

**LSE ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET**

**Title Page**

**Ref. No.: THS016**

**Wav file Refs:**

**Collection title:** Tales from Houghton Street

**Interviewee's surname:** Hills

**Title:** Professor Sir

**Interviewee's forenames:** John

**Sex:** M

**LSE connection:** 1986- present. 1997-present Director, Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE), 2015-present Co-director, International Inequalities Institute; Richard Titmuss Professor of Social Policy

**Date of birth**

**Date(s) of recording, Compact Flash used, tracks (from – to):** 11/7/2015

**Location of interview:** LSE

**Name of interviewer:** Clara Cook

**Type of recorder:** Tascam DR-40

**Total no. of tracks:** 1

**Recording Format:** Wav 24bit  
44.1khz

<b>Mono or stereo:</b> Mono	
<b>Total Duration:</b> 00:43:45	
<b>Additional material:</b>	
<b>Copyright/Clearance:</b>	
<b>Interviewer's comments:</b>	

### THS016 John Hills

Track 1 [35:39] Session one: 17 July 2015 John Hills (JH) is Director of Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) (founded 1997) and co-director of the International Inequalities Institute. JH joined LSE February 1986, He was recruited in 1984 for the Welfare State Programme established by Professor Tony Atkinson and based in STICERD. The group later combined with other groups to form CASE. [00:27] JH remembers LSE as a crowded campus but describes being based on the top floor of Lionel Robbins Buildings with a spacious office. [1:53] Notes that LSE is often described as being formed of separate units but STICERD was congenial and supportive. Welfare State Programme was funded by SUNTORY. Describes being in STICERD where wide ranging research was undertaken. [2:57] JH describes development of teaching in Social Policy Department initially doing class teaching on Professor Anne Power's housing course. [4:45] Marriage to Professor Anne Power. [5:10] JH describes closer links with Social Policy Department and the department's 75<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. [5:25] Describes changes to LSE campus and accommodation for STICERD and CASE. Includes redevelopment of the Lionel Robbins Building in 1999-2000 and temporary accommodation former Patent Office off Chancery Lane. [6:56] Notes that initial bids for accommodation stressed proximity to Library to access statistics, now all available online. [8:12]]. CASE moved to 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields and retained links with the Economics Department. [9:22] LSE students are very stimulating to teach. Most of JH's teaching is at post graduate level. Describes development from vocational UK focussed teaching to generic programmes applicable to all students. Also taught on the MSc in Social Research Methods and the MSc in Social Policy (Research). [11:45] Recalls recruitment to work at LSE on the Welfare State Programme with Tony Atkinson. He was interviewed with

Julian Le Grand. [15:56] JH describes working with Nick Stern, Mervyn King (who taught JH in Birmingham) and Tony Atkinson recruited by Michio Morishima for the Taxation, Incentives and Distribution of Income programme [TIDI]. [18:44] Working on a conference on social security in the developing world with Amartya Sen. [20:08]. The establishment of CASE in 1996-1997 and obtaining 10 years funding allowed JH to working with Julian Le Grand, Carol Propper, Simon Burgess from Bristol, demographers Kathleen Kiernan and John Hopcroft alongside Anne Power's team working on low income neighbourhoods. [20:52] Forming the International Inequalities Institute to encourage collaborative cross disciplinary research. [20:35] The Director's strategic review placed inequality at the top of the list of issues that LSE should be addressing. [24:25] Institute was agreed in May 2015 establishing an MSc in Inequality and Social Science from September 2015 and recruiting Leverhulme Trust funded Phd students. [26:40] JH comments on the practicality of LSE's research and discusses the legacy of Richard Titmuss, Brian Abel-Smith and Peter Townsend and the very early Ratan Tata funding for social policy work. [29:32] LSE is not only about understanding the causes of things but also contributing to the betterment of society - an aim recognisable to LSE's founders. [30:56] Recalls first view of the internet in the late 1980s or early 1990s when two American economists did an early demonstration explaining its use for international working. In 1997 CASE established a website - now have a million downloads of documents a year. [33:00]