RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH MORTON DEITZ, ESQ.

RUTGERS SCHOOL OF LAW-NEWARK CLASS OF 1955

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SHAUN ILLINGWORTH

BOYNTON BEACH, FLORIDA
AUGUST 21, 2009

TRANSCRIPT BY

DOMINGO DUARTE

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Morton Deitz, Esquire, on August 21, 2009, in Boynton Beach, Florida, with Shaun Illingworth. This is our second session with Mr. Deitz. Thank you again for having me here.

MD: Thank you for coming, Shaun. It's always a pleasure to see you.

SI: Thank you for lunch also. I should also note that this interview is made possible in part by travel grants from the Classes of 1942 and 1949. To begin this session, I wanted to ask a little bit more about your early life and your family and its traditions. Both of your parents came from Lithuania, originally, your father's side through South Africa; were there any "Old World" traditions carried on in your household?

MD: Well, my parents, both being observant Jews, maintained a *kosher* home, and Friday nights, [it] was traditional that we would have Sabbath dinner at home, after my mother lit the Sabbath candles, and I guess there's nothing really unique in my upbringing, in my home, that would differ from that of anyone else in that same time period with the same background. My parents were both doting parents. I had an older brother, six years older than I, who died some twenty-five years ago, … some two weeks before his sixty-sixth birthday, of lymphatic leukemia. … We lived in an area of Trenton known as Chambersburg, that was primarily populated by foreign-born people and was adjacent to, as I think I previously mentioned, … the main plant buildings, which were extending over quite a few acres of the neighborhood, the plant buildings of the John A. Roebling [&] Sons Company. … My dad operated a retail jewelry store and his customers primarily came from the immediate surrounding area. … As demanded by the competitive nature of his business, and having already a knowledge, to some extent, of Lithuanian, he managed to master speaking Polish and Slavish and German, and perhaps even, to some extent, Russian, to be able to accommodate those who lived in the area, who spoke in that native language of theirs and spoke only haltingly in English. …

SI: What about in your home? Were other languages, besides English, spoken in your home?

MD: Primarily English, except, when my parents did not want my brother or I to understand what they were talking about, my parents would speak to one another in Yiddish. That also occurred when my maternal grandmother, who lived not too far and who my parents helped support, would come to visit. … She spoke no English and she would, of course, converse with my parents, collectively and individually, in Yiddish, as a result of which, being exposed to this from time to time and having an innate curiosity to know what was being said, I managed to pick up, a little bit, from time to time, of the Yiddish language. … When I was on the bond tour, in 1943-'44, one of the movie stars, I think I may have mentioned, was John Garfield, and he took a shine to one of the other veterans, Schiller Cohen, and to me, because all three of us were Jewish. Garfield's name, before he became a professional actor, was [Jacob] Julius Garfinkle. [He] came from Brooklyn, from a similar Orthodox home, spoke Yiddish fluently, and expressed his view to Schiller and I, and this occurred when we had periodic opportunities for the three of us to sneak off by ourselves and have lunch or dinner, or an evening snack or whatever, he kept emphasizing, "You've got to learn to speak Yiddish," as a result of which, I made a concentrated effort to learn to speak Yiddish. … I speak a halfway decent Yiddish today, certainly far more, with greater fluency, than my peers, most of whom, maybe, will recognize or understand one or

another word of Yiddish, but are unable to speak [it]. That was the extent of the foreign languages, plus, the fact that I would hear my dad, in the store, speaking to a customer in a foreign tongue, which completely escaped me. I had no idea what was being said. I might have asked, once in awhile, you know, "What was that all about?" Maybe they would explain it, but it was not retained.

SI: Earlier, we had discussed your father's moving from the furrier trade, from being a salesman in your grandfather, his father's, furrier business, to being a watchmaker. What do you know of that transition?

MD: Not very much. I merely know the facts, that Dad had studied to become [a watchmaker] and was recognized as an extremely competent watchmaker. Whether that training that he obtained was before he became affiliated with his father in the fur trade business or during or after, I don't know. My guess is that it was before and he just had it on [the] back shelf. Ultimately, because he was allergic to the chemicals that were used to treat the furs, to make them saleable and usable, he was very allergic to it, he had to give up selling [in] the fur trade and went back to, … or resumed, his trade of watch making, and, of course, this, when he came to Trenton and got married, or got married and settled in Trenton, became his full-time occupation. … Some time in that same general period of time, and I'm sure it was while I was a youngster, because I really have no direct knowledge of it, other than hearing Dad speak about it, he was a supervisory instructor in watch making at what was then the Trenton Watch Making School, nearby. … He was regarded by his colleagues as being a very knowledgeable craftsman and would get inquiries, from time to time, about a peculiar problem, "How do you make this kind of jewel?" or, "How do you replace that?" or whatever, and he was always very gracious about doing that. He also got involved, as really unrelated to that, but he became very active in the Masonic Lodge, and I think, through that connection, had some opportunity to derive additional business that, otherwise, would not have been coming his way.

SI: Were either your parents, or your whole family, involved in the local synagogue or any Jewish community activities?

MD: Yes, yes. My mother's father died when I was three months old. He had come to Trenton from Lithuania to become the first Orthodox, full-time, Orthodox rabbi at the synagogue in Trenton, which became incorporated, of which he was one of the incorporators, in or about 1880, 1881, the congregation Brothers of Israel, and my dad had his formal education from a Hebrew parochial school. So, he had similar training, and had he wanted to, he had the certification himself to become a rabbi, which, of course, he never pursued. My dad was very active in synagogue affairs. He was on the board. My mother was involved in the sisterhood of the congregation, and, for a period of years, Dad was the president of the congregation, and we were regular synagogue attendees. … Mother was also involved in some of the local community charities and a couple of a Hebrew ladies associations and the like, the names of which escape me at the moment.

SI: Was Zionism ever discussed in the household? Was it something you were aware of growing up?

MD: Vaguely aware, because, in our home, we had what were known colloquially as "blue boxes." They were tin cans that had a coin slot at the top and had a removable bottom from which the coins could be removed, imprinted white Hebrew lettering on a soft blue background, distributed by the Jewish National Fund, which was the fund created, I think, by the father of Zionism, Dr. [Chaim] Weizmann. [Editor's Note: Theodor Herzl is considered the father of Zionism and inspired the founding of the Jewish Nation Fund. Chaim Weizmann was the first President of Israel.] … We would deposit coins, on some kind of scheduled or intermittent basis, into the blue boxes, and they were just given to the representative in the area of the Jewish National Fund, the monies relayed to the office in New York, perhaps to someplace in Europe, and the funds were used, primarily, to buy land in Palestine, and, also, to fund the planting of trees in Palestine, to attempt to counteract or overcome the very arid conditions that existed in the bulk of Palestine. I don't know whether that's fully responsive to what you were trying to get at; run your question by me again.

SI: Just if you were aware of the Zionist movement.

MD: Oh, yes. To that extent, I was aware that there was a Zionist cause; familiarity with it, no. I belonged to … what was then the Young Men's Hebrew Association, which was parallel to the YMCA, only for people of the Jewish faith, and I guess, from time to time, as a youngster, I might have heard the subject broached, but, certainly, was not in the forefront of my consciousness.

SI: You described Chambersburg as a melting pot of different ethnicities. How fluid was it? Was there a lot of interaction between the different groups?

MD: Not to my knowledge. I think the groups pretty much stayed to themselves. If there was any interaction, I was not aware of it. It's quite possible that if some of the Slavish or Polish people belonged to the same Catholic church as that of some of the other ethnic groups, there might have been some interaction in that fashion, but that's pure speculation on my part.

SI: Would your neighborhood be mostly Jewish people living there?

MD: No. The neighbors next-door were two elderly women, one a widow and the other a maiden sister. They were German Catholic. Next to them, further to the north, was a family by the name of (Briger?), Mrs. (Briger?) being the daughter of the widowed lady who lived next-door to us, between the (Brigers?) and I. So, Mrs. (Briger?) was [of] German Catholic origin, but Mr. (Briger?), (Arpad Briger?), was a Hungarian Jew, and they had one son, who was a very close friend of mine. As a matter-of-fact, he was in our home, in the kitchen, sitting with my dad while my mother was being delivered of me in the upstairs bedroom. That's the close relationship. John, my kids called [him] Uncle John, [was] very close to my father, and Mr. (Briger?), Uncle Arpad to me, and my father were very close friends, until they had a falling out in 1931, following a financial debacle in which Uncle Arpod got my father involved. He got my father to buy a piece of rental real estate, residential real estate, and financed it primarily on a mortgage. … In those days, the mortgage required the mortgagor, the borrower, to sign a bond, which was secured by the mortgage on the real estate, and the bond was personal, not limited solely to the real estate. Because of the difficult economic times, my dad was unable to make the

payments on the house, because the house was vacant, being vacant because the previous tenant had lost his job and had to move out, with the result that the mortgagee called the loan. Dad was unable to pay off the loan and was afraid that the bank, or whoever the lender was, was going to go after him personally, and quite a bit of anguished conversation took place. I don't think I was ever present, but just the understanding, the feeling that I got at that time, [was] that my dad felt very, very much aggrieved that Uncle Arpod would get him into that kind of situation. Ultimately, it was resolved. The mortgagee took the title to the house and cancelled the bond, but Dad never got over that, what he felt was a very serious and deleterious affront. [It] did not affect the relationship between John and my parents, nor between John and me and my brother, and, in later years, as I think I may have mentioned, John was a frequent visitor in our home when we moved to Trenton, after finishing law school. To my kids, whom he visited regularly, he was Uncle John and he never married. [He] was, as far as I was concerned, completely agnostic and had a booming voice, was in the Army in; I guess it would be World War II. He was a sergeant major, a drill sergeant, and I remember his talking to me and to my kids about his experiences as a drill sergeant. When he would be marching along, he would shout out, "Company, halt," and the guy immediately next to him would say, "Gee whiz, Sarge, you're breaking my ears." That's drifting a little bit from the point; what was your question?

SI: I was just asking about any interaction between the different groups and what your neighborhood was like.

MD: Okay, oh, yes, okay.

SI: Was it a very working-class neighborhood?

MD: No, it was commercial, where we were. …

SI: Did you live above the shop?

MD: We lived above the shop, yes. Beyond the (Brigers?), again, further to the north, was an optician by the name of Wilson, as the father, and he had originally had a jewelry store at that location also. … Because my dad opened up in the same block, it was not in the same location where I was born, but three or four houses further away, [he] was annoyed with my father for opening up a jewelry store and doing watch making where, here, there's already a jewelry store. … Ultimately, Mr. Wilson was grandfathered in, as was my father, when they passed the first opticianry law in New Jersey. They were selling eyeglasses from a prepared, previously prepared, case and they would use a reading chart and trial fit, "Try this one, that one," and, sometimes, [it was] necessary to take … a left lens from this frame and a right lens from a comparable frame, but of a different strength, and insert them, so that you got a pair with two different powered lenses. With that, they were considered opticians, and Dad was also grandfathered in, and the animosity continued. Mr. Wilson's two sons became optometrists and, sometime later, my brother also went to optometry school and my brother, with my dad's help, bought the building in which the two ladies lived, next-door, and converted it, so that my brother had an office on the first floor and rental apartments on the second and third floor. Before that, my brother's office was in what had been our living room in our home, and that was for maybe a couple of years after he first got out of [school], had graduated and became licensed. Beyond

that was a commercial printing company. The Wilsons were Jewish, but not practicing. The commercial printing company were, I believe, German Catholic. … Then, there was a store of used magazines and groceries, … a very small store, very small variety of things, and the primary living of the family that lived there, their name was (Porkovich?), Mr. (Porkovich?) was an ice man and delivered ice from a truck, had two boys, older than I, significantly older than I, but they were very nice fellows. They were always nice to me, and they were both very, very heavy, both boys, and, of course, the nickname, with the family name (Porkovich?), they were called "Porky," and then, on the corner was a saloon that was operated by a Gentile family. I don't even remember their names now, but they also were very nice. I was allowed to go in through the side door. … A minor was not allowed to go in through the front door, but I could go in through the side door and buy a Pepsi for a nickel. …

SI: Did they keep that running during Prohibition? Prohibition was in effect until you were about thirteen or so.

MD: Yes, I guess it was '32; I must have been eleven or twelve. It may have been running during [Prohibition]. It may have been a speakeasy, because, further down to the south, in the same block, was what had been a speakeasy operated by (Callahans?), Irish Catholic, and that became a bar, but immediately next to us was a Hungarian Jewish family. Next to them was a barbershop, operated by a German Catholic, very anti-Jew. If my ball, when we were playing in the alley, happened to bounce into their yard or was hit by a bat into their yard, forget it. You'd never get your ball back. He'd tell us kids, in no uncertain terms, to go fly, but he didn't use the word "fly." Their name was Barth, B-A-R-T-H. Beyond Barth was a ladies hosiery store, operated by a family, husband and wife, no children, and with them lived the wife's sister. I'm trying to think of the family name. The husband's full-time job was running a hosiery mill in Bristol, Pennsylvania. … No, it wasn't Bristol; it's a town nearby Bristol, but it was in the Bristol vicinity. I'll think of the name, and that's how his wife and sister-in-law came to operate this retail hosiery store, because they would get the hosiery from the mill. … Next to them was a Jewish family by the name of (Robbins?) that had a music store, sheet music and, in those days, rolls for a player piano. … I've forgotten who was next to them. Then, there was the (Callahan?) saloon, and then, there was some vacant buildings, and then, there was an Italian pizzeria and a florist down towards the end of the block, and then, at the corner, to the south, the southwest corner of Hudson Street and South Broad, was an automobile parts and supply store run by an Italian family, two brothers by the name of Ferry, only they spelled it as the ship transport is spelled, F-E-R-R-Y. I think, originally, it was F-E-R-R-I. Across the street from that was the Colonial Branch of the Trenton Trust Company and north of that was a firehouse, and I used to spend a lot of time in the back of the firehouse. In those days, the firemen spent forty-eight or seventy-two hours, around the clock, on duty and slept in the firehouse on the second floor, and you'll remember, I'm sure, pictures of the firemen sliding down the brass pole. That was the purpose of the brass pole. They could get down in a hurry from their sleeping quarters to get to the engine. In the backroom of the firehouse was their relaxation room, in the middle of which was a round, large round table that they used for playing poker, and in the middle of that table was a checkerboard and in the middle of the checkerboard was a cribbage scoring pegboard. This is all custom-made. Whether one of the firemen made it or whatever, I don't know. That was before my time, and then, north of that was a hardware store, run by Jewish people who had emigrated to Trenton from Palestine, and north of them was a saloon,

which I guess was also a speakeasy in days gone by, operated by a family known as Duch, D-U-C-H, and then, there was an insurance and steamship ticket agency run by a German Jewish family by the name of (Eisner?). … On the corner of Dye Street, the northeast corner of Dye and South Broad, directly across the street from where I lived, was a department store, (M & P Erkin?), Jewish family, and on the first two floors … and in the basement was typical department store merchandise. … On the third floor, when I was a kid, and I don't remember when it started, was a loft occupied by a Mr. Switlik, a Ukrainian Catholic, who took a fancy to me, was very nice to me. He had been in the business … following World War I, in making; no, it would have been before. I guess he came to this country before World War I and got into the business of making canvas mail sacks for the Postal Service, Post Office. … When World War I broke out and airplanes became more commonplace, the Air Force, such as it was at the time, required parachutes, and he converted his plant from manufacturing canvas mail sacks to manufacturing silk parachutes and formed a new corporation, Switlik Parachute and Equipment Company, S-W-I-T-L-I-K. He was very, very nice, very fond of me, and I would have a steady routine. Saturday morning, when I came home from synagogue, which was a required obligation every Saturday morning, to attend services at synagogue, I would change my clothes and go visit Mr. Switlik, and he would save for me the envelopes from all of the mail that he'd received the prior week, particularly those that came from foreign countries, and he did business throughout the world. … He got me interested in philately and I would save the stamps. He taught me how to cut them properly off the envelopes, which we didn't need unless I wanted to keep the envelope, for whatever reason, and how to soak the stamps off the paper and how to identify what country they were from, how to put them properly in an album, and so on. That went for several years. He was quite a guy. The company is still in existence, in Trenton, but they moved to a much larger location, and I believe, as far as I know, the company is operated by his son, Richard, whose wife went to high school at the same time I did. We were very friendly, and on the other corner was a gas station, the northeast corner of Dye and Hudson, and beyond that was all Roebling's plant and offices, the whole, I guess it encompassed more than three full blocks, bordered by South Broad Street, and then, continuing on what was called Canal Street, along the Delaware-Raritan Canal bed, to Clay Street and bordering Clay Street to South Clinton, and bordered on South Clinton all the way back to Dye, huge, huge, numerous buildings, one after the other. That's the composition of the neighborhood. So, I learned to grow up [there]. There was a significant amount of anti-Semitic feelings among some of the people. I still, to this day, have a mark in the heel of my right hand from one of the kids who took a disliking to something that I said and jammed the point of his sharpened lead pencil into the heel of my hand. You can see the mark, still there.

SI: It is a dark spot.

MD: But, you know, we managed to survive and we took it in stride.

SI: Later on in the 1930s, when Hitler was coming to power, did any of these people, like the Barths, express support for Nazi Germany?

MD: If they did, I was unaware of it. I'm sure they did, but …

SI: Did they display *swastika* flags or anything like that?

MD: I don't recall that, no. I can't say that they did and I can't say that they did not. I just was not aware of it. I wasn't attuned to that degree of consciousness about the subject, and I guess, to that degree, I should apologize for my lack of sensitivity, but that's the way it was.

SI: Was that usually the form that the anti-Semitism took, personal disagreements and fighting, or were there other forms of anti-Semitism?

MD: Yes. …

SI: For example, were you not allowed to go places?

MD: I don't recall too much of not being allowed to go anyplace. It was not that formal, but, as I explained with the Barths, if our ball happened to go into their backyard, of which they were very proud, Mr. Barth and Mrs. Barth kept a meticulously nice garden, and that was their evidence of dislike, … and I never went to the barbershop. I was forbidden to go there, both by the barber, who told me not to come in there, as well as my father, who told me not to go, but, you know, … the business people in the block got along one with another, both Jew and non-Jew. The Jewish merchants were able to compete properly, and I'm recalling one incident. As I mentioned, on the … northeast corner of Hudson Street and South Broad was the Colonial Branch of [the] Trenton Trust Company. When I was much younger, that was known as the Colonial Trust Company. It had not yet become part of Trenton Trust. I don't recall what date it was. That's where my dad banked and Dad's checks were, I don't remember whether they were even imprinted, they might have been, but his bank account was in the name of Morris Deitz. There was another family named Deitz, same spelling, North Trenton, miles away, furniture business, retail furniture business, [the] gentleman's first name, Mendel. He didn't like Mendel; he did business as "M. Deitz." He banked at the bank on the northeast corner of Market Street and South Broad, across from the county courthouse, and that was known, that bank was known, as the Mercer Trust Company. His bank account was M. Deitz. Trenton Trust Company, which was a much larger bank, which was started by the Roebling Family and other non-Jewish merchants of significant size and material accumulation, acquired, at the same time, Mercer Trust and Colonial Trust and merged them into Trenton Trust, and Mercer Trust became the Mercer Branch and Colonial became the Colonial Branch. Now, the one bank had the bank account of Morris Deitz and the bank account of M. Deitz, and those were long before the days of computers or bookkeeping machines or anything like it. Everything was manual. Well, Dad would get his statement, he would find checks charged to his account that were issued by M. Deitz, the furniture guy, and Dad really fussed and fumed about that. Ultimately, it was straightened out, but the reason he was told that the checks were charged to his account [was] because he had money in the account, and Deitz that drew the check didn't have enough money to cover the check. So, the bank, as a favor to Mendel, said, "We're going to pay the check, but we'll charge it to Morris." They paid it back, ultimately, and Dad tried to get Mendel to use his first name. Dad used his first name, Morris. Mendel absolutely refused. Dad even, I don't know whether he formally went to court, but he contemplated going to court to do it, with the result that Dad changed his name to Morris M. Deitz, and then, of course, when bookkeeping machines came in, the problem receded, but that was a very … interesting experience that I can recall in my childhood.

SI: How did the Great Depression impact this neighborhood of all businesses?

MD: Very significantly. I can't give you chapter and verse. I do know that if I went into the department store, the (M & P Erkin?) Department Store, … and the "M" was one Mr. (Erkin?) and "P" was a brother, Morris and Paul (Erkin?). They were always very nice and very kind to me, but I would notice in, I guess, at the time I was nine or ten, that the store was relatively empty, and I guess, in conversation, they would tell me that things are slow, and, of course, I saw it in my dad's business. Dad had to rely on his watch making to a much greater extent. He would take in work from other watchmakers or other jewelers who did not have the watch making skill, in order to make a living. He also undertook, which is a phenomenon repeating itself today, and I would go with him, we'd travel around the neighborhoods in the vicinity, knocking on doors, "Do you have any old jewelry that you want to sell?" He was buying old gold and similar jewelry that he could turn into scrap metal and make a profit for his effort. The only other thing that I recall that brings that into focus [is], we had a family ritual, every Sunday, in the summertime, to drive to Belmar. … On the way, Mother would have prepared sandwiches, we would stop at what was then called a picnic grove that was available, for free, for the public use, but which had available adjacent, or perhaps as part of the picnic grove, a refreshment stand. So, if you wanted to buy soda, a candy bar, whatever, it was there and that's how they covered their expenses for the use of their land and picnic benches, and then, we would go to the shore and bathe in the ocean, walk on the boardwalk, whatever. … For several weeks, in or about 1930, '31, we did not go to the shore on Sunday and I don't recall whether I asked my father about it or, … if I did, whether he gave me an explanation, but we did go on one Sunday, after a lapse of several Sundays. … After going into the ocean, and we used the bathing lockers; [if you are] familiar with how Belmar was set up, we used the rental locker, go in, use the dressing room, undress, you put your clothes in a basket, you turn it in, you get a receipt, which is a key tag, you put it on your belt or on your wrist and that was your claim check to get your clothing back. After we got done, we got dressed and we'd walk on the boardwalk and I was getting a little hungry, and I said, "Gee, I'd like to have something to eat." I don't remember whether we'd stopped for lunch before or not, probably not, and my parents said, "No, we can't," and I did not understand and I began, I guess, to wail. … They ultimately conceded and we walked into a type of eating establishment, I guess a casual restaurant, on the boardwalk. We sat down. Nobody ordered but I. I ordered a cream cheese sandwich and it was served to me, and I think my brother had a quarter of my sandwich and I had the other three-quarters, but my mother and father, may they rest in peace, did not eat, because they didn't have the money in his pocket. That's very vivid in my mind.

SI: Were there any transients coming through the neighborhood, like hobos?

MD: Always, always. If they came into the store, which they did, periodically, my dad would tell them to go around the block and come in through the back entrance. We had a garage built behind our house, and I guess Dad would open up the garage doors and they could access it, [go] into the rear yard which we had. … They would knock on the backdoor, which accessed our kitchen, and my mother would prepare, whatever, a sandwich, two sandwiches, and give them something to eat. This was a not uncommon situation. When it started, when it ended, I can't tell, but I do recall numerous regular occasions when that would happen. Also, they would come

into the store, itinerant solicitors for various Jewish charities. Whether they had access to a list of members of the congregations in the area or how they got their lists, I don't know, but they knew where to go to solicit funds and Dad would always give them whatever nominal sum he felt he could afford, whether it was at least two or three dollars, just to satisfy the solicitor's needs and to salve his own conscience of participating.

SI: Did you and your brother spend a lot of time working in the shop?

MD: My brother did not; I did. I would come home from school at, I guess, when I was still in grammar school, I guess fifth or sixth grade, I would come home, particularly in the wintertime; next to Dad's bench, to the right, was a radiator, we had hot water heat, with a boiler in the basement, and covering the radiator was a wooden cover on which I could sit and watch my dad work and we would talk. He would ask me about school and the subjects and what I'm studying and, although Dad's formal education, as I indicated earlier, was parochial, he still had enough understanding of arithmetic and enough of English to be able to guide me. Mother, of course, was much more help, because she had a little more formal public school education, having been able to graduate the eighth grade. … I lost my focus.

SI: I was asking if you worked in the shop.

MD: Oh, and, in later years, I worked as a sales clerk, when Dad needed it. Particularly before Christmas, it was always very busy in the store and, in those years, I was already responsible for what we called "trimming the show windows." We had two show windows in front of the store, in the middle of which was the front door, and the show windows were irregularly shaped, enclosed by tempered plate glass. There was no "L" shape; it was a modified octagonal, or half octagonal, shape, and in the one window to the right as one entered the store were displayed items such as sterling tableware, ladies' boudoir sets, which was a hairbrush and a mirror and a comb, very popular in those days, and things of that nature that were not of significant value that one had to be concerned about having a brick thrown through the window. On the left side entering the store was the display window that was, inside, constructed with tiers, several tiers up to a flat level, and on each of the tiers, which were maybe four to five, six inches deep, we displayed watches and rings and similar type jewelry, which, at night, had to be removed from the show window and locked up in the safe, because of the concern that somebody, otherwise, would throw a brick through the window and clean out the window, and [we] couldn't afford insurance to protect against that, and that was the way we operated. So, that was my responsibility and, from time to time, I would change the material which covered the tiered platforms, a different color, different type of fabric, sometimes multicolored, whatever my imagination led me to use, and this continued even after service. … When Phyllis and I became engaged, in 1946, she wanted to get married right away and I wasn't that anxious to get married, certainly not precipitously. I wanted to make sure that what I was doing was proper for the both of us, and I had a very reasonable excuse, that I had to help Dad in the store, both preparing for the Christmas traffic, Christmas trade, by going with him to New York, or even going on my own, to buy merchandise and the responsibility for keeping the windows properly trimmed and to help as a sales clerk, with the result that our marriage was postponed until January 19th, of 1947, and those were my responsibilities in the store. Once I got married, my responsibility ceased. My brother, in the interim, of course, had established his office in what had been our

living room of the house and I guess, by that time, I don't really recall the year, he was ensconced in the remodeled adjoining house, and those were my responsibilities.

SI: Can you tell me a little bit about your early education in the Trenton school system? Where did you go to school?

MD: I went to school at the school a short distance away called Harrison School. It was on Genesee Street, was perhaps eight blocks away, and we walked to school and that was to sixth grade. … My mother, may she rest in peace, had started me, at age, maybe before three, but certainly by … age three, [in the practice] of taking me to the public library, which was located about twelve or fifteen blocks south, on South Broad Street, a branch of the Trenton Free Public Library, and she taught me how to read. I was reading at age three. By the time I went to kindergarten, I was already advanced; I remember nothing about kindergarten at all. I remember first grade as having existed and having occurred. When I started school in the following year, second grade, my teacher was a Miss (Robbins?), sister to the (Robbins?) that ran the music store near where I lived, and she knew my background and my parents. … She talked to my parents and recommended that, since I was more advanced than the kids, my classmates, in the second grade, that I'd be better off being advanced to the third grade, and I was six years old at the time, had not turned seven yet. [It was the] worst mistake that was ever made for me, other than being torpedoed, because I was with kids that were a year or two older than I, bigger than I, more bully-ish than I, and most of the kids in the class were non-Jewish. … The prevailing attitude was one [of that] I was the kid to be picked on, but I managed to get by that. I did reasonably well in school, in sixth grade. Oh, there was one incident in school then, don't think I told you this. It must have been the fourth or fifth grade. I must have done something horribly bad. My dad came to school, whether he was called by the principal or he just happened to be visiting and wanted to see what was going [on]; he liked to do that. He liked to come to school and talk to the teacher. That was his way, and the teacher informed him of that which I had done, which was against the rules or whatever, and Dad called me up to the front of the class and, in front of the class, had me bend over, took his belt off his pants, removed it from his trousers, gave me a couple of whacks across the backside, and [said], "Go sit down again," put his belt back on, and then, he said to the class, "Let that be a lesson to you." That stands out quite vividly in my mind. Anyhow, I got through with sixth grade, went to Junior High School Number Four, which was a good distance away. I would say maybe two-and-a-half, three miles away. … Because of the distance, I had a friend who lived a few blocks away by the name of Bill (Cantor?), who subsequently became a dentist. His father had a wholesale candy business, one block off of South Broad on Roebling Avenue, and it was a storefront building, which Mr. (Cantor?) used as his warehouse, and they lived in the adjoining dwelling, except theirs was on the same floor. I don't know whether they had a second floor or not; maybe they did. That residential property fronted on Genesee Street, and Mr. (Cantor?), particularly in bad weather, was nice enough, when he would start off on his rounds, I would walk to their house and he would drive us in his truck, Bill and I, to school, so that we got to school on time, I guess it was eight-thirty, and we were saved the walk, number one, and particularly in bad weather, not [to] have to walk in snow and rain and whatever, and I don't remember too much more. Oh, I did win a short story contest in junior high. A lady who ultimately became superintendent of public schools in Trenton, (Sarah Christy?), was my teacher and she gave us an assignment to write a short story, and I leaned upon a story that was published in, I guess, these days, they'd call it plagiarized, a story

that was published in the trade magazine that my dad got. … [It] had to do with a retail jeweler who was presented with a piece of jewelry that the customer was bringing in for sale and the jeweler recognized it as a piece of jewelry that was worn by his son, who was killed in unknown circumstances. So, that was the plot of the story, and I guess I did a sufficiently good job that I won the short story prize that year. … I don't remember too much more about junior high, where our principal was a lady by the name of (Grace Dunn?), she was a pretty good educator, and can't recall anything further. We had yearbooks. I worked on the yearbook staff in Junior Four. Our yearbook was called *Legacy* and, every year, [it had] pictures and accomplishments and who's going to be the most popular and who's going to be the most successful, and so on. …

SI: Were you primarily interested in things like English, or were you interested in all subjects?

MD: Yes, interested pretty much in all of them. I was a pretty good student, I got good grades and, when I went to Trenton High, that was not as far from the house as Junior Four was, but it was a reasonable walk. Periodically, I'd get a ride to school. When weather was nice, I didn't mind walking and, particularly when it was getting warm, I would take the route home from school that brought me to Chestnut Avenue, where the local Coca-Cola bottling plant was located. … I would stop in and the bottling chain was operating and the supervisor, or foreman, when I would walk in, would grab a bottle off the chain, and it was ice cold, because they packed it cold, and would hand me the uncapped bottle of Coke to drink. That was a fond memory and, in my senior year, I was sixteen years old, I became sixteen in March 1937, and here I had enough credits to graduate high school at age sixteen. Well, 1937 was still a rough time. My brother had just finished optometric college in 1936 and had opened his practice in the living room. My dad was fresh out of finances. Also, in addition to being young and being short of finances, all of my friends, my contemporaries in age, were a year behind me, because I had skipped second grade. So, I decided, with my parents' approval, to drop a French course, which denied me the credits that I needed to graduate, and the reason for doing that was financial, because, if I'd graduated and stayed in high school for post-graduate work, there was a tuition, which we couldn't afford. So, the easiest thing was [to] just drop a course and I repeated the senior year, very easy. I took the French course over again, did very well, I took a typing course, repeated physics and brought my "B+" up to an "A," but I was also able to go on the Washington trip with my contemporaries, and that was a fond memory. I someplace have photographs that I took on that Washington trip of my friends, and I remember one incident that we still joked about up until most of my friends have gone the way of all flesh. There were three or four of us in the room in the hotel in Washington and, as young lads are not unexpectedly involved, … came back to the hotel after dinner, whatever the evening activities were, and we started having a pillow fight and it was raucous, noisy. We were jumping on the bed, off the bed, batting one another with the pillows, and so on, really making a tremendous racket. I guess the jumping up and down from the bed to the floor and the noise of our shouting, and so on, called the attention of the hotel security guard. By the time the security guard came, with our monitor, to the door of our room, one of the pillows that we were using as weapons …

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: You were saying one of the pillows broke.

MD: One of the pillows burst and they were big, soft, downy pillows, and the contents of the pillow just flew. Bang on the door, security guard and the school's class monitor standing there, "What's all the racket? We want to come in and see what's going on." They walk in, "What are all these feathers?" and [the] three of us are standing on the bed, "Feathers? What feathers?" [laughter] Standing joke, whenever we'd get together and something came up that we wanted to have a chuckle, the key to the chuckle was, "Feathers? What feathers?" We were disciplined badly for that, but that is a fond recollection. It still is pleasant to recall, and what else was I going to tell you about the senior year?

SI: Let me ask you this; since finances were so tight, was college ever discussed? Did you think you would wind up going to college?

MD: Oh, yes. Oh, I had taken a college preparatory course, no question about it, but it had to be deferred, and you had indicated earlier, you wanted to know about how I came to study accounting, and so on. I had always had, at a young age, a tool kit and I always made things. I was good with my hands, good with tools. Every summer, I would take a piece of two-by-four, thirty-six inches long or thereabouts, take a used roller-skate, which, in those days, had a nut and bolt in the middle that enabled the skate to be shortened or lengthened by loosening up the nut and bolt; well, if I saw a discarded pair of skates, because the wheels were worn or whatever, I put them aside. I took a skate, took it apart, put one part of the skate in the front of the two-by-four and the other at the rear, put an empty orange crate nailed to the two-by-four, a couple of handles on the orange crate, and I had a scooter. I never had a bicycle in my life, because we couldn't afford it, never had a manufactured scooter; this was my transportation. So, I was good with tools and one of Dad's customers, with whom he was very friendly, a non-Jewish gentleman, worked in the Roebling offices, was a pretty steady customer and came into the store one day. … Dad was talking to him, [mentioned] that I'm finishing high school, I guess this was the postponed senior year, could have been before, and Dad said to this gentleman that I was pretty good with tools and that Dad thought that perhaps I ought to consider going to college to study either engineering or architecture, because I was good in math. … I loved geometry. I whisked that one, and this gentleman said, "Morris, I'm going to tell you something. Don't say I told you this, because I'll deny having said it. Don't let your son go to engineering school. There's no room in this country for Jewish engineers. They're starving," and I think he said; let me rephrase that, I think he also said, "I think that the same is true for architecture, but, since I'm an engineer by trade," the gentleman said, "[I] can't be sure about architecture. I sure as the devil know about engineering. There's no room for Jewish engineering. A Jewish engineer would never get a job at Roebling's, not get a job at American Standard, not get a job at (Scanton?), no way," and Dad had a friend with whom he was friendly, a CPA, who was very active with Dad in the Masonic fraternity. … Dad talked to him and [he said], "Why don't you have him study accounting?" and we scrounged around and found that the University of Pennsylvania had the Wharton School, what was then called the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, now the Wharton School of Business, and they had a very fine accounting school. It was located not too far from 30th Street Station in Philadelphia and Trenton's Pennsylvania Railroad Station was not too far from my house and that's what developed. I applied and was admitted to Penn, to [the] Wharton School, and, for three years, I commuted by train, every morning on the 7:18 from Trenton to Philadelphia, and walked from 30th Street to the school at 39th. … There are a group of us that were on the same train every day, some going to Penn, a couple of gentlemen that were

professionals that were going to work in Philadelphia, and so on, and we had developed a camaraderie. We used to play cards on the train in the morning and the train got to Philadelphia at about ten minutes to, ten minutes, five minutes, to eight. So, we had maybe thirty-five, forty minutes to play cards. We used to play a card game called "catch five." You've probably never heard of it. When you get time, look up catch five. It's, in some areas, called "one-eyed jacks." It's got other names, too, but we called it catch five and we learned how to play that as kids and it was very popular in the Trenton area, and we loved the game. I, as I say, commuted for three years, would come home every day, try to get home before dinner hour. My lunch hour I would use not to have lunch as such, but I got involved with a group of fellows who loved to shoot pocket pool in our student union center, and I would spend my lunch hour playing pool. I remember, we used to play for nickels and dimes, and my lunch money was spent, if I didn't lose it all playing pool, buying a package of peanut butter cheese crackers and a cherry Coke. That was my lunch. … Someplace along in there, I think I met a girl at what is now College of New Jersey, in those days, used to be Trenton State College. You're familiar, I'm sure, with that history, a student at Trenton State studying to be a teacher, from Hackensack, New Jersey, a lady, girl, by the name of Helen Wides, W-I-D-E-S, and I became very enamored with her. We got along extremely well, nothing; what's the word I'm looking for? nothing erotic or …

SI: Romantic?

MD: Romantic in a puppy love sense, but nothing, you know, improper. … After I met her, and I, again, don't remember the year, but, while I was still commuting, I would try to catch an earlier train, so that I could come home and go to Trenton State to visit and spend the afternoon with her before going home for dinner. I recently learned, quite by accident, by somebody who also was from Hackensack who knew Helen Wides, who told me that she had died some years ago. While I was living at school, in my senior year, by that time, it was 1941, my dad was a little better fixed financially, so, he was able to help me get enough dough together to rent a room in a rooming house on 39th Street. … I worked as a short-order cook and a sandwich maker in a luncheonette on the corner. I would work lunchtimes and, periodically, dinner hour, and I made a few bucks that way, and the rest of the time I spent doing my studies and very little socializing and, once in awhile, my brother would drive down to visit. He would take me out to eat, to Horn & Hardart, I'm sure you've heard of that, and that was always a delightful experience. …

SI: Do any of the professors or classes standout in your memory as being particularly good or bad or innovative?

MD: Well, I remember one of the first classes that I attended as a freshman. I believe it was "The Fundamentals of Economics." Our professor was a noted scholar by the name of Solomon Huebner, H-U-E-B-N-E-R, who was a renowned theorist in life insurance actuary work. He developed various theories of life insurance and was known as an expert in the field, in the theory of life insurance. … In this first class, I must have been maybe at school for a week or two, and he spoke with a heavy German accent, and in his accent, he said, "Boys, I want you to remember, you never go broke taking a profit. You remember that. Don't forget it." That sticks out in my mind. I remember a Professor Benjamin Cataldo, [Bernard F. Cataldo?], who I learned, in later years, was a Sephardic Jew. I didn't know that he was Jewish. I thought he was Italian, brilliant, brilliant guy, professor of business law, loved his class, did well in it and was

the seed for my ultimate decision to attend law school, and the accounting professors were pretty routine. I don't remember much of anything else of college. I graduated at the top of my class and, of course, in the senior year, as I previously have related, we had Pearl Harbor and I was busy trying to avoid foot soldiering, and then, after graduation, was able to go home before I got orders to report to the Merchant Marine Academy. You had also asked me about that particular period of time that I had previously told you I spent working as a payroll clerk at the Turnstead Division of General Motors. They were making various parts for aircraft and, because I was an accounting major and they needed payroll clerks, and they were paying a decent salary and they're willing to hire me knowing that I might last two weeks, three weeks, four weeks, I think I lasted five weeks all together, they're willing to hire me, because help was just short. Every available [able]-bodied man was either drafted already [or] was about to go, and the work was pretty perfunctory. I don't remember too much about it. I don't even remember how the hell I got there. I think I took a bus every morning, from home to the plant, which was out in West Trenton, on Parkway Avenue, Ewing Township.

SI: Were you able to observe how the war was impacting the plant? For example, were people having to work a lot more hours? Were you yourself having to work a lot more hours? Were more women employed there?

MD: Much more women, yes, and although, you know, I can't speak from full recollection, I would guess I worked overtime. There was a lot of overtime and there were a lot of women, I would say predominantly women, in the workforce, but it was very pleasant, good attitude. The atmosphere was *gung ho* and everybody was contributing to the war effort, and that's about the extent of my recollection of that.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Before we move back into World War II, when we were reviewing the first interview, you had said, even though your father and one of his siblings were born overseas, the rest of the family was born in the United States. Could you explain that further?

MD: I'm not so sure, because I think they got to South Africa [in] approximately 1880 and they didn't leave South Africa until maybe 1899 or 1900, and Dad's siblings were only a year-and-a-half or so apart. He had seven younger siblings, six sisters and one, the youngest, was a brother, his only brother. I'm not so sure but that some of them were born in South Africa. Uncle Teddy, the youngest, was born in New York. That, I know; the others, I'm not so sure. It may have been fifty-fifty. … I never explored it. I don't know, and the one cousin who would know, on my father's side, passed away last Christmas. He was supposed to come down here. He had retired from the lady lingerie business and was spending his time, as an avocation, as a standup comedian. … He was scheduled to appear at a nearby temple as a standup comedian, doing his act, and, unfortunately, he died three weeks before his scheduled appearance. That was very sad for me. He would be the one; he was my paternal grandfather's favorite grandchild. He and my grandfather had great rapport, great rapport.

SI: We also did not talk too much about your mother's family. You mentioned she came over as an infant from Lithuania and her father was an Orthodox rabbi.

MD: Correct.

SI: What else do you recall about her family?

MD: She had three older half-sisters, who were born to her father's then wife, who died in childbirth of the youngest of Mother's three half-sisters, who lived in Trenton. The half-sister lived in Trenton; actually, two lived in Trenton. One lived on Chambers Street and the youngest lived in the Jewish section of Trenton, and the oldest lived in Lambertville. The tradition among Orthodox Jews, particularly the male, [is], if his wife dies, he has to remarry promptly, and he married the lady who became my maternal grandmother, who gave birth to my mother's older full sister, who married and settled in Leesburg, Virginia. … My mother and father had met while my Aunt Fanny, the one that went to Leesburg, was still unmarried, and the Jewish tradition in those days precluded the younger female from marrying before the older female sibling was married. So, Mother had to wait until Aunt Fanny was married, and then, Mother was able to be married. Would you have any interest in the family, this collateral family of Leesburg and the half-sisters, and so on?

SI: Whatever you would like to say. I just wanted a general background on your mother.

MD: Mother also had two younger brothers, so that there were three children of my maternal grandfather by his first wife and four by his second wife, my grandmother. They all lived in Trenton, other than the Leesburg sister, and they were all very observant of the training and teachings that they had received growing up. As a matter-of-fact, the one in Leesburg, which, in those days, was an hour's ride from Washington by car, used to go every other week to Washington, which was the … location of the closest *kosher* butcher, in order to buy meats, kept a *kosher* home, and, of course, my parents kept a *kosher* home, the other siblings, similarly. My mother's younger brothers were both observant, and particularly so, rigidly observant. … Mother's next younger brother, Uncle Ike, did not work on [the] Sabbath, but he worked on Sunday, because I can remember going to his loft in Morrisville, where he had a kimono factory, manufacturing ladies kimonos, and we would go on a Sunday, because he was there in the factory, cutting and sewing and doing whatever he was doing on his own. … It was available for us to go visit because I was not in school, and I can recall going up, in the freight elevator, to the fourth floor of his loft, afraid every minute that the elevator was going to fall, [laughter] and the youngest brother, my Uncle Joe, had had a candy manufacturing business in Trenton, on Lawrence Street, and I don't remember what happened. I remember, he was doing very well. They lived in a very comfortably furnished apartment above the candy factory on Lawrence Street. Something happened that he had to give up the candy factory, but, during the time that he operated it, his busiest time was Easter time. He made Easter eggs of all kinds, chocolate covered Easter eggs, different flavored, covered Easter eggs. Uncle Ike and I would go in, periodically, to visit when he was busy making eggs and watched and, once in awhile, I'd get a sample. … He had, for some reason, to give that up and he bought a bar license and became a barkeep. That's how he made his living. I don't know what else to add about Mom's family. That probably covers what you want to hear.

SI: Yes. Going back to the World War II era, in the first interview, you described how you read the *Popular Science* or *Mechanics* article and that inspired you to go out for this officer's program through the Naval Reserve and the Merchant Marine Academy.

MD: But, it didn't specify that in the ad.

SI: That is what I want to ask; how was it misleading?

MD: It was very misleading, as I remember it. I wish I could find that ad. I think the headline was, "Become an officer," and it had a picture of a midshipman in uniform; what does one get as an impression other than [that you would become a] naval officer? I don't recall the address to which the coupon application was to be sent, but it was ultimately determined that that was an application for admission to the United States Merchant Marine Academy, that was just formed, created by Congress, and was related to the Naval Reserve Program, and so on. [Editor's Note: The United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York, was dedicated in September 1943.] The ad, as I say, still gripes me to this day, was thoroughly misleading, particularly to the extent that it provided for being in the Naval Reserve, but being placed immediately, without our being so told or informed, that we were placed on inactive duty for training, and even when we went on shipboard, as part of our training, following our ninety-day … schooling at the Academy, we were treated as being civilians. We were employees of the War Shipping Administration, and were not [treated] as cadet midshipmen for the Naval Reserve. We were not on active duty, and that, to me, when I came back, was just beyond belief, beyond belief.

SI: During that period, when you were scouting through potential programs, you said you kept getting rejected for different medical reasons. Do you want to elaborate on that, what the different reasons were?

MD: [laughter] The reasons were really not reasons; they were purported reasons. They were all medically based, medically founded, but, later, I learned, which I had not known before, that the Navy and the Coast Guard, and, perhaps, but I don't really know, … the Army Air Force, certainly the Navy and the Coast Guard, were primarily WASP territory, not too many Jews allowed, certainly not as officers. I didn't know that at the time, and tune me back in again.

SI: The different medical reasons.

MD: Oh, right, thank you. So, I went to these various recruitment offices and, following the filing of an application, [I was] ordered for a medical [exam], may have been right then and there, may have been later, I don't recall, but every one of them, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Newark, Boston, New York, every medical exam that I had, and some of them may be still of record, I don't recall whether they were ever put into this docket that you've reviewed, every one had a different medical reason. One, I can remember, he said I had a left varicose seal, which is a swollen left testicle, another one said I was flat-chested, another one said I was too skinny, don't remember what the others were, all ridiculous, and every one different, and, yet, a month later, when I was accepted for the Merchant Marine Academy and I had my medical exam, [I was] found perfectly fit. What does one say at that point? …

SI: At the time, you did not know or think that there might be an anti-Semitic motive behind this.

MD: If I was aware, I think I was anticipating being able to overcome it. Maybe I was fighting odds, I don't know. I just pursued what I thought was my available opportunities and, if I did it, I did it.

SI: You had mentioned, which I initially did not understand, but it sounds very interesting, that when you were on the SS *John Drayton* and you were coming out of Cuba, you did not just go straight across the Atlantic. You went a different route.

MD: Yes. After we were able to leave, after the boiler was repaired and we had a replacement for the engineer, we were unable to; oh, maybe we did get a convoy, but our route was to go along the east coast of Central America to the Panama Canal, traverse the Panama Canal and went down the west coast of South America, around Cape Horn, and then, eastward, east-northeast, to Cape Town, all by ourselves. If we had a convoy, it was between Guantanamo and the Canal. I don't recall, one way or the other, but, clearly, from [the] entrance to the Canal, through it, west coast [of] South America, to Cape Town, all by itself, and, from Cape Town, we made our way up to the Persian Gulf, and I think that that was pretty much free of convoy also, but I'm not really sure.

SI: You said the ship was really loaded down with materiel.

MD: Yes.

SI: Can you describe that a bit more? You said things were welded to the deck.

MD: The ship was loaded with various forms of armament. What I do recall specifically is Sherman tanks that were pretty well completely assembled, except for the gunnery. We had guns, various artillery pieces. We had planes, airplanes, fighter planes. They were Douglas A-20s, as I remember, that were disassembled into segments and, in the cargo hold, the components were stowed, the fuselage of the plane, the wings, because, disassembled, they would take up much less room than an assembled plane, and the wheels and the chassis and engine, and so on, all separate and apart. … I recall that some of that, and I guess it was primarily the tanks, there were several of them that were welded to the steel decking, exposed steel decking of the ship. It was easier to weld them in place to the decking than it was to try to lash them down, with cable or any other means of lashing, and that's the way we transported them. … When we got to the Persian Gulf, when we're ready to unload, all of that welding had to be undone and had to be repaired, so that the materiel was usable, and it was offloaded and the bulk of it was headed for the Russians, with whom we had this lend-lease program that was in operation at the time. … There was a General Motors aircraft assembly plant near Abadan, where the aircraft components were shipped for assembly, and the Russian pilots would come down, by airplane, over the mountains and land in Iran, maybe half a dozen, … as many as there were planes ready to be flown back, with an individual pilot, I assume. Perhaps the planes required two, I don't really remember, but that's how the planes got into the Russian hands, and the tanks, I don't really

recall how they got to Russia. They may have traveled under their own power, maybe they traveled on trucks, I don't recall.

SI: You got to visit both Abadan and Basra.

MD: Yes, yes, but what I visited was in no way connected to the materiel that we were carrying. I was there to view the town and to see how the people lived and get a feel [for that area], and I can remember one occasion, and I'm not sure, I think it was Abadan, it could have been Basra, not sure, but there was a bazaar, a typical outdoor market. … We were looking, I think I was with a couple, three, other guys, looking at what they had on display, and there was a lot of nice arts and crafts. Ultimately, I bought quite a bit of things that I wanted to take home with me, some jewelry, gold, Yemenite gold work, silver pieces, a couple of prayer rugs that were beautifully hand-woven, and I thought I would have them for either gifts or display in the home, whatever, and a few other [things]. I bought some; that was on the way back, I bought books in Durban, and all of that, of course, was lost [when the ship was torpedoed]. I must have spent maybe a thousand bucks, all together, as a draw against my pay, to buy this stuff, hand-carved ivory. … One incident that stands out in my mind, [I was] walking through the bazaar one day and there was a young boy, about eight or ten years old, dark complexion, looked like any other kid, native kid, black hair, barefoot, but he had around his neck a piece of cord, cotton cord, from which hung a Star of David, and I was flabbergasted. So, I walked up to him and I said, "*Salaam*," thinking that that was what he would understand and he said, "*Salaam*," and then, I pointed to the Star of David and I said to him, in Yiddish, "(*Bist du Yehuda*?)?" "Are you a Jew?" He didn't understand it. They don't speak Yiddish. They speak Arabic, some of them speak Ladino, some of them speak Hebrew, not Yiddish. Yiddish is Eastern European. I didn't know that. I learned something, but he knew what I was after. He took me by the hand, I went by myself, I left the other guys, whatever they were doing, and walked me through dirt streets, two, three blocks away, into a ramshackle structure with a thatched roof, twigs intertwined, dirt floor, wooden benches, with an Ark of David [an *Aron Kodesh* or *Hekhal*], the place, the cabinet, in which the *Torah* is kept, and I think he gestured to me to sit down. … He ran out, came back shortly thereafter with an older gentleman, who obviously was some functionary of the synagogue. He was not the rabbi, he was either the sexton or comparable, and he opened up the ark for me, to show me the *Torah*. They had one *Torah* and it was hand decorated with gold. Some craftsman had done the decoration, and we could not communicate with one another, showed me their prayer book, which was all in Hebrew and Arabic, and I wound up taking all the money that I had in my pocket, think I had about two hundred dollars in local currency, didn't carry dollars, and I gave it to him. He was dumbstruck. He hadn't seen that much money at one time in his life. To me, it was, you know, nothing, and I think I pointed to the poor box when I gave him the money. What ever happened to the money, Lord only knows. [laughter] Whether it got to the proper use, I don't know, but that stands out in my mind, that I learned that there were Jews that did not come from Eastern Europe, that did not speak Yiddish. … Up to that point, I thought all Jews spoke Yiddish. I learned that there were those that left Spain and Portugal and went to North Africa and to the Middle East, and there were others. … There's a very interesting theory now that the Russian and Polish Jews, the so-denominated Ashkenazi Jews, from which I'm descended, are descended from the residents of a kingdom in the Caucasus Mountains known as Khazaria, a very interesting book on the lost tribe. Maybe I'll find it, I'll show you, but the theory is that Khazaria, which was raided by the Rus band of Vikings, laid

waste to Khazaria, demolished the capital city of Iteyl, I-T-E-Y-L, I believe it's spelled, phonetically, [Atil], and the residents of Khazaria, who had converted from Islam to Judaism, following the similar conversion of the king from Islam to Judaism, making Judaism the state religion. The Khazars fled to Russia and Poland. … The theory is that the Spanish Portuguese are the Sephardim, Sephardic Jews, and we are descendants not from the Twelve Tribes of Israel, which the Sephardim are, but rather from the Khazars, fascinating theory. [Editor's Note: Mr. Deitz may be referring to the theory put forth by Arthur Koestler in his very controversial 1976 book *The Thirteenth Tribe*.] Now, how'd we get on that subject?

SI: You were talking about how you met this Jewish boy and you had some exposure to the Sephardic community.

MD: Oh, right, right. Up to that point, you know, my exposure had been solely to Jews that had backgrounds identical [to mine], the same as mine. I knew no difference and that was a learning experience for me, that there were Jews who spoke Hebrew and Arabic, and, of course, it's something that does not get lost.

SI: You discussed the night the ship was sunk last time and you also gave me a lot of documents that covered that, so, I will not go back into that, but I did want to just state for the record something we discussed earlier, that a lot of the documents that I put into the first transcript were documents that were created based on something you told another interviewer, which they wrote up.

MD: That is correct, that is correct. There was not, to my knowledge, … a tape recording, [or] that it was a verbatim transcript. It was a regurgitation of what the interviewer heard.

SI: There was also this discrepancy between the contemporary documents saying the submarine was German and, later on, it was learned that it might be Italian, or there might be a mixed crew. As far as you thought at the time, you thought it was German.

MD: I understood it, originally, that it was German, because as I heard the story, when I was repatriated, that one of the seamen from the other [life]boats had been picked up by the submarine for questioning, where we were going, what we had carried, what we had delivered, and so on, and then, they put him back in his lifeboat. … I understood, and, of course, this is all third, fourth-hand, that he had said that the crew members were speaking in German. It's quite possible that they were speaking in Italian, that he didn't know, or that it was an Italian submarine, which, later, we learned was the *Leonardo Da Vinci* and that it had a German officers' crew, but Italian staff, Italian crew, other than the officers.

SI: Have you kept in contact with any of the other survivors?

MD: I've been in contact with one, who was my bunkmate on the ship. His name was Herman Rosen. He liked to be called Hank, or, sometimes, Hy. He had graduated as a journalism major from the University of Indiana, I believe a year earlier than I graduated from Penn, and he was on the ship when I boarded. He had been on the ship from its maiden voyage from the shipyards to Brooklyn. He was a very unusual gentleman. I can remember one occasion; very smart, very

articulate, and, overall, a good bunkmate. We had stopped in Cape Town on the way over to refuel and it was over a weekend and we were allowed to go ashore and I visited a synagogue, for Friday night services. … The rabbi was generous enough and courteous enough, kind enough, to give me a pocket prayer book, which, interestingly enough, was printed in Great Britain, and I brought it back to the ship and I was sitting on my bunk, shortly thereafter, when Hy came in, "What are you reading?" I showed him the book, "Eh, what are you believing in that crap [for]?" I couldn't understand his attitude, and it's interesting because … he was on the same lifeboat as I, when we were repatriated, he had not the same deleterious effect of the shipwreck as I, he was able to go back to the Academy, finish his training, become commissioned, and I don't recall whether he served as a naval officer or as a Merchant Mariner officer, but he finished his training and served on shipboard. … When he left the service, he went to work as a fundraiser for one of the international Jewish organizations, and I found that very strange. I didn't hear from him when I got back. I didn't know where to get in touch with him, didn't know that he was back, other than the fact that I would periodically speak to our skipper, (Carl Norman?), who lived, interestingly enough, in Neversink, New York. I'd called him a couple of times right before Christmas to wish him Merry Christmas, and so on, and he was the one who told me that Hy was working in Washington, and so on, but I never had any direct contact with him. Phyllis and I, as I think I mentioned to you, were very active in community and Jewish affairs and we went to Philadelphia one day, to a general assembly meeting of [the] Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, of which we were members through the organizations of which we were involved. I walked Phyllis to her meeting, which started at nine o'clock, and I'm walking to my meeting, which is supposed to start at nine and I'm going to be a few minutes late. There, down the corridor, walking towards me, I nearly fell over, Hy Rosen. Now, of course, we fell over one another, embraced and [asked], "What are you doing? How you doing?" and, of course, he was there because of his involvement, I think, at the time, it was B'nai B'rith International. … It was a warm and welcome experience for both of us, both of us had our wives with us, and we agreed to meet for dinner, which we did, the four of us, and the dinner was so pleasant, we were relating so many things that were recalled by each of us, and the wives were urging us on, [that] we didn't break up until after two o'clock from dinner. … Subsequently, he retired. He's now living in California and he has written a book, paperback, I think, I know I have a paperback copy, *Brave Men, Gallant Ship*, telling about our training at the Academy and what the program was for shipboard and afterward, and, of course, highlighting our experience in the lifeboat for thirty-one days, and so forth. … He mentions my name a couple times, and he had called me while it was still in the manuscript stage to ask me if I would review it for him, which I did, and I found no problem with it. Editorially, you know, he's better qualified than I, and, ultimately, it was published by the Merchant Marine Academy Foundation, the proceeds of the sale of the book going to benefit the foundation. I hear from him, not too often, but, periodically, we'll call one another, "How you doing?" and I guess the last time he called me was a couple, three, months ago, and that's about the extent of our contact. None of the other people on the ship, other than the Skipper, who's since passed away, did I have any contact with.

SI: I want to ask you a little bit about the bond tour.

MD: Yes.

SI: My first question is, since you had these very serious physical injuries from your ordeal, which you were still recovering from, why did you say yes to the bond tour?

MD: [laughter] That's an interesting question, because I've asked myself that. If I had it to do over again, I probably would say no, but, if you offered me a million bucks, I probably would refuse it in exchange for having gone. I was home on recuperative sick leave and I was, at that time, going into New York, I think, three days a week for treatments. The treatment was illusory. I was on medication that made my hair stand on end and the treatment was a whirlpool, which I'm sure you're familiar with, and that was the standard treatment for what they diagnosed my primary illness as, immersion foot. World War I, they called it trench foot. Now, they call it either Raynaud's Disease or PVD, peripheral vascular disease. The treatment, today, I don't know; I'm supposed to see another doctor next week to see if there's any new treatment to help. … I get a call one day at home, "This is Captain So-and-So. I'm calling on behalf of Admiral So-and-So, USN." "Yes, sir?" "We understand," and [he] proceeds to tell me that he had learned a little bit about my experience. "Yes, sir." "We are helping to organize a trip with intermittent and periodic stops of servicemen who've had experiences that are worth telling, such as yours, and the tour will include some movie stars to attract the attendance, and the purpose is to sell war bonds." I said, "Captain, as you know, or as you may know, I'm presently undergoing treatment in New York at the Marine Hospital, three times a week. I'm under doctor's care, with medication." "Oh, we'll take care of that. You're going to have a chartered plane and we will make certain that, [at] every stop that you make, there will be facilities available for you to be seen by a doctor and to have treatments," and [I said], "Well, I'm still walking with a cane." "No problem." "May I think about it?" "Well, we'd like a decision quickly." So, I discussed it with my parents and, the next day, he called me again and said, "We'd like to have a favorable decision from you and is there anything else we can do to convince you? because we think that you can bring an element of war experience to the citizenry that," … and I'm paraphrasing his language, "that is not available from the others." … "You didn't tell me, Captain, who the others are." "Well," he says, "it's going to be an Army Air Force gunner, … master sergeant, a submariner, a Coast Guard [serviceman] and a United States Marine Medal of Honor winner. His name is Johnny Basilone, from your backdoor." [To interviewer] You recognize that name?

SI: Yes.

MD: Well, that sold me and I said, "On that basis, I think I'm obligated to participate," and I'm glad I did, in a way. It was a very tedious time, trying to squeeze in the treatments and the doctor and the breakfast meetings and the luncheon meetings and telling my story *ad nauseum*, but it was a tremendously valuable catharsis that helped me, inexplicably, to avoid much more serious psychiatric help. The movie stars that were on our tour, which was the; I think it was called the Mid-Atlantic Tour … of the Third War Loan Armada, "Air-mada," and our movie stars were Gene Lockhart, Eddie Bracken, Martha Scott, Virginia Grey and Johnny Garfield. … Virginia Grey, I was assigned to Virginia Grey, or she was assigned to me, and each one of the movie stars got up and made whatever introductory remarks they had to make, and Virginia would get up and [say], "My name is Virginia Grey. I live in Hollywood and I did my schooling, dramatic schooling," [and] so forth, whatever she was saying, "I'd like to introduce you [to]," and she introduces me, "and Cadet Midshipman Deitz has a story to tell you that will make you both harrowed and sad," and I guess there was a round of applause, I don't really recall that, and I'd

get up to the microphone and I would tell what happened to me, starting from Guantanamo to Persian Gulf. Sometimes, I was told to shorten it and we would shorten it by starting with [the] Persian Gulf, coming back, and, of course, the thirty-one days in the lifeboat, with the lifeboat having capsized on the sixth day and losing our mast and all our food and our water, and being able to right the boat and climb back in again, no compass, and being picked up by the Greek ship, comatose, being fed, first thing, chicken broth, if it was a predominantly Jewish audience, it would be chicken noodle soup, and hospitalized and being given a jar of peanut butter with crackers on my bed to eat, crackers and peanut butter, whenever I felt like it, and then, after six weeks, being asked to give up my bed, because they needed it for more seriously injured and putting me in a hotel across the way, where I had my meals and slept and came to the hospital as often as indicated for treatment. … Then, Martha would get up, or Virginia would get up, and say, "Well, now, with what this young man has gone through, how can anyone refuse to dig into their pockets and buy war bonds? How can anyone refuse?" We raised, on our Mid-Atlantic Tour, the most money of all of the tours, as I recall, thirty-three million dollars or some such [figure], an enormous sum in those days, and I think I mentioned to you that Johnny Garfield took a shine to Schiller Cohen and myself, because the three of us were of Jewish backgrounds. … When it was all over, I came home and, a couple of months later, I got notice from the War Shipping Administration that they had received word that my injuries were such that I'd be unable to complete school and I, therefore, was going to be discharged from the Academy and that they were going to notify the Naval Reserve accordingly, because, since I'm discharged from the Academy, I'm no longer eligible for the Merchant Marine Reserve, United States Naval Reserve, and then, I was able to find a job. …

SI: Before we move on with WTTM, among the veterans on the tour, would you talk about your experiences with each other often?

MD: No, no. If we did, it was conversational, conversational, because we said everything we had to say at the microphone. The rest of the time, we were trying to regain our composure, our civilian composure, our returned service personnel composure. No, we did not talk about anything regarding our experiences, because they had heard it all.

SI: Can you explain that a bit more, "regaining your returning serviceman composure?"

MD: Well, we were trying to get back to normalcy.

SI: All right.

MD: That's all. We wanted to get away, at least I did. I wanted to get away from it as much as possible, the horror of that which I went through, and, as I say, I'm thankful that I had the opportunity to be able to participate, which enabled me this great catharsis.

SI: It sounds like you gave this presentation in a lot of different venues.

MD: Oh, yes. I think, all together, we must have made a hundred or more presentations.

SI: This is just within five weeks or so, right?

MD: Yes, started in Newark, New Jersey, and then, went up and down the East Coast, out to the; I think we went to Detroit at one point. I've forgotten where we all went.

SI: Next, after you were discharged from the Academy and the Naval Reserve, you got this job at WTTM. Can you explain how you got that?

MD: Yes. I had heard that they were looking for personnel and I went in and was interviewed by the station manager, a lady, who liked my voice and she gave me a piece of copy to read and I was able to read it without any hesitation and not stumble over the multi-syllable words. … I was hired as a DJ and my responsibilities were relatively simple. I would have to announce the record, perhaps, … a music record, give a little background of it, who composed the music, who performed it, if it was instrumental, who the artists were, and, when I finished what I was saying or going to say, I would merely motion to the engineer and he would start the record. It was his job to, [I] forget what they called it, technical term, to put … the needle of the phonograph into the proper groove to start the playing of the [record]. This was the days of the old "seventy-eight" rubberized records, and my two fellow DJs, when I first started, were Jack Barry of [*Twenty-One* (TV game show)] … infamy, who left shortly after I started. I think, perhaps, I may have been hired anticipating his departure, and Ernie Kovacs, with whom I had gone to junior high school and high school in Trenton, and with whom I was very friendly, and a third chap by the name of (Elsworth Gosling?), whose radio name was Roy Groove. My radio name was Morty Deeds, "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town." Ernie used his right name, and it was a very pleasant experience. I was able to sit on my can and not have to walk around too much, which was my orders, and pleasant, [the] atmosphere was pleasant, the work was no big deal, the pay was modest, but not unacceptable. … When Ernie and I would get done of an evening, when we both had similar schedules, particularly on Saturday, we both seemed to have our schedules end at the same time, at about nine o'clock on Saturday night, near the radio station, which was in the middle of the block of West State Street, between the Hotel Hildebrecht and the Hotel Stacy-Trent, we would go into the Hotel Hildebrecht, which had a nightclub in the lower level. … One evening, we went and the performer was a young female singer, very attractive, and Ernie said, "Gee, I'd like to go backstage and talk with her," and we went backstage. We were able to talk with her. She, he found out, he was correct, … was of Hungarian background, and he ultimately married her, and then, … later, when he got big and important and famous, he divorced her and married Edie Adams, but that was how he met his first wife. He left WTTM, I guess, about a year after, or maybe it was right about the time that I left. He went to Philadelphia, to WCAU radio, and then, some four or five years later, when WCAU started a TV station, he became involved in their TV production and became a well-known TV personality in WCAU and, ultimately, wound up in Hollywood.

SI: You mentioned earlier that you would read news bulletins as they came in off the Teletype.

MD: Yes.

SI: This is obviously a very important time, when a lot of big news stories were happening, still during the war, in the early part of 1944.

MD: Right, yes.

SI: When you would get a big story, was it something that stands out in your memory? Do you remember, for example, D-Day? Were you there at D-Day?

MD: No. D-Day was December 7th of …

SI: June 6th.

MD: I'm sorry.

SI: Pearl Harbor was December 7th. D-Day was June 6th.

MD: June, of what year, '44?

SI: 1944.

MD: I don't recall anything specific, no. I think I took it all in stride. I don't recall anything about, you know, getting excited about something or the other.

SI: Would people call in to the station and things like that?

MD: Well, if they did, there were people out front who would handle the calls. We would accept calls only on the call-in line, where they had a request for a particular song to be played or they had some comment that they wanted to make about a particular song that had already been heard, but, inquiries of that nature, they would call the station and the reception staff would handle those calls; nothing regarding the news, that I remember.

SI: In the first interview, you described how a friend led you to the IRS agent training program.

MD: This was the same gentleman, who, at that point, became my father's accountant, because I was away, the CPA friend of his with whom … Dad was involved in the Masonic fraternity, who had a friend who was the manager of the office of the IRS in Trenton. In those days, it was called the Bureau of Internal Revenue. It wasn't Internal Revenue Service, it was the Bureau of Internal Revenue. … You know, [the] name changed, still the same organization, and the manager of the office had informed the accountant that the manager was looking for additional personnel, and, since Ben had known that I had graduated accounting, [he suggested], "This would be a good opportunity for Morty." So, Dad told me about it. I went up, I was interviewed by the manager, and he liked my credentials and seemed to like me and made an arrangement whereby I could have automobile reimbursements for my travel and under such circumstances that enabled me to go to a nearby Ford dealer that had used autos for sale and I was able to buy a used 1940 Studebaker coupe for four hundred dollars. … That was my first transportation and I used that for a year-and-a-half, or thereabouts, until it started to disintegrate, and replaced it, but that was how I came to go to work for the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

SI: Can you describe for me a little bit about what you would do as an agent? You touched on it a little bit, particularly dealing with the refugees from Europe.

MD: Yes. That was a specialized task to which I was assigned responsibility. The normal procedure of every agent was to receive [assignments] from Newark, the district office, which the manager would distribute. He would keep a record of the taxpayer's name and the year and the form, whatever else was required to be recorded. Perhaps his secretary did the paperwork for him, but I would come in in the morning and I would find on my desk a stack of files, and in each file was a tax return, sometimes with a note of questions regarding items on the return, sometimes with suggestions, and the first responsibility that we had was to look over the return to see that it warranted further investigation. We had certain guidelines that we were following. In those days, they had certain statistics with regard to the relative size of total deductions for medical expenses, for example, to gross income, and the same for real estate and other taxes, the same for contributions, the same for whatever other [data], and, if it fell within the guideline [and] we didn't "smell" anything by looking at it, we would send it back, "Accept this file." Most of the time, though, most of the returns that were given to us warranted further investigation, because the guy who first picked it out saw something that his greater experience indicated to him that it warranted an audit, and, certainly, if we were in any doubt, we resolved the doubt in favor of audit, even though our proficiency was measured by the amount of additional tax that we recommended be assessed. So, if we wound up with an audit, spending a day or two or three or more, with no change, that didn't make our record look very good. So, we had to be very punctilios, very careful about what we were picking, but, again, more experienced eyes than ours, in most instances, picked these returns for audit. If we decided to proceed with the audit, we would either send out a letter designating a time that we were going to call, we, I, was going to call on the taxpayer, [of] a certain hour, certain place, "Any problems, call me," or I'd call on the telephone. … If it was a large firm; I was involved, one of my early audits, with a senior [agent] who was a CPA at the time, and who was the one who encouraged me to get my CPA certificate. We were checking the tax return for, don't remember the corporate name; Young's Rubber. Young's Rubber was the manufacturer of Trojan condoms. In those days, that was a no-no word to use, never spoke the word, and it was family-owned and I worked with my senior [agent] and he guided me [through] what he wanted me to do, and so on. … Interestingly enough, when I became engaged, in 1946, a year or a year-and-a-half after completing the audit of Young's Rubber, one of the Young brothers came into the office to see my mentor and my mentor told him, "You remember Morty?" "Yes." "[He] got engaged." He went down to his car and brought up a package of a gross, and left them on my desk, [laughter] but that was a learning experience, to know what to look for, where to look, and so on. One of the experiences I had was a local jewelry store, and because my father was in the retail jewelry business, I felt a little bit squeamish about handling that one. So, I discussed it with the boss and we agreed that one of the other agents could do the actual physical audit, but I would sit behind the scenes, out of the picture, unbeknownst to anybody, to give some guidelines, and the first thing that I noticed was that the margin and the bottom line looked out of whack. So, the agent to which the actual audit was assigned and I talked about it, and so on, and he went into the audit and found what he and I thought might be possible, that the owner of the business wrote on the check stub the name of a vendor from which the store bought merchandise and would identify it with a date and a number and [was] marked "Purchases." The actual check was made payable to cash and the checks were being cashed and pocketed. The ultimate result was that this was so raw and so unacceptable,

this was more than just casual misjudgment, this was outright attempt to cheat, that the special agent, which is the criminal investigator, was called in, and I believe the owner ultimately served time, but this is the kind of thing that we did. Most of it was routine. I remember checking a cranberry growers' cooperative, I remember checking an automobile dealership, a fuel oil distributor. You name it, I probably checked that type of business, professional people and the like, and it was, generally speaking, fairly straight forward. I remember one experience that I was very unhappy that [it] occurred. I was assigned to work at Atlantic City and I was assigned a corporate return of a fuel oil distributorship that was one of the largest in the area. … I showed up at the office of the company at the appointed time, began looking at the records in the owner's office and I noticed a pattern, that every month [there] were checks to cash, two hundred, four hundred, three-[hundred-and]-fifty, and so on, and they were charged to "business promotion." … I asked the owner, when he came, [the] second day, I guess, [after he asked me], "How you doing? Can I help you with anything?" I said, "What are these?" because I had made a whole list, of the date, the check number, and so on. He said, "It's a funny business." He says, "Most of our customers, apartment houses, hotels, big buildings, the guy who does the ordering of the fuel oil is either the superintendent or the custodial [supervisor] or the mechanical engineer and he makes the selection of the purveyor from whom to buy the fuel oil; same with the gas stations." He says, "I have to go around, once a month, and, like a commission, pay these guys for their help in retaining the business." So, I said to him, "Well, do you keep a list of to whom you give this money?" "No. Should I have?" I said, "Well, you're claiming a business deduction for an expenditure which goes nowhere." He said, "Gee," he said, "you put me in an awful predicament here." He said, "I really don't know how to resolve this. Is there some way that we can, you and I, reach an accommodation?" Well, I knew what he was driving at and I had a pencil in my hand. On the desk where I was working was a picture of his wife and two children, and I tapped with my eraser of the pencil on the glass of the picture frame and I said, "Mr. Owner, please don't do anything or say anything that will embarrass your family," and he got up and walked out, never heard anything more. That's the kind of thing you run into.

SI: Most of your cases did not involve fraud, mostly mismanagement.

MD: No, very few, very few. Most of them [were] just routine differences of opinion, improper classification, wrong year, accounting judgments, not to any significant degree, I would say less than one percent, that were involving fraud.

SI: How long did you work with the refugees in the Princeton area?

MD: Oh, that was a relatively short project, maybe five, six months at most. It was only a few dozen, really. Most of them were at the Institute for Advanced Study, some were at the university, some were connected with neither, as I remember. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: After your time as a field agent, you became an instructor for new agents.

MD: I was assigned to Washington, to the school for new agents, and I was fortunate to be able to find living quarters with the wife of a first cousin of mine, son of my Aunt Fanny, who lived in Leesburg. He was an accountant and was working for the OPA. You know what the OPA is?

SI: Yes, the Office of Price Administration.

MD: Right. He was an auditor for the OPA and his wife and young son lived in an apartment in, I believe it was called Fairlington, Virginia, suburb of Washington, of DC, and because Harry, my cousin, was traveling, he had the family car. She had no transportation, and it just so happened that the woman whom he married was the younger sister of the wife of my mother's youngest brother; family [ties]. I don't recall how it worked out, how it developed, whether I called Harry, asked for guidance about a place to live in DC, and I don't know, but I wound up staying with Molly, his wife, and Chuck, the son, who was a year old at the time. Now, sixty-some-odd years later, you know, these are old guys already. I talk to him once in awhile. Chuck does not remember me, because he was a year old at the time. His younger brother, Norman, who was named after a cousin of mine who was killed in the war, cousin of Harry, Chuck and Norman's father, didn't even know me until my nephew got involved in genealogy and made Chuck and Norman aware of my involvement with them, certainly with Chuck, at a young age. So, I would be able to use my car once a week to take Molly to shop, and I forget how we divided up the cost of buying groceries or whatever, and that's where I stayed. I paid no rent and it was a marvelous arrangement, and I don't remember too much more about it.

SI: Do you remember what you instructed the new agents in?

MD: No, we had a whole curriculum spelled out in advance that we had to follow, whatever was provided to us in writing, and it was, I guess, more perfunctory, to get everybody attuned to the same page and follow the same procedures, more than anything else, that I think [it was] more procedural than substantive.

SI: How and when did you meet your wife?

MD: That's interesting. One of my fellow agents was a fellow by the name of (Arthur Rothschild?). Arthur was retired from the Army, had been on the staff of one of the generals, I've forgotten whom. … Before going into service, he was the office manager for the gentleman who became my father-in-law, who had a very large poultry processing plant in Cranbury and farms where poultry was grown, for meat, not for eggs, but for meat, and feed supply stores, where feed was sold to other farmers in the area, and, also, retail cut-up poultry stores, which you probably don't remember, because they're no longer in existence. In those days, there was no frozen poultry that was for sale. It was all fresh killed, iced, and retail stores sold the chicken cut up into parts, the breast, the wing, the leg, a half a chicken, and it was sold by the pound, ready to cook, and the company owned a whole group of fifteen or twenty cut-up fresh chicken stores, called Chicken Boys. When Arthur came back from overseas, he went to work for Internal Revenue and, when I started, we became friendly, and I knew that he was from, originally from, Hightstown, although he had since married. … I had a cousin, actually, an uncle and two cousins, that had a retail store in Hightstown that sold work clothing and related items to the farmers and the farm helpers, farm help, and I talked with Arthur about that, and so on. …

On one particular day, I called my cousin, the female, who worked in the store in Hightstown, to say hello, and so on. I guess maybe I was going to go visit Hightstown, maybe I had somebody to audit in Hightstown, I don't recall, and she was very close with my parents. She never married. She was the only girl in the family. She had, I think, six brothers, one or two younger and the others older, and at the time that her mother, my mother's half-sister, gave birth to one of her younger brothers, it was difficult for her, for my cousin, the daughter, to stay in the house and she came to live, at my mother's invitation, … with us, because I was young at the time and she would help my mother take care of me. So, she mentioned to me, during this conversation, "Are you seeing anybody?" I said, "What do you mean?" "Are you going out with any girls?" I said, "Yes." "Anybody special?" "No." "There's a girl who lives nearby in Cranbury that I'd like you to meet. Her father and mother are customers." This is my wife's parents that she's referring to. They're customers of the store because Phyllis' father and mother were buying goods for the workers in the plant and the workers on the farm, and would pay for it by the company and would charge it to the employee and the employee would pay it off on a regular weekly basis, and I said, "Well, you know, I'm happy to meet somebody, sure." So, she calls me back a week or so later, "She's not interested in meeting you. For whatever reason, I don't know; she heard something about you or whatever." Six months later, or thereabouts, Arthur, my fellow agent, who had been the office manager for Phyllis' father and mother, "Morty," he says, "there's a young lady that I know, I know her father, [I] used to work for her father, I'd like you to meet her." I didn't put two and two together at that point, and he arranged for me, on a blind date, to go to Phyllis' home in Cranbury the night before Memorial Day. I believe it was either a Friday night or Saturday night, and I picked her up and I brought her to the apartment where Arthur and his wife and child were living, in South Trenton, between Trenton and Bordentown. … We spent the evening just, you know, talking about this, that and the other, and I took her home and went by way of Route 33, and I don't know whether you know the area or not, but on Route 33 is a place called (Del Rio?); familiar with it? In those days, (Del Rio?) used to be an open-air barbecue, grill, steak, hamburgers, hotdogs, run by a (Charlie De Angelo?), who was a mason by trade who built the building from scratch, because he needed something to do at night and he loved to cook. So, we stopped at (Del Rio?) to have a steak sandwich, and then, I took Phyllis home. When I got to her house, before the evening started, I walked in the house and Phyllis introduced me to her father and he's sitting in his easy chair, with his feet up on a footstool, with his glasses down on the end of his nose, reading a newspaper, and [he was] looking up at me, got his stocking feet, no shoes, and Phyllis introduces me and he says, "Nice to meet you. I want you to take good care of my daughter," and Phyllis later told me that, even though he seemed unimpressed and uninterested, he had done a little checking about me and, even though he didn't get up off the chair to greet me, he was favorably impressed, but that was my introduction to Phyllis' parents.

SI: I would like to get into some of your later activities and your community activities.

MD: Okay.

SI: First, you were a professor at Princeton.

MD: Not a professor; I was a visiting lecturer. I was addressed as professor, I was addressed as doctor, but all of those are merely the custom in university.

SI: How did that come about and what did you teach?

MD: Very, very simply. When I got to start to work in Princeton, at the law firm about which I told you, the number two partner, Mr. (Wise?), had been teaching this course at the university and felt it intruded too much into his time, and this must have been in April or May of 1955 when he made the decision, and came into my office and said to me, "I've been teaching this course at Princeton," courses, there were two courses at the time, "and I don't think I want to teach them anymore, but I'm thinking, with your permission, to recommend you to take over the responsibility." "What's involved?" He said, "One is 'Fundamentals of Business Law' and the other is 'Economic Choice Problems.'" He said, "With your background, the CPA and [as] a member of the bar, should be like falling off a log." So, I went and was interviewed by the dean, Dean (Condit?), and the assistant dean, Dean (Menand?), who became, ultimately, my client, a wonderful man, and I was hired for, initially, it was two afternoons a week. I think it was Tuesday and Wednesday, for, [I] don't remember now whether it was one hour at a clip or two hours at a clip, but whichever it was, I was hired as a visiting lecturer and that made me a member of the faculty, which gave me faculty privileges, which, among other things, included the priority for tickets to athletic events, and those were the days that Bill Bradley was at Princeton. So, Phyllis and I saw every basketball game at home. We went to a lot of them that were away. We saw football and some swim meets, and that was very nice. So, I taught these two courses. Then, … after about two years, I gave up the "Economic Choice Problems," because it's getting [to be] too much and the testing was entirely different for the economic portion, the economic course, as it was for the law course. Both courses were required courses for seniors to graduate engineering school. The courses were in the engineering school, and they had to pass both courses in order to be able to graduate, and the economic portion, I had to make up an exam each year, because it was a sit-down, closed-book exam, and it just became too much. The law course was relatively simple. I merely had to go through the assignment for the day. We used a case book that was typical, similar to that which we used in law school, only this was catered to contract law. I had to give them an understanding of the legal structure in the United States, constitutional fundament, court system, which took a couple of lectures, but, then, the rest was contract law, which they were required to learn because they were going to go out into the business world and [should] know what's involved in a contract, and the exam was an open-book exam. No testing, I would keep track of attendance and I would keep track of participation, which I used to help a grade, never to denigrate a grade, and I used the same exam year after year and they could take it home [for] a week's time, or three days' time, use their book if they wanted to, but they had to write an essay response to the problem, and it was a multi-faceted, multi-issued set of facts. … I used made-up, ridiculous names to give them a chuckle and ridiculous names of places and company names, and so on, and I tried to bring out, in every statement of fact, a potential issue, and then, at the end, they had to decide and explain why, and I had to grade the papers, and I did that for twenty-three years, until it got [to be] a little too much, towards the end. The university was getting pressured for grades more quickly, sooner than they had before, and I generally would take off to go [for] Memorial Day to Florida, where we had bought a place in 1971. I'd been ill in 1968 and almost didn't make it. I had a routine gallbladder, old-fashioned gallbladder [removal surgery]. They cut me open right through the middle, had a diseased gallbladder, which they removed, and an incidental appendectomy and, within twelve hours, I spiked a 106 fever and I was in the hospital for sixty-three days, during

which time they had to operate on me again, because I had a massive subphrenic and nephric infection, whole gut was peritonitis. They had to clean me out, they had to cut me in the back, in order to put in drains, terrible. As I say, I almost didn't make, but, when I recuperated, my doctor, who … practiced in Westfield, who also was a client, told Phyllis, who was a patient of his partner, "Take Morty away every chance you get, a long weekend or whatever." So, we would go away for Memorial Day for two weekends and a week in-between, which was just the time that the exams had to be graded, [laughter] and, if the exams were turned in before I left, I would take them with me. Otherwise, the dean would have them shipped to me somehow and I'd have to grade them and get … the grades back to the university in time for final grading and, after 1977, I said, "That's enough." I gave it up. It was good. I had status, because of the appointment, I had a little prestige, being able, on my resume, to state, "Member of Faculty, Princeton University," but it was just too much of a burden, and that's the story about the university.

SI: You are a member of both the county and state bar associations.

MD: Yes.

SI: How active were you in the bar association?

MD: I was active in both of them. In the Mercer County Bar Association, the big thing that I had, which Phyllis did most of the scut work [for], we had a county bar association hospitalization and medical plan issued, underwritten by Blue Cross Blue Shield. … The guys would have to send in their premiums to me, which I would bank in my escrow account, and then, I would write one check to Blue Cross Blue Shield. Phyllis did all the paperwork. She knew whose check was coming in, if somebody was a little delayed, and, [if it was] somebody that she knew, she was kind enough to call him on the phone, "Hey, you get your premium check in." Once in awhile, she even fudged to cover the check that was missing by using other funds, to save somebody from embarrassment or from losing their hospitalization insurance. So, that was a major task for a good number of years. I never became an officer of the county bar association. I attended meetings fairly regularly. Most of the meetings were social affairs and good camaraderie. Periodically, we would have judges' night, where we would invite the local judiciary to meet with members of the bar and bend elbows at the liquor bar, but I never participated in any of the responsibilities of the county bar association, as far as officership. With the state bar association, I was involved in a couple of different ways. I was appointed by the Supreme Court, and I forget what year it was, to serve on the county's Ethics and Disciplinary Review Committee, where we would review alleged complaints against the members of the bar, and so on, and I don't know how long that had me involved, perhaps several years. [It] did not take that much time. We met, I think, once a month and it was all, you know, volunteer, no compensation, but, then, I had been pushing the officers of the state bar association to form a specialized section of the state bar, similar to what they had for trial attorneys, for patent [lawyers], I forget what the other sections were, but there was none for taxation. I had previously, I think it was previously, been in touch with the State Senator for Mercer County, (Cyrus Dolphy?), because the State of New Jersey was, at that time, one of the few states that did not permit professionals to practice other than in their individual or partnership names. Other states …

SI: You did describe this in the first interview as well.

MD: Did I? Okay.

SI: I do not want you to have to repeat everything.

MD: Okay, all right. That was known to the officers of the bar association, the headquarters of which was in Trenton, and, if I haven't already stated, one of my colleagues, an older practitioner, was so impressed with what I had done that he wrote a long letter to the editor of the *New Jersey Law Journal* commending me on my efforts for drafting this measure, which was enacted by the Legislature unanimously with no editing and was signed by the Governor into law. The officers of the bar association had a meeting at the office one day, they called me over to join them, and [said], "We're talking about formation of a taxation section." I had also been serving on that commission, [the] Governor's commission on government costs and revenue, and I had been pushing the state to adopt a gross income tax in lieu of a net income tax, similar to the federal, as a means of relieving the pressure on the property tax. So, at this meeting at the bar association, they said, "We're seriously thinking of creating a section on taxation. If we do, will you serve as the first chairman?" "I'm flattered." "Well, you're the most neutral guy that we can select. We don't want anybody that's controversial and we don't want anybody that's going to try to make use of the post for selfish reasons," and I served for two years as the first chairman of the New Jersey State Bar Association Section on Taxation. Is that the point?

SI: Yes. Could you explain how you got involved with the Governor's commission?

MD: Somebody recommended my name to the Governor and I was appointed. It could have been (Cyrus Dolphy?), I don't know.

SI: This is the Commission on Government Cost and Tax Policy.

MD: Yes.

SI: During the Brendan Byrne Administration.

MD: Yes. That was a lot of work. We had meeting after meeting after meeting. I think the commission, as a whole, may have been twenty-five or thirty people of various backgrounds and training, and a lot of in-depth studies, which were actually done by the Treasury Department, at our request, that was funneled to the Treasury Department through the Governor's office. … We would get statistics back and we would analyze them, and then, we would ask for more stuff, more stuff, more stuff, went on for months, and I wrote the recommendation for two things, the establishment of a tax court, separate and apart from the Division of Taxation, independent tax court, and a gross revenue tax, and that was part of the report that was submitted to the Governor. That's thirty-some years ago, thirty-five years, a long time.

SI: What did they do with your report?

MD: Well, they did two things. The Legislature created a tax court, and it wasn't mine; this was the commission's recommendation. This was, really, my contribution to the report, which, overall, was the commission's report, recommending these things, recommending a lot of other things as well. [The] Legislature did create a tax court. I was hoping to be appointed a judge of the tax court, but, unfortunately, there were others that were more politically connected, better connected than I. As a matter-of-fact, I went, at one point, to meet with former Governor [Richard J.] Hughes, who, at that time, was the Chief Justice [of the New Jersey Supreme Court] and with whom I was quite friendly, because we worked together on the Rutgers Alumni Fund together. He was always the nominal chairman, because of his prestige, and he was very gracious about it. He said, "I'll see what I can do," he said, "but, from what I understand, the names are already in." So, that was that one, but a tax court was created and the judges were appointed and, separately, the Legislature enacted, and I had minimal hand in drafting [this], but it adopted a gross income tax, which I assume is, today, still in existence and probably not much changed from what it was when it was first enacted.

SI: In the Princeton area, you became involved with the Human Relations Council.

MD: That was in the Trenton area, county.

SI: How did you get involved in that? What would you do there?

MD: Don't really remember, other than perhaps attending meetings, but I have no recollection, whatever. It was parallel to the efforts of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, in which I was involved much more actively, and it was merely an effort by a community group to minimize, and, if possible, eliminate, any ethnic or religious bias.

SI: Your involvement with the Conference for Christians and Jews was prior to that.

MD: Both contemporaneous, yes, as I remember, both. I don't know how long the Human Relations Council lasted. I really don't recall.

SI: Was this during the Civil Rights era or was it at a different time?

MD: Don't know.

SI: Was it in the early 1960s, or the 1950s through the 1960s?

MD: It would not have been '50s, it would have to have been '60s, perhaps through the '70s. I don't recall.

SI: Do you recall any of your activities with the Conference for Christians and Jews?

MD: Well, that, we would have periodic meetings and our efforts were always directed to fundraising. … As a matter-of-fact, it's because it was directed to fundraising that the chapter in Trenton was ultimately, unilaterally, on the part of the executive director, and wrongly, in my opinion, … dissolved, cancelled. We didn't raise enough money for them and, anyhow, … what

we would do was to have an annual dinner honoring a black, a non-Jew and a Jew for their brotherhood efforts, and each honoree, prospective honoree, was expected to get out the troops, buy tickets, contribute, and we had very successful, I thought very successful, fundraising activities, and then, ultimately, it petered out, because our executive director felt we weren't worth his effort. He was a Hispanic by background, and I've never forgiven him. I think he felt perhaps we weren't doing enough for the Hispanic community, but that's my own speculation.

SI: In 1972, you were the recipient for the Brotherhood Award [of the National Conference of Christians and Jews].

MD: Whatever year it was, yes.

SI: What about your involvement with Jewish charities, like the Jewish Family Service? When did that begin and what stands out about your involvement?

MD: Jewish Family Service, I got involved in in 1960, when I left the firm in Princeton and joined two other lawyers in Trenton, one by the name of (Bernard Green?) and the other by the name of (Leon Robinson?), both older than I, and they were very much involved in the Jewish community. (Bernie Green?) had been responsible for founding the Children's; I've forgotten the name of the organization. It was a children's advisory group, had its office on West State Street in Trenton, and was also involved in the Jewish Family Service. Leon had been a past president of the Jewish Family Service, and they wanted me to become involved as well, and I did, and I became a board member. I think I later served as a treasurer. I'm still listed as a director *emeritus* and it was a counseling organization that helped people, without regard to race or color or creed or religion, with domestic or mental health problems. … Phyllis got involved a little bit with me, because one of the efforts of Jewish Family Service was to resettle, in Trenton, Russians who immigrated to this country who were of Jewish ethnic backgrounds, who had come here without anything, and she was chairman of the resettlement committee. … That necessitated finding a place for the people to live, depending upon what the family consisted of, getting furniture for them at the minimal price, getting kitchen utensils, getting the gentlemen a job, all those activities, and beyond the board meetings … and my possible service as treasurer, it wasn't that much. We had monthly meetings of an evening and we talked about various problems. We had an executive director who did the day-to-day administrative work, and one of the things that I had recommended more recently, more recently in terms of maybe 1980, was that the agency create a council of presidential advisors, forget what the exact name was, and the purpose was to encourage people to make a substantial capital contribution to a permanent fund of the agency, kind of an endowment fund, and [it] would be a group to which the president of the agency and/or the executive director would call when an emergency or crisis or a difficult question came up. I'm still a member of that, not very active, but, because Phyllis' involvement was significant, when she passed away, I discussed with the new executive director and, ultimately, made a capital gift to the agency to create the Phyllis P. Deitz Memorial Internship Scholarship Fund, the income from which pays the salary of a summer intern of a nearby college or a nearby resident who wants to get into social work. … That's been in existence now for maybe four years and it's proven its worth. It's worked out very well. Agency has moved from its offices on Academy Street in Trenton to offices in Princeton, used to be the Family Service of Trenton, now Greater Mercer County, broadened our horizons, and it's doing fairly well.

SI: Can you tell me about your involvement with Israel Bonds?

MD: That's another project. I don't know how I got involved with that. Somebody prevailed upon me to get involved. We had a committee that had periodic fundraising activities to sell Israel Bonds. The bonds would be issued by the State of Israel, would pay a rate of interest higher than the prevailing domestic rate for comparable securities, but it also was attractive to those who wanted to do something to support the State of Israel, and we had two major functions during each year. One was an appeal to each synagogue and temple in the area, on Yom Kippur, generally, by someone on behalf of the committee, to pitch Israel Bonds to the assembled congregation, and it was set for Yom Kippur because most every Jew who attends synagogue at all, even if he attends no other day, he'll attend on Yom Kippur. That's the Day of Atonement, which, according to tradition, is the day on which the book of life is sealed after the names are written from the new year, and most everybody is there because on that day is the memorial day for the departed and there's a special memorial ceremony that takes place in every synagogue. So, we have a "captured" audience and I, and everybody else who had the assignment, would go to a particular congregation. I would probably hit two or three on that day. I'd leave services and go to another congregation, and we would have arrangements made with the synagogue personnel to have purchase order blanks and an envelope, and whatever other solicitation material, in each prayer book, in every seat, and you make the pitch and hope that it would ring. The other big thing, we'd have an annual fundraising affair and these were very successful. We would bring in some big names, and, when I say big names, two years, we brought in Marvin Hamlisch. Marvin Hamlisch was a friend to one of the daughters of the executive director, which is how we got to Marvin Hamlisch, and he brought down with him, from New York, by limo, twelve of the *Chorus Line* [cast], to the War Memorial Building in Trenton, and they performed on stage. Then, we had a big dinner and, again, the pitch for sale of Israel Bonds, and I was general chairman for a good number of years, I don't remember how many, and it required a significant amount of time, but I got a lot of satisfaction out of it and it was a worthwhile endeavor.

SI: Both you and your wife received the Israel David Ben-Gurion Medal. Was that as a result of your Israel Bonds involvement?

MD: I believe so, yes, yes. I don't know who has the medal, the plaque. I think one of my daughters probably has it. It was in Trenton and, when we gave up the place in Trenton, one of the girls, I'm sure, took it.

SI: For a long time, you were also a member of the local Selective Service board and, eventually, became the chairman.

MD: Yes, yes.

SI: You were definitely there during part of the Vietnam War.

MD: Started before the Korean War.

SI: You started before the Korean War, okay.

MD: Yes. When the draft was activated, there was a vacancy on the board and the Colonel was given my name, along with others, as a potential board member, non-compensated. You know, you've got to get somebody who's willing to devote the time and not expect to get paid. … His assistant, who knew me personally, called me to ask me if I would accept, and I did, and it was very gratifying. We had some very interesting experiences with potential draftees who came in with all kinds of stories about medical problems and financial involvements, and so on, and we had to listen and, after the individual left, we had to make a decision, whether we would defer or not defer. … Then, when the chairmanship opened up, again, I was asked to take on that responsibility, which is some added work, administrative work, to handle. I don't recall what years they were, but I know it started [before the] Korean War and went on through the Vietnam War.

SI: Were you ever subject to any outside pressure in regards to anyone's case?

MD: Rarely. It was not unheard of. For awhile, my telephone at home was unlisted, for that very reason. Specific instances; I don't recall any specific instances. I'm sure that there were, but I don't recall any. I just didn't let it evolve into anything.

SI: How did you feel about the draft's role in the Vietnam War in particular, with so many people trying to evade the draft?

MD: Oh, I don't think they were trying to evade it. I think some had very legitimate reasons for exemption or deferment, but I think, all in all, certainly the feeling of the board was that we had a responsibility to provide a sufficient number of potential draftees. The law was pretty clear, who was obligated and who was not, and we just did our job. We had a black school principal, another attorney and I, and, trying to think who else there was on the board, another gentleman, but I don't remember what he did. There were five of us all together and we worked well together. We listened to one another and evaluated each other's respective positions and we generally had [agreement], rarely had a less than unanimous decision on any given case.

SI: I forgot to mention before, in relation to your work with the Conference of Christians and Jews, that was when you were named a Kentucky Colonel.

MD: Oh. [laughter]

SI: Would you like to explain that a little bit more?

MD: Yes. I got word one day, I don't recall now how it was, but, ultimately, I received a certificate entitled, "Commonwealth of Kentucky, Julian M. Carroll, Governor. To all to whom these presents shall come, greetings. Know ye that Honorable Morton Deitz, Trenton, New Jersey, is commissioned a Kentucky Colonel. I hereby confer this honor, with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities thereunto appertaining, in testimony whereof, etc., 18th December, 1987," and it's signed by the Governor.

SI: 1978.

MD: Is it '78? Oh, I'm sorry, '78, "87th day of the Commonwealth," yes, December 1978, thank you, and, apparently, the decision for this was a result of information that had been given to the Governor, that I was involved in all these various community activities, and so on. This is the way that Kentucky, the State of Kentucky, recognizes civic contributions. So, it's quite an honor. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: You were saying they have a chapter [of the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels].

MD: I think they have a chapter in Palm Beach, but I've never gone to a meeting. I just decided it wasn't worth my effort. What could I contribute at this stage of my life? and I just retained that framed certificate as a memento of days past.

SI: Is there anything else that stands out about your life that you think we should record right now? You have a very long CV here and I have picked through some things that I thought were of interest. You may have some more anecdotes about other things.

MD: I don't know, let me take a look, maybe I can find something.

SI: You were also involved in many accounting/CPA professional associations.

MD: Yes. I got my Certified Public Accountant's Certificate from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania [in] 1947. '44 to '47, it says IRS. … My title for the county bar responsibility, I was Chairman of the Insurance Committee. I was Secretary of the Federal Bar Association. One thing that I was involved in, that I'm reminded [of], I was appointed to serve on an advisory committee to the regional commissioner of Internal Revenue, whose office was in Philadelphia. … We would have monthly meetings with the regional commissioner and various of his staff people, and the we, the group, were practitioners like myself that represented taxpayers, in one way or another, and we would talk about common problems. This one's having a problem getting an answer to a ruling request, this one's got a problem he can't get resolved, and how do we get the stumbling blocks removed and make it easier for both the citizen, the taxpayer, as well as the practitioner? … Because [of] the contact, being on that committee, if I had a problem, I knew the person to call and I had the phone number, made it very, very worthwhile, plus, … I thought I was contributing something to the general well-being. Oh, that's it, ABA, Regional Lawyers Liaison Committee, Regional Commission of Internal Revenue, Mid-Atlantic Region. Don't even remember this; I remember Phi Delta Phi, [a legal fraternity], wow. Oh, I was a trustee of the Penn Alumni Club. Oh, Kidney Foundation, this is something I have to tell you about. When I finished law school and returned to Trenton to settle, [I] bought a house in the western end of the city. One of my very close friends, going way, way back, married to a woman from Trenton who was very friendly with my wife, because over the years that we [knew each other], he was an usher at our wedding and, when we lived in Cranbury, we would have periodic parties and invite them, among others, to our home. We kept up the relationship. They had two children, the younger one of which, at age one, was diagnosed with childhood nephrosis,

kidney disease, childhood kidney disease. While I was in law school, that family, along with others who had a child or grandchild with nephrosis, banded together to form [the] Kidney Foundation of Central New Jersey. The legal work to form the corporation was done *gratis* by an attorney friend and, when I graduated law school and settled in Trenton, worked in Princeton, I was asked if I would be involved, because the mortality rate of youngsters with childhood nephrosis was about ninety-nine percent, maybe one percent survived. … This being a close personal friend, they had a child who was suffering, child was being treated at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, and so on, Phyllis and I both agreed to become involved and I became not only a board member, but, ultimately, the treasurer. In 1970, the brother-in-law of the father of this child was diagnosed with adult kidney disease and was going, three, four times a week, to Philadelphia by car for dialysis, a little older than I, a member of the bar. … I said, "Gee, we really ought to do something about getting a dialysis unit closer." The only closer one was at Fitkin Memorial Hospital in Asbury [Park, New Jersey]. So, I went to talk to the president, the then president, of the Broad Street National Bank, where I had my banking account and who was a good friend, also was the chairman of the Board of Governors at Helene Fuld Medical Center, where I served as a volunteer. I worked in the pharmacy, particularly on days when non-Jews would not be able to work, Christmas, Easter, and so on. That was the day that I had to work, among others, which was fine. So, I went to talk to Mr. (Stein?) and told him about the problem. He knew Ben (Fore?), the adult who had to go [for] dialysis to Philadelphia, and we would take turns driving Ben to Philly, waiting while he was dialyzed, or we would come back and somebody else would go pick him up. I said, "Why don't we have one at Helene Fuld Hospital?" "We don't have the money." I said, "What does it take? We've got a Kidney Foundation. We'll raise money; tell me how much." We finally worked out an arrangement whereby we got one or two dialysis machines from a charity in North Jersey who made them available to us *gratis*, Helene Fuld set up the physical facility for the dialysis machines, and the Kidney Foundation of Central New Jersey guaranteed the salary of the visiting nephrologist who would be in attendance one day a week, and we guaranteed that the hospital would not lose money and we would make up any difference. Well, as it happened, it took off like gangbusters. There was such a need for dialysis. Today, the unit is, I think, twenty-seven machines at Helene Fuld and it's one of their biggest revenue producers, plus, it does a very valuable job for the community, but, over the years, after the establishment of the dialysis unit, our fundraising kind of receded and we were using the money primarily to support indigent patients who could not afford their medication and, perhaps, paying for transportation for a patient who needed dialysis and the like. … The people got tired, the board of trustees. … The children who survived got older, that [those] people lost their interest; those that died, the people lost their interest. I was left as treasurer and we had a urologist who was our nominal president of the foundation. We ultimately got a full-time nephrologist who's still the medical director. He's now the chief of the medical staff of Helene Fuld. He was our first full-time nephrologist. I had, accumulated, thirty-some thousand dollars that was just lying fallow. Helene Fuld Medical Center was taken over by an umbrella group called Capital Health System, which absorbed Helene Fuld and Mercer Medical Center. I made an arrangement with them, if they would take over the responsibility and operation of the foundation and carry out its responsibilities, we would turn over the thirty-five thousand dollars to them, which is what we did. They're in the process now of erecting a plaque, in the dialysis unit, in memory of Dr. Marvin Friedmann, who was our president, in my honor, for serving to the establishment of the dialysis unit, and to Dr. Michael Somerstein, who was the first and remaining, to today, the full-time nephrologist, putting up a plaque, as, you

know, contribution from [the] Kidney Foundation of Central New Jersey. So, that's [the] Kidney Foundation, I remember. That's worth telling, I think.

SI: Yes.

MD: And I guess, at the time that I went to see (Ray Stein?) about the dialysis unit, I was already a member of the board at Helen Fuld. So, I had a little leverage with him. Oh, we formed a New Jersey Association of Attorney/CPAs. I was a member of the American Association of Attorney/CPAs and a board member, and we decided, since there were, at that time, I forget when it was, more than just a handful of fellows who were both CPAs as well as lawyers, we formed a New Jersey Association of Attorney/CPAs, and I was elected the first president, which I had served [as] for several years. … Boy, I'm looking at this, I'm really recalling. I was a member of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation, '72 Brotherhood Award, Fundraising Chairman, Mercer County National Jewish Hospital and Research Center, Denver. It's now called a different name; the National Asthma Center? [Editor's Note: Mr. Deitz leaves to retrieve a document.] It's now called National Jewish Health, National Jewish Medical and Research Center. That's 2006, but they changed their name. That's their annual report. So, I was fundraising honcho for quite a few years for that. They're the number one go-to hospital for asthma treatment in the United States.

SI: Where is the hospital located?

MD: Denver. That's enough. [laughter]

SI: Thank you very much for all of your time and for spending the day with me. I appreciate it, and thank you for your service.

MD: Thank you. …

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 12/22/09
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 1/19/10
Approved for release by Morton Deitz 5/8/2015