

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH HENRY H. LAWYER

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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This begins an interview with Mr. Henry H. Lawyer also known as "Hank" Lawyer on Monday, February 13, 1995 at Rutgers University, New Brunswick with Kurt Piehler and Robert Colandro.

KP: I guess I like to begin with a statement you made. You said you traced your family ancestry back. How far back did you go and on which side of the family?

HL: 1690 on my side of the family, or my father's side of the family I probably should say and about ... late 1700s on my mother's side of the family. Both pure English, all English, which my mother hated, but that's a whole separate story.

KP: You said on the pre-interview survey that you did not know your father well.

HL: Yeah, my parents were divorced when I was six years old and I saw my father between that and age eleven maybe, oh, at the most, eleven or twelve times ... and it wasn't a very pleasant relationship by any means. So, from around age eleven or twelve, I never saw my father.

KP: Do you know the cause for the breakup between your father and mother?

HL: Well, the biggest cause was his drinking. He was, in plain and simple language, a falling down drunk. ... When he was drunk he became very abusive and my mother didn't care for that and grabbed me and we took off. ... I guess about three or four years later she remarried and my stepfather was really the only father I knew in reality.

KP: What did your stepfather do?

HL: He was some kind of a technician with what was then Standard Oil in New Jersey, now Exxon.

KP: What were your mother's feelings toward Prohibition with this experience of her first husband being an alcoholic? How did she feel about the whole question of drinking?

HL: Oh, the whole question of drinking I can answer. She was totally against it. Absolutely, totally against it. The only time she ever got mad at me was if she saw me with a drink. I mean a drink. I don't mean if she saw me plastered, if she saw me with a drink, and she was very, very upset.

KP: Did she have any thoughts about the repeal of Prohibition in 1933? Did she ever talk about it?

HL: Well, first of all I was a little young for that to register with and I would say, just knowing my mother, she was very, very opposed, very much so.

KP: She thought Prohibition was a good idea?

HL: Oh, yes, yes.

KP: Your natural father came from Indiana.

HL: Lafayette, Indiana.

KP: Do you know how he ended up coming to Newark?

HL: The whole family, well, they were farmers, ... farmers and tradesmen of some kind. The whole family just for some reason that I really don't know, just emigrated back here. They originally came from Newark, went out to Indiana and then came back to Newark, Newark and Trenton.

KP: Your mother also hails from Newark. How long was she a domestic?

HL: I think that she came here with relatives as sort of a trainee domestic. ... How long she was here as a domestic, I really don't know.

KP: So, she was a domestic at some point in her life?

HL: Oh, yeah, yeah, very definitely.

KP: After your parents divorced, what did your mother do to support herself?

HL: Worked in a lot of factories in the Newark area of which I understand there were a zillion at the time, not [any] longer, no longer in business, but at the time there was a myriad of them.

KP: It must have been very rough in the 1930s for your mother to find work.

HL: Oh, it was, it was, I'm sure.

KP: What memories do you have of the 1930s?

HL: Actually, I don't remember things too clearly prior to, ... for some reason, 1932, when Roosevelt was elected, registers with me. Anything prior to that is sort of meaningless. That was about the time my mother was remarrying, or had remarried a couple of years earlier, and my stepfather was, and I don't say this for effect, but he should have been a saint. He was just a hell of a fine guy. Although he didn't have a big job, he had a steady job, which was very unusual during the Depression. I'm not one of those guys who can say, "I missed meals. I wore ragged clothes."

KP: So, by the time your mother had remarried your family life was fairly stable?

HL: Oh, yes! It was very, very good, very good. I can't complain at all about the growing up years. There wasn't a lot of money, but there was enough money. Pop got a new car every three

years, which was a sign of great affluence at that time. In 1937, they bought a place at the Jersey shore in Point Pleasant. Another thing that you didn't do in those days, but they did it. I would doubt that at any time in their lives my parents had a net worth of as much as ... ten thousand dollars would have been an awful lot. You know, we think of that as pocket change these days, but there was no great affluence, but there was adequate money. Thanks all to my stepfather.

KP: It sounds like you had a very good relationship with your stepfather.

HL: Excellent. Excellent. He had played semi-pro baseball at one time. As a consequence, ... I grew up as a sports nut, primarily motivated by him.

RC: Since you said that your situation was unusual during the Depression, in that you really didn't have the suffering that other people did, do you have memories of seeing that hardship around you?

HL: Oh, Lord, absolutely, absolutely. I have very, very clear distinct recollections of almost anything that happened after 1932, but don't ask me about anything before that, 'cause I don't remember it.

KP: What memories do you have after 1932 of some of the hardship?

HL: Well, as a matter-of-fact, my stepfather used to buy shoes for other kids in the neighborhood. I remember that quite clearly. I remember a kid named, Nelson Kelly, who wore rags. My father took him, we lived in Hillside, my father took him down to Elizabeth to, I think it was Natelson's Store, and outfitted the kid. You know, that sort of thing. I can definitely remember people panhandling, begging. As I said to a friend just over this past weekend, we were talking about something else, the current crime situation which everybody worries about, I came up and I said, "Yeah, it's a damn shame. During the Depression, nobody had anything, but there was very, very little crime, very little crime." As I said before, you could sleep out on the campus here when I was here and nobody would bother you. Now if you don't have a platoon of armed Marines with you, I guess it's dangerous to walk across the campus.

KP: You grew up in Hillside. Not everyone in your neighborhood was doing well during those years.

HL: No. No, Hillside was not an affluent town. ... I didn't even hear the expression until many years later, but it was an average middle class town. Nobody had a lot of money, but there wasn't too much in the way of financial problems then.

KP: But you did note that your stepfather would buy ...

HL: Oh, yes, yes. There was poverty and you saw it, but it wasn't a humungous problem like it might have been. Well, I haven't been to downtown New Brunswick in years and years, but when I was a student here, nobody would bother you anyplace in New Brunswick. Now I see

this crime story in the paper, that crime story in the paper. That's the difference that I am trying to make. It was a different world, a safer world, a more conscious world. Like my stepfather helping Nelson Kelly and his family out. That wasn't considered anything great. It was just something you did because the people needed it and you had a few more bucks than they did. Today they cut your throat for ten dollars.

RC: This was the time in the early Thirties where the so-called "public enemies number one" ...

HL: Bootleggers!

RC: Bootleggers and the bank robbers were really coming to the fore. There was almost a sense of folk heroism that some people looked upon them with. Were you aware of these figures?

HL: Yes. My mother's one and only brother, her one and only sibling, was a bootlegger. He was as far as my mother was concerned, he was the black sheep of the family, but as far as other members of the family were concerned, he was a very well-to-do guy, not just middle class, but sort of loaded. I don't know if you guys have ever heard of a car called a Pierce Arrow, but it was a very, very expensive car even in its day. If you could find one today they're worth a million. He had a Pierce Arrow and he even had a guy driving him from time to time.

KP: Where was he based? Where did he live?

HL: Oh, someplace at the Jersey shore, Monmouth Beach, or something like that. I don't remember the details of that so much.

KP: What ever happened to him?

HL: After Prohibition was killed off in, what was it, '33, he opened a bar. Bar and a little restaurant and lived very comfortably for the rest of his life.

KP: And retired?

HL: He practically retired when he bought the bar and restaurant. He had somebody else doing all the work. He just came in and counted the money and had a couple of belts and went on about his business.

KP: Did you ever go to his place when you were growing up?

HL: No. As a matter-of-fact, it wasn't until much later in life. As a matter-of-fact, I guess it was just before he died, which would have been ... 1950, somewhere around there.

KP: At what point did you know you wanted to go to college?

HL: Oh, that's another separate story. Do you know what a debit insurance policy is? This is where the collection guy comes around and takes your twenty-five cents a week and puts a little

check in the book. My mother took one of those out for me shortly after I was born so that I could go to college. Of course, by the time I got to the age of going to college, those quarters didn't amount to much and thank God for the GI Bill.

KP: But your mother envisioned you going to college?

HL: Oh, she was a great believer in an education and the second man she married, my stepfather, only had a third grade education, but when it came to arithmetic, not mathematics, but arithmetic, nobody could beat him, but he was at best semi-literate, very hardworking, very dedicated and very much a believer in education. If I had a dollar for every time he said to me, "Boy, get all the education you can," I'd be a wealthy man.

RC: So, from an early age, your parents instilled the importance of an education in you.

HL: Oh, God, yes. Particularly my mother, my stepfather to a large degree, but my mother was the education fanatic.

KP: Your father was a Baptist and your mother was a Methodist. Was your family very active in the church?

HL: Not terribly, no. I can remember going to church with my mother and stepfather, but it was never a big thing in the family. It was not something you did every Sunday. Some Sunday you might go and the next two or three Sundays you wouldn't go. Religion was never a real big thing in my family, no.

KP: In your family, who managed the finances growing up, your mother or your father?

HL: My mother. No ifs, ands, or buts. My stepfather used to take his paycheck, endorse it, her name was Harriet, but they called her Hattie, "Here, Hattie, it's yours."

KP: And give your father an allowance.

HL: Exactly, exactly.

KP: After your mother met your stepfather, did she ever work outside the home again?

HL: Yeah, but not for reasons of need. She did it because I went into the service. She had lost two previous boys. I had brothers who I never knew. They died young, five and seven years old, and don't ask me which was which I don't remember. At ages five and seven, she lost two sons. As a consequence, I could get away with damn near anything. When I went into service, she took it hard. ... Our family doctor, who was strictly a family doctor, he was no psychiatrist, he said, "The best thing you can do is get a job," and she did. She worked for, oh, I guess for three or four years for ... Bristol Myers Squibb, which I think has offices somewhere around here.

RC: They're still in Hillside

HL: Oh, are they? I get back to Hillside very infrequently unfortunately.

KP: She worked in the office or on the factory floor?

HL: No, she worked in the office. I don't know where she got it, but she had some sort of secretarial training. She was a pretty smart old cookie, but I don't think she had, in fact I know she didn't have a lot of formal education. She graduated from the eighth grade which was considered pretty good at the time. It might be equivalent to graduating from high school today, but that was the extent of it.

KP: When you say your mother was worried about you, she probably preferred that you didn't have to go.

HL: Oh, I'm sure she did, I'm sure she did. She never tried to, I actually enlisted. It was the only way you could get into the Air Corps at age seventeen. She signed the papers for me. She never tried to talk me out of it. My stepfather never tried to talk me out of it. They knew it was something I wanted to do. I always was a nut for wanting to fly. Don't ask me why, but I was. They did not encourage it, but they did not discourage it either.

KP: When you say you were enthusiastic for flying ...

HL: And I had never been up in an airplane.

KP: Did you ever go out to Newark Airport to watch the planes?

HL: Absolutely, absolutely. As a matter-of-fact, I almost got killed one time on a bicycle crossing the highway to get from one side to the other. I can remember very distinctly, I may have been about fourteen, fifteen, at the time. Four or five of us who lived in Hillside got on our bikes, went down through Weequahic Park, crossed Route 1. I happened to be the last one, you heard the brakes screeching and somebody hollering, "Goddamn kid!" you know. [laughter]

KP: You were too young for Lindbergh, but you probably [were aware] of Amelia Earhart and other aviators.

HL: Oh, yes! Amelia Earhart, sure. That was very much a part of my youth, very much so.

KP: Did you have model airplanes?

HL: I built model airplanes like you've never seen before.

KP: Growing up in the 1930s, you said you very vividly remember Franklin Roosevelt's election.

HL: Right. 1932.

KP: Do you remember his inaugural?

HL: No. That doesn't really register, no.

KP: What did your family think of Roosevelt?

HL: I think they were both Republicans. God only knows why. They did not have classically thought of Republican money. I think they were, but it was something that was never really discussed.

KP: Really. You never had conversations about the '36 campaign?

HL: No. I'm sure they would be classified as Republicans today.

KP: What did you think of Roosevelt growing up? At that point, he had been president your entire life.

HL: Oh, yes, he was the only president that I knew at that time. Hoover? Who's Hoover? I really don't know. I can't say that I thought that he was a good man or not a good man. If you ask me what today I think of him, I'll give you an answer there and it's not a terribly good one. At the time, I don't think I really thought of him in that capacity.

KP: You were growing up in the 1930s, and as we now look back, it was obvious we were heading towards war. At the time, what did you know about what was going on?

HL: Well, I knew about the September 1, 1939 invasion of Poland. I can remember listening to news broadcasts on a radio about that. Very clearly remember that. Beyond that, I don't think there was a great recollection. I just, if you have a specific question I'll answer it.

KP: There was big question about isolationism. Did you think at any time before Pearl Harbor that you were going to be in a war or that the United States was going to be in a war?

HL: No. I think I was a little bit young to think of, you know, to get into that kind of philosophical thinking and my parents were not philosophical thinkers by any stretch of the imagination. ... Comparing myself with my three kids at a comparable age, I did not begin to have the political know-how they have.

KP: Really, your kids were much more tuned to what was going on earlier than you?

HL: Oh, yes, absolutely, particularly my eldest daughter whose now forty-one or forty-two. When she was fifteen, which is what I was at the period we're talking about, she was very, very knowledgeable. She has a political science and history degree from Rutgers as a matter-of-fact.

The other two kids were probably less knowledgeable about political stuff, but they were far more knowledgeable than I was at the same stage of the game.

RC: In terms of your education, through grammar school and high school, was there discussion of politics?

HL: No. As a matter-of-fact, there again, school was different than it would be today. There was very, very little flexibility in a given curriculum, as you guys probably know better than I know. It just wasn't the kind of thing that you sat around and talked about. Is the College [Corner] Tavern still over here? Well, my point is, in my day, when you wanted to get away from it all you went over to the College Tavern and got a ten-cent beer. You talked about women, sex, what have you, but I can't remember anybody ever talking about politics at these bull sessions. Talk about the football team or something like that. ...

KP: Politics wasn't something that came up at all?

HL: No, no.

KP: It sounds like your father and mother urged you to take college prep.

HL: Oh, absolutely. There was never anything else to go into. There was no general program. There was no office science program. There was college prep, period, forget it, boy.

KP: How many in your high school went the college prep route?

HL: I would say half of them. Now the town I live in now, Westfield, ninety-five [percent] some odd go on to college and I just read recently that eighty some odd percent graduate. Now that did not happen in my high school days. Kids started high school and either didn't finish or switched to a general course instead of college prep. Strictly as a guess, and it's nothing more than a guess, I would say maybe ... thirty to fifty percent of the class started in the college prep program, but I would be surprised if more than twenty-five percent ever completed it. ... Keep in mind, too, when I was in high school, the war was in full blaze. An awful lot of guys, myself included, I got a high school diploma, but I was not there for the graduation exercise. I was off winning World War II practically all by myself.

KP: Do you remember Pearl Harbor?

HL: Yes. I can even tell you what I was doing. I was listening to a Giant football game on, I was going to say television, on the radio and they broke in and said that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. I didn't know where the hell Pearl Harbor was, never heard of Pearl Harbor, and my mother and a women friend of hers, my father was working that day, my mother and a women friend of hers were in the kitchen drinking coffee. I'm not making this up as I go along; this is a clear recollection. I went out to the kitchen and I said, "Hey, Mom, do you have any idea where Pearl Harbor is?" And she said, "I never heard of any Pearl Harbor. Why, what do you ask?" And I said, "It was just bombed by the Japanese." That I remember very, very clearly.

KP: You were in high school for another year-and-a-half.

HL: Approximately, right.

KP: What did your high school do to help the war effort? Do you remember any bond drives or anything?

HL: Yes. As a matter-of-fact, ... I have a recollection. I played football and baseball in high school, not in college, but in high school and I have a recollection that for high school football games and possibly for baseball, though I am not sure about that, instead of charging the twenty-five cents that they normally charged at the time, they would charge thirty-five and the extra dime went into a war bond program of some kind. Then they collected tin cans, aluminum wasn't a big thing at the time, but tin cans and bottles, and things like that. Recycling, as we know it today, didn't exist of course. They did collect stuff that could be recycled and go back into, like into metals.

KP: Where you a Boy Scout?

HL: Oh, yeah. Not much of a Boy Scout, but I was a Boy Scout.

KP: So, you weren't in the Boy Scouts by the time you were in high school?

HL: No. As a matter-of-fact, I think you had to be nine years old, and don't quote me on that, but I think that's correct, to join the Scouts as a Tenderfoot and the next level was a Second Class Scout. I got to be a Second Class Scout and then said, "To heck with this, I don't like it," and that was the end of my scouting career.

RC: You very distinctly remember Pearl Harbor. Do you remember if there was a sense of worry in your neighborhood or an atmosphere of "might they be coming to invade New Jersey?"

HL: There was concern that the Germans would invade the East coast, yes, very definitely, very definitely. They even, although I can't honestly say I remember seeing them, I know that they did have barrage balloons. Do you know what a barrage balloon is? They had barrage balloons up off the coast like at Asbury Park, North Carolina, the Outer Banks, and all that sort of stuff. As far as actually, there was always drills, always air raid drills, in school, well, any place you went, there were air raid drills. You went to the movies and there was always a blurb. There were two pictures in those days, there was no one picture, two pictures and in between the pictures they would show the news and something to do with the war. That would have been the early to mid '40s.

KP: Newark and that area had a large German community.

HL: Oh, yes. "Downneck." "Downneck." Some of my mother's closest friends lived down there. I can remember going down there with her.

KP: Was there any concern among your neighbors, or your family, about the loyalty of German-Americans? There was a large *Bund* in New Jersey.

HL: There was a *Bund*, yes. Up in Peapack-Gladstone area there was a pretty good Bund operation. I really can't say that there was worry about being attacked by the Germans or anything like that. No, I don't think, at least at my level, you know, as a kid.

KP: You didn't give it a lot of thought.

HL: No, no. Except for the barrage balloons and that sort of thing, to a large extent you didn't really know the war was going on. You know it was going on, but you didn't know it was going on, which will really foul up your recording. [laughter]

KP: You decided to enlist. Why? You mentioned in part, it sounds obvious because you were interested in aviation.

HL: Well, that decided where I enlisted. The fact that I was enlisted was because it was a totally different world. The Korean War was sort of like this and that almost butted up against World War II, as I'm sure you know, but Vietnam everybody hated anybody in uniform. In my day, if you didn't have a uniform on you were a slacker. It's hard to explain to anybody who wasn't there and saw it. People, healthy guys, would almost blow their brains out for a chance to get into service. I don't know how to explain it other than it was a totally different atmosphere.

KP: You really had this expectation that you would serve and wanted to serve.

HL: Oh, no question, no question. As a matter-of-fact, gospel true story, on my seventeenth birthday the home down at the shore, in Point Pleasant, my summer place, my folk's summer place. I went from the Point Pleasant home to Hillside by train. Then walked back to get certified that I was seventeen years old and was eligible to enlist and that wasn't because I was a glory hound. Everybody did that. Everybody, who was normal, wanted to be in service.

KP: You wanted the Air Force. Why not the Army, why not the infantry, why not the Navy?

HL: Well, in my humble opinion, anybody who would volunteer for the infantry was a real section eight. The Air Force had the glamour. The whole atmosphere of the times was geared to flying. I can't give you a better explanation than that.

KP: So, you really wanted to [fly].

HL: I wanted to fly and so did millions of other guys.

KP: Which was very competitive, to get into the Air Corps.

HL: Absolutely. You had to be very, very healthy. You had to be pretty darn intelligent. It sounds like I'm patting myself on the back, but this is a statement of fact though. Both health and intelligence, you had to be pretty darn good, and to get into what I went into, the Aviation Cadet Program, you sort of had to be the cream of the crop for the period.

KP: You enlisted at seventeen and your mother signed your papers.

HL: Yes. I don't think she was thrilled, but she never tried to talk me out of it and she willingly signed the papers when it became time.

KP: Do you remember your departing? You enlisted in Newark.

HL: Yes, sir, I certainly do. My mother and stepfather drove me down to Penn Station where I met the Army people. We got on a train at Penn Station, went down to Trenton where we got off the train. Got on another train and went from Trenton to Fort Dix. Spent, oh, I guess maybe ... two, three weeks at Fort Dix getting uniforms and being taught the basic military courtesy and all that stuff. Then, again, by train, the whole group now, was sent down to Greensboro, North Carolina, and that's where we started our training.

KP: Had you traveled much before the war? Your parents had a place at the shore, but that's ...

HL: That was our traveling, from Hillside to Point Pleasant, Point Pleasant to Hillside, *ad infinitum*.

KP: What did you think of this whole experience, seeing another part of the country? Admittedly, you had a lot of other things on your mind.

HL: Well, probably the best summary I can give you in a word was tense. It was a totally new experience for a seventeen, almost eighteen-year-old kid, and I had led a very sheltered life. You know it wasn't that I was brought up in the slums or something and was subjected to all sorts of problems, nothing like that at all.

KP: You were thrown in with a lot of strangers from different parts of the country.

HL: Well, this may sound corny, but I think having played high school football and baseball helped me an awful lot going into service.

KP: In what ways?

HL: Competitiveness. I was a, well, the size of me. At the time I was about five-five, five-six, weighed maybe a hundred and thirty pounds and tougher than hell. You know, "You want to belt me? Go ahead and I'll belt you back three more times," that's the kind of kid I was. I think having played sports and having been a hard-nosed kid playing sports, particularly football, it helped a great deal getting acclimated to military service, 'cause nobody coddled you in the military.

RC: So, you arrived in Greensboro for your basic training. Was the camp you were at something fairly well-established or had it the appearance of being put together fairly quickly?

HL: It had been hacked out of the woods, very definitely. It had been hacked out of what I think was probably a very beautiful area. I never saw it as a civilian. I passed through Greensboro many, many, many years later, but it was just another Southern city then.

RC: So, the transition of Fort Dix had already been established and it had better facilities.

HL: Oh, Fort Dix goes back to World War I, maybe even earlier than that, but Greensboro, that was a, you know, "Let's slap it up and get it going, boys." The barracks were, on a day like this, you'd be wearing every bit of clothing you had inside the building. That's how the things were slapped together.

KP: When you went to basic, had you been accepted as an aviation cadet?

HL: Yes, yes.

KP: So, you went through the pre-flight [training?]

HL: I went through the whole smear and was eventually certified as a single engine aircraft pilot.

KP: Starting with your basic at Greensboro, how many people made it through the training?

HL: Just basic training or the whole program?

KP: Starting with basic, because that's one of the levels, or pre-flight.

HL: Well, you either made it through basic, or you went to the infantry. It was that simple.

KP: And so most had a real incentive to make it.

HL: Oh, yes. Some of the world's greatest goof-offs stopped goofing off when they found out what the alternative was.

RC: Do you remember any particular sergeant or anyone that guided you through training that made an impact on you?

HL: No. You mean like in the movies?

RC: Like a typical drill sergeant, let's say.

HL: No. We had DIs, but I don't remember any of them. I remember some of the words they taught me. They were words that my mother would have been shocked out of her socks to hear.

KP: Your mother frowned on drinking, but one of the things that you always see in World War II movies is soldiers playing cards and drinking when they had the chance. What about your experiences?

HL: Oh, sure. As a matter-of-fact, we're talking about Greensboro, the first time I ever had a drink of hard liquor was in Greensboro in basic training. We got a pass late in the afternoon that was good until two o'clock in the morning. Maybe about a dozen of us went into beautiful downtown Greensboro and a guy was selling, in North Carolina at the time you couldn't sell alcohol, a guy was selling white lightning out of his trunk, and we all bought a pint of white lightning and drank it like it was water, and you never saw a dozen sicker guys then we were the next day, but it didn't cure me, I still had my share over the years.

RC: During your training you were meeting different people from all over the country. Did any one of them strike you more than others?

HL: No, because most of the guys that I was going through training with came from either New England or the Middle Atlantic states, not all of them, but most of them. There was another group who had been gunnery sergeants on bombers in the North African campaign. They were older than we were. They came back while we were there and they got mingled in with us and, boy, they taught us how to raise hell. So, we had a pretty diverse group in the final analysis. If I get too long-winded with answers ...

KP: No, no, long-winded is good.

HL: It is? Okay. [laughter]

KP: You mentioned that you were pretty tough and that you could hold your own.

HL: Right. That's the best way to put it. Nobody pushed old Hank aside.

KP: What else do you remember from your basic training? Especially given that you would spend several years in the service because of the war.

HL: I was in one month short of three years.

KP: What else do you remember about your initiation?

HL: Well, the thing I probably remember the most was that as part of the pilot training program, flight training program, I saw a great deal of the United States. You would go through a phase for a month, two months, finish that phase and you go from airbase A to airbase B. I was in half a dozen airbases in the South, more than that, God, maybe ten different bases during the time I was in, and probably a like amount on the West Coast. I saw one of Bob Hope's first

presentations to the troops while I was in California, and I very clearly remember one of his routines, which you may want to wipe out of your tape with. [laughter] No, that's all right, it's not that bad. He was up on stage with this very beautiful young woman and he said, "Some night," and she said, "Yes, some night," and he says, "Some weather." Then she says, "Yes, some weather." Then he said, "Some do." Then she said, "But I don't." That was very risqué for the times.

KP: Your experiences in traveling around the country, what was the toughest training? Was it actually flight training?

HL: Night flight training, yes.

KP: Because pre-flight, I've been told, very few people washed out.

HL: No, pre-flight was a, if you had a little something normal up here, as long as you weren't really out of it, pre-flight was nothing.

KP: But that flight training really started to wash people out.

HL: Oh, yes. Here, again, I'm guessing, I don't know what the statistics actually are, but I would be surprised if more than fifty percent started, finished. Very surprised.

KP: Where did you do your flight training?

HL: Oh, boy. A couple of fields in Mississippi, North Carolina, Florida, Arkansas, Texas, southern California, that's about it as far as the training goes.

KP: Which is a lot of places.

HL: Oh! They never knew where to send my mail to, not only me, but the other guys that were still in the program.

RC: During the war they used women pilots to ferry planes back and forth and they even used them for ground crews. Did you ever meet any of them or see them?

HL: No, no. We knew that they existed, but they lived a totally different life than we did. Here again it's difficult to explain to your generation, but the mingling between the sexes is a normal thing today. It was very, very much prohibited. I was, as part of flight training, I and many other guys went to college for five months, and I went to the University of Chattanooga, which was a very nice little campus, and just south of Chattanooga, Tennessee is Fort Oglethorpe, a WAC training base, and God help you if you were caught going to the WAC training base. Today, they don't think a thing about it, a totally different world.

RC: In the course of this training when you were flying at various airfields, did you fly various types of aircraft?

HL: Oh, yeah. We flew bi-planes, two wings. They were really nothing more than a glorified kite. The next step would be planes with retractable landing gear, planes with flaps. All of this, which you didn't have with the earlier planes, and then advanced training was about as close to a combat airplane you could get without being a combat airplane. They were faster and more complicated to fly, and so forth, and then once you completed that and you were certified for a certain type of aircraft, that was pretty much all you ever flew. You see in the movies; a guy hops out of a bomber and goes into a fighter and goes up and shoots them down. No way, Jose, it just didn't work like that.

KP: What was your favorite aircraft to fly on, in training or otherwise? What did you enjoy flying the most?

HL: Okay, for fun, we're talking for fun, a Stearman bi-plane, which was a double-wing, single-engine, no fancy stuff, training plane, two cockpits, one and one. You had to wear a helmet and goggles or else you'd go blind and couldn't hear anyway, but you could do anything with that plane and it would forgive you. I don't know if either of you fly, but if you do you know an airplane is a very unforgiving thing, regardless of what some hotshots think. Airplanes don't give you too many second chances. The Stearman bi-plane would give a bunch of eighteen-year-old hotshots, who thought they were God's gift to aviation, not only one chance, but twenty-five chances to survive, and it was a fun thing to fly. It was just plain old fashioned fun.

KP: It sounds like parts of aviation lived up to what you imagined.

HL: Oh, yes, oh, absolutely. To this day, I couldn't tell you why I didn't continue to fly after the war was over. I guess the reason was I came back and went immediately to college. Then eventually got married and never really had the money to pay three or four hundred dollars an hour for instruction, so, you know.

KP: It sounds like you would have liked to have done that if you could have.

HL: I guess so, yes. I think so.

KP: What was the plane that was the most difficult to fly or the one you enjoyed the least?

HL: B-24, four-engine bomber, the kind of plane that, along with the B-17, really won the war in Europe. A very, very difficult plane to fly, and I was, except in practice, I was never allowed to fly it.

KP: It sounds like you were glad you didn't have to.

HL: Yes.

KP: What made the B-24 so difficult to fly?

HL: Very cumbersome. They used to call it the "flying boxcar." It was built like a boxcar, with wings and four engines, two tails in the back, two rudders, very difficult plane to control.

KP: Are there any other planes that stick in your mind in terms of difficult to fly or very enjoyable to fly, or even ones that you had close calls with?

HL: Only had one close call and that was flying a plane I shouldn't have been flying, B-24. At the time, most airports did not have a lot of fancy electronic gear. One of the things you always tried to remember, after taking off, you banked to the right to get into, sorry, banked to the left to get into the flight pattern. At Mountain Home, Idaho, which was a hundred miles from nowhere, it was just the reverse of that because there was a mountain range that you had to watch out for. We were taking off and another B-24, who wasn't familiar with the field, was coming in and they were doing what they were supposed to do, and we were doing what we were not supposed to do and we got reverse patterns and again, the B-24 had twin rudders. We clipped one of his rudders and, you know, almost dumped them in the mountains. That I remember quite clearly, but we did land all right. We thought for a while we were going to have to bail out, but we didn't. That's the one time I can truthfully say I was scared to death in an airplane, not of flying, but I didn't want to bail out. The command pilot hits the bail out button once, which means, "Get ready." When he hits it the second time, it means, "Get out as fast as you can," and you sort of sit there and pray that you're not going to hear that second ring, but that was not because there was anything wrong with the plane, it was because one of the guys flying wasn't aware of what the special traffic pattern [was].

KP: So, you weren't flying at the time?

HL: No, no. I was on a navigational flight at the time. What they did was take us up in a B-24 and it had a real big bay, very big bay, and they would give us problems and while we were flying, we were supposed to solve the navigation and all that sort of jazz. So, no, I was not flying.

KP: You mentioned that you got to see a good part of the United States.

HL: Oh, yes.

KP: What sticks out in your mind of these different places you got to compare? You may have not been doing it consciously, but you got to compare and contrast different regions of the country.

HL: That's a very difficult question to answer for the simple reason that I have traveled extensively, not only in the United States, but throughout the world since I got old enough to do that sort of thing and I've got all different impressions stashed away in my head. What part of the South did you like the best? Well, Chattanooga, I thought was great, but I've been a lot of other places since then that I thought was equally great, so, I really can't tell you too much. California, northern California I liked very, very much. It's probably a byproduct of having spent time out there. Los Angeles, oh, I did a lot of flying out of the Los Angeles area, March Field, I never

particularly cared for it. I know people who would kill for an opportunity to spend a couple of months in southern California.

KP: But you didn't care for it in the 1940s. Why?

HL: I don't know. Just didn't. I honestly don't know.

KP: What about the isolated places you where in? Arkansas. Idaho.

HL: Well, this place where we had the mid-air, almost literally, it was a hundred miles from nowhere. Have you ever seen a cowboy movie with the wooden sidewalk and the swinging doors on this? Mountain Home had that. It was one street long, maybe one or two little side streets, and that was Mountain Home, Idaho.

KP: Which you must have thought this is something you grow up watching in the movies.

HL: I thought I was still part of the movies when I saw it. So, did thousands of other guys. As a matter-of-fact, maybe five, six, seven, eight years ago, one of my daughters was moving and I was helping her, and a neighbor was helping, and we got into a conversation, make a long story short, about places we had been and I said, "I bet you've never been to Mountain Home, Idaho," and he said, "The hell I haven't!" He said, "I spent six months there in the military," and then we got to telling war stories back and forth and he hated it as much as everybody else did and this guy was more your age than my age, but he hated it just as bad. Unlike the rest of the world, which has pretty well built up now, Mountain Home, you can still look there, there, there, or there and see nothing.

KP: So, you've been back.

HL: No, I have not been back, but from what this guy told me.

KP: So, it sounds like that particular place, Mountain Home, Idaho, you were not fond of.

HL: I think I'm pretty adaptable to that sort of thing. As a kid, we moved quite frequently. I'm not sure why, but we did. I never had trouble adjusting to that and in the military, it never really bothered me to go from point A to point B and then to point C. I don't think that, in the military, I was ever in one location more than [a] couple of months.

KP: It also sounds like the people around you were constantly changing.

HL: Oh, sure, sure.

KP: So, you did not stay with a particular group?

HL: You never made real, real, close friends. You might have made buddies that will last a month or two and then he's gone, or you're gone or whatever. I think if you talk to more people

they'll tell you the same thing, who were in the military. You might have made good friends, but they were not close friends because they couldn't be.

KP: Did you ever think that you would spend the whole war training?

HL: No, no. As a matter-of-fact, the toughest part though, if you want to digress for just a second, was not the training, but after the war ended in August of '45, I did not have enough points to get discharged. They had a point system for discharge. Are you familiar with it? Okay. I did not have enough points to get out right away. So, between August of '45 and April of '46, they wouldn't let me fly, not just me, nobody flew unless you had some very specific reason for flying. They had no flying; they had nothing at all for us to do. This is where I first started playing golf, for the simple reason that one of the guys had a few golf clubs and a few golf balls, and to kill time we went out and whacked golf balls around. Didn't know what we were doing, but we did it. That was the toughest part of my military service.

KP: Where were you stationed at the time?

HL: Well, at the beginning, at Boise, Idaho, getting ready to go to the Pacific and then, eventually, at Fort Lewis, State of Washington.

KP: And so you would, every day just wake up and ...

HL: Oh, you talk about boring.

RC: When you were going to these various places across the country, did you sense the change that the war had brought around the country, from a depression to this boom?

HL: Well, yes, but not quite in the sequence you're outlining. Keep in mind that I was too young to go in service during the early part of the war, so I was still at home. Guys, who never had a job before, suddenly had a job paying, by today's standards, be a million dollars a day, you know. Then I went into service. Then I came home and it was just the reverse. The guys coming home from service were taking all the jobs from the guys [veterans] who had gone and had been guaranteed work when they got back, and the women who had been, you know, Rosie the Riveter, that sort of thing. She lost her job and she might have been your next-[door] neighbor. It was a different sort of situation; it's hard to relate to today.

KP: You saw a lot of bases. Is there any base commander or training that you thought was particularly good, or particularly bad, in terms of personal or instruction or in terms of location?

HL: Well, I think the training for the most part was better than average, but not terrific. Again, keep in mind here you're talking about young guys. Now, the two of you are kids compared to me, but at the time I was eighteen, nineteen years old, and ... I know I sound like an old broken record, but it was a totally different world and it's hard for me to express some of the feeling that I have that would relate to some of your experiences. Generally speaking, I thought the training was pretty good. I came home so I must have learned a little bit about taking an airplane up and

bringing it back down, but I certainly would not have tried to fly a commercial airliner based on what I learned in service.

KP: What parts of the training did you think you didn't have enough of? What could have been added to it?

HL: Well, since a big part of mine was in aviation, I would say night flying. It was probably the most difficult thing and you have to understand clearly, too, that while you go someplace now at night there's nothing to worry about. There are all sorts of systems keeping you out of trouble. In those days there wasn't. Even landing and taking off in broad daylight. Do you know what a biscuit gun is? Okay. It's a thing about this big around, about that long, got a trigger on the bottom and you go like this at the airplane. If you hit the green button, that means, "It's okay to land." If you hit the red button, "Go around until I give you the green button." Now, that's what you had to do to land, not just in daylight, but at nighttime. That's all you had. You know, you see, in the movies, these beautifully lit runways; no way, Jose.

KP: That's one thing that struck me, aviation, now for commercial and to a certain extent military, has very clear routes and patterns, whereas, then, you could get lost when you were flying.

HL: A lot of guys did. Very nice friend of mine, good friend of mine, flew right into the Cascade Mountains and splattered himself and the two guys that were with him all over the side of the mountains because his altimeter wasn't working. He probably thought he was at fifteen thousand feet when he was at five and, "POW."

KP: Did you know of any other accidents during your training?

HL: Oh, there were many, many accidents, God, yes. This is probably not statistically supportable, but I wouldn't be surprised that as many guys were killed, or at least seriously injured, in military flight accidents as in the actual fighting the war.

KP: How many accidents would you see on a given base during your flight training, say, you were there for a month?

HL: A couple, maybe, two, three, four. Clipping wings was always a problem. You know, trying to get this plane past this, on the ground now, this plane past this one and they're getting closer together and all of a sudden somebody's wing goes flying up in the air.

KP: What other accidents would you see on a regular basis?

HL: Well, I didn't see, but I know of one that was pretty hairy. One plane just taxied right into the side of another plane and a couple of guys were killed. When I was stationed at a place called Moody Field in Valdosta, Georgia, and a hurricane was coming up from Florida, coming right up the coast. I was a student pilot at the time, along with a lot of other guys, and they told us to get back in as fast as we could and tie down the planes. Now, the planes we were flying at that time

were low wing monoplanes and when you got out of the cockpit, you ducked under, came up, tied the wing to something on the ground. I actually witnessed a guy going under a wing, coming up and going right into a propeller, and, man, if that doesn't register with you nothing ever will.

KP: Did you ever realize how dangerous flying could be in training?

HL: I think I was too darn young to appreciate how dangerous it was, really. That may sound silly, but that, I think, is a fact.

KP: It also sounds like you had fewer close calls than others I talked to.

HL: I don't really recall, you know, a load of them, but they certainly happened.

KP: What about your night flying? Did you get lost at all?

HL: Well, yes and no. I mean, you get lost, but eventually you find your way back because the base is where they give you that kind of training. Like Flagstaff, Arizona where, it's not true today, but at that time you could fly 500 miles in any direction you picked out and you were still away from anything. Now, what was the rest of the question?

KP: In terms of getting lost and in terms of ...

HL: Oh, you asked me if I was ever scared flying at night. I guess, more or less, perpetually. Guys used to kid about when they landed having to run in quick and change their underwear. I guess everybody, because, literally, there was very little in the way of instrumentation. Even in the B-17s and B-24s, which were the big workhorse aircraft of the time, the instruments compared to what you see, just in the small commercial airliners, today was like night and day. So, you were flying by the seat of your pants. It wasn't quite as bad as when the mail service started. Those guys all should have gotten the Congressional Medal of Honor. It was worrisome. Maybe scared is too strong a word, but it was worrisome.

KP: For most pilots today it's a very routine job.

HL: Oh, God. Well, the commercial pilots are so trained, and trained, and trained some more, both in synthetic atmospheres and actually in the field, you can't compare it. Here again we're trying to compare generations and it's hard to do.

RC: Part of your training was at a college.

HL: University of Chattanooga, in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

RC: Did you have a lot of aeronautical engineering [training?]

HL: No, no. Again, keep in mind that the average aviation cadet was fresh out of high school, had a routine high school education, had very little polish. The average high school graduate today is ten times more polished than they were in my day. So, what the Air Corps was trying to do was give these eighteen, nineteen-year-old kids, and they were kids, and I was one of them, a lot more sophistication than they had. If you completed the program, you were an officer and you were supposed to lead other men. Now, if you act like the village idiot, nobody is going to follow you.

KP: What subjects did you study at Chattanooga?

HL: It was very comparable to the senior year in high school or the first year of college, basic algebra, history, geography, you know, a half a notch up from what you studied in your last year in high school.

KP: Did this training end prematurely, or was it set to last four or five months, at Chattanooga?

HL: No, no. The five month part of Chattanooga was a structured part of the training.

KP: And unlike some ASTP programs, which they would sometimes end abruptly.

HL: No, it didn't, no. I'm a little bit familiar with ASTP, not that I had any direct, but a lot of my friends were in it, and in the Navy equivalent, also. They had a reputation for half way through the program, they would need seventeen guys, "You, you, you, you and you get on the bus," but we didn't have [to]. It was very structured as a matter-of-fact. It went from basic training to pre-flight in Georgia, then to primary flight, basic flight, advanced flight, crew flight, you know. It was always about three months in each one. I was an old man before I got to really do it on my own.

KP: Flying was very glamorous.

HL: It attracted the girls.

KP: That was on my mind, especially once you got your wings and you were in these different places.

HL: In my high school yearbook, the prettiest girl in the yearbook was voted the prettiest girl and she was my girlfriend.

KP: Did she stay your girlfriend throughout the war?

HL: As a matter-of-fact, we were engaged. We got engaged about six months after I went into the service and about twelve months after that, I got a "Dear John" letter. Do you know what a "Dear John" letter is? "Dear John, I hate to write this, but ... " and I got one of those, but for the year that we were engaged, and this is the gospel truth, very few people believe it, but that girl

wrote to me every day and I mean every day. Mail call was six days a week. On the seventh day, I got two letters instead of one.

KP: Why do you think this "Dear John" letter arrived since it seemed like initially she was very faithful?

HL: Well, I'll tell you exactly, to the best of my knowledge, first of all, it was a kid thing, passionate, hot and heavy, when I was going into the service. The first six months the passion was still there. After that, you know with anybody, with any romance, I don't care if you're eighteen or thirty-eight, the passion sort of runs down a little bit, and I think that happened, plus the fact that she met another guy that, apparently, she liked better. Maybe he was a better lover than I was, I don't know. Of course, I refuse to concede that.

KP: After getting your "Dear John" letter, you could date.

HL: Oh, yeah, well ...

KP: It sounds like you would have had a good time.

HL: I was very down, I was very down. The "Dear John" letter hit me as hard as anything in my life. The only thing that could hit me harder, at this point in my life, is if my wife, or one of my kids, died before I do. It probably sounds silly that an eighteen or nineteen year old kid would have that kind of hots, you know, for a girl. It wasn't just physical, it was ...

KP: You were very much in love with her.

HL: Oh, God, yeah. You talk about pedestal; I built the biggest one in the world.

RC: Did you see any of the USO shows, particularly when you were in California? Did you get to see any of the stars?

HL: No, I mentioned before this Bob Hope thing that was at March Field, which is in southern California, not far from LA. That's the only one I can recall actually seeing. There may have been others, but they didn't register with me, but that one really clicked because it was Bob Hope and because of this, for the times, risqué little bit he had.

KP: I once interviewed a person who was in the Air Corps who went to mass three times waiting for an invitation for Christmas dinner. He finally got one by someone in the neighborhood. How much hospitality would you get?

HL: There was a fair amount of that when I was at the University of Chattanooga. As a matter-of-fact, you could have had Sunday dinner every Sunday if you wanted. There was like a standing invitation and the clergyman, and it was almost always a Protestant clergyman, would after the service say, "We have six servicemen here. How about some volunteers to take them to dinner?" Unfortunately, the University of Chattanooga was a poor example because, I mentioned

before, the WAC training base, the largest WAC training base in the world, was five miles south of Chattanooga. If the guys wanted a little action, they didn't go to the sophisticated places. They went where the girls were.

KP: Where would the guys go for dates on various bases? Do you have any stories about this?

HL: Well, I guess everybody did pretty much the same thing, headed into town and wandered. Some towns had, the big towns had USO bases. The stories were not as wild as you might think they were. I mean there was no, you know, really nasty stuff going on. The guys being normal, red-blooded, eighteen, nineteen, twenty-year-olds, they were interested in girls.

RC: Did you ever experience any of the service rivalries?

HL: No. Nope. I know what your talking about, but no, I never experienced it, never saw it at all.

KP: You spent a good part of the war in training, but you were sent to the Panama Canal Zone.

HL: Yeah, three whole months.

KP: What year was it, 1945 or 1944?

HL: Yes. The three months. If you take the last month as, oh, mid-summer, I guess. No, it would have been earlier, because the war was over in August and that's when they were going to send me to the Pacific.

KP: But it was in 1945.

HL: Yeah, yeah, it was 1945.

KP: And you flew what type of aircraft in Panama?

HL: A single engine, stationary landing gear, you would probably call it a Piper Cub, it wasn't a Piper Cub. It was bigger and it had a more powerful engine, but to the person who is not that oriented to aviation, it was like a Piper Cub. It was the pilot and an observer and we were supposed to be looking for Japanese submarines, and, to this day, I've never seen a Japanese submarine.

KP: Did you see anything on your patrols?

HL: No. Nope. What we did see was a ship hauling presumably supplies and troops from the west side through the east side. After the war in Europe ended, there was a tremendous push to get everything, material and men over, you know, into the Gulf, not the gulf you would know, this is a different gulf.

KP: You were based in Panama. What base were you based at?

HL: Panama City.

KP: In a sense you did get overseas.

HL: Well, unfortunately, this is a very sore point with me. I tried to use that to get three more points, which would have gotten me out of the service three months sooner, but the powers that be wouldn't buy my tale of woe. It was true, where I was, there was no combat conditions. Nobody was shooting at us and we weren't shooting at anybody and we came home at night and had a hot shower and good food and comfortable beds, but I sure as heck could have used those three extra points.

KP: So, your three months in Panama were very routine.

HL: Very much so, very dull. The girls got prettier with each passing day and they were not very pretty to begin with.

KP: Where would you go when you were on leave?

HL: You went no place. Well, first of all, I wasn't there long enough to really be on leave. I was only there three months.

KP: Let's say, you got a weekend pass.

HL: Oh, a weekend pass you could get into Panama City. The other big city is Colon, which means Columbus in Spanish. You went there and, again, the name of the game was get a glow on and look for girls and that was about the size of it. If you wanted to go to the movies, the best movies were right on the airbase, no ifs, ands, or buts about that. That's basically what most of the guys did. We'd get a couple of beers and a hamburger and then go to the movies.

KP: Most of the day you'd be patrolling the Atlantic.

HL: Not really most of the day because we didn't have the fuel capacity to go too far out into the Pacific. You'd try to stay within, maximum, 150 miles of land. Anybody who went further than that in these little single engine crafts we were flying would be crazy.

KP: Was there anyone who was crazy enough to do that? Was anyone ever lost?

HL: Yes. They were lost, but not flying those planes. We had several B-24s, which were lost flying between that area and the Pacific, the islands in the Pacific; again, there was very little radio contact. You could get radio contact, but it was so garbled, and so far apart, that it wasn't much help.

KP: So, you were very much dependent on your own instruments and navigational ability.

HL: Oh, yes. That's why the long-range stuff, the B-24s and B-17s, all had a full-time navigator. No ifs, ands, or buts about that. Now the lighter stuff that didn't get very far away, you did the whole thing yourself.

KP: Which is a lot to think about.

HL: Well, I've always had a great deal of respect for Navy pilots. I would never admit that to an old Navy pilot at a bar, but they really took their lives in their hands, not just when they were in combat, but when they were out on patrol. There was radio contact, but it was nothing like today. Nothing.

KP: It was very hard to go out on even a routine patrol and come back, whereas now it would be a major incident, I almost get the impression.

HL: I'm not sure I understand what you are saying.

KP: In other words, you could go out on patrol and there was a good chance you might not come back, simply because you could get lost.

HL: Well, yes. I would say that ninety percent of the guys, maybe ninety-five even, got back. There was five percent of people losing their lives.

KP: It's a lot, not for combat.

HL: Yes, exactly, exactly. The other thing I've always admired Navy pilots for is taking off and landing on an aircraft carrier. I think they're absolutely insane and if you interview any of them you can tell them I said so, just don't give them my home address, I'm not much of a fighter at this point in my life.

KP: How did you get to Panama? Did you fly down?

HL: Short hops, yeah, short hops.

KP: You flew your craft all the way from what base to Panama? Which base did you start out at?

HL: Exactly, exactly. Well, started out from the West Coast. The first plane that I got, picked up in Walla Walla, Washington, and then just hopped down. March Field was the last United States field and then I landed in Mexico, ... yes, Mexico was the final, Baja, Mexico was the final place. Some of the guys did get taken down there on disassembled B-24s, but I was not one of them. They were actually taken down on boats. The planes were disassembled, reassembled in the Canal Zone, and I think all of them were 24s. I don't think they ever did that with 17s. If they did I never saw them.

RC: Do you remember exactly where you were when you got word that the Japanese had surrendered?

HL: That's a good question. I can remember where I was when I heard that Roosevelt had died. I was on air-to-ground gunnery practice at the Florida Panhandle, Appalachicola. I was there on air-to-ground gunnery when that was announced, but where was I when the Japanese surrendered? I don't know. It should have been important to me because that was the end of the war.

RC: For that matter when Germany surrendered? When the war ended in Europe?

HL: Well, Germany's surrender was a real, real, big deal, but I'll be darned if I can remember where I was.

KP: You mentioned that earlier you were sent to Panama, but then brought back for further training. Where were you sent?

HL: Yes, yes. No, not for further training, I was brought back and stationed very, very temporarily in Washington State, getting ready with a whole bunch of other planes, to be taken to the Pacific. If we had gone, and we never went, the war ended too soon. If we had gone we would have gone on stripped down planes, not flying them, de-winged, de-tailed, and put in the holds of ships and we would have been passengers, but that never actually happened. I can't remember why I don't remember the German surrender. My wife tells me I'm senile. If I think of it before we break up, I'll let you know for your notes, but at the moment I can't tell you what I was doing.

KP: The war ending in many ways, for many GIs and many airmen and sailors, the war ends very abruptly.

HL: Oh, yes. Absolutely, and when it ended abruptly, I may have said this before, they wouldn't let us near an airplane. Once the war ended, never again did I fly an airplane until after the war. Do you know where Hadley Field is? Okay. While I was student here at Rutgers, I went up to Hadley Field and washed airplanes in exchange for free flying time.

KP: So, you did get to fly after the war.

HL: Oh, yes, and then after that, I joined a glider flying club and flew gliders out of this field in Somerset, but that's got nothing to do with what we're talking about.

KP: Had you thought of making the military a career at all, or staying in the Air Force, given your love of flying?

HL: Yes, yes, I did. As a matter-of-fact, not only I, but many other guys were offered an automatic promotion if you would sign up again. They were offering anybody, keep in mind that the Army Air Corps that I served in was part of the Army, period. There was no United States

Air Force at the time. I believe it was '50, '57, somewhere around there, what we know today as the Air Force was formed as a separate service and if you had been a pilot, or I guess a lot of other things, too, in the old Army Air Corps, and had a good clean record and were young enough that they could further train, to use you, they were offering an increase in grade and a pretty good deal on a twenty-year enlistment. I thought of it because when I got out of school in '49, it was the first post-war recession. Jobs were pretty scarce. This was 1949. You could get jobs, but they were very, very bottom-rung jobs and what I wanted to do was get into business management. So, I gave very serious thought to going back in, going back in at a higher ranking and making a career of it, and the more I thought of it, the more I realized that I don't have the personality to serve full time in the military. I'm not enough of a conformist and in the military, if either of you had any direct experience, you should know that when somebody says, "Jump," the only answer is, "How high?" and I'm just not geared to that sort of thing.

KP: Even though you enjoyed your experience, but you didn't think you wanted to do it for a [career].

HL: Oh, I can really say that most of my military experience I enjoyed. I can truthfully say that, but that was because it was part of the wartime atmosphere. It was a totally different ballgame.

KP: But it also sounds like you were changed a bit by college. You were older.

HL: Yes. As a matter-of-fact, I was twenty-one when I started college. I got my bachelor's degree in three years by taking extra courses. Instead of taking the traditional fifteen credits, I took eighteen and I also went to summer school one summer. So, yes, I enjoyed it, very definitely.

KP: When did you join the American Legion post that you mentioned in your survey?

HL: Well, a very good buddy of mine, [his] father was the commander of the Hillside American Legion Post, and he talked me into joining. He had been a member following World War I and I went to one meeting and if you wanted to say something you had to stand up at attention and salute the guy and ask for permission to speak. You know, after three years in the military, who needs it? So, that's why I did not have much of a career with the American Legion.

KP: Are you still a member at all?

HL: No.

RC: The end of the war comes abruptly and you were discharged, I believe, in Seattle, Washington?

HL: That's correct.

RC: How did you make your way back and did you have a set plan on what you were going to do?

HL: No. I was discharged in Seattle and I was given a check or cash, I don't honestly remember, in the amount of seventy-five bucks and, I think, a ticket between Seattle, Washington and Newark and that was the end of that. ... So, I went home, came over here, right in the area we're in now, and a couple of months later took the college entrance exam. It was a totally different situation than now. There were no SATs and by some miracle I passed the test. There were thousands of guys taking it and, somehow or other, I passed and that was that.

KP: Why Rutgers? You had the GI Bill. Had you thought of other schools?

HL: I thought of other schools, but I had been on the prowl for three years. My parents were getting older. My father, or my stepfather, I should say. Anytime I say, "My father," I usually mean my stepfather. My stepfather was about ten, twelve years older than my mother. I just wanted to get back home, see the old folks, spend a little time with them, that sort of thing. I did think of other schools, yes. As a matter-of-fact, at one time I applied to Georgia Tech because I wanted to be an aeronautical engineer. I honestly don't remember whether they accepted me or not. I just don't remember. Rutgers I had no problem at all.

KP: It sounds like in your early life you had quite a tug between aeronautical and air ...

HL: Oh, yes, very definitely, and that what not unusual in my generation. My father was not a railroad man, but in my father's generation, the sort of glamorous thing to do was go to work on the railroad. In my generation, it was getting into aviation. I don't know what it is today, but ... my interest in flying was not at all unique, not by any means.

KP: In fact, it sounds like many of the people who were in your Air Force units had a similar [attitude].

HL: I would think so, yes, I would think so.

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

RC: When you came back, and first came to Rutgers, this would be June of '46 and like so many other veterans, the GI Bill funding, they were flocking into schools. I know there was a tremendous problem with housing.

HL: You better believe it.

RC: Can you tell me some of your experiences with that?

HL: Well, some of the worst situations were the married guys coming back and I don't know if it's still there, or not, but up in what was then called University Heights, up where the football field is, ... I don't know whether they were connected or separated, but there were a whole bunch of housing units for the married, returning GIs and there was baby laundry facilities, the whole thing up there. As far as housing for students, I had to commute the first year even though I

would rather have lived on campus because I just simply couldn't get accommodations, either dormitory or fraternity house or private residence. There just wasn't enough at the time.

RC: Following up on that, what about the class size? Were there very crowded classrooms?

HL: Classes were humungous in number of students. ... There was a professor here who was quite a character, a fellow named Houston Peterson, and he taught a class that had something like 300 students in it. I don't know if the auditorium still exists or not, but it was jammed packed with every student, even sitting in the aisle, taking notes. That's how bad it was. The geology classroom right over here someplace was just unbelievably crowded. There were buildings all along, in fact they may still be there because I don't think they were temporary buildings, all along the waterfront they were building both classrooms and dormitory facilities. When I first started Rutgers in '46, I don't know what the student population was. I understand it's about 48,000 now on the three campuses. Camden didn't exist at the time. Newark was a non-entity, it was Newark College at the time. I would say that you're comparing 48,000 to maybe, maximum, 5,000, very maximum 5,000. ... It was very much a commuting college at the time.

KP: Rutgers.

HL: Yes, Rutgers. It was just Rutgers. There was no Rutgers Newark, no Rutgers Camden.

KP: You commuted for a year, but then you also lived on campus.

HL: Well, there's a little bit to that story that doesn't have much to do with what we're talking about. My father, my stepfather as I say, was quite a bit older than my mother and they retired and moved down to Point Pleasant. So, I had no home in Hillside to live at and to try to commute from Point Pleasant to New Brunswick every day was just about impossible. So, I, I can't remember the name, is there a dormitory called Ford Hall?

KP: Yes.

HL: That's where I lived for the last two years.

KP: What was the difference between commuting and living on campus? Did you notice any changes in a life on campus for you? Were you more involved in activities because of it?

HL: No. As a matter-of-fact, I was not terribly involved in most of the campus activities because I worked at part-time jobs all the time I was in school. When I was at home I couldn't work much because I simply didn't have the time with all the commuting. When I was living on campus I held whatever jobs I could get 'cause I needed the money, plain and simple.

KP: What kind of jobs did you have?

HL: Well, I drove the shuttle van from the library, which was over that way at the time, up to University Heights, which was the brand new library at the time. I also sold Everware cooking

utensils, door-to-door. I ... hustled secretarial school, what would you call them? trying to con people into going to secretarial school and the courses were something like \$150 and I got \$25 for every one, you know, you get the picture.

KP: So, it sounds like you were getting a basic business background pretty quickly.

HL: Oh, yes, yes. I had an uncle, my father's brother, who was very, very much a dedicated businessman. A dedicated drunk also, but that's a separate story. No, seriously, my uncle was a very, very active businessman and he had a lot of influence on what I did. Great deal of influence.

KP: Why did you decide on business administration? Was it the fact that your uncle ...

HL: A great deal to do with this uncle and he was the character that I'm, very astute businessman, but don't get him near the bottle, you know, that sort of thing, ... but he was the greatest influence I had on that.

RC: What was your sense of the campus when you came back? Here you are the veteran and like so many others coming on the campus, what of the social life?

HL: Well, again, keep in mind that at the time the average student was much, much, much younger than he is today starting school. I, as a freshman, was ... trying to think how old I actually was, twenty-one, twenty-two, something like that, and I was a kid compared to the majority of the new students on the campus. It was not at all unusual to have guys in your class thirty-five, forty years old, and up where the married students lived it was not unusual at all to see ten-year-old kids running around. So, it's not like a guy, however he comes to school today, be it on train, or by car, I guess with his own private Rolls Royce, but it was, again, as I've said so many times this afternoon, a different atmosphere.

KP: How did professors relate to you?

HL: Well, a lot of them were younger than the students, a lot of them. My Spanish teacher, ... he couldn't have been more than my age at the very, very most, and probably was a couple of years younger. The geology professor that I remember very well, I can't remember his name, but I remember him, he was about my age. I was, say, twenty-one at the time. He was, maybe, twenty-five.

KP: One person I interviewed said that some of the deans and some of the professors sort of treated you, even though you were twenty-two, you had flown planes out in the middle of the ocean and back, but they treated you like you were nineteen-year-old first year students. Did you encounter any of that?

HL: Yes, some. It was never a particular problem that I recall, but it did exist, yes.

KP: What about Dean Crosby, did you have any thoughts or run-ins with Dean Crosby?

HL: [Whispers] Housemother Crosby.

KP: When you say ...

HL: Is he retired incidentally? He must be.

KP: In fact, he's passed away.

HL: Oh, has he? 'cause I'm sixty-nine, so he's got to be dead.

KP: In fact, I directed Crosby Hall. They named a residence hall after him.

HL: No, he was an awfully nice guy, but he was a little bit weird, that's all I will care to say.

KP: Did you go to chapel at all? I've been told first you people were strongly urged, in fact, required to go to chapel.

HL: But not the returning GIs. No, we didn't have to go to chapel, we didn't have to take gym, phys ed., didn't have to take ROTC, all of which guys five years ahead of us had to take.

KP: Did you have interaction between, sort of, traditional students who were nineteen, first year, or who hadn't had your military experience?

HL: At Ford, I had two, there were three of us to each unit at Ford Hall, two of them were normal students and then there was me, and that was not at all unusual.

KP: What was that interaction like? Because you had seen quite a bit and they had really not been past New Jersey.

HL: Well, I taught them some new language they had not heard before, [laughter] and I mean that, you know, and I'm not bragging about it, but in service any word that you can conceive of was a common word in the service, even among the WACs, and sometimes when these younger guys, eighteen years old, came in and heard what somebody said to somebody else they were shocked.

RC: Did you feel that your military service benefited you in terms of when you came to college? Did it make you more serious?

HL: Oh, absolutely. It matured you tremendously. Even if you were not in combat, the average guy, who was in the military during World War II, saw death in some form, usually by an accident. Some guys were even killed in training. That matures you; it has to. If you're human, it's got to mature you. To that extent, yes, but I don't think there was any real animosity between the two age groups. Not that I remember.

RC: What about the sense of self-discipline that the military instills you with in terms of applying that to your studies?

HL: Well, the two roommates that I had were fairly mature for their age. Other guys did have trouble with the age bracket and I think that the administration and the housing people tried to set them up in rooms so that was not a problem. I think it was a conscious effort to adjust to those situations, ... but I never really had what I thought was a problem, not at all. In fact, one of the roommates I had, he and I kept in touch for a few years after we both graduated, which was rather unusual, incidentally. I don't know whether you folks have had the same experience. You're still an undergrad, right?

RC: Yes.

HL: And are you an instructor?

KP: Yes, I'm a member of the history department.

HL: Well, then you guys have a tough time relating to me. [laughter] "What's that old coot want?"

KP: When you say it was unusual to stay in touch, did you feel the same bond as a class, or to Rutgers and to each other? Because I know other classes, the Class of '42 people have stayed in touch for years, to this day.

HL: That must have had something to do with the war because when my graduating class graduated, there was very little effort to stay together, stay in touch. To this day, I have only gone to two or three class reunions and I've been out, what forty-five years now, something in that area?

KP: It sounds like your group was pretty much in a hurry to get it over with.

HL: It was very, very much a group of "get it over with in a hurry," the primary reason being money. They had the GI Bill, but even in those days seventy-five bucks a month wasn't an awful lot of money to live on and if you had, or wanted, a car, it was impossible to live on and I had a car, a fifteen-year-old car with a 150,000 miles on it, but it was just different. The guys came to school to get the education that they hadn't gotten and get out and make the bucks that they knew was out there for them to make. Money was the motivator, no question about that.

KP: You were very optimistic going into college that there were good jobs out there.

HL: Oh, absolutely, absolutely. I was going to be, I remember one time I said to my father that I was going to have 30,000 dollars before I was thirty years old, and at the time, 30,000 dollars was one hell of a lot of money, and he said, "Sure, boy, sure." He always called me "boy." "Sure, boy, sure, boy," and I thought, really, that I'd go out there and, you know, two or three years I'd have my 30,000 dollars. Didn't work out that way.

KP: It took you awhile.

HL: Yes. My first job out of college only paid 3,000 dollars a year.

KP: You mentioned Mason Gross was your favorite teacher.

HL: He was. He was one of the finest human beings I've ever known. A real, real class man.

KP: And you were a business administration major and he taught philosophy. What do you remember so ...

HL: Well, he was my, I don't know if you still have them or not, but he was my class advisor. He was the guy that sat down with me and said, "Now, Hank, that course isn't going to do you any good, but this is what you should take." You know, that sort of thing. Coming from the background, my father or my mother was in no position to really counsel me, and Mason Gross was just a hell of a fine human being.

KP: Are you surprised that he went on to become college president?

HL: No, I wasn't surprised. I was a bit disappointed because I thought he was better as an instructor than as an administrator.

KP: Really?

HL: Yes.

KP: Did you ever stay in touch with him in the years afterwards?

HL: No, no.

RC: You said that when you were getting ready to leave Rutgers that pretty much everybody had a sense of optimism.

HL: The sense of optimism was there until the senior class started actual job interviews, and then, keep in mind what I said about the first post-war recession. They went out there and they found out that the streets weren't paved with gold.

RC: Through your period, when you were going through, there was this sense of optimism?

HL: Oh, yes. I would say from, beginning of freshman year until midway in the senior year, everybody was going to be a millionaire real quick, but that changed in a hurry.

KP: Because, in fact, '49 was a very rough year to find work.

HL: Yes.

KP: All of you GIs had come out together.

HL: It was difficult to find meaningful work. You could get jobs selling pots and pans and stuff like that, which I did. I didn't do it as a graduate, but I did it as an undergrad.

KP: How did you get your first real job? How did that come about?

HL: Through the Rutgers placement office, which was in, God, I can't remember the names of anything now, I won't remember this one. Across the quadrangle there was a Victorian house up on a little hill and that's where the placement office was. I don't know if it's still there or not. Is "Holy Hill" still there?

KP: Oh, yes. "Holy Hill" is still here and the placement office was able to get you an interview with Diamond ...

HL: Yes, got me an interview with Diamond Expansion Bolt Company and Diamond hired me as a sort of an unofficial management trainee and put me to work, where I had a terrific boss who didn't have a lot of college type education, but had a lot of know how. He, along with Mason Gross and one or two other people, educated Hank Lawyer very well.

KP: I guess before leaving Rutgers totally, did you ever get contact with Douglass, the New Jersey College of Women? Did you date any of the women?

HL: I can show you some shoes that were pretty well worn down, on a back and forth. [laughter] Does that answer your question? Being both serious and light-hearted for a moment, one of the most beautiful girls I ever dated was from Douglass. As a matter-of-fact, at that time it was called New Jersey College for Women. It didn't become Douglass until I was out of school, I don't think.

KP: How did you meet your wife, 'cause you didn't marry a New Jersey College for Women ...

HL: Oh, okay. It had nothing to do with college. My wife and I met, ... my folks, I told you, had a house at the shore, in Point Pleasant. There was a fire in the woods, not woods, the grass whatever you call it around the property and I ran over to help put the fire out and she and a girlfriend who was staying with her ran over to see the fire and she and I got to talking and she said, "We don't have a car with us," and I forgot her girlfriend's name, but let's say Edythe, "Edythe and I don't have dates tonight. Would you like to take us down to the boardwalk?" and I said, "Yes, sure, I'll take you down to the boardwalk." I said, "One thing, I've only got about three dollars on me and that won't buy much," and she said, "Well, we'll treat. You provide the car." So, that's the whole story. Now, I've answered your question. [laughter]

KP: Was this unusual to be approached like this for a date? It almost seems a little unusual today. Not completely, but it seems more unusual in your day.

HL: She, well, my wife's always been very outgoing.

KP: Well, you obviously have a very happy marriage.

HL: Yes, forty-two years, forty-two years of connubial ...

RC: Okay. So, you have your first job when you come out. Now Korea comes up in 1950. Did you ever feel that you might possibly be called back in or did they ever ...

HL: No, because at the time when the war, the war that was on at the time, the Korean War, didn't take you in if you were twenty-seven or older and by that time I was twenty-seven and I was not about to go back for another war. So, the war never was a factor in my mind, really. I almost went in the military as I told you before, but that was before the Korean War.

KP: Which your life might have been very different if you had gone in the military in '49.

HL: Oh, yes. Absolutely.

KP: Do you ever think of that once ...

HL: Oh, yes. I've thought of that many times, as a matter-of-fact. I have friends, my age now, who are retired military naval officers and some of them have done mighty, mighty well and others have, you know, had a decent life, but I don't think my wife, outgoing as she is, would have sat still for the military. [I was in training to be a nurse and I am an RN. - Janice W. Lawyer] Because in the military, and you may know this already, every three years you're transferred and they do that on purpose and very frequently, particularly, well, not just the Air Force, but any of the fighting forces as opposed to the Coast Guard, they will transfer you at the drop of a hat and keep you going. ...

KP: Your first job, you were with Diamond Expansion Bolt Company for a long, long time.

HL: Seventeen years.

KP: And it sounds like you learned quite a bit from that company.

HL: I sure did. That's why I consider myself today a pretty damn good business manager.

KP: What were the lessons you didn't learn at Rutgers?

HL: Well, it's a question of practicality. It's a question of practicality. Not only I, but I think everybody, you guys included, learn the basics here. You learn the real world once you get out and have to meet a payroll, have to pay for the baby's new diapers, and you get what I'm driving at. The formal education, great, I think everybody should get as much of it as they can, but the practical education, and I was blessed with a couple of good, very good teachers.

KP: Why did you leave Diamond Expansion Bolt? It sounds like you had ...

HL: Well, they were, well, I was promised the presidency in five years. Unfortunately, the presidency never existed because Diamond was bought by General Cable, which is a big multinational corporation, and my presidency became just another job and at the same time, I was offered to head up a program for a company here in New Jersey, Elizabethtown Gas and Elizabethtown Water and that was very, very lucrative and that's the whole story.

KP: You've had experience with a diverse range of companies. Elizabethtown is a major company versus smaller companies.

HL: Well, basically, forget Elizabethtown for a moment, put it to one side for just a moment and I'll explain that to you, but, basically, I was in the metals processing business all of my adult life. I worked for companies, I ran companies, that made metal products or metal processing machinery. As far as Elizabethtown goes, either the gas or the water companies, I went with them to head up a diversification and acquisition program. Which never got off the ground because once we put everything together, the SEC came along and said, "Hey, fellas, a utility cannot own a non-utility." So, there I was at the tender age, I think, of fifty-one at the time or somewhere around there, and I would have had a job until I retired, but it was not the job I wanted.

KP: It could have been a very boring job.

HL: Yes. It is, it is. I worked for the gas and water companies for three years. Great people, wonderful people, very, very employee conscious people, but boring as hell and if you have say five, ten years of college, formal education in a competitive field and then go to work for a utility, you'll blow your brains out in six weeks, because, no stress, no hurry. If you don't get it done today, you know, tomorrow's another day. It's very hard to explain, but it's a totally different atmosphere and even their accounting procedures are totally different. It took me about six months to figure out a statement with the utility companies.

KP: Why such the difference between, well, partly you said they don't have the same competitive pressures?

HL: Exactly. That's the whole sum and substance of it. That's the total sum and substance. There's no competition. They make a big thing today, particularly the electric companies, that they are very, very competitive, bull feathers.

KP: Running industrial businesses up till very quite recently, and you're still serving as a consultant, manufacturing has taken quite a beating in New Jersey.

HL: [laughter] It's not taken a beating, it's dead. They can bury it. The problem there is quite simple. Wages in this area, or anyplace in the Northeast, are humongously large compared to

what you can get labor for in the Carolinas, Mississippi, well, Mississippi, they give away people down there.

KP: So, you think that's really the crux of the problem?

HL: Oh, I would stake my life on it, absolutely, that's the sum and substance of it. You can get economists, who are a lot smarter than I am, who will tell you that it's because this reason, that reason, some other reason, but plain and simple, the final analysis, it's money. The fact that the labor rate in the South is so much cheaper. ... It's not even close.

KP: Probably the most intriguing firm you worked for, I thought, was you worked for Solar Industries Incorporated. How did that sort of come about?

HL: Well, the company prior to that was a closely held company. A widow and her two sons, who couldn't manage the men's room, were running it and running it into the ground. They hired me.

KP: That was Blache Industries.

HL: Biache, Biache Industries, right. Biache hired me to come in and straighten out the mess, which I did over a period of about five years, and I'm not complaining because they paid me beautifully, but after five years, the two boys who were not boys, one was thirty-four and the other thirty-two, they decided it was time to take back the reins and they patted me on the head and gave me a couple of bucks and said, "Hank, you've done a great job for us, but we no longer need you. Bye-bye." At that time, I guess, I was about fifty-six, you've got the resume there, somewhere around fifty-six, and I was too young to totally retire and not financially, well, I guess I could have done it financially, but it would have been a stretch to do it financially at that particular time because I still had a kid in college. So, I went job hunting and one of my kids, who was is CPA with Coopers and Lybrand, said, "Dad, would you be willing to try something new at this point in your life?" and I said, "Yes, sure." So, she said, "Well, I've got a client with a major accounting firm and I can set up an interview for you, if you would like," and I said, "Yes, I would like." So, I got the interview and I got the job and they made me Executive VP and paid me very well, but then they went down the tube financially. So, after that, I worked as sort of a half-assed consultant, and that's the story of my life.

KP: I guess one of the other questions I have in terms of relating to your Rutgers experience is you were a business administration major, but you went into, in some ways, a technical area. Well, it almost seems like for your area, engineering would have been a logical, metal production or metal industries, or maybe I'm reading this ...

HL: No. What you are saying is true. One of the reasons I never had my own business was I couldn't come up with a product that I could manufacture and market. I always worked for somebody else because somebody else had the product idea and I had the management capability. At least, I thought I did.

KP: But you were very successful at ...

HL: I've made and I shouldn't say, not bragging, but I am bragging, I made a very, very good living at it for myself and my family, put three kids through college. Among the three of them they have two, four, they have five degrees, so, I guess, I took pretty good care of my kids and that's it.

RC: During your time when you were working, the country obviously had changed tremendously from the time that you left Rutgers, going through the fifties and sixties ...

HL: And how.

RC: Did you have any opinions on various conflicts that the United States got involved in? So, called "little wars" and, eventually, Vietnam, or did you basically stay away from ...

HL: No. It's pretty hard to have a big mouth, like I've got, and stay out of that sort of thing. I felt, as a matter-of-fact the Korean, not the Korean, the Vietnam War blossomed while I was with Elizabethtown Gas and Elizabethtown Water and a guy I had on my staff there was a retired lieutenant colonel, a black, retired lieutenant colonel, and he and I had a terrifically good relationship. We did a lot of things, both work-wise and socially, together and we said what we thought to each other and the only time he and I ever had a real, knockout, drag down fight was over the Vietnam War. He thought that it should be fought and fought until every last Oriental is murdered and I said, "This is ridiculous," and then he and I really went at it. That's the only hot thing I ever had war-wise, but it sort of pertains to your question. As far as Korea, I never thought we belonged there, but that was for strategic reasons. Vietnam, I guess I would say that, in the final analysis, I agree we had to be there, but it was not something that I really would have promoted.

KP: And in fact it sounds like at one point you began to doubt whether we should have been there given what you ...

HL: Oh, yes. Yes.

KP: This argument you had with this friend of yours, who was ...

HL: Exactly.

KP: You mentioned that your daughter was very politically aware.

HL: My eldest daughter, my forty-one, forty-two year old, whatever she is, daughter is a, young guys like you are probably going to hate me for even saying this, a very good do-gooder. Kim is about the nicest person and I'm trying to remember that she is my daughter, but about the nicest person I've ever met in my life. She has a genuine love for other people. A genuine feeling for other people. Her other two sisters aren't like that. They are more likely to be a bit like their old man who feels that everybody should pay his way through the world.

KP: Was she politically active growing up?

HL: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. She went down to the Carolinas and spent a summer taking care of impoverished black families and this is not a phony thing with her. There's not phony bone in her body.

KP: What does she do now?

HL: Now, she's a nurse with three degrees, two bachelor's degrees and a masters in nursing and well, shortly, as soon as her youngest kid gets big enough to be in school full-time, she's going to have a private practice as a lactation specialist.

KP: Your daughter was also, I'd figured out from your survey that she was part of the first Rutgers College class to go coed.

HL: Yes, yes, she was, she was.

KP: What did you think of that, to go to an all male school?

HL: Well, I got kick out of it. She had gone to another college for a year, a little one out in Ohio, Heidlburch, not the one in Germany, this is the one in Ohio, and she did very, very well. She's an excellent student. She's a bit of a grind, but she's an excellent student, but she got homesick out there, although to this day you could hold a gun at her head and she would never admit that she got homesick. After two years at Rutgers, she said, "Dad, if I dropped out of school for a year would you be upset? And I said, "First of all, yes, I would be upset, but I'm not going to get nasty about it." I said, "The one thing I would say to you, keep in mind that once you're out of school, I no longer support you. So, when you become a freelance whatever, you support Kim." That was the last I ever heard of dropping out of school. [laughter] So, she went on and got her bachelor's degree in political science, with the idea of going to law school, but then love found Kim. Kim and her eventual husband got together and she said, "To heck with law school. I'm going to go to nursing school," and that's what she did. So, little Kim has a master's and two bachelor's.

KP: And you said is a do-gooder.

HL: Oh, she is. She's a real bleeding heart. You would like her I know. I don't say that because she's my daughter. The other two kids I'm not so sure.

RC: It seems that the sense of getting a college education, that your mother had really pushed you towards, you carried that over.

HL: Oh, I'm not a phony about, well, I'm not a phony about much of anything. If I were, I would be a very rich man, no, quite seriously, I have always believed in education. I suppose that's due to my mother, and to a large extent, my stepfather and I have tried to, I never attempted to beat it

into their heads, but I have tried to encourage them. I mean this sincerely, too, as my stepfather said, "Get all the education you can get." ... I still believe that. As a matter-of-fact, something that the resume doesn't show, for all practical purposes, although I have this little consulting operation on the side, which doesn't amount to enough to keep me in cigarettes, I nevertheless, for all practical purposes, am really retired and I still, since retiring a few years ago, have continued to take courses at the Union Junior College level and at Kean, both of them. Not for any credits, just for the fun of learning something I didn't know yesterday.

KP: What do you take?

HL: You name it and I have taken it over the last five years.

KP: Oh, so, you've taken all over the curricula.

HL: I've taken history, philosophy, lot of social stuff, basically in that area. I've haven't tried to take any technical courses. The old brain doesn't function that well anymore.

RC: Being such a strong proponent of education and getting the GI Bill, which helped put you through Rutgers ...

HL: Without it, I couldn't have gone.

RC: How do you look upon programs today that the government sponsors to help people go to college that can't afford it ...

HL: Absolutely, absolutely. Without equivocation, I'd say support education to any extent you can afford.

KP: I guess one or two question, they're sort of out of sequence, but did you ever come in contact with any of the Tuskegee Airmen?

HL: No, no. I know who they were. They were outstanding pilots, before I knew what a joystick was, and they deserve all the credit they've gotten, believe me, and the planes they flew in combat were coffins. They flew fighter planes, but they were outdated fighter planes and they took on anything that the Germans would send against them.

KP: Were you aware of that at the time? How bad their planes were?

HL: I would say probably, no, I can't say categorically, but, probably, no.

KP: But when you learned about them you became, because of your knowledge it sounds like you were very aware of what ...

HL: Yes, but it was not something that I was directly involved in and we all tend to save our own skins, so, ... I think the Tuskegee Airmen should certainly be admired by anybody.

KP: That was about the only question I had meant to ask. Is there anything that we forgot to ask, anything about your experiences before the war, during the war, or after the war?

HL: Let me see my resume for a minute. I'm perfect, but there are other people who are almost as perfect as I am. The only other thing that I might say is at one time I was a very strong believer in solar energy, but, right at the moment, don't invest your money in it.

KP: It sounds like you were a bit disappointed that solar didn't turn out the way ...

HL: Oh, yes. The guy who started the company practically bankrupted himself and his family to get the thing off the ground. Before he realized that solar, as an industry, is great potentially, but is still five to ten years away from practicality and I feel very sorry for him. I didn't enjoy working with him because I have had too many years of being "the boss" and when I was working with him he was "the boss," and that went against the grain. No, seriously, you know, it's tough to be a leader and then become the second banana, but the guy deserves a lot of credit, that's the point I'm trying to make. ... I think we covered just about everything here. For whatever it might be worth, I have traveled all over the world, literally.

KP: Have you been to Japan and Germany?

HL: Yes. I've been to Germany many times. Japan, my wife and I spent our thirtieth anniversary, about two weeks in Japan. We've hit just about every country in Western Europe. We visited countries in South America and North Africa. As my wife and I say, now that we're old coots and, believe me, the clock is winding down, and we can't do the, no, seriously, physically we can not do the things we could do even a couple of years ago. We are both golf nuts. At one time, and I'm bragging now, I was a very competitive golfer. My wife was a very good, for a woman, forgive me, dear, golfer, but both of us have really, whatever expertise we had is, "Plghhh!" now, and life is winding down like that. I'm sixty-nine and she's sixty-six so, sixty-seven. Gee, I'm married to an old woman.

KP: Most Americans of your generation and my generation haven't been to Japan. You spent a lot of time in Japan.

HL: Not a lot of time.

KP: [Has] it ever surprised you how well Japan has done in the sense ...

HL: Economically.

KP: And also we were very bitter enemies and the fact that you would spend two weeks there.

HL: Well, let me add to the story a little bit there. My wife's brother, her only sibling, was killed in the war, World War II, by the Japanese. I was a little gun-shy of taking her to Japan. Not that we've ever discussed it, but the truth of the matter was we had traveled so extensively and we,

except for Bermuda which we go back like we change our socks, we don't like to go back usually to place we've been and we were running out of places. So, I said to her one evening, "Would you object to going to Japan?" and she said, "Well, why would I object?" and I said, "Well, Bob was killed in the war by the Japanese," and my wife said, much to my pleasant surprise, "What am I going to do, hold a grudge all my life?" So, with that I answer your question. We did not get any, on our side or on the Japanese side, indications of animosity, no. As a matter-of-fact, they treated us very, very well. I always try to learn a few phrases in the country where we were going. It was a joke. It was a fiasco. I don't have a flair for languages, but I get fun out of kicking them around, but the Japanese was just too much for me, but they were very, very gracious. They spoke their sing-song English to us to keep us happy and help us wherever they could and my wife and I are wanderers. We, although we do go on group things at a time, we, more often than not, will go by ourselves and usually, as I say, I can fiddle-faddle my way through the language, but Japan, no. Another thing in Japan, that you may or may not know, there are no house numbers, building numbers, or anything like that, so, if you're looking for an address in Japan you better be able to speak a little Japanese, which I don't. I know, *Hai*, which means yes, and, *Sayonara*, which everybody knows, and what was the one at breakfast? Oh, in Japanese, *Ohio*, which is pronounced just like our state, means good morning. *Ohio* is good morning, so, the first morning we were there, the waiter was bringing us our breakfast, he said, "*Ohio*." I've bored you guys long enough, and I don't want to go out without this.

KP: I guess I have one or two other follow-up questions.

HL: Listen, I'm yours until another half hour if you really need me, if you don't, I would rather go.

KP: Did you ever return to any of the places you were stationed, or look up any of your airbases, especially in the more exotic places you've been to? Have you ever been back to Panama?

HL: No, you know I've never thought of it that way to be honest with you, but I, no, I've never gone back to, the only place, the only military installation of any kind that I've ever gone back to is Fort Dix and I went there on a business trip so I've never gone back to a military installation other than that.

KP: Or go back to Panama to see where you ...

HL: No, no. If you've ever been to Panama you wouldn't be anxious to go back.

RC: How about any air shows? Did they have any of the planes you used to fly?

HL: I go to, as a matter-of-fact, because I'm me, I'm difficult to buy things for, as my family will tell you, so, my family, whenever there's an air show, they take me to the air show. Take the doddering old man to the air show, so, I get to see all of them in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio. We've never gone further than Ohio and I see all the old planes like I used to fly, but nobody ever offers me a chance to fly them and I think it's a darn good thing because I probably would pile them up before I ever got them off the ground.

KP: At what point did you realize that you were never going to be a flyer again? Did you toss it around in the early fifties that you'd like to go into professional aviation and fly for an airline?

HL: No, no. I tried to keep the interest in flying alive as much as I could within the framework of my finances and that was the deterrent, plain and simple. My folks were retired. They had no money for me and I had a, basically, get it off the ground type of job at that point in my life, so, I just couldn't afford it. If I had money, if I had come from a family with money, I probably would have flown and maybe have made a career of it. I had a guy working for me up in Hackensack about thirty years ago, who came from a very well-to-do family, and they financed his aviation education. He got a degree in aeronautical engineering, paid for by his parents, and they gave him the best in flying lessons and aviation, but I had nothing like that to fall back on. If I had, I think, I would have made a career of flying, yes. This guy I allude to did make a career of flying. Last I heard of him, he was a flight instructor at the airport in Trenton, Robinsonville, I think it's called.

KP: Well, unless I've forgotten something, thank you very much. We appreciate it.

HL: Thank you, I enjoyed it.

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Reviewed by Jamie Wang 11/4/02

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 11/15/02

Reviewed by Janice W. Lawyer 2/03