RUTGERS-THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH BARTON H. KLION

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

SPONSORED BY THE RUTGERS COLLEGE CLASS OF 1942

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Mr. Barton H. Klion on December 20, 1994 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick with Kurt Piehler

Margret Thompson: and Margret Thompson.

KP: And I guess I'd like to start by asking you about your parents, and your father and your mother.

Barton Klion: Alright.

KP: You father was born in New York City.

BK: My father was born in New York City, 1897.

KP: And was his family from Russia?

BK: His family was from Russia...I believe my grandfather and grandmother came here in 1890 or 1891.

KP: Do you have any recollection of your grandparents?

BK: Of my father's parents I do. ... My grandmother died in, I believe in 1948, and my grandfather died in the late '50s. And my mother's parents died long before I was born.

KP: Your father started in the garment industry.

BK: Well my father started in the garment industry on the Lower East Side, and in fact, he either he lived on Rutgers Street. Rutgers Street is still on the Lower East Side. And he was in the garment industry, and he went to ... join the Navy in 1918.

KP: Did he join or was he drafted?

BK: I don't know.

KP: You don't know.

BK: I don't know.

KP: What did he say about his Navy experiences?

BK: My father didn't say anything to me about it. He may have said something to my brother. My brother ... was five years older chronologically, but was way ahead of me academically and ... he entered Rutgers when he was fifteen. It was 1938. He was born in 1923 so that's...

KP: So he was one of the youngest people in the class.

BK: He was most likely the youngest person in the class of '42. Some would say he was one of the most brilliant people in the class of '42. The only recollection I have is that I do have a picture of my father in his Navy uniform in 1918 which I have in my house. And I carry on my key ring which is distinct because nobody else I knew ever had one of these. ... That was my father's dogtag from the First World War.

KP: Samuel Klion

BK: And on the back is his thumbprint.

KP: Yes.

BK: And my brother and I had this and we shared this. We'd pass it back and forth until he died, until my brother died. He was stationed at [the] Brooklyn Navy Yard. I think he was in the Quartermaster Corps of the Navy, and he got married in 1922. My brother was born in 1923. I was born in 1928. ... He travelled a lot. He was a traveling salesman. ... We have run across recently, since my brother passed away my sister-in-law and I have opened up lots ... of trunks [that were my mother's]. ... My mother saved a lot of letters. ... I may wander a little bit.

KP: That's fine.

BK: Because in this ... and I can get [th]em for you, if you want to look at them, obviously they have to be returned. In this trunk ... are all the letters that my brother wrote to primarily to my mother, which I found interesting because I always thought my brother was always closer to my father. But to my mother, during the Second World War in his travels from camp to camp, to the Philippines and then to Japan. And there's some very interesting things there. There's some very interesting things that as well as I thought I knew my brother and I always idolized my brother, I found almost a complete different side of him.

KP: Which side of him did you find?

BK: My brother--again you know people would say I have him on a pedestal. I do have him on a pedestal. He was a father image to me. All the problems if they would get too rough he would get me out of them and things like that. But he was ... somewhat stern and not as outgoing as I am, but he was and everybody thought I was more sentimental. The letters that he wrote to my

mother were highly sentimental, and very descriptive of somebody ... who served in the war, and it's a wealth of information as to what ... took place at the various forts and camps in the United States. And he had hurt himself. ... He had ruptured a disc in training, which kept him out of the invasion of Africa, where a lot of his classmates and Rutgers people had gone. But if you're interested in a lot of them I'm sure my sister-in-law would give them to me. And I could bring them down here or...

KP: Yeah if we could copy them that would...

BK: Yeah, I'll ask her that, in fact if you have a piece of paper I'll take some notes. ... I'll ask her whether or not ... she has a problem with it, but I don't think she would because she's interested in these types of programs. But my father did travel a lot, and...

KP: Where would he travel to?

BK: Chicago by train in those days, and it was almost like a Death of a Salesman type of story. You'd leave New York on Monday and you come back maybe two weeks later because they didn't fly. In those days you took the train and the steam locomotive, and that kind of business. Somewhere in, I guess during the Depression, that business ... was completely wiped out pretty much. And in the late '30s he went into the real estate business where my grandfather, actually with my grandfather, it was his father, and they owned apartment buildings in the Bronx. And a few in Manhattan and he did that until he died ... the night of the Cuban Crisis. It was 1962, I guess it was October 1962.

KP: Do you think the Cuban missile crisis had anything to do with it, or was it just the...

BK: Oh no, no. ... My father was a very bad asthmatic and he just died of an asthmatic attack, and it just happened to be the night ... Kennedy was on TV, ... and he died that following early morning.

KP: How did the Depression affect your family?

BK: That's another question which is very difficult for me being born in 1928, I mean I only remember that my family I considered wealthy. We lived in a nice apartment house on ... Upper West End Avenue in Manhattan. I went to private school. I went to Horace Mann in 1940. ... [In] 1940 the Depression wasn't completely over yet. It really didn't get over until the war ... I remember going up to in the summertime, going up to a place called Tannersville, New York, which is up in the Catskills. Though I've read letters again, ... all these letters that [have] surfaced. We never had the letters, my brother and I just never got around to doing anything about it, we just, we bounced it back from my house to his house, and when he died this past April, my sister-in-law, it ended up at her house, so she had to start doing something about it, and so we've been going through and keeping what we want. I've taken what I want, such as pictures

of my father and things like that. But my father wrote a letter. I was born in '28. I guess around 1932 maybe--the Depression started when 1929--maybe it was 1930, I was two years old. He wrote a letter to my mother which was also surprising about the letters because my father was more sentimental then I remember him being. So you know I can't explain why all--but when you see it in writing you know it to be true as opposed to what you may remember. And he sent something on New Year's. ... I think he wrote a poem, and I never knew my father would writes poems. He said something about the fact that its been a hard year and things could be better, but on the other side of the coin, my mother's mother and father both died somewhere in the middle '20s. I think one died in '25, and the other died in '23 or '24. My mother was the eldest of three children. She had a brother, who, I believe, was five years younger, and a sister who I believe was almost, maybe eight or nine or ten years younger than my mother. When both her parents died, my father ended up, and this was during the Depression, the beginning of the Depression and through, and they lived at 808 West End Avenue, 99th Street, which was a fine upper-middle class apartment house. And my father had two children, but he also had a sister-in-law and a brother-in-law and the brother-in-law ... [was] going to NYU, and [there was] a whole menagerie of animals in the house. So somehow there was money, ... now when my father writes things weren't going good, that may be relative to what ...

KP: He hoped.

BK: ... he had hoped or he had started doing. But certainly [he was] a lot better than, I mean there was no such thing as bread lines [for him], or selling apples or selling off this or that. So I only remember, I have no recollection of the Depression, I have no recollection of any hardships or being told that I couldn't do anything. I was kind of young so there wasn't much I could do, but I said in 1940 I was able to go to Horace Mann which was a prestigious private school, so there had to be money. My brother ... graduated from De Witt Clinton which was a public school, but in those days De Witt Clinton was the premiere public school of New York City. He graduated in, I believe 1936, which would have made him thirteen years of age, and he couldn't get into college because he was too young, not that he wasn't bright enough ... and then went to private school, Riverdale Country Day school, that was in 1936, so for another year, and then he went to Rutgers in 1938. So if he was able to go to a private school in 1938 and I was able to go to a private high school in 1940, and he went to one semester or two semesters at a private high school in New York City, everything in my opinion became relative to what you may want. But obviously there was money because if there was no money he couldn't have, no matter how bright he was, have gone to there, and he certainly wouldn't have gone to Rutgers. He could've gone to City College which in those days was a fine school ...

KP: And free.

BK: ...and was free. ... I don't have any recollection of any great hardships, and we both went to summer camp.

KP: Where would you go?

BK: ... The first camp we went to was up near a place called Kinderhook, which is near Tannersville in the Catskills. Then we went to a very fine camp up in Maine called Cedarcrest, and then we went to a camp in New Hampshire called Sagamore.

KP: Were these Jewish camps?

BK: I would say they were primarily Jewish camps, because as I tell my wife, that's primarily a Jewish syndrome of the New York area. I would say I don't think they were 100 percent Jewish, but I would say they were primarily all Jewish camps.

KP: Your brother went to school at a very early age. Why did he pick Rutgers? How did that occur?

BK: That's a question that's been asked of me continuously, and there were only two reasons that I could ever figure out. One he wanted to go. Going back to the Depression, he had also taken a ... a bicycle trip in Europe before he went to college, so I can't believe my parents had suffered of any great things. .... He went to Rutgers, I guess for three reasons. One it was a small school. I think that maybe the total enrollment in 1938, you may know better than I do, I'd say 1200, 1500. I don't think much more than that. I think each class had maybe 400 kids in it, 400 students in it. It was an all-male school, so it was small. It was away from home which was important, but it wasn't so far away from home that you couldn't get back. In those days there was no Jersey Turnpike, and students didn't have cars, so you got a train out of New Brunswick, ... and an hour later you were in Penn Station, New York. ... The third reason was that a friend of his, was a fraternity brother from the class of '41, went to Rutgers, so ... he knew of the school. Those are the only three reason, because I know that--in fact, when he died, and I gave the eulogy at ... the memorial service, I quoted, it was written ... up in one of his reviews, as vice chairman of the board of Peat Marwick Mitchell and head of ... management service--that he had applied to Columbia, and was turned down at Columbia, because the Dean of Admissions said he was too young. Now that was, I think, prior to his going to ... Riverdale. Now after that I just don't know. But the end of that story was, that when he graduated from Rutgers, he was accepted to Yale, Harvard, and Columbia law school. ... The person at Columbia who interviewed him and accepted him was the same person who had turned him down and when my brother reminded him of that, he said, "I would've done the same thing all over again regardless of how bright you were." ... But, ... [these] are the only three reasons that ... I can believe [in or why] he came to Rutgers. I came to Rutgers because of him. That's a simple question.

MT: You said he was a father figure to you, did you miss him when he left?

BK: Yes I missed him greatly. I have no recollection if he ever wrote me letters or not, because I never saved anything. It came in and came out. ... We had always shared a room together at

home, and we shared the room together when he came out of the army. Again in those days you more of less lived at home until you got married. For one thing it was a hell of a lot cheaper, and two it was ... just the tradition of the time, I guess, whatever. ... I was visiting my mother's brother who was my favorite uncle in California in the summer of ... 1944, and that was when my brother ... was sent over to the Philippines and he left from California obviously. I think part of the trip was because I knew he was going to be over there. ... I knew that. ... I was very much moved, you know, concerned about the fact. I cried when he left.

KP: You went to a public elementary school and then to a private school. What were the differences between the two schools? Did you notice any?

BK: Yes. ...I went to the local public schools you went to in those days. There were no buses. You lived in the neighborhood. You went to that elementary school and you went to that junior high school and that was it. ... In those days everything was pretty strict. ... Your teacher walked in, you didn't open your mouth up because if you did, you'd get clobbered. And I do remember, my French teacher, who to me was the biggest woman in the world, her name was, and I still remember her name, it was Miss Blankenstein and she was a terror. You opened your mouth in French class and you got rapped in the knuckles, and this was public school, ... not parochial. This was a public school. You get rapped in your knuckles with a ruler, and or get hit in the head with an eraser, and if you go home and tell your parents about it, after they finished the job, they'd say go back and apologize to your teacher for being--there was discipline. Everybody didn't get along, ... but you ... were disciplined people. ... While you went to a neighborhood school, therefore you ... tended to have all your neighbors as your classmates. In New York City, neighborhoods even in those days ... [were] pretty mixed and while that part of the ... city ... had a heavy population of Jewish people, there were Irish, and there were Italians, and there were blacks, so there was a mixture. And I always thought, you know, I liked that. ...

I went to Horace Mann and ... I graduated '44, with a very famous class. There are people in our class who you all know. Tony Lewis, Anthony Lewis of the New York Times, Frederick Berman of the City of New York Courts, I think he was Chief Judge one time. And the most infamous person, depending on what you feel, was Roy Cohn. This was all in one class. But the problem that I found with that school--people graduated from that school and you get a super education, no question about that, you can't beat the education. But you are going to a school that is 99 percent upper, then, its not so much today, but then it was 99 percent upper-middle class Jewish population, and I didn't like that. ... One I didn't feel comfortable about it. My other problem I had in high school was that I was young, not as young as my brother, but I was sixteen when I graduated. That mainly being because I went to public schools, and in public schools in New York in those days, ... you could skip [grades], and they had what they called rapid advanced classes where you could take the Seventh and Eighth grades, that two year period in one year, so ... that would eliminate one year. And then you could skip one year, or skip a half a year, and you ended up, instead of ending up at eighteen, you ended up at sixteen. But in addition to that if I was sixteen chronologically, I'd look like I was twelve. And that was a problem. It was a

problem socially, and it was a problem until I got to Rutgers. And at Rutgers I was very active, and I guess I just matured quicker. ... My high school days I enjoyed them, but they weren't the best years of my life. The best years of my life school wise were down here [at Rutgers].

... My wife went to Fieldston and when we got married, I insisted to move to the suburbs because I would not send my children, this was already in the '60s. I wouldn't send my children to New York schools any longer. Twenty years before that they were the finest schools you could find in the United States, and there are still schools in New York City which are among the best. They have two or three public schools, specialty schools, music, some science schools. But I wouldn't send them to public school in New York and I wouldn't send them to private school because I didn't like private schools.

KP: So you believed in a good public school.

BK: ... I believed it then, and I certainly believe it today, that a good public school system is ... [the place to get] a better education. Maybe not academically, ... but you're more rounded.

KP: Socially you mentioned that you looked younger than you really were. How do you think that affected your social interactions?

BK: ... I had little or no social activities in high school. I know I went to parties. Again there was a much different atmosphere. You went to parties, not necessarily dating parties, but you went to mixed parties. Much more supervised than I even remember my kids being supervised. But I don't, you know, if you had a date you went to a movie, but just as many times you went to a movie with four guys and three gals, or five gals and three guys. ... I did that, and I had friends. I certainly had friends there. I was fairly athletic but I wasn't, the social life was not my ... big part. It wasn't until I got down here, by that time. We'll come to that later on, but you know I was older. At Rutgers my class had so many people that were not my class, but were older than my brother was. But we'll come to that. ... But I didn't have much of a social life in high school.

KP: Your mother, you mentioned she recently passed away.

BK: My mother recently passed away in 1990.

KP: And your mother was born in Poland.

BK: Well that's an interesting story. I put it down as Poland, but ask me that question five years ago and I would've said she was born in New York. And we always thought she was born in New York. We know that her parents came from Poland, but we didn't know when they came from Poland. And the reason we found out where my mother was born is my brother had been appointed an advisor to the Department of the Navy, and they did a security check on him, and

when you do a security check, they check your immediate family, your blood relatives, your brother, myself, and besides his own family, ... our mother. And he came up to me one day, and he said, "Where do you think Mom was born?" And I said, "I don't know, born New York. What kind of stupid question to ask me." He says, "No, she wasn't born in New York." ... "Where was she born?" "In Poland." "How do you know she was born in Poland?" So he told me the story. She was apparently born in Poland because the F.B.I. made a security check and found out she was born in Poland. We have no record of it, I have no record, ... no birth certificates. I have a birth certificate for my father. I have my father's discharge papers. I have his death certificate. I have my mother's death certificate, but I have no papers of my mother's birth. So we always thought she was born in New York, but apparently she was born in Poland. She never mentioned it. We were going to tease her about it when we found out, but she was already getting old and [a] little crotchety about certain things, ... so my wife said best don't start up with your mother and tell her she's not an American citizen because she's not going to be happy with that one.

MT: Did your parents encourage you and your brother to rapidly accelerate through high school?

KP: That was a question. My mother ... was the main driving force in our cultural education for sure. My father, I mentioned earlier, did a lot of traveling, and my father did not go to college. I can't answer whether my mother went to college, I don't know. I know my uncle, her brother went to NYU, and her younger sister went to an all girl's school down in Virginia. ... I don't know whether my mother ever went to college. I would doubt it, because she got married I believe at age eighteen, and she ended up having to take care of her brother, sister and the rest of the family. And my mother was very brilliant. She should've lived maybe two generations, maybe this generation because she would have been [a] successful entrepreneur or businessperson. Brilliant mind. But she did all the education part, and when I would question it. "How could you let my brother get out of high school at thirteen?" She said, "What would I do with him? He knew everything, whatever he studied. ... He knew French when he was three years old, and ... he did mathematical problems at some early age, so that, you know, what was I to do with him?" That was pretty much the answer to the question.

In my case, it was more of a question that most of the people that went ... into public schools in New York, if you had any kind of home education, you know, where you start reading to your kids when they're two or three years old or whatever, pretty much they're going to go through school and get out at sixteen. You could actually in those days you could go to a high school called Townsend Harris, and that ... high school you got out in three years, so ... my brother could have gotten out at age twelve because he could have gone to Townsend Harris, and that was the craziness already. ... But he was an exception, I was more of the rule. But yeah, my mother was the one who ... was the driving force in that part of it.

KP: Did you find, when you were in elementary school, that a lot of your peers didn't have that sort of family background where parents were reading to them?

BK: No, most of my friends in ... elementary school and in junior high school came from pretty much the same background that I did, and depending on when their birthday happened to hit, got out of high school either when they were sixteen, or just seventeen. There were a few people that I knew that got out of high school at eighteen. Because of the way schools were set up, ... New York City encouraged you to get into ... [rapid advancement]. If you were not in the rapid classes, the seventh or eighth grade, you were ... looked at as maybe not the brightest guy around. So it was encouraged by the school system.

KP: You mentioned on your survey that your mother was very active in charitable organizations. What were her range of activities?

BK: ... During the war, she worked for the Red Cross, collected clothing for the soldiers, all kinds of things like that. After the war, she got involved in camping, and founded a camp in upper Westchester or lower Putnam county up in New York, for underpriviledged children, where they would contribute whatever they could, maybe five dollars a week, and she was the driving force in getting this camp started. And eventually the camp was turned over to the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, which is an umbrella organization in New York. Then she got active, and it was always a joke, I made a joke out of it, because I'm very active in Rutgers alumni affairs, class correspondent. I'm an officer in my class, whatever. And my brother was not as active in the school as I was, after graduation. ... We both contributed to the [Rutgers] fund. She got active in Brandeis. ... Brandeis has an organization which I've told many people at Rutgers they should learn how to do. They have the Brandeis women's clubs all over the United States, and if you want to see a force to raise money, they raise money! And she was very active in Brandeis in New York. ... They had book fairs. They had ... thrift shops, and till the day she died, when she died .. the New York branch honored her with some kind of ... memorial program, and some dedication at Brandeis library in her honor, and it got to a point that any time there was a Mother's Day or any small holiday, we would just automatically send in ten or twenty dollars to the Brandeis book fair and they'd come back with a little book with a bookmark in it, and if you gave more, you know they have different levels. And the Brandeis Library which is one of the fine libraries in the United States, part is due to the amount of monies that the women's clubs of Brandeis raise, and most of them never went to Brandeis.

KP: Why do you think your mother became so intrigued with Brandeis? Was it the Jewish connection?

BK: ... I think that was part of it, I think some people she knew were involved in it, but I think it was a combination of both.

KP: Was your mother active in any synagogue or temple?

BK: We were members, ... part of a ... group called the Reconstructionist, which was a kind of off shoot of conservatism, and in the ... '30s and '40s, that would have been considered almost

radical. It wasn't radicals by today's standards. ... The founding person, was a man named Mordechai Kaplan, who was written up in 1950 as one of the foremost Jewish philosophers, one of foremost philosophers of the first 50 years of the 20th century. ... Brilliant, brilliant individual, kind of reminded me of Moses, because at the pulpit, he had a very clipped white beard and his shawl was very large, and he would kind of go over there. His sermons, you had to be a graduate student to understand his sermons because he just talked about philosophical things. I wouldn't say Judaism, but philosophical things that were so deep that I mean these weren't sermons, these were lectures. Some of them went on for ... a long time. ... She was one of the first families in the place. ... She went to service, but I don't believe she was overly active.

KP: How did your family become interested in the Reconstructionist movement?

BK: My mother was. Again that was part of her intellectual drive. My father came from an Orthodox family. My grandfather certainly was from the old school, and my father through my mother, went from Orthodox to ... Conservative, and Reconstructionist. ... All that type of educational background from my family was through my mother.

KP: Your mother's interest in starting a camp for underpriviledged children, where do you think that came from? What sparked that?

BK: I think ... she was always charitably minded, and I don't know exactly how the camp started, or why it started, other than she was always interested in children, and always interested in helping people less fortunate. And she also taught. ... She later on, I guess, in the '70s, she was teaching. She got a hold of a Korean student, ... a young Korean girl, and helped her in English, that was the kind of things she did.

KP: Your mother's role in setting up the camp, was she chairwomen of a committee or did she ...

BK: She gathered around people, a lot of them from Federation, some of them were friends, and just put it together. And then she got herself a camp director, I can't remember her name, I remember what she looked like, who was on staff the whole time and this camp director would hire the people and set the place up. I'm sure my father was instrumental in finding a location. ... In fact, if I recall now after I got out of the service, ... from my mother's pushing a little bit, formed a young group, that helped raise money for the camp. ... [We were] Young Benefactors, who were just all my friends from college or from ... New York, and we'd ... hold dances, we'd go to ... theater, have a theater party, or maybe have a barbecue, ... and we'd charge, I don't know, I think ten dollars, of which eight dollars went to the camp, and two dollars went for expenses.

KP: So your mother had a lot of entrepreneurial experience?

BK: My mother I said if she had lived, if she was born 40 years later, I think she could've gone any place she wanted to go. Very, very bright, very strong willed, and I think she could have done anything she ever wanted to do.

KP: Did she ever express regret that she didn't live in a different era?

BK: Yes, yes. My mother had a very complex life. ... She idolized her father. Her father was on a pedestal, not to close to her mother, not to close to her youngest sister, ... my mother [thought she] was a pain in the neck, close to her brother. ... I don't think she favored either one of us. She did a tremendous job. ... She was very complex, and if she didn't like you, you knew about it for 60 years. She didn't like one of my aunts, and until the day she died we would ... say that's enough already. She didn't like ... my father's mother, you know enough already, stop it. But she did a fantastic job in I would say bringing me up, because I never had any problems with my brother's obviously superior scholastic abilities and intelligence.

KP: You could have been very easily intimidated.

BK: That's right, but I wasn't. ... I can't put my ... finger on anything, other than we had a very normal childhood. We played ball in the park, and got to my ... scraps and everything else. Always had my brother on a pedestal. I would go to him with all my problems, but I'd get in trouble down at the University here, and he'd figure out ... how to get me out of it. But yet, you know, people have asked me and I said, "No, I have no problem." I was one of the few people who could tell him off, ... if we got into a fight, ... I would never [be] in awe of him ..., and I could go to him with any problem I had or with any questions I had, as could anyone in the family, but I may have had the closest relationship. ... So I sort of give my mother credit for that one.

She was much more influential in our upbringing than my father was. My father in the '30s travelled a lot. By the '40s he was already getting asthmatic, so it got to the point if there was any kind of stress he'd have an asthmatic attack, and in those days, asthma ... it's bad enough today, but it was worse in those days. But my mother and father chaperoned fraternity parties down here for my brother. My mother was very pretty and in fact the story goes that some of his fraternity brothers wanted to date her. ... Remember she was married at eighteen. She was only twenty years older than my brother, something like twenty, 22 years older than my brother, so my brother came here when he was fourteen, so she was 34, 35, 36 but under 40, and ... everybody in our family had a tendency to look young, so she was 36, 37 and she may have looked like she was 32, and I think she was a flirt to some degree. I think she relished the idea that some of his fraternity brothers would try to make a date with her, then she would kind of push him aside.

MT: Did you ever come to visit your brother here at college?

BK: On yeah. I was, quote, "The kid ... who would come down here." So I came down here a lot, and when I finally matriculated down here, most of the people knew who I was. I joined the fraternity because they all knew me. I knew them. It wasn't even a question that I would go to another fraternity. This was where you're to go. That was the end of the conversation. Yeah, I visited him a fair amount of times. I have no idea how many but ...

KP: So you had a good introduction to Rutgers even before you had gotten here.

BK: Oh yeah. I knew this was where I was going to go.

MT: It must have helped with your age.

BK: Well yeah, but getting now to when I came to Rutgers. ... If you were a civilian student here, you were either my age or you were 4-F, ... someone who was physically unable [to serve]. ... If you were 4-F, you were really bad off because they took mostly everybody that they could. So when I got down to Rutgers, there were two or three of us from New York, who were all within four or five months of each other in age.

KP: Before coming to Rutgers, one or two other questions. One was how did your father feel about Franklin Roosevelt, and your mother, about Franklin Roosevelt, and Fiorello LaGuardia?

BK: ... This is interesting. ... All the females of our family, that is my mother, my sister-in-law, my wife, are all more liberal than the males, my father, my brother, and myself. My mother for sure, idolized FDR. My sister-in-law was a great Stevenson supporter. My wife worked for McGovern and was on the rampart of the '60s. She worked very hard for McGovern. My sister-in-law, my brother's wife, I believe worked hard for Stevenson. I know she was a Stevenson's supporter. My mother was a FDR supporter, I ...

----------END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE----------

BK: I can't tell you whether my father voted for Hoover or not. I can't tell you whether he voted for in '36, Landon I guess it was. I'm pretty sure he voted for Willkie in 1940. My mother I'm sure voted for FDR all four terms. So my mother was more of a liberal than my father. My father was, I think, more conservative. I don't think any of them ... was a registered Republican or Democrat. My mother may have been a registered Democrat. My wife is surely a registered Democrat, and I believe my sister-in-law's a registered Democrat. But my brother, I don't know. My brother was certainly conservative and a Republican, whether he was a registered Republican, that I don't know. I'm independent, I never registered for any party.

KP: How did your family feel about the approach of war in the 1930s?

BK: I don't [know]. Again as war approached, I was born in '28, so '38, '33 for sure, ... Hitler coming to power in '33 meant absolutely nothing to me. [In] '38 I was ten years old, I just don't ... [any] recollection. I would only surmise that they were highly concerned because of the Jewish problem in Europe. ... There's no question in my mind about it. Although ... I don't remember conversations taking place at the dinner table about it. Certainly during the war, that was your duty. ... The war came and everyone did what they had to do. ... I don't recall ... any incidents where my mother or father did anything to try and keep my brother out of the war, not that they could've if they wanted to. He wouldn't permit it. But I don't recall, that was a duty. ... This was the war, ... and everybody goes and hopefully you come back alive, and if you don't, you don't. Certainly, ... in the '40s, ... there was the usual apprehension about ... Germans were winning at one time, the Japanese were winning at one time.

... Everybody did what they had to do. My mother collected all kind of things. There was gas rationing. My father had a car, and there was gas rationing. I was ... an air raid messenger. The things that we did ... are mind boggling, really even when you look back at it. I was a messenger, and my job was they'd have black out drills twice a week. ... My friends and I would get on bicycles. We could get out of the house and not do homework, and two, we were able to stay up late on any night we wanted to because we were part of the civil defense. And we'd drive up and down the streets. It was 82nd Street in those days delivering messages from one warden to another warden. Where were the wardens? They were on top of the roofs looking for German airplanes. Its mind boggling to think that ... we were concerned, this is pre-jets, ... and we were concerned of a plane flying, ... I don't know where they would come from, but they were up there looking with binoculars. I admit the people that patrolled the beaches out in Long Island--there was a couple of submarine sightings and there were indeed some agents ... that tried to get on, but other than that, that was it. But the hysteria was fantastic.

I'll just skip twenty years later. We bought our house in Hartsdale, New York in ... '60, '61, '62 somewhere in there. ... In the middle '60s, I'm already ... married and have two children, living in suburban New York. ... We were planning, not me, but the civic group, all the civic groups, were planning to take a lot ... with no house on it, and build an air raid shelter and stock it with food against possible Russian nuclear attack. And I went to one meeting and I said these people are crazy. I asked a question, "What if your neighbor didn't want to join, and the Russians are coming, and you want to put them in the shelter?" And she said "I'd kill 'em first." I looked at my friend and I said, "These people are crazy ... and I think they would do it." You're not going to join us, ... take out a gun and shoot them, they couldn't come in ... OUR SHELTER. This was only 1964 or '5 that's not so many years ago. ... 30 years ago is not a lifetime yet. ... 30 years ago that was the mentality that people had. So you could imagine in 1940 they're sitting on top of a roof looking for a German airplane, craziness. ... But that was all, I was an air raid messenger.

KP: Just to go back, I just can't resist, this effort to build an atomic bomb shelter, what ever happened to the plans?

BK: Enough people like myself said you people are all crazy, if they want to come and bomb us, they'll bomb us and you're going to die anyway ... so the heck with it. ... And then I went out and played my tennis or whatever I wanted to do and said ... I can't take this. ... And my wife for sure couldn't. ... There was all kinds of crazy people running around.

MT: I know you were young at the time, but do you remember Pearl Harbor?

BK: I remember Pearl Harbor. ... I remember exactly where I was. Certain things in life you remember. I know exactly where I was when Kennedy died. I know exactly where I was when Oswald got shot. I know exactly where I was on December 7th, exactly where I was. ... We had moved in 1938 from 99th Street and West End Avenue. We moved to ... 85th Street and West End Avenue, lived there one year, and then we moved over to a building called the Beresford in New York. It's on 81st, 82nd Street in Central Park across from the Museum, big building with three big towers on it. The entrance to my apartment was on 82nd Street, and I was just walking up and down the street, a couple of my friends, their fathers had taken them to the Polo Grounds to see the Giants, and they'd announced at the Giant game that ... Major General Bill Donovan who ended up being head of the ...

KP: OSS.

BK: OSS, ... he was at the game, and they wanted him to leave immediately, and they told all people in uniform to report to their units. I was walking up the street and I heard it on one of the car radios. I was on 82nd Street, just about a half a block from my house, from my apartment.

KP: And what was your reaction and of your parents and brother. Was he home at the time?

BK: No, that was December 7th, and he was down here. ... He had already--he was in advanced ROTC, and this was ... his senior year. He graduated in May of 1942, and this was December '41. He had another six months to go, but he was already in advanced ROTC. In those days, oh boy we're going ... to win this war, finally the Americans are going to go in there and that's going to make a big difference. ... There was no revisionist history in that day, and you didn't read the hundreds, you're a historian you know, about the Roosevelt plan, the December 7th thing, with he and Churchill in cahoots with it. ... In retrospect, we did a thing in this country which I don't think we're proud of, but in those days, I got to admit interning the Japanese that... We didn't call them Japanese in those days.

KP: Were you aware of the internments?

BK: ... Oh yeah, but that was pretty much [informed]. ... You know, you were suspicious of any Germans and things like that. ... You used nicknames that are not very complimentary ... under the best of circumstances, but ... its easy. Its like I tell when I get into arguments with ... my

children or their friends, is to whether or not we should have used the atom bomb. I said, "You're a lot smarter today, you're 40 years away from it, in 1944 or '45 you had a much different story." I said, "My brother ... most likely would have been killed if it wasn't for that." ... Looking at history in hindsight is a lot different than looking at history today. ... But what we said and did in '42 and '43 was how the country felt.

KP: You came to Rutgers in 1942, and you had some familiarity with the campus because you often visited you brother.

BK: I came in '44.

KP: You'd been here in the late '30s and early '40s and then you came in '44. What were the changes that you saw? It is a big question that we'll expand upon.

BK: When my brother was here, certainly from '38 through '41, it was a private school. I'll say 1500 students possibly. I may be off in that figure, but that figure sticks out in my mind, maybe 2000, 2500 students. But certainly ... a small, private school. First school to play football, and ... I knew who all the football players were and I followed that. ... Fraternity was a very important part of life down here, and ... it was ... not an Ivy League school, but an Ivy League type of atmosphere here. I knew some of the professors certainly by name, and when I came down here, physically the school was exactly the same, no changes physically.

But I came down here, I think it was sometime in September. In those days ... you went by quarters, four quarters to a year, ... theoretically you're never stopping. You didn't have to, you could go for three quarters and then take off a quarter which I did. But I was immediately in my fraternity. There weren't many fraternities at this school, a lot of them had closed down. I was Sigma Alpha Mu, SAMMY, and the house that my brother was in, the one that I remembered was 78 Easton Avenue, and I think there's a lot there now. I pass it on occasion, but I remember that house very well. We lost that house in the war because we couldn't financially keep it up, and we rented ... I think it was Phi Gamma Delta House on not this street, but the next street. This is Seminary Lane here, and the next one is Bishop. ... The house consisted of one or two people my age, a couple of people who were going to take a semester or two or a quarter or two and end up in the service, and there were some veterans that were coming back, being discharged because of physical problems. They were wounded. They got medical discharges, and I think one or two 4-F people, but not very large. And we kept the fraternity going pretty much with the traditions that existed before. You pledged and you had to do your pledge trip, couldn't go very far on a pledge trip, because there weren't any cars, but I remember hitch hiking from here down to the University of Pennsylvania where ... we had an ... [event]. We somehow managed to do it, so we did those things. In those days, ... see you don't have these things today. We would banish you if you did some things we did. We had paddling in those days. Which you certainly can't do today, or at least I believe you can't do it today. But we had our paddling and you had to do some

stupid things ... like recite some moronic thing you had to memorize, so we tried to keep it as much ... of it going as possible.

Now when we came here, this is all memories, so I think I may be right, I may not be 100 percent right. ... As I was telling you before, when I came down there was no great counseling of young freshman, and ... I came down here and left pretty much on my own, premed [and] liberal arts [were written] on the blackboard. ... I saw premed, and I said they look like nice subjects, so I took those. It lasted me about two or three quarters, no, it lasted me about a year and a half, and I busted out of that thing completely. The Dean of Men, was one of the great men--there were two great people at Rutgers, certainly that I thought of, and influenced me. One was the Dean of Men, Earl Reed, and he was Mr. Chips completely, you know out of the old English [school]. He knew every student while there weren't many, even when my brother was here. He knew every student and my brother would write letters, and say as long as Dean Silvers is watching out for the kid, you'll be alright because he won't let him get in too much trouble. And the other person, was Dr. Gross. Dr. Gross was my philosophy professor, he had to be a great man. He was the first person who gave me a one or an A in those days. I think ... we reversed the scoring. I think one was the highest, today four is the highest, I believe one was the highest, whatever it was, I got philosophy, and he ... understood genius. (laughs) He was a great man. I really missed him ... when he passed away. I really thought he did a great job in the University during the transition part.
But the school, we ran, we did what we had to do. ... I looked at that and I went to premed. Nobody said don't go to premed, so I went to premed.

... By that time the ASTRP the Army Specialized Training Reserve Program ... was getting on campus, I guess maybe a 1000, 1200. ... But I had nothing to do with them. In the morning I'd be going to classes and they'd be in their army uniforms and they'd be going to classes, then another group would come in, and those guys would go off to whatever ... war training they had to do, but we kept everything as normal as possible. We saw football games. We played ... always Lehigh and Lafayette, and a couple of other small schools. ... I think NYU still had a football team in those days, we played them. I think we played Columbia, ... but it was small time football. We did it in the stadium. The stadium was built in 1938, and the stadium was the same in 1944 as it was until ... last year. ... I'd come home maybe once every three or four weeks depending--the longer I stayed down here the less time I would go home, and I was already getting involved in going over to, in those days it was NJC, we called it the Coop. Like the ... chicken coop, and you'd walk across town. ... [The] two schools ran ... complete[ly] separate of each other. There was nothing across the river other than the stadium, and basically the University was Queens Campus, Voorhees, ... and Bishop Campus. And Bishop only had the Quadrangle, Hegeman Hall and those three or four buildings, and Ford Hall here, and Winants Hall, and I lived in the fraternity.

We tried to keep it, I don't know if we tried, we just did whatever we had to do. Jumping a little bit, I know that when we had V-E day, ... on V-E Day which I believe was on May 8th or 9th,

which comes in with my brother's birthday May 9th, we had a chemistry test, and the professor was a very young professor. He may have been in his 20s, ... and we said we don't want to have a test today, this is V-E Day. He says we're going to have a test today. And we had a test on V-E Day, a chemistry test, I remember that. ... I went the first three quarters of my freshman year. I never did the fourth quarter because I didn't have to, and that's the quarter I went out to California to visit ... my uncle and before my brother went overseas, I returned to the campus for what was actually the start of my sophomore year, but in reality it was the start of the fourth quarter. They didn't really go freshman, sophomore. they went by quarters. I don't know how many quarters you need to graduate, but that was in my fourth quarter.

And my birthday is in March, so I had just turned seventeen, I looked like I was twelve, and I was just starting my sophomore year, and I was elected president of the fraternity. I was elected president of the fraternity because there was nobody else around to be president of the fraternity, so here I am ... at age seventeen, president of the fraternity, and then we had this big tragedy. In early October, or sometime in October, fortunately for some, I think a friend of mine from another fraternity, who lived in New York, the Phi Ep, said "Come on, we're going to go home, and ... visit folks. I have a date in the city." So I'll get you a date, so I said, "Alright I have nothing better to do." So we went home, and at 4:00 in the morning I got a call the house had burnt down and there was a loss of lives in it. Now what happened was ... there was two of the older fraternity brothers I believe one of them, one I know was a 4-F. He had I believe a club foot, and the other guy ... was a returning veteran, had two girls from NJC over the house, and they were sleeping over the house. They were not sleeping with these guys. They were sleeping in a separate room, but that was completely, we didn't have house mothers in those days, but it was obviously against regulations. And when they went to sleep that night, they had forgotten to put a shield in front of the fireplace, and the furniture was heavy stuffed furniture, dusty. Anyway it caught fire and the whole house burnt down, and so I was president of a house that burnt down, and I was called up to see President Clothier, and President Clothier was not Dr. Gross. Dr. Gross would have sat down ... and said don't worry about it. Dr. Clothier, [a] great president, but very stern, ... remember he came out of the '20s and '30s, so he came to Rutgers [with] very white hair, very proper Princeton graduate, patriotic. So what do you want from me. And we were banned from campus. I didn't know what to do. The news travelled very fast, and my brother was in Manila, and he knew about it within 24 hours, on the Red Cross or the Army newspapers. He had a Red Cross telegram back to my family within 24 hours after it happened to know whether I was one of the people who had gotten killed.

KP: How many people had lost their lives?

BK: I believe three, but I'm not 100 percent sure anymore. ... I have a scrap book which I kept from my four years at Rutgers, anything involving me, any activities, and I was in many activities, and awards I got down here, and I'd have to look it up. It's in that scrap book, but its falling apart, because the scotch tape and everything is getting old.

KP: How long did the ban last on the fraternity?

BK: That was the early part of '45. By '46 ... people started coming back. When I graduated in '48 we had a new house, not a new house, we had rented a house, I think on Hardenburgh Street, one of the side streets up here. So I would say maybe a year or a year and a half. I think we petitioned the University after the veterans came back, after the war was over in '45, and there was a big influx of people starting in September of '45, no ... September of '46. ... I think at that time they realized ... these are returning veterans, why penalize them excetra, excetra. So we were able to get the house back again.

KP: But it sounds like you had a very tense experience with President Clothier.

BK: Yeah, it was. (laughs) Remember there was only about 200 ... civilian students down here, maybe 500, but I'd say 200, but I don't know for sure. So ... everybody knew everybody. Especially since ... I had a brother who had been down here just previous to me, so he knew me and Dean Silver for sure knew me, and so it was ... an experience.

KP: Many of the people I have interviewed from the class of 1942 have very distinct memories of Chapel. Did you continue to have chapel?

BK: Yes, chapel ... was compulsory. Rutgers still had [a] Dutch Reformed background, and you had to go to Chapel every Sunday, unless you had a letter from your parents saying that you couldn't go for religious reasons or ... because you were sick or something like that. ... It was held in Kirkpatrick Chapel, and again you could get the whole school in Kirkpatrick Chapel in those days. I remember going to them. I enjoyed them. I didn't find anything wrong with it. In fact we had some pretty interesting people. We had Norman Thomas would be a speaker. We'd get people from various religions, and political viewpoints, and ... I thought that was interesting. I remember Norman Thomas for sure being a speaker at Chapel. I think he may have been a minister. I'm not sure, but besides his political actives he may have been a minister, but in any case, ... he did lecture or give a sermon at Chapel. And my parents were not the type that would excuse me from it.

KP: Even though it was a very Christian service?

BK: ... They had no problem with that. They thought it was good exposure.

KP: I believe he had retired by the time you had come here, but do have any stories about Dean Metzger.

BK: Dean Metzger was here when I came.

KP: He was here.

BK: He preceded Dean Silver. Dean Metzger I didn't know that well. He scared me, but I didn't know him that well. He wasn't Dean Silver. Dean Silver was an unusual ... individual. I mean he was really out ... of a Mr. Chips story, ... where he knew every student in there, and you were always free to go into his office. ... He had an office in Queen's. I think it was the ground floor. He'd knock on the window, wave to you and that kind of business. He'd motion for you to come in and is everything okay, ... and he was just an ... unbelievable person. Dean Metzger, ... I know him, one because he was here when my brother was here. I don't know whether he was Dean of Men when I came to school. He may have been something else by this time. ... I don't know if we had a provost at that time, but he may have been some other title which I'm not sure of. But I remember he would scare me.

KP: You mentioned that the ASTP were very separate. Did you get to know any of them?

BK: Not to my knowledge, not to my knowledge.

KP: What about the classes they were in? Were they in any of your classes?

BK: I believe they were separate and again, I just don't remember ... them being in the class. They may have been, but I just don't remember them. ... Really they ... were in the military and while they were going to school they certainly had their formations and they ... had to get up at a certain time with reveille, and they had to have lights out by a certain time, and they ate as a group, and I ate in the fraternity house, so ... I don't have any recollection of any interplay ... between them and myself.

KP: What about at football games? Would they sit separately? Or Chapel? Were they required to go to Chapel?

BK: They were not required to go to chapel, and I don't remember them at football games.

MT: Was there any competition with NJC?

BK: I'm sure there was, but again I really there's almost ... no great recollection ... of any involvement with them. I was in the ROTC. The first two years was compulsory. The last two years was voluntary and I took all four. But even in the ROTC, I think we trained separately, with ... nothing to do with the ASTRP.

KP: You had mentioned that Mason Gross was one of your favorite professors and later became a Rutgers president. What do you remember best about him? Besides that he was the first to recognize your brilliance.

BK: (laughs) He was a great teacher. He ... [taught] a course that I think could have been very dry, and made it very interesting, philosophy. ... He was a very kind person, very friendly, yet he knew everybody. ... His door was open for you to go in and talk to him. I think he had a great understanding of the transition that the country was going through after the Second World War into the ... postwar period. ... I remember writing a letter ... to the board that was looking ... to pick a president, ... as an active alumnus. ... I recommended ... that they consider him. There were a lot of people who didn't think his tenure as president ... was as good as I thought. They said he may have been too liberal. ... But on the other hand, nobody got ... killed at Rutgers, ... [no] riots. ... I think anybody who was president in the '60s had a very difficult time, I don't care who you were. Everybody is going to be criticized, but I think he did as good a job of running this university as anybody could have done. The University was becoming more of a state university because it was done in stages, and I think he was the perfect person to be there at the time. He wasn't a fantastic fundraiser ... as later presidents are, which they have to be. But he knew the University. He came from the University. He knew the people. He had a love for the University. ... I think he was a graduate of Oxford and he had some of that English background. He was also a Mr. Chips type, later date than Dean Silvers, but of that mold. And I just thought he was an unusual human being.

KP: You've always been active in alumni affairs. How do you think your fellow alumni viewed Mason Gross at the time he was president?

BK: I had a lot of people who I knew who said that he should have, when they took over the Queen's Campus, ... should have called ... in the state troopers or whatever, but he solved the problem without anybody getting hurt. ... In history, and I happen to like history and I read a lot of history, I just find it interesting that you judge somebody in two ways. One when they ... actually did it, by the people that were there. And then you judge them twenty or 30 years later and its like you have two different people. ... In retrospect, the school continued, the school flourished, the school grew, expanded. It expanded across the river. ... We had no Kent State here. We had no Columbia University. ... They took over Queen's campus for ... a day, two days, but ... there was no barricading ...

KP: Morningside Heights.

BK: ... like I said the SDL or whatever. We didn't have any of that here. To that degree, I think all schools had something to some degree. But ... Columbia ... or Berkeley, they were major takeovers, Kent State you had the killings. Rutgers like any other school had problems. ... I thought he did a good job then. I wasn't in agreement with a lot of my friends that he should've used unusual force. ... Now I think ... for sure, I'm sure that I'm right.

KP: You were probably aware at the time of the Genovese controversy.

BK: Yeah, ... I didn't have him. I believe he had a brother. I had an economics teacher and I believe it was his brother.

KP: Oh really.

BK: I'm not sure now, did he came from Brooklyn College originally?

KP: I know Eugene Genovese came from Brooklyn College.

BK: ... Then I think he was at Rutgers when I started, I'm not 100 percent sure, but I frankly I forgot the whole case.

KP: In 1965 Eugene Genovese had made a comment wishing for a victory of the Viet Cong.

BK: Yeah. Those comments generally did not sit well with me. I wasn't happy with those comments, nor was I happy with Jane Fonda's ... actions. Because whether you liked the war, or didn't like the war, or you thought the war was good or bad, you were still sending American people there who were getting killed, and my own belief is that ... its a free country, its a democracy, and if you don't like something you work to do it through the democratic system, and I don't believe in violent overthrows of anything. Did the student problems and people like ... Genovese add to the war being stopped? Unquestionably yes. Did I agree with them, no. ... I felt if you ... didn't like Johnson, then vote Johnson out. ... Historically, people that everybody looked to, ... Johnson, each president just made it a little bigger. Because the first president was Eisenhower. He brought the first advisors ... into there when the French were in there. And then Kennedy sent ... special service people in there and it was on and on. But if you didn't like it, then vote it out. ... But I ... didn't believe it then, and I do not believe now in any kind of violent overthrows of any [kind]. ... I also believed that--it's easy for me to say because I was ... out of it already. But would I have gone to Canada? I believe ... you live here, take the good and you take the bad with it. If my son who was too young then, he was too young during the Vietnamese War. What would I have counseled him, I don't know the answer to the question.

KP: So that may have been a different issue?

BK: It may have been. But as I told him, I didn't have to answer that question because it never came about. It ... made that discussion very easy.

KP: You had known Mason Gross as a professor and then you had known him as an active alumnus. You have had experiences with other presidents, Clothier for example as a young fraternity president. What have you thought of the presidents of Rutgers in a general sense? You mentioned you thought one of the strengths of Mason Gross was that he was of Rutgers, he had worked through the system.

BK: ... The current president I don't know at all. Webster Jones, I didn't know, I knew him, but his tenure wasn't very long, but the one who I did know very well because he was a neighbor of mine, was Bloustein. Bloustein lived in my community, and a funny story that ... I've told and I have a letter somewhere about this, was that Bloustein ran, I live in Hartsdale, a part of the community called the Ardsley Union Free School District, and its a small school district, about 2000 kids in it. We have one high school, one middle school, one elementary school, and one primary school, so we don't have any busing because every kid goes to all the schools. We're a somewhat affluent area and we have a very good school system. Bloustein ran for the school board, along with a classmate of mine from here who came from New York. In fact he was the man who took me home the night of the fire, and they lost that election. ... A year later I ran for school board with that same man again, but Bloustein by this time had now gone on to, maybe two years later, had gone on to Bennington, and I lost the election.

... When I was driving home, .. I was on Route 4, ... going towards the Washington Bridge to go home, and I heard that Bloustein had been appointed President of Rutgers. So I wrote him a letter, words to the effect, I guess my next job in life will be president of a university since only people who get defeated for the Ardsley school board, apparently are not good enough for a local school board, but can be made presidents of major universities. To which he responded. So I knew him. I thought that he grew in the job very well. I didn't think he was highly effective at the beginning, but I think ... as his years went on, he became very effective, and was perfect for that ... time. He surprised me. I didn't think that from his background, Bennington, whatever, that he would have been a big sports supporter, and he was. So I think ... president for a university, the times dictate who you want, each time in the growth is different. So I certainly thought he became a great president, and Lawrence, ... I just don't have an opinion.

KP: That presidential term is very recent.

BK: I met him at some functions, but I think he, the university is so large now, and his responsibilities are not the same as they were for certainly for a Gross or a Clothier, people like that.

KP: Rutgers was small and was even smaller when you were initially here, for the civilians. How did the influx of the G.I. people change the dynamic?

BK: ... Starting in the fall of 1946, the war was over in May, no the war was over in September of '45 ... with V-J day. V-E day was May, so already there were people being discharged from the European theater, that didn't have to go to Japan and were coming here. And when V-J Day happened, ... they started this great influx of people. So all of the sudden you come back to campus ... in '46, and there's all these people coming back, among other things is that, class of '48, now ... I've got people in my class ... who should have been four or five years ahead of me in school. So they're four or five years ahead of me chronologically, plus the fact that I was a year or two young. So some of them were seven or eight years older. A lot of them knew who I was,

because they had been here when my brother was here. Not only in the fraternity, but people out of the fraternity. So I had a good rapport with a lot of people because they ... knew who I was, because when they were here originally when the school was so small, and my name is odd, that there was no question who I was. And I was active. I was business manager of the Targum. I was swimming manager of the team in the year we were undefeated. I was Cap and Skull, ... [in] Who's Who in American Colleges, and whatever, and some other activities. ... So I got to know a lot of people, and I was kind of, like the swimming team, which was one of the great swimming teams of Rutgers [history]. I was kind of adopted as the kid brother, ... These guys ... were middle 20s. I was seventeen or eighteen. Some of them had seen combat, middle 20s, ... they had lived a lifetime already.

----------END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE TWO----------

KP: Do you remember Dwight Eisenhower's commencement address in 1948?

BK: We wanted to make him an honorary member of the class of '48, and he was president then. ... He had us on the list of ... one of the appointments he may have kept for our ... fifth I guess it was. But it didn't work out. But, no I don't remember the ... address.

KP: Is there anything else about your Rutgers years that we may have forgotten to ask you about?

BK: No, we pretty much covered it. I mean I enjoyed Rutgers very much, obviously as I wouldn't be active today in it. I think I got a good education. The school is completely different today. Neither one of ... my children went to Rutgers, though they went to schools that were similar to Rutgers.

KP: Of the Rutgers you went to.

BK: Of the old Rutgers, more of the Rutgers of my brother's days. ... My son went to Union College in Schenectady which is a school of maybe 2,000, 3,000 students. ... My daughter went to St. Lawrence University which is up ... in the St. Lawrence River in ... Canton, New York. ... But they went to schools that were similar to what I went to. ... I got a good education, and made ... lots of lasting friends, whom I've stayed close to and worked with. ... But the school just made a lot of changes in the four years that I was here, so there weren't many people who started when I did, and ended in ... an actual four years. ... As I explained, there was a great big difference between the first two years and the last two years. But most of the people got here and just wanted to get on with their education, and they played their sports or did whatever.

KP: One of the things I have noticed when I interview people of the class of '42, is that there was a real division, and you might even have recognized some of this when you visited your brother.

There were the fraternities and then there were the dormitory people and then there were the commuters. Were those divisions present in '46, '47', '48?

BK: ... [To] some degree ... fraternities were strong, especially a lot of [the] returning veterans who belonged to fraternities, they went back to the fraternities. The fraternities were cliquish. In those days the fraternities were almost all based on ... ethnic background or religious background. There were some breaking of it by this time, but very, very slight.

KP: So there were still Jewish fraternities...

BK: A Jewish fraternity, they may have had one or two people who weren't Jewish or a Christian fraternity may have one or two people who weren't Christian. ... There were very few blacks on the campus, and there may have been a black in one of the fraternities. ... Remember this was all male then. There were no females on the campus, though the students at NJC could take courses down here. ... They were able to ... take a course or two at the University. ... The commuters were the commuters. The commuters were kind of always the outcasts, I mean because...

KP: Even in the G.I. Bill period?.

BK: Yeah, because basically if they were commuting, they weren't able to ... partake of most of the activities, so while they were at the classes, when classes were over, or you didn't have a class one day, you weren't able to get involved in the activities because you were always going home to wherever home was. So commuters were always, I mean there was no stigma about being a commuter because of how they chose to do it. They weren't involved in the University.

And the people in dorms, a couple of the fraternities actually lived in the dorms. The Phi Eps for example, their house eventually became just off of College Avenue, on Bishop I think, on the Gymnasium side, but they had a whole section of Ford Hall, ... facing Queen's, and they had a whole floor there. In fact I lived there for awhile and I lived in the Tau Delt house. Actually we didn't get our house back. You asked me about that before. We didn't actually have a house until I think my senior year, because in my junior year I lived, after the house burned down I lived for awhile in the Tau Delt house. That was during my sophomore year, and also a couple of months with the Phi Ep. I had friends there, and then I moved to the other end of Ford Hall ... where I stayed for my whole junior year. Then I went back to my house in my senior year. ... So the dormitories ... had a lot of fraternity people in them, but ... I didn't think there was any great division there.

... The fraternities pretty much ran the school, I'll put it that way. Most of the leaders on campus were fraternity people, not all of them, but most of them were. The Targum, there were three of us, two from the class of '49, Frank Long and Bill MacKenzie, they were Zeta Psi, I was SAMMY. That was Targum. Swimming team were mostly fraternity people, yeah ... most of the people were fraternity people that ran the school of the undergraduate part of it.

MT: Did being a part of the Targum cause you to follow the war more carefully, news wise?

BK: No, the Targum in those days, was I'll say a weekly, but it may have been less than that, I'm not sure. I really don't remember, but it certainly wasn't a daily, so it was either a weekly, or maybe twice a month. I'm not 100 percent sure of that. But some guys from the Class of '49 could tell you better than I would. If you ever speak to Bill MacKenzie, he'll tell you for sure because he was the editor. ... My responsibilities, were with business management: getting ads for the paper which I did through an ad agency in New York and some ... local people in town here. But the Targum was mainly ... the news of the University, now I'll take it back. I was business manager in my senior year, and I was advertising manager in my junior year, so I must have done something in my sophomore year, only because it was a progression, but I'm not sure how often it came out in the first two years. ... I believe there was a Targum, and the Targum building was right next to the Zeta Psi house, up on College Avenue. ... In four years, it was really not a great amount of involvement by the civilians in the war. In the first two years you went about your business, you got your education, and when the time came to go to the service, you went to the service. You belonged to a fraternity. You didn't belong to a fraternity. You went to a football game. You didn't go to a football game. But there wasn't, ... I don't recall [an] overriding thing like what are we going to do about ... the world situation. You studied history, and you studied whatever history you were studying. If it was Greek history, you studied Greek history. If it was philosophy, you studied comparative philosophy, mathematics, you did your mathematics, and you did your work that you were supposed to do. Surprisingly in retrospect, they kept everything pretty much as normal as possible. The last two years it was exciting, but there was nothing political about it. ... The war was over with ... the best you could get out of someone was someone, "Gee, ... didn't we meet in the Philippines?" ... But there was no thing about ... getting involved in the battle experiences, or lack thereof, or anything like that. You just went about your business and did what you had to do.

KP: Your first job with the Army, what was that experience like?

BK: That was an interesting experience. ... I was called to active duty in December of 1948. Actually I hadn't gotten accepted to [the] Graduate School of Business at Cornell. ... I didn't accept it because I knew I had to serve in the Army at sometime, ... so I went there and I went down. I was commissioned at second lieutenant, and I was twenty years old. ... I went down to Fort Dix, and most of the officers there were veterans. ... Here I was, most of the sergeants were veterans. Everybody was a veteran ... except the recruits. It was a recruit training center. And I had a knack of making friends pretty easily, especially with ... older people, I never had a problem with that. ... I remember ...I had to make a quick deal here because I knew I was in over my head. These guys ... most of them were crazy people. They had gone through the war. They had decided to make the Army a career for whatever reason, and they were great soldiers, but they were not very highly disciplined. I mean on their free time they were really wild and crazy. So I said look, "You guys know all the .... I'll give the lectures, [be]cause I know more book

work than you guys do having just gotten out of college, if you do the other part." So that was the deal I made with them. So I gave all the lectures, whatever the subject was, and they did ... most of the physical work.

And then I got transferred down. Actually I applied for and got transferred down to Fort Benning, Georgia, which was the infantry school for advanced training, and sometimes I wonder, the government in their infinite wisdom in 1949, made this decision, this was six months before the Korean War started, so they didn't realize there was going to be a Korean War, or they couldn't have made this decision. They were going to make the Army all volunteer, and there would be no more draft, and no more reserve officers. ... And I thought gee, maybe I'll stay in the Army. This wasn't such a bad deal. I was away from home. I was making $200 a month, and I was having a great time. The Army at that time was back to peacetime. You didn't work on Wednesday afternoons. You didn't work on Saturdays and Sundays. I had a lot of free time and Fort Benning, Georgia was a "country club."

KP: At least for officers?

BK: Oh yeah, for officers ... they have every facility you could possibly think of. And I was going to stay in, but my brother talked me out of it. He said, "Why? Who knows?" He said, "Unless you want to make a career out of it." I said, "No, maybe a couple more years in." He said, "Well, do what you want to do, but I think," anyway, I got out, and I had ... been a training officer down there. I remember it was the Third Division. We never trained very well, ... because this was a civilian peace-time Army, and the Third Division was the first division that went over to the Pusan Peninsula in Korea, and ... they got wiped out. Surprising no one in particular, ... because they were never trained right.

But I came back and I decided to stay in the reserves, so I became a member of the 77th Reserve Division, New York State. ... The government came out with another ruling which always surprised me: ... They would not take individual officers into Korea, only a unit. And here I was completely trained ... in infantry tactics. My commanding officer spoke Korean fluently. He had been in the occupation of Korea in 1945, and they couldn't take either one of us, because they didn't take the division. Which seemed like a complete waste of training and everything else. ... Other people that I knew, sons of friends of my family who had been in the Second World War, and had not joined a division, but maintained their commission, were called back into Korea, and that caused some eye rollings to as why I wasn't I being called in, which had nothing to do with me.

KP: You were ready to go.

BK: Yeah. I just happened ... to like the military, so I joined the reserves division. If I didn't like the military, I ... [would not] have joined the reserve division. ... You couldn't be taken as an

individual without taking the whole unit, which never made sense to me. So ... I never got called into the Korean War.

KP: How long did you stay in the reserves?

BK: I stayed in the reserves close to ten years. No, not even that much. I guess I stayed in the reserves--I got out of the Army in '49. I guess about five or six years, somewhere around '55, something like that.

KP: I want to go back because it is an important point, your recollection about the training for the Third Division, you mentioned that Fort Benning is a country club.

BK: It's a paratrooper school and a ranger school, but in 1948 and '49 for officers, it was a country club. They had...

KP: Tennis courts, golf courses...

BK: Oh yeah, ... it was the infantry training school and that made it a tough place to be, but you ... [have] free time. It was a country club.

KP: And you mentioned the training of the Third Division had definitely slackened off from war-time.

BK: Well, yeah all the training. That just happened to be the one I was associated with. One regiment of the 3rd Division was there, and they had a regiment in Fort Lewis, Washington, and they had a regiment over in ... Massachusetts, Fort Devens I guess it was. And they took that whole division and moved them together into Korea and I think they were the first division to get to land there, other than the troops that were there already. And they were put in the Pusan ... perimeter, and they were one of the groups that had tremendously high casualties, when the North Koreans came down.

KP: You had also mentioned that a lot of people you first encountered when you were in the Army had been veterans during World War II and that they were a bit wild. This conjures up stories of drunken reveries at night, of course, when they were off duty.

BK: Yeah, ... I lived with a hard group of guys, nice guys, and some of them I stayed friendly with for a long time. I lost track of them. ... But they were a ... hard group of people.

KP: In terms of drinking, did you think a lot of veterans drank because of their military experience, or did you have any sense that they drank more than non veterans? At the time, did you think about it?

BK: I don't know if they drank more. They certainly drank. I don't know if they drank more than they would have under ... I don't know if they drank more then they do today for example. I know we don't have, what one of the New York ... papers ... [called] binges or whatever you call them, that have written up in some of the magazines and papers. No they drank. They got sick, but it wasn't, I don't think it was an ... abnormal amount of drinking.

KP: What about smoking, did most of the returning veterans smoke?

BK: Everybody smoked. ... Drugs were nonexistent, ... at least I didn't know about them. I'm sure somebody had. But drugs, as such, were never even discussed. Marijuana, ... I don't think anybody even knew how to spell the word. But ... everybody smoked. That was very, very common, and that was going on all day long, and that was definite without any question.

KP: After going into the reserves, what was your first position?

BK: I was a sales trainee for a home furnishing company, and I've been in that industry ever since in one form or another. ... I became vice president of sales for a couple of companies, and then went into my own manufacturing rep business about five or six years ago.

KP: And you're still in that position?

BK: Yeah, I work out of my house now. And I have some salespeople who work for me. I don't work as hard as I used to obviously, but I still keep myself active.

KP: And I had seen in your alumni file that you were very active in community affairs also.
BK: I was active in Little League with my kids. I helped form the first girls softball league in our community before girls were in Little League. I was involved ... with United Funds, ran for the ... school board, and served on a lot of advisory committees. And then just generally pretty active.

KP: In terms of your activism in your community, did you think of yourself as exceptional, or did many people have that same sense of activity?

BK: I wouldn't say I'm exceptional. I think I did more than a lot of people did, but there were a lot of people who did more than I did. The Little League ... happened to be a lot of fun for us because there were ... about a dozen fathers. We all moved [to] the area around the same time. Our kids were all in the same class, and we kind of took Little League over from quote "the old timers," who ran Little League like they were trying to run the New York Yankees. We ran it to have fun, both for ourselves and for the kids. ... So we had a baseball league, and we had a flag football league, and we kind of ran it so everybody played, everybody had fun, so it was...

KP: The competitive edge wasn't as important.

BK: Well everybody wanted to win, ... but you joined, you had to play, and we weren't trying to be the New York Yankees or whatever. ... We never lost sight of the fact that these were eight year old kids, and not ... 22 year olds.

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

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