got Israel?"

LS: "That's what they say. We pay a big price for that."

WH: "What do you think?"

LS: "We have to have own country. There is no question about it."

WH: "Do you think now if something would happen - do you think Israel has an atom bomb?"

LS: "Yes."

WH: "And they would use it?"

LS: "Yes..."

WH: "Rather than have it happen again."

LS: "Israel is very strong I mean, you don't hear, but they are prepared for everybody, for everything. And I think it would never come to it because Israel, when we would have a country, and Israel would hear what was going on in Poland with the Jews, they would bomb, they would kill, they would shoot, they would do anything to help us. But the goyem, they didn't want to believe it. They didn't want to LISTEN to us."

WH: "Who...?"

LS: "The goyem, the whole world, the gentiles, they made themselves the deaf, they don't hear, they don't know nothing."

WH: "What about American Jews here?"

8
LS: "They were the same. You know why? My father, he was reading in a Jewish newspaper how a rich American was sitting in a beautiful home and eating supper and every time he was reading in the paper how bad it was for the Jews in Poland he got more hungry and fill his stomach more with the food..."

WH: "You think they really didn't believe it?"

LS: "They didn't want to believe it. They didn't care...the...Jews... before the war...American Jews ...today - they change a lot..."

WH: "Do you belong to any Jewish organizations?"

LS: "...UJA...Bnai Zion..."

6
WH: "What do you do in your free time?"

LS: "I spend it with my children. They come to me, I come to them."

WH: "...you think it's important...to show these films about the Holocaust..."

8
LS: "They should always. I always watch. I mean I cry but I watch. They shouldn't be forgotten, believe you me...I even tell my children to watch. They always watch..."

WH: "Are you Republican or Democrat?"

LS: "...Democrat but lately Republican."

WH: "...Jesse Jackson?"

LS: "They mostly for them...I didn't like...Dukakis..."

WH: "His wife was Jewish."

LS: "Oh, please! All of a sudden, she woke up, you know for the votes. Now she's back what she was. Who knew she was Jewish?"

WH: "...Kissinger?"

LS: "He is a very intelligent man..."

WH: "Did you like it that a Jewish guy got that far? Did you feel some pride?"

LS: "I don't know. He didn't hit me too much. I mean, he's so diplomatic, he doesn't show too much he's for the Jews...he's like for, you know, the politics..."

§ WH: "You got money from Germany because you fell out of a truck and hit your head..."

LS: "I get from my nerves, too...I don't get too much money..."

WH: "Some people...exaggerate...(their claim)...they were afraid they wouldn't get any money from the Germans..."

LS: "...I had witnesses...A lot of people were in Russia...they said they were in Germany...(but) they lost...family and everything...I'm not saying they shouldn't...but I went straight."

WH: "Do you know...hear about any survivors in America who passing... that they don't tell anyone they're Jewish?"

○ LS: "I know somebody I mean she was German, married to a Jewish - I didn't know all the years - but when the husband died I found out she wasn't Jewish..."

WH: "...she pretended to be Jewish, why?"

LS: "She's German. A lot of the German women, you know, I don't know, they feel guilty, maybe, their conscience."

WH: "But she's not Jewish."

LS: "Not Jewish, but the...feelings of Yiddish, you know, they bringing up the children Jewish way."

WH: "...you remember Cambodia...Biafra...Nigeria..."

LS: "I feel sorry, but I don't...feel the same way because nobody helped us...I said where was that time so many thousands, millions of children they were killed. Innocent children. And nobody did nothing...(but) I'm not happy (about it), of course not."

WH: "Do you think they suffered as much as we did?"

LS: "Nobody can suffer like we did...hunger is a terrible thing. (Her voice softened, but increased in intensity.) It is the worse thing in human race..."

WH: "In Cambodia they killed people..."

LS: "Listen, you want to find justice in this world? There's no justice. No place. I don't think so. Hunger, I see children. It hurts me. But why they didn't do nothing for us, I ask."

WH: "Maybe because there is no justice."

LS: "No justice. I don't know. Such beautiful children we had. Nice, fine children."

WH: "After everything you went through...you're still able to trust people ...to love people?"

LS: "No. Not too much."

WH: "...you saw...so much bitterness in everything."

LS: "I am bitter to people."

WH: "How come today you can still love your children...your own family. And you can trust people."

LS: "I tell you, when I had my children, I didn't have love to them. I didn't have the feelings...I didn't know what means love, you know?...I lost that feeling."

WH: "Do you think you have it today?"

LS: "Uh, not like I remember like my parents were, no."

WH: "Because you went through too much?"

LS: "Uhh - it's missing in me. A lot of things. (She laughed mirthlessly.) The family feelings, it's missing. I love my children, of course, I do anything. Give my life for them. But sometimes I feel like - cold inside."

WH: "Why...?"

LS: "I don't know why...I was 14 years old when I lost my life. Now I'm 61, so many years..."

WH: "How could you say you lost the feeling, if you say you'd give your life for them?"

LS: "I love them dearly, but sometimes I, I'm, I have I don't know how to explain that. I'm cold inside.... I help people but I'm disappointed in people...ohhh - people are so - I see the older I am, I see they so selfish, they for themselves. They don't give a damn. 'Special here. Ohh..."

WH: "Why here?"

LS: "...the money makes them so, I don't know what is. I, I, sometimes I stay away from people. I'm rather...."

WH: "Stay by yourself?"

LS: "Yeh."

WH: "What do you do, watch t.v.?"

LS: "Yeh, I read, I clean, I do, I find, I sew, anything."

WH: "What do you read?"

LS: "Papers, magazines. Nothing special. English. Yiddish...The Forward.
They have nice articles. Lots from the Holocaust people..."

WH: "That's interesting to you, right?"

LS: "Yeh...but I'm avoiding people...lately. I don't know why."

WH: "...I'm glad you talked to me."

LS: "Yeh...I feel much better now."

WH: "...I wouldn't repeat it."

LS: "No, I hope not. No, there's nothing to hide. I says to my children,
too, the same thing. And, you know, you so disappointed in life.
Uhhh...A lot."

END OF INTERVIEW.