

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH IRVING E. PAPE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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AND

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HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Mr. Irving E. Pape on January 3, 1995 in Hackensack, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and...

Curtis Tao: And Curtis Tao.

KP: And I guess I'd like to begin by asking a little bit about your family background and your parents. Your father was born in East Orange but he was....

Irving E. Pape: No, he was born in Russia. Both my parents were born in Russia. I was born in Waterbury, Connecticut. They came here when they were very young. My Dad walked across half of Europe, at the age of fifteen, to get out of Russia. And worked in the vineyards in Germany and France to save money and came to this country as a boy of seventeen on the ... Mauritania. And for some reason, which we never knew, all of our relatives had come to Waterbury, Connecticut, which is where he went.

And he and my mother, who was underage, worked in ... factories in Waterbury, which was the brass center of the world and also the clock industry of the world at that time. And after they worked for twelve hours they would run home and have a sandwich and then run downtown to study English because the worst insult in those days was to call somebody a greenhorn. And they didn't want to be considered greenhorns. So my mother spoke English perfectly, but had difficulty with one word. She could not say arthritis. And that always came out "arthur-itis." And my Dad had trouble transposing v's and w's. He would say he put on a west, and went vest, which was his only problem.

But ... they both worked very hard as ... young people. I have pictures of them in the den which I'll show you when we're through. And my Dad's adventures in going from Russia to Cherbourg, France to get out of Europe are worthy of a novel.

KP: What had happened to him on the way?

IP: Well, he ... got in a second class coach and in the Russian trains the baggage was underneath the seats. There was a sliding door. You open it up. ... So, he crawled in. There was a lady in the compartment. He told her what he was gonna do. And the reason he was doing this was that he had gone to a small town. He lived on a farm. The farm was on the line of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in the War of 1812. And in the spring plowing they would dig up artifacts from the French Army and from the French Armory Train. They had buttons, pieces of weapons and uniforms, tattered flags and things.

And when they came to this country, they had this stuffed in a cardboard box on the boat. Also included was the family Bible with a listing of the births of everybody, and who got married and all the family history. And, unfortunately, somebody stole it. So we lost the whole history of our family. But my dad, himself, told me the story of how he came to this country. And he was in this town and they didn't have paved roads in those days. What they had were dirt roads and when it rained it got very muddy. The streets got muddy.

So they built, instead of sidewalks, they had, like, boardwalks about eighteen inches high. So the gentry in their finery could walk without getting mud on their boots. And he came by a Cossack officer wearing a white uniform ... who took a swing at him with a riding crop because he was a farm boy and he was wearing farm clothes. He knocked him into the street and my Dad said he looked up and he said, "I'm not gonna stay in a country that treats their people like this," and made up his mind that he was going with fifteen, about the equivalent of fifteen dollars that the family gave him. Got on this train, crawled underneath the seat [and] the woman fed him.

When they came to the Polish border--the customs was very lax in those days. You could walk across. So he walked across. Got a job in Poland. He slept in barns. Worked his way into the wine country in Germany, where he worked for a year. Saved his money and he drove the wagons with the big barrels of grapes. That was his job. He was a husky kid. And that was his job, and then he did the same thing. He worked his way towards France. Got to France and when he had money for his passage, he got on the boat and came to Waterbury, Connecticut. So that's why I am here.

KP: And you already had family in Waterbury?

IP: I had ... his only sister in America, and there were other cousins that were there, all from the same general area in Russia. But he had two brothers in Russia with a total of nine children, all of whom were lost in the war. And his mother, who lived in a log cabin, was also lost. ... After the war, we never heard from any of them, so we knew they had to be dead. Because before the war my dad would send them money, and we would send things, clothing and things. And they would always acknowledge the letters. But he lost his whole family in Russia, and he was never able to talk about it.

KP: Really?

IP: It was a blow to his heart.

KP: Had he tried to bring them to the United States?

IP: He tried. It was too late.

KP: And your Mother, did your Mother also immigrate.....?

IP: My Mother came here when she was twelve. She was a very pretty girl and there was a big Jewish community in Waterbury. She was a very popular girl. And she worked in a factory and they realized she was under age. But she said no, she was out of the eighth grade. She had, you know, done her studies and everything. And she picked up on English very quickly. And as a consequence they didn't know whether she was or she wasn't.

So they kept her because they worked in those days, five and a half days-half a day on Saturday, and twelve hours Monday through Friday.

And she was a good worker and she was quick to learn. And ... she got in. I have a picture I'll show you of my folks. They got married and a year later I was born. I was an only child. And we used to talk about the difference between Russia and this country. And my dad would say to me, "You know, you have no idea how good you have it here." And we were living in East Orange which, ... in those days was the bedroom of Wall Street. I mean, it was a beautiful town to grow up in. And nobody locked their doors. We didn't have problems. All the kids, you know, knew each other and Saturday afternoon when they had a football game every kid in town came and we had a great time. Saturday night we'd go out with the girls.

We had a 1932 Ford with a rumble seat. And life was wonderful. And he would say to me, "You don't know how good you have it here." And I never knew what he was talking about until I got to France and Germany during the war. And then I knew for the first time what he meant when he said how wonderful this country is.

KP: It sounds like your father did well in the United States?

IP: My father worked very hard. He had ... at an ... very early age. He was in his 20s, he became the biggest magazine distributor in New England. And some friends of his wanted him to run for sheriff in New Haven County. And because he was not a politician--he was not interested in politics--he laughed. But they coaxed him, so he ran.

The problem was that he ran on the socialist ticket. And when the war came on, the socialists were looked upon as a bunch of bearded Russians running around throwing these round bombs with sparkling fuses, and it ruined him because he had to get out of the business. They wouldn't deal with him anymore. He was looked on as a radical nut. And as a consequence he ... struggled. He had a tobacco and stationary store in East Orange which he opened up at the height of the Depression, at a time when everybody told him you can't go in business, everybody's going out of business. He went in. We had meat on the table every night. He bought a home. I was raised in a nice home in East Orange. The school system was great.

KP: So your father did well in...?

IP: My father worked very hard. He worked long hours. But ... he never wanted to work for anybody again after his experiences in Waterbury at the clock factory. He was the inspector in charge of quality and they were making Ingersoll watches, which sold for \$1.95. And all the stores and the gas stations had 'em, cigar stores, everywhere had Ingersoll watches. And the ones that didn't run, he would pull out of the line to be repaired.

So he got called into the office and the boss told him, "We don't make defective watches here." He said, "Well, when I find one what should I do?" So the boss said to him, "We don't make defective watches here." And my Dad said, "But you do." And they said, "Harry, your fired." (laughs) That was his last experience working for someone else. He just refused to work for anybody else. That was his experience. Yup.

KP: Your Father, was the problem he had with his magazine distributorship the reason he moved to East Orange?

IP: Yes. Well, he moved because Waterbury, basically, was a heavy industry kind of a town. They made all the brass products in the world in those days. They made most of the watches made in the world. Certainly all of the watches made in the United States were made either in Torrington, which is adjacent to Waterbury, or [in] Waterbury. But it was an industrial town. He didn't like it. He had a friend in East Orange who wrote him, "You should come here. This is a lovely place to be."

They should see it now. It looks like a battlefield. It's all ... falling apart. Very distressing. But it was a beautiful town when I was a boy. And ... I have nothing but fond memories. And in those days if you graduated East Orange High School with a B+ average, you could get into any college in the country without taking an exam. I could have gone to Harvard with my grades. And I wasn't an honor student, but I had a B+ average.

KP: It sounds like you...oh...

CT: How did the Depression effect everyone else in your town?

IP: Well, it was very hard because the Wall Street people were loaded in East Orange. They had beautiful apartments and many of the prominent Wall Street brokers lived in East Orange. And when the crash came, overnight these people were broke. Absolutely flat broke. They had no assets. They were wiped out. And they didn't handle it too well.

There were several suicides in town, including my dad's lawyer who jumped off the roof of an apartment building, couldn't handle it. And every week, when we would come to school, there would be news about somebody else, or somebody knew his son or his daughter, and he had killed himself. So it was ... very hard to take.

In those days East Orange didn't have bread lines. But when I would go to New York with my mother to visit her sister the bread lines were all over the place and there were beggars all over the place. And people who had held good jobs were beyond the corner selling apples for a nickel a piece. And we would take a carton of food, because she had two children, my aunt. And I was always nicely dressed. My mother would take me down to Bambergers and I always had a nice polo coat,. you know, and....

KP: So, she would take you to Bambergers in Newark?

IP: Yes. And you always had the same salesmen in those days. No matter what you bought in the store he went with you. It was great! They knew us. They knew what I liked. They knew what she liked. So when I came to New York and I was well dressed everybody looked at us like we had a lot of money, so we were a soft touch.

And as you walked along, people would come out of the line, you know, and say, "Give me a nickel, I haven't had anything to eat today." And it wasn't one or dozens, it was hundreds of people like this. I don't think you can relate to this because in your lifetime Curtis you never saw anything like this. But it's very distressing to walk around. I worked in New York for 40 years. To see homeless people sleeping in the Port Authority, in the Port Authority, because it reminded

me of what 1929 was like. I was eight years old at the time, but I was old enough to see what was happening. I didn't understand why, overnight, how could everything go bad? But to see all these people starving, literally starving, and some committing suicide is dreadful. And I have hopes that in my lifetime I will never live to see anything like this again.

It was that bad. People couldn't afford a pack of cigarettes, and cigarettes were twenty cents a pack. They would come in and buy one cigarette for a penny, because they didn't have money. People who [were] Wall Street brokers ... wound up with jobs as used car salesmen, who were getting ten dollars a week. You know, from opulence to ten dollars a week. How do you adjust to it, a life like this? And the town was filled with ... people like this, who had had great wealth and now were doing menial things to stay alive. And my dad had the store and every night when we came home we had a beautiful dinner. We had everything we needed to eat. If I needed clothes my mother would deprive herself and my dad too, so that I would always look nice.

And that was the way that they were raised, that the children had to have a better life than the parents. That was the tradition. And our family--and, of course, I have three sons and I try to continue that. I had two boys go to the University of Virginia. One spent seven years there, three in law school and four as an undergraduate. And the third one went to Penn. So I did what I could and when they were ready I said to 'em, "Boys, I'm gonna tell you what my Father said. The world is your oyster." (laughs) "Go get 'em. Whatever you do you're gonna do for yourself now 'cause you're off the payroll." (laughs)

KP: So your Father said that to you too?

IP: He did. He did. He said, "I'll put you through school, but the day you graduate you're off the payroll." I went into the Army for 29 or 30 dollars a month, so I had a big income off the, you know, right off the start.

CT: What was the ethnic makeup of East Orange back then?

IP: East Orange was, basically, [a] white, Protestant town. There was a small group of black people and I think there ... [were] six or eight Jewish families in a town of approximately 25 or 30,000 people. But the way we lived, we didn't even think about ethnic backgrounds because everybody was friendly. There were a half a dozen kids, black kids, who played football. I was friendly with 'em. I wrote for the school newspaper. I covered sports. I went to the away games on the school bus with them. Never had a problem in terms of racial antagonism of any kind. There was no anti-Semitism in those days. At least, in my high school I never ran into it. And when I went into service many of my teachers would write me letters and send me little notes about what was happening in school and I would write them back. It was very nice. It was a hometown atmosphere but in which everybody belonged. It's so different today, it's incredible. It's just unbelievable.

KP: You said there were not many Jewish communities in East Orange at that time....

IP: There were only ... six families or so.

KP: Did you belong to a synagogue in Newark?

IP: No, ... I was sent to Sunday school, originally, because my grandfather was Orthodox. They wanted to please him. So they sent me to an Orthodox synagogue in Orange, which was very depressing because the little kids in all the grades were all in one room with a light bulb. And I had to take a trolley car to Orange to get there and I came home and I said to my mother, "I'm not going anymore." She said, "Why?" I said, "Because my first day in class he opened up the Hebrew book and said, 'Read,' and I can't read, so he whacked me on the knuckles with a ruler. And if I had to go back there I'm gonna run away from home." ... And my mother and father got into a discussion after I went to bed in the kitchen. And I heard this whole thing. And my mother said, "Harry, if he says he's gonna run away from home, he will run away from home." And my dad gave in.

So we went to a Reformed Temple in East Orange, which was quite nice, ... big Grecian columns ... and stuff. One of my wife's cousins that I didn't know at the time, and I played in the same school orchestra. And at our wedding we recognized each other. So it was quite a coincidence. But I stayed with that for a while and then the rabbi that I liked got killed in a freak accident, cranking his car. Somehow, when the engine started he had left the car in gear and it ran over him on a hill in West Orange and killed him. And I didn't like the man who replaced him. So I dropped out.

And I have found, ever since World War II, that my opinion of organized religion has changed from what it used to be. I could take it or leave it in those days, but when I saw what I saw in Europe and I started to think about it, I was never able to understand how people who could call themselves Christians or people who could call themselves Jews could be at each other to the point where they could put human beings in ovens. I didn't understand that. So I said if there is a God, where was he? And I have asked that question to myself ever since.

We have belonged, we support a synagogue in this area, primarily because I wanted to give my children the benefit of a Jewish education. And once they were confirmed they had the opportunity to continue to go or not to go. I have two Christian daughter-in-laws. One is an Episcopalian and the other one is Catholic. And we have a wonderful family. We have never had a problem with the fact that these are mixed marriages. And ... I think it's just wonderful that they're happy together. And ... each one participates as they wish. My son will go to Christmas services in Washington, my oldest boy with his wife. And she will come to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur with my son. And ... they have one little child. They take him. So, we've never had a problem in our family with that. I have a problem reconciling organized religion with what I saw. And I can't shake it. I just can't believe it could happen.

KP: You mentioned that East Orange had a very good high school.

IP: Yes.

KP: When did you know you were going to college? It sounds like your parents expected you to go to college?

IP: Oh, it was. From the time I got into kindergarten I knew I was going to college. I mean, that was it. The path was laid out. And this is interesting, I'm glad you're here Curtis, because I think that certain ethnic groups have a great respect for education. And I think the Jewish people certainly do, and I think that the Oriental people respect learning, respect intelligence, academic achievement, and ... it's a shame that everybody doesn't have the same respect for learning. But I was taught you have to be an achiever to get ahead. My son, the oldest one who went to UVA for seven years, when he graduated law school the dean of the law school came over to me and he said, "I want you to know something. Your son wasn't the easiest student I ever had. But there was nobody in his class that came better prepared than your son. And when you go into a court room, the attorney who's the best prepared is the one who wins the case." And I was pleased to hear that. I thought that was great.

KP: How well ... did East Orange prepare you for Rutgers?

IP: Oh, I think it was great. First off, ... my junior year, I was a bit of a dilettante. I fooled around in school. I found out about girls, which were a distraction. And we had so many pretty girls in my high school class, it was incredible. I mean, really good looking girls. And in those days ... the uniform for the girls was a cashmere sweater. Everybody wore, you know, the same kind of shoes. And everybody wore white socks and all.

And you weren't allowed to smoke on the block where the high school was located. You couldn't smoke the cigarette. You had to behave yourself. They would suspend people who acted up, which was very rare. And, my junior year, one of my teachers called me in and said, "You know, you're fooling around a lot." Well, I was kind of a hard nosed guy. We were studying, for example, ancient poetry, English poetry. And I found it so damned boring, I couldn't stand the class. It was driving me crazy. So the teacher called on me and said, "Explain this." And I said, "I can't, 'cause I can't read it." I said, "I think this is the dumbest thing I've ever read." Well, she flew into a rage. I had had similar experiences in grammar school with one of my teachers.

Anyway, I sat down with one of the teachers who took a great interest in me. Her name was Ms. Rupert. She was my Latin teacher. And she said, "You know, if you put the effort to it not only could you be the best student in my class but possibly, the best I ever had." And I looked at her, I had never thought about that. She said, "You're sailing through with a minimum effort and I want you to sit down and realize that if you don't up your grades you're not gonna get into college." So from that day on my grades went way up.

And I got into Rutgers with no problems. And they told us, you know, one third of you fellah's in the freshman class won't be here in January. And it was true. They were gone. And they told us it's harder to stay in Rutgers, in those days, than it was to stay in Harvard or Yale. I had a cousin at Yale, roomed with Larry Kelly, the football player. I don't know how he got through Yale. (laughs) He was lazy. He was a playboy. But he made it. He got out in four years with a diploma. But I worked ... pretty hard.

And I'll tell you something, the fraternity system at Rutgers, which I think is in disarray today, saved my skin. Because my first semester, as a freshman, I was having a terrible time keeping up with my work. First off, I had to take a science. I was taking chemistry, which meant a four hour

lab every Thursday. And I struggled with chemistry because I was a history and poli[tical] sci[ence] major. And I loved history and political science. I had Doc George, and we had a great time in class. I couldn't wait to get to his classes. So, I kind of struggled with that.

And then you'd go to the library. Like I said, you couldn't get the outside reading books. So, I was pledged to SAM Fraternity and moved in. And found that there were a half a dozen fellahs in the class who were taking the same studies that I was taking. So when we had 300 pages of outside reading, instead of having to read 300 pages we would make outline notes of 60 pages. And sit down in the den and everybody'd go around the room and we would discuss everything thoroughly. And, you knew, my grade shot up my second semester at Rutgers.

And then, when the war came on, we had a meeting and we said, O.K. fellahs, we're gonna do this in style. We going out of Rutgers. We want to do something great. We want to win the Scholarship Cup. And we did with a record that I don't think has ever been touched. And we did it. That was our goodbye to Rutgers.

KP: Why did you select Rutgers? It is one question I always ask everyone.

IP: Well, I had an English teacher named Bauer, who was very nice, and who liked me. And I wrote on the school paper. ... Some of my theme papers were well written, so ... he felt I should go to his college, which was Williams. And I, you know, coming from immigrant parents like that, my folks didn't know Harvard or Yale or ... anything like that.

So we started to look into some of these places and found out that the fees were astronomical. My dad couldn't afford those kind of fees, number one. And number two, at the time there weren't too many Jewish kids going to Yale. I mean, my cousin Billy was, probably, one of the few and the only reason they took him was because he was on the swimming team. We didn't feel that I would have that kind of problem at Rutgers. In those days there were nineteen fraternities. There were three Jewish fraternities. It was obvious that Jewish kids from the metropolitan area would be accepted.

That was not the case at Cornell. I don't think they had one Jewish kid at Williams. And here was this lovely professor pushing me to go to Williams, so we started asking around. And at that time, I had a friend who was in my class who became a surgeon. He went to Harvard Med. His brother was up at Dartmouth, and he was the varsity center on the first string football team. And at that time, he was probably the only Jewish kid in Dartmouth. And he had his lumps up there as a football hero and all. There were plenty of cracks made about the Jew playing ball for Dartmouth. And in the summertime when he would come back and visit, all the kids would come down because he was a big football hero, kind'a unusual for Jewish people to have football heroes, you know. And we would sit there and listen to him tell stories to us, and some of the stuff he told was what had [been] his experiences. I had another friend, named Bob Haber, who was in our fraternity. Bob Haber had originally signed up to play football for another school. He's in the shower and two assistant coaches came in and started talking about the Jew boy from Erasmus High School. That was him. Toweled himself off and got dressed, and came down and signed up for Rutgers.

So we didn't see any problems at Rutgers. I certainly wasn't gonna go to Princeton. Princeton was notorious. Cornell was another one that was notorious. If they took one or two Jewish boys they were miserable the whole time they were there. And ... I didn't want that, and we knew people who had kids at Rutgers and they were very happy. Rutgers was great in those days. We got to know everybody. Everybody! You couldn't walk down College Avenue without seeing the whole school, you know. And it was a very warm experience for me. It was. It was great. And all of the fellahs that were on the archives committee said the same thing. 'Cause we came down and we walked around the buildings and the library and said look at the stuff they've got here. Can't believe it. We didn't have any of that stuff. But we had something warmer. We were really bound together. When I see somebody I knew in the Class of '41 and I get a welcome, that can't happen today. You know, 38,000 students walking around, how do you get to know half the people in the school? You can't. And I don't know how big the classes are, but in those days a big class was twenty. And there were fellahs there from classes ahead of you and your own class. It was a nice mix.

Fred Lacey, who became a federal judge, sat next to me in a Poli Sci class along with Charlie Morris, who was another judge from my class. And ... you got to know everybody in the ... Advanced French class that I took, with Clarence Turner. There were only two freshman in the whole class, my roommate and I. And we loved it. It was great. We got to know all these juniors and seniors, all these big heroes, you know. And ... it was wonderful. And we played football against guys that were in our league. We played Lafayette and Lehigh and ... it was a fun thing to go to a game. And they wore leather helmets and didn't have face masks at all but ... it was great.

CT: Why did you decide to major in history and political science?

IP: I wanted to be a lawyer. And in those days, lawyers were highly respected. Unfortunately, today that's not the case. But when I was there. ... In my dad's mothers family, we had the most prominent diagnostician, was a cousin. And another cousin who was a piano protege who had a debut in Carnegie Hall at the age of twelve or thirteen. I had another cousin who was a protege of Wanda Levandowska, who was a famous harpsichordist. She went to Julliard on a full scholarship.

So there were achievers in the family. And we had one attorney, who was a cousin of my mothers, who became the inspiration for Elmer Rice's play "Counselor at Law." This guy was a pip. He represented the Furriers Union and at the same time had the Furrier manufacturers as a client. (laughs) So he got caught ... and as a result got disbarred because you can't have both participants in a thing like this. They were having a strike. It was in the courts and he's representing both sides. So the judge said wait a minute. And they disbarred him. Had an interesting career.

Went to California, and became the first guy to publish what we call today skin magazines. You know, with the little ladies disrobing. ... It was much more demure than ... it became later on. And he made a lot of money at this. And then went down to South America and married a six foot show girl, a red headed show girl that he met in some night club and wound out having absolutely a picnic. ... He had made a lot of money. He didn't have to work. He had the best of

everything. And this guy, who was the black sheep of the family, probably had the most interesting life of anybody. That's ... from the family archives.

CT: How was your first year of classes?

IP: My first year classes, except for my science classes, were great. I ... studied history. I studied political science. The chemistry lab was killing me on Thursday. And I had signed up for an 8 o'clock biology class, and I never had time to have breakfast. So I would go to the biology class hungry. And the day that we did the frog business, you know, with the batteries in the frogs, I was on the verge of chucking. And I said to the professor, "It's very nice, but I don't think that I can handle this course," and I signed down on it. In my first year I was studying journalism and we spent an inordinate amount of time ... on type and kinds of type and why you do this and the mechanics of it, which I found boring. So I switched over to history and political science. And the only reason I went in for journalism was because everybody was telling me I could write the stuff. So I would take a shot at that but, ... you know, type and technical things ... were not for me. But I wrote for the Targum for four years. I had one story I wrote published in Antho ... the Anthology magazine. But, basically, my concentration was history, political science, and one semester of French which I sailed through. And I was called in 'cause I was flunking chemistry, and they told me you know, "You're not doing well." And I said, "Take a look at the other courses. ... I'm doing great in my major courses, and I'm doing terrible in the science courses that I'm required to take. And they're boring as hell 'cause I am never gonna need chemistry." I said, "You're talking to a guy who can't even change a light bulb and you want me to spend 4 hours every Thursday"you know, so the Dean was very nice.

KP: Which Dean was it?

IP: Dean Read was the head of the Chemistry school. I went to him for advice. He was not my teacher. After I spoke to Dean Read I spoke to the teacher, and then, I think, the two of 'em got together and they looked at my records, and my interacademic records were fine. In addition to that I was playing freshman soccer. I was on the school newspaper, and I was kind of busy. Now the fraternity said, "Look, in this fraternity everybody does something outside of their own little academic studies. You gotta find something and go after it." So I started to write ... for the Targum, which I did for four years. And I enjoyed that. That was a good experience.

CT: Where did you live your first semester, before you moved into the fraternity?

IP: [I] came down with a friend of mine from East Orange, a red headed Irishmen who came from a large family named William V. Rafferty, Jr. On the Class of 1943 war monument that we have up by the RAC center, his name is on the monument. [I] found a Christmas card that he had sent me. Oh no, that's not the card. I got it some place. And Bill's father was a judge in East Orange. He came from a highly respected family. He had a lot of brothers and sisters. And he said to me, "I'm going down. Let's go down." And we went down for the indoctrination, but it never dawned on us that there wouldn't be enough rooms in the dormitory. So we came down and there are a couple of sophisticated sophomores, and the guy says, "We have no room in the dorms." But he gave us a list of places to go. So we went to Hardenburg Street and we came to 27 Hardenburg Street, which was owned by a widow, and three of us moved in. David Luhmann

was in my class. He was quite an achiever, and I was in the class, and the other fellow was a senior named Earl MacPherson. And we studied in the attic, and if you think Lincoln had problems, each one had a single bulb hanging from a cord, no shade, and that's where you had to study. And it was the most depressing thing I have ever gone through. But, when I moved into the fraternity house, and I had five or six fraternity brothers all studying the same courses and everything, and we would have these discussion, rap sessions, it was very helpful to me because now I was getting things that I wasn't exposed to before. And ... it was kind of lonely living in a private house. I don't think I was alone in ... the way I felt in those days. It wasn't what I had expected. And I would go to Ford Hall and see the guys, you know, having a good time in Ford Hall. And the accommodations were nicer, and it was, that was the College Life. I was living in a garret like Abraham Lincoln. So I didn't like that too much.

CT: You pledged second semester your first year?

IP: Yes.

CT: What was the pledge program like?

IP: You mean in terms of hazing?

CT: Yes.

IP: Well, they had paddles, but I think I was paddled once as a gesture. Our freshmen were called in and they were told that we expect you to be achievers in school. And if you need help in your work you come to us and you'll get help. We want you to do things. The freshmen had to run down when it was exam week. They had to run down to the pharmacy, Doc Kaufmans, which was off of College Avenue, where we could get sandwiches. Or we would run down to the Crystal Restaurant, which was the Greek restaurant near the railroad station, and get hot dogs and coffee, because we would stay up all night studying. But we didn't have real hazing, as such. And the initiation was the only time, and at that time you were blindfolded, and there was a lot of inka-dinka-do stuff. And, basically, they would crack an egg over your head and then they'd put talcum powder on your hair. And it was silly things that, but there was no brutality.

KP: You weren't dropped off somewhere and....

IP: Oh no, none of that stuff. I had a discussion with Lenny Hanson, who was a DU at Rutgers, when we were walking down the campus, down College Avenue, actually, for our 50th reunion. And we came to the DU house, which had been boarded up. And Lenny said to me, you know, "Could you believe this? We had such a fine fraternity house," which was true. And he said, "They go and do something stupid like this. What is the matter with these kids today?" I don't know. And the fraternities were, kind of, decrepit looking. I have to tell you. It's an embarrassment to walk past some of them. When we were there, every fraternity house was kept. We would come down the end of August, and paint every bedroom in the fraternity house and have the outside of the fraternity painted about every five years. Because we had a white house on the corner of Easton Avenue. It was a gorgeous place. And you come down now and paint is peeling and they're decrepit. The students are running around in a state of disarray. I mean, the

grungy looking outfits, you know, which my generation doesn't understand. We tried to look as nice as we could and they're trying to look as dopey as they can. And ... it's hard to understand why. ... From behind you can't tell the boys from the girls. They all got blue jeans. They all got long hair. A lot of 'em got that little rubber band around the back of their hair. So, who are you ... looking at? You can't tell. And with all those people down there, I think it becomes so depersonalized. We never had date rapes. You could walk around the campus at NJC at 2 o'clock in the morning and not have a problem. Never have a problem. [That's] not the case today. We didn't have Rutgers Police and we ... the big activity ... in the fraternity houses, occasionally, was to have a beer party. I mean, that was wild, right?

CT: How was the dating scene at Rutgers?

IP: Well, my Freshman year I didn't have time for the dating scene because I was ... battling chemistry problems. (laughs)

IP: But I did meet a very pretty girl at ... NJC who was a sister of one of the guys in the fraternity house.

CT: Did you always make the trek up the hill?

IP: And we made the trek, but the funniest trek....

KP: Hold that....hold that thought.

-----End of Side One, Tape One-----

IP: The funniest trek we made was right after we got into the war in 1941. And I was walking over ... towards NJC and Dick Nelson, who was in the Kappa Sig house had come out and we started to talk. So he said, "Where are you going?" I said, "I'm going over to NJC." He said, "Me too." So we walked over there and they had these little houses and ... there was a reception area where you walked in. You asked for your lady friend, and they would send word upstairs. And then you had to leave. So what happened was, ... the first black out in the area took place, and all the lights in the whole area of New Brunswick went out. Now, I'm sitting there in a reception area, by myself and all the girls are coming down stairs, most of 'em in their bathrobes. (laughs) And one of 'em says out loud, "Wouldn't it be great if my boy friend was here." And everybody said, "Yeah." I said, "Well there's one boyfriend here now." So they all ran back upstairs. And my lady friend came down and we didn't know what we were supposed to do, so I said to hell with it, let's stay here. So we stayed and it lasted much longer than a normal test black out. And Dick Nelson wrote about this a few years ago and the article was printed in the Alumni Monthly. It was hilarious. He had the same experience I had. And to my knowledge, we were the only two that were over there on a weekday night enjoying the black out as much as we did. They, subsequently, changed the rule at NJC when there was a black out. If there were any men in the house they had to get out the front door right away. Which ... anyway, that's what it was like. A lot of the fellahs dated NJC girls. I also ... brought up a girl I liked very much from Randolph Macon College in Lynchburg, Virginia. Other fellahs brought in girls from other places. We went up to Syracuse one time. I met some Syracuse girls, but I didn't meet anybody I really liked.

So I essentially went steady for three years at Rutgers. We went to all the dances. Great, we had ... all the good bands were there. And ...

CT: Where were the dances held?

IP: In the gymnasium on College Avenue. It was great. We also had a concert series that was terrific. And I was at the concert series when Paul Robeson led it off. And the place was packed. And he came out and got a tremendous ovation. And he was very gracious with the crowd because he sensed the electricity in the air. And they insisted on ovation after ovation. He sang eight encores, I think. No performer who had ever performed at Rutgers ever got that kind of a reception. And he walked off, everybody in the audience was standing and cheering. And this was at a time when he was, probably, the only black person of any prominence that was speaking out for his people. And I have always felt that Rutgers never really did right by Paul Robeson. I think he was ... if they were to pick one outstanding graduate, it would have to be Robeson. As an athlete, as a student, as an actor, an opera singer, he did everything and he did everything well. Now who else can compare to him in stature? I can't conceive of anybody that ... could touch him in any way.

KP: How did most of your classmates feel at the time, about Robeson?

IP: Well, we respected him as a ... singer of super quality. We also respected him because we knew he had been to Rutgers at a time when ... black students were extremely rare. We had heard some of his experiences on the football team. How he came out for the team, and they didn't want him to play. And they tried everything they could to physically discourage him by running, you know, eight guys knocking him down and all. And, this is a story I was told, was that he made the team after one of the Rutgers Varsity players tried to knock him down and Robeson grabbed him and picked him up and held this guy over his head. And the coach said, "That's it, I've seen enough." I don't know how true the story is, but it's a good story.

KP: But you knew at the time that he had had a rough going, at first, at Rutgers?

IP: Oh, sure he did. There were stories that he never made the Glee Club. That could be checked out. I never, you know, knew for sure, but the story was that he never made the Glee Club and they had a pool in the gymnasium, I think. And there were other things. There was no question that he was discriminated against because he was black. I saw an interview with his son on TV last week, and he mentioned some of the things that had happened to his father. If his father hadn't spoken up for his people he never would have had a problem in this country. He wouldn't have to go to Russia or Europe to live like he did for a while because the climate here, politically, was so unsatisfactory for him. So if he was bitter I could understand it. When I came out of service and I started to travel down south, which was in the late '40s, white only drinking fountains, black only drinking fountains, toilets the same, everything was segregated. And ... I look back on those years and I say, well what was it like when Robeson went to school? My God, it must have been horrendous!

CT: What was the ethnic make up of your class?

IP: I would say mostly white Christian boys, possibly a couple ... hundred Jewish boys. There were three black fellahs in my class. One became a judge, Harry Hazelwood in Newark became a superior court judge. There was a fellah on the track team named Walter Alexander. He was a lovely guy, I knew him quite well, became a dentist in Orange and had a very nice productive career. And the third man, I don't know what ever happened to him, his name was Arthur Johnson. Other than knowing him to say hello to--I never had any experience with him. Harry and I had a couple of classes together and Walter and I would see each other at track practice, and stuff. So out of the class of 380, I guess we were 400, there were three black kids in the class, and they all graduated. But there were no black fraternities in those days. The question of color never came up! I mean, nobody ever thought about it.

CT: Were there any stories or, I guess, instances that you witnessed any racism against those three black kids?

IP: No. No. I think they were outstanding. They were not, what we would call today, street types. They spoke very nicely. They were good students. And they were accepted as students. Now, prior to that, if you go through the yearbooks and you see the other classes, there were one or two blacks. One fellah earned nine letters in his career with Rutgers. I think he was the only one in his class that was black. So it must have been a lonely experience for him. But we never really thought much about it. In the years that I was at Rutgers I never had any experience with a Rutgers student that could be deemed an anti-Semitic incident. We had friends. We were very close to the fellahs in the Beta Theta Pi house. I had a lot of friends in the Kappa Sig house. Certain fraternities, for some reason, gravitated towards each other. And we never ... had problems of that nature. I guess life was a lot simpler in those days.

KP: What did you think of Dean Metzger? Did you ever have any run in with him?

IP: Dean Metzger was looked upon as a bit of a martinet and it was advisable to stay on his good side, which we did. Cuno Bender was what we called, the gumshoe. He was the guy who snooped around to find out what evil doers on the campus were up to. And we had (laughs) a beer party one night and Bob Haber, who was ... very well known in our fraternity, was popping the cork on a keg of beer. And we were in the kitchen. And we were on the corner of the campus on Easton Avenue and the door to the kitchen opens up and in walks Cuno Bender, and I said to Bob, "My God, we're dead." He say's, "Fear not my boy, he's here because I invited him." I said, "Boy this guy [has] really got guts." And Cuno sat down and the three of us had a glass of beer together and we chatted and he stuck around for a while and then left. But we didn't go on social pro or anything because we weren't having a wild party. We were just having a little beer, which was strictly against the rules. But one thing we had in college, which was very interesting, we had, possibly, the longest black jack game on record started on a rainy Thursday afternoon, and ended Sunday morning at 2 o'clock in the morning.

CT: Did you play all the way through?

IP: No, I went up and I went to bed and I came down. They were still playing. I couldn't believe it. And word got around to some of the other fraternity houses, and their fellahs came over to the house. There was a flood of people walking in and out of the fraternity house and they'd sit in on

the game for a few hours and then leave, and somebody else would take their place. It was absolutely the most incredible ... thing. But ... you know the experience when the final exams are rolling around and everybody gets a little crazy. And that was one of those times.

CT: Did a lot of people drink?

IP: Not really. Most of the drinking was done at Al Stricklands Corner Tavern. And it was beer. I don't recall any of the fellahs drinking hard liquor, first off because they couldn't afford it, and secondly because, you know, when you ... drink beer you chat and you have a good time. Well, there was one time that I did drink beer and it was probably freshman year. They took me in there--it was some seniors--took me in there on a very quiet weekend, and they had dates with some nurses from the hospital. And I had a beer and they had to carry me home. I was out. So I wasn't ... [a] big drinker ... as a freshman. But some of the fraternities, a couple of them, had reputations for doing a lot of drinking. And I won't mention their names 'cause it's not important, but there was one fraternity especially that was notorious for a lot of drunken parties and yet they had guys in the fraternity who were good students who were good friends. And it was a strange mix. Lenny Hansen, who was an athlete, came down to Rutgers raised in a tradition ... I don't know what Norwegian people practice. What are they, Lutherans?

KP: Often, yeah.

IP: Lutheran. Told me he had never cursed or tasted liquor or beer in his whole life, until he got to the DU house. They brought him in because he was a wonderful football player from Englewood. And he said it didn't take long before he started to get like the rest. It just didn't bother him. But he was completely unused to this kind of atmosphere. Yet, everybody, you know, did it. But we, you know, the fraternity houses were never locked. You could walk in the front door of any fraternity house during normal hours and ask for a friend, and you would be greeted with a red carpet. It was a lovely place to be. It really was great.

CT: What were the views towards sex back then?

IP: I would say that ...the views were the same. The achievements were less. In those days, first off, you could go to the movies and you wouldn't hear the language that you hear today. So, you started out, basically, respecting the girls. Occasionally somebody would run around with a ... tramp who was not at the college. ... A girl would get a reputation. She's the town pump. That's what they called her. And, possibly, she was. But, I don't think that it was anywhere's near the sexual achievements that they have today. People jump into bed today at the drop of a hat. Except for, you know, the consciousness of AIDS, which we didn't have. And we didn't have the opportunities either. The girls at NJC in the dormitories and ... in the houses lived upstairs and there was a woman at the door guarding their chastity. It's how it was.

CT: Did you work while you went to school?

IP: I worked my junior and senior year for Squibb. They were making Sulfathiazol. It was the only plant in the country making this stuff. And my roommate Eddie Simon and I and a couple of other fellahs worked the night shift. The problem was that they used ammonia in this process.

It got into your clothes and when I would get on the bus to go back to the campus everybody on the bus would be holding their nose because it was such an acrid odor (laughs). And they would say, you know, "My God, what are you doing?" ... It was an interesting process, ... it was a three tier plant and they would have big vats up on the top plant and it would heat to a certain temperature and then you would have to spoon in the material by hand to make sure the needle stayed at the temperature. If you were too slow or too fast the needle would vary and you had to be very careful. Then it went down. ... Anyway, it was hard work and ... we were told to perform so much work on the shift. And one night we decided we were going to see how much we could really turn out. And we turned out a huge amount of production. Which was way above what we had been doing. And the next day we were called into the manager's office and we were told that they had a union contract. They were to produce so much on a shift and that was it and if we did it again we would be fired. That was interesting because this was war-time and these materials were badly needed by the medical department. And this was a brand new drug that nobody else in the country was making. And we were told to cut back on the production because we were ruining it for the guys in the union. So that was my first experience with this kind ... [with]--you know, the real world is different than what you read in books. And that was it.

CT: There were religious services that were held.

IP: On the campus?

CT: At the Chapel.

KP: Did you attend Chapel regularly?

IP: No. I attended the freshman convocation. There was a requirement, at one time, that you had to attend freshman chapel, but the people who did not wish to attend: I did not care to attend a religious service that wasn't my religion, so I ... spoke to the dean and I was excused. And after that I think the obligatory ... attendance was waived and you didn't have to attend except on a voluntary basis. That was it.

CT: What was your reaction when you heard that the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor?

IP: It was a Sunday and I was in Paterson visiting with my roommate and his lady friend. And I had my NJC date. And there was a big football game on that day, the Giants were playing somebody, and you probably heard this a hundred times. We were sitting on the floor in the living room listening to the radio and there was an announcement made that all the military personnel were to return to their base. And I said, "That's strange. Why are they doing that?" And then the word came out that, Pearl Harbor had been bombed. We had a discussion about where Pearl Harbor was. A couple of us thought it was in the Hawaiian islands and a couple of us said, "Maybe it's in the Philippines." Nobody knew where Pearl Harbor was. We had never heard of the place. Anyway we found out very quickly where it was. And I have to look back on that day. 'Cause I realized that so many of us were going to have our lives changed. Some for the worse. My class took the biggest casualties of any of the classes.

So we came back to Rutgers. We were very quiet and I think most of us sat up that night talking. The next day Roosevelt made his speech to Congress. It was at lunchtime, twelve o'clock, and everybody with a radio brought it down to the dining room and we had the whole dining room covered with radios so we could hear the speech. And we listened in silence. And when Roosevelt was finished the fellahs in my class and some of the other classes got up and we went downtown. And we went to all the recruiting offices. And somehow, I don't know how this happened, somebody had gotten to these people first because they all had the same question and the same answer. And the question was, "Are you fellahs at the college?" And when the answer was yes, they said, "Go home, we know where to find you when we need you." Now we hit every branch of service. Nobody would talk to us so we went back. Overnight the atmosphere regarding the ROTC changed also. Because up to that point ROTC was kind of a joke, you know. It was a chore, a land grant college, you had to go, so you went. And overnight, all of a sudden, you're looking at your friends who were in advanced ROTC and you realized these guy's are going off as officers in the infantry. So they were treated with a degree of respect to which they were not accustomed, because up to that point, you know, we used to joke about it. And then it got deadly serious. I applied for advanced ROTC and was turned down. I wore glasses and I was a skinny kid. And I went to see Col. [George R.] Koehler, who was in charge of the ROTC unit at Rutgers. And we had a very nice chat. And I was pretty good in my grades, ... especially in map reading, for some reason I had a knack for map reading. But most of the fellahs that they picked were athletes and they were, you know, all solid guys. Here I am with the eye glasses. Not the perfect candidate for an infantry commission. And they didn't have that many commissions anyway. So it was probably the best break that ever happened to me that I didn't get into the advanced ROTC and didn't get a commission in the infantry because the bulk of those fellahs were the ones who got lost. A few were lost in the Air Corps, but most of 'em were lost in combat units on the ground. Koehler said to me that they're working on a new program. When it comes out everybody would be notified and it's gonna be the program where you can stay in school until you graduate and then you go on active duty for six months and then you go to OCS. Well, I signed up for it. It was called the Enlisted Reserve Corps. And I went to summer school my junior year to make sure that I graduated because I felt that the Army, even though they said they were gonna let you graduate, would call you in. And Rutgers, at that time, had a policy if you had academic good standing for seven semesters, you didn't have to complete the eighth. So I completed the eighth and graduated in January, and went into service in February of '43.

Two of my fraternity brothers and I--and one fellow named Dick Steinberg, who was, subsequently killed--all went in together. Someplace I have my old orders calling me up. And we walked into the gate at Fort Dix and the MP's were standing there. And we were waving our orders and we were all nicely dressed. And the guy says, "Come in gentlemen, we have been expecting you." I said boy this is great! Great. We went in, we got our uniforms, we got shots, and my roommate and I are peeling potatoes two o'clock in the morning in the kitchen. And Eddie says to me, "Do you realize what day it is?" I said, "What day is it?" He said, "It's Valentine's Day." Now when you peel potatoes in the Army what you did, you had a centrifuge, which was like a big steel bucket. And the inside was very rough with sharpened points and you put the potatoes in there, you filled it with water, you spun it and the sharp points peeled off the skin and then you had to take everything out and take the eyes out with a little knife. So he said, "It's Valentine's Day. Why don't we cut the potatoes in the shape of hearts and then everybody'll know." So the two of us are sitting there cutting the potatoes in the shape of hearts. And the cook

came in, big husky guy, and he said, "What the hell are you guys doing." So Eddie said, "It's Valentine's Day." And he looks at him, you know, with that baby faced expression. And the cook didn't say anything. He went out and came back in a minute with a cleaver and he said, "I'm gonna kill you guys" (laughs). And we started peeling potatoes like crazy. So we finally got everything done. And we went back at six o'clock and we were so tired we didn't even take off our uniforms. We crawled right into bed in our fatigues and slept for a couple of hours. And both of us were running low grade temperatures because of the shots. The food at Fort Dix was inedible. The trays were filthy, the utensils were filthy. It was awful. So most of 'em shipped out early, I didn't. I got stuck there for a couple of weeks, several weeks as a matter of fact, and I went down to find out what happened. It turned out that a urinalysis that I had taken didn't pass muster. But they were supposed to notify me to come and take another one and they had never notified me. So if I had kept my mouth shut I'd probably would still be sitting there. So anyway, I took another one and they shipped me down to the Air Corps in Miami Beach, and that was the beginning of my military career.

CT: Was there any question in your mind, when you heard about the war, that you were going to join the service?

IP: No, I didn't have any hesitation. ...

CT: Was that the case with most people too?

IP: No, I knew some people that ducked the war, did everything they could to duck the war.

KP: At Rutgers?

IP: At Rutgers, sure. I felt that I had a stake in what was happening because of what was happening in Russia and what was happening in Germany, and a lot of which was only happening in the Jewish press. They were writing about the hardship of the Jewish people, but the American press wasn't paying that much attention. And if you read about that era ... a lot of the rabbi's were keeping a lid on what was happening and were trying to influence Roosevelt to open up immigration policies and things, which never happened. But, I felt that I had a stake in it. I had relatives I had never met in Russia and I empathized with them.

KP: You had entered in September of 1939, just as the war had begun in Europe. How do you think most Rutgers students felt about the war in 1939 and 1940?

IP: Well, I'll tell you, when we went down in September of '39 we were really in a state of euphoria because a lot of things were happening in the world. And I wrote this once before for an article about the history of our class. Rutgers was covered with like a silk cocoon. And academia and the outside world had no relationship. What was happening in Europe and ... the rest of the world wasn't happening in New Brunswick. We were worried about our grades, who's gonna win the football game on Saturday and [if you'd go] ... on a date for the soph hop, you're going, that was it. And it all changed on December 7th. But prior to that we were in our own little world and ... I wrote that it was like a silken cocoon because we were shielded from all the bad things that were happening. And I remember Dick Reager, who was a speech professor, my freshman year.

... [He] got up, it was 1939, we weren't in the war, but they were fighting. Gave a speech, damn it, full speed ahead, blow the torpedoes, let's all go down and enlist. And we got so irritated with him, we were yelling and screaming back at him, damn it, you go. We're not going. And there was a movement on the campus in those days ... I have to say politically we were not sophisticated at all. So you had--when things heated up you had Lindbergh with the....

KP: American Front.

IP: I guess, the American Front, whatever you want to call it. And then you had other people who were interventionists. And we were torn. What was the right thing? How should you feel? Were you sympathetic to the British because they were taking a pasting or were you sympathetic to the Russians who were all a bunch of bearded guys running around throwing bombs, you know, in ... bank buildings? We didn't know, but everything changed after December 7th. At that point, I would say, 98% of the Rutgers men that were physically fit had already tried to get into service one way or another. And some of 'em, who were not physically fit, also tried. I know that for a fact. I'm not gonna mention any names, but I know that a couple of 'em that were really handicapped tried to find something that they could do in the war effort, which I thought was great, that they would try.

CT: How many of your classmates quit school as soon as December 7th happened?

IP: [I] don't have any statistics on it. but there were quite a few. ... Some were drafted. I remember the first guy from our fraternity who was drafted, we had a beer party for him. (laughs) We put him on the train to Fort Dix and he was plastered. (laughs) And he's howling, "I like it here better than Fort Dix, don't send me away," you know. And I ran into him in ... Alsace-Lorraine, just before the end of the war and we reminisced a little bit. But he was only saying it as a ... joke. He went and he went willingly and whatever they asked him to do he did. Sure.

CT: Looking back at your years at Rutgers, how would you view your time there?

IP: How would I what?

KT: View your time there at Rutgers.

IP: I would say that up to December 7th it was perfect. You had a social life, you had an academic life. There was life in the fraternity house. You made new friends. [I] got to know everybody on the campus. It was a wonderful experience and I look back and I ... still see the fellahs that came in with me in the freshman class. And I had 'em all on the archives committee. Charlie Zukaukas became a doctor. There were guys who were businessmen, one became a dentist, and we're so happy to see each other. ... I got a letter the other day from John Archibald. John wound up principal of a school in Ridgewood, right near here. So when we had the meetings, John and I would go down together and we would talk. We had a wonderful time, talked about everything. And we look back on those days. I can only say that it was the best of times for us. When the war came on everything changed. Fellahs would disappear one day. "Whatever happened to this fellah?" "I don't know. He dropped out." We ... tried for 25 years to find about fifteen or twenty men in our class that just dropped out of sight. [We were] never able

to find a shred of information about ... [them]. Now how does a guy just disappear? These fellahs, we don't know if they didn't make it in the war. If they weren't interested in contacting the school, whatever it was. We could never find these fellahs. But I know some who dropped out because they were called up. And if your grades weren't good and you flunked out, you were guaranteed to be called up. You know, that was a little incentive too. Yup.

KP: Is there anything else about Rutgers that we forgot to ask about before going on to the service?

IP: No, I would say in general the quality of the Rutgers professors was good. We had [in] the history department here, Dr. Burns, who was wonderful. Doc George, who was a very entertaining teacher. He was great. His classes were extremely popular because you never knew what he was gonna come up with, but there was never a dull moment in his classes. I took a final in his political science class and got an "A-" in the course. Now when I walked out I knew I had that exam cold. That was my major, I loved it, and I went through that thing and I really, so I went in to see him. And I said, "You know, I had this exam down pat and you give me an A-." He says, "I have never given anybody an A+ since I have been teaching because there's nobody that's perfect including you. And that terminates this interview." And we shook hands and laughed and he threw me out (laughs). There were some professors at the University who were dull, pedantic. One guy, Charlie Marden, taught sociology. Smoked filter tipped cigarettes. Charlie would put the wrong end in his mouth and light a match and the class would be mesmerized. Is the match gonna burn his fingers? Is he gonna remember to light the cigarette. So one day, everybody called him Charlie, which in those days was rarely done. And I said, "Charlie, why do you always stick that wrong end of the cigarette in your mouth?" He said, "Because it gets their attention. Everyone of you guys is waiting for me to light the filter and I'm not gonna do it. But I know that everybody is paying attention in class." (laughs) And we had a couple of psych professors, whose names I have forgotten, that were interesting. Basically, in the courses that I majored in, where I was really interested, they were fantastic, fantastic. Dr. Burns was a renowned historian, quality teacher. And the others were as well, so it was ... well worth it. And it was a sacrifice for my parents. One of the fellahs in our fraternity left school after one semester because his folks couldn't afford the tuition. Well, it was 400 dollars a year in those days. Then you had, you know, room and board, and all the rest and a little spending money. And they couldn't afford the 400 dollars, so he dropped out. And a lot of that happened because economically this country was suffering. It was hard. I only know one or two fellahs who had cars at Rutgers. That was a luxury. You go down to Princeton [and] everybody was riding around in cars. You go to Rutgers [and] there were two cars on the campus. You know, we didn't have a parking problem in those days. You could park anywhere. Nobody had cars. Well, I have very fond memories at Rutgers. I really do.

KP: You're not alone.

IP: No, I know that.

KP: Going into the service, you picked up, even before you had entered the service, that the Army did things in a certain way. What made you so educated in terms of the Army? Had you gotten that sense from friends?

IP: One of my cousins became an Army nurse right off the bat, right after Pearl Harbor Day. And I used to hear from her once in a while, and she would write, you know, that things don't always go according to plan. And I was a Civil War buff and read a lot about World War I as well. When I was ten and twelve years old I was reading every book on the Civil War I could get my hands on. And I read a book in college, "Now It Can Be Told," by Sir Philip Gibbs, which was an expose of the way the military fed propaganda to the British people when they were taking tremendous casualties. At the Battle of the Somme, 650,000 casualties, and the newspapers were told we're winning the battle. And I read that, it made a lasting impression on me. And I said, "What the hell?" And then when I got in the service it confirmed it. When we were first in training we were given a lot of propaganda films. Now propaganda can be the truth as well as the advertising puffery. One of the things that they told us was that "You have the best weapons in the world. We're giving you the best weapons. We're giving you the best training." Well, it turned out it wasn't quite so. The Germans had the best tanks. They had the best artillery in the 88, which was a fantastic weapon. We didn't have anything like that. Our tanks were mounted with guns that were smaller in caliber than the German tanks. Before the invasion I was given a carbine. I fired the carbine once on the range and it didn't have adjustable sights, like the Garand rifle. It held 15 rounds and it was a light weight weapon, but you had to adjust. If you went for longer distance than 100 odd yards, you had to adjust. There was no windage on it, you couldn't change the windage, and I couldn't hit a damned thing at ... the long distance because I never knew what the adjustment was supposed to be. When I got the opportunity I got rid of the carbine and picked up an M-1. And there was a tremendous difference because you could adjust this with the windage. You could adjust it for the elevation. It was a great great weapon. It was heavier, but it was well worth it because if you looked through that sight what you saw was what you hit.

We had the best planes, there was no question about that. We had the best vehicles. The British vehicles had strange experiences, their trucks. They were mounted on two vertical shafts with a big ball, like a ball bearing, on the bottom. The Americans had springs on both sides so with a heavy load, you know, driving through a battle area you're bouncing around. That suspension system adjusted for itself. The British trucks tilted over. They were too high. And this was a complaint because I served with two British officers and ... I still have a picture of one of 'em, who's a buddy of mine. We're clowning around here, there he is. That's me and that's Jock Stewart who was a lieutenant in our outfit. He and ... Captain Smith, who was the Englishman in our outfit, were both bobbies. And they were public service officers in our unit. And Jock was the one who told me about the British trucks. He said, "They're not worth a damn." He was a Scotchman, he also hated bagpipes so I liked him right from the start.

I think I would like to tell you, if I could digress a little bit, about what it was like to go overseas in a troop ship for the first time. We loaded up in Boston. We had all brand new equipment. Two o'clock in the afternoon. And subsequently, after the war, I found out it was the biggest convoy of World War II to Europe. And they marched you up the gangways and around the whole length of the ship, and each time you made the full circle you went down one deck. And we wound up in the bottom hold of the ship in the rear stern of the ship as far back as you could go. I could reach out with my left and touch the ... curved hull of the ship. And with my right hand I could almost touch the propeller shaft. Now that was fine when the water was smooth, which is how we started out. We got into the gulf stream and we went down towards Norfolk, and then we

turned east to go to Liverpool. And in the middle of the night we hit a tremendous storm. And the only way I can describe it is to say it was like Dante's Inferno. This is February, 1944. The nose of the ship would plow into a wave and the stern of the ship would lift out and the propellers would speed up. And the boat would vibrate like crazy. The helmets would swing back and forth. They were using them to throw up in 'cause they [were] too weak to get out of [bed]. Some of these guys were sick from the day we got on the boat. The rifles would be clanking and in the middle of the night there was a tremendous bang and water came pouring down into our compartment. So a lot of the fellahs ran up screaming we'd been torpedoed. And we were in bunks. They're metal bunks made with pipe, four in a tier. And I was on the top one because if you got on the lower one the guys behind would.....

-----End of Side Two, Tape One-----

KP: This continues an interview with Mr. Irving E. Pape on January 3, 1995 with Kurt Piehler and...

CT: and Curtis Tao.

KP: ...at Hackensack, New Jersey. And you were continuing to talk about your passage.

IP: The guy above you, his behind was two inches from your nose, which wasn't, you know, exactly aesthetic. So I had the top bunk and I was puffing on a cigarette, 'cause nobody could sleep. We were taking such a bashing it was incredible. And the next morning we were told what happened. For the rest of the voyage, a lot of the fellahs in our compartments slept on the stair wells, because in case we were torpedoed they wanted to be able to get out. What they didn't understand was in February in the Atlantic Ocean, the temperature, 35 degrees. You can last about five minutes and then you die from hypothermia. So there was no way to get out of the ship where we were. And if you got out it wouldn't do you any good anyway. A wave had hit us broadside with such force that 50 feet of the deck was buckled and one of the big double entranceways was bashed in. And what we were getting was the residue of the waves which had come down all of these decks. And the boat I was on was a big ship and ... in civilian life it was the (Krips? home?). It was called the Edmund Alexander, I think. And this thing took some bashing. So the water was so rough for a couple of days they didn't let us on deck. When you wanted to eat--there were two meals served on the ship. You started winding around, going up deck by deck and 5000 guys on this ship walking around, it took hours. And then you got into the kitchen. (laughs) If the weather was rough you got queasy right away because of the smell of the food. Some of the guys were living on stuff [they bought]. They had a little ships store there where you could buy cookies and crackers. In the bottom bunk was a fellah who got sick from the motion when we were tied to the pier in Boston. So we fed this guy with water and vanilla cookies. And when we got to Liverpool he was carried off the boat on a stretcher and I never knew what happened to him. But he absolutely was ... really sick. He hadn't eaten anything in ten days, maybe two [weeks]. I don't know how long it took us. But we got to Liverpool and we came out, it was in daylight, and the longshoreman was standing on the dock and we started throwing oranges and bananas to these fellahs. We had access to this. And then troop commander got on the loud speaker and said, "Anybody that throws anymore food over side will be court martialed." Apparently there were some laws about bringing in fruit and things that the

British government had. We were not allowed to show any courtesy, I guess you'd call it. The one guy I threw a banana to and he hollered up, "I hadn't had one of these since 1939." I never forgot that. In the states you couldn't conceive that anything like [that], you know, not to have a banana at a all, for all those years. So that was interesting. Then they put us on trains. We went to Manchester where we were billeted. And ultimately we got shipped to (Shrivenham?), which was a British Officers Training Camp. And I was placed in a Civil Affairs Division, which was unique in the Army because most of the Officers were direct commission officers, who were politicians, mayors of cities, borough presidents. And we had one from Manhattan, Charlie Keegan. Vice presidents of banks and things. Colonel Hatch was from one of the big banks in New York, happened to be a hell of a good officer. And we started to train. We didn't have the vaguest idea what we were gonna do, but we were told in France you will be civil affairs because the Frenchmen are on our side. They're our allies and we will assist them in every way and when we get to Germany it will be Allied Military Government. So we did and we had a tremendous motor pool with all the vehicles for a whole division. And I was doing guard duty one night and about eleven o'clock at night, bed check Charlie would come by, the little observation plane. And I was sitting in the jeep and it was kind of dark and I heard foot steps and I turned around. And I saw the captain, for whom I was developing an intense dislike, trying to catch me sleeping. So I crept out of the jeep and got around behind him, stuck the gun in his back and said, "Halt! Advance and be recognized!" just like the book, see. And this guy was a short bow legged guy, jumped about four feet in the air. He was petrified. I didn't have any ammunition. They gave you an empty weapon to guard, you know, 10,000 jeeps. But, we started to talk. And he said to me, "This country is making ... our country...was making a great mistake. That we really should be fighting with the Germans against the Russians, because they were the Bolsheviks. They were the menace to the world." And I said to him, "Captain ... you know I'm Jewish and how could you say to me that we should be fighting, that I should be fighting with the Germans?" I was a volunteer, wouldn't volunteer to fight with the Germans who were killing people of my faith because of their religion. Well, we talked for a good hour and a half and the remarks that he made to me, that Roosevelt was no good and that he had sold out to international interests, it was a code word. Spellman used to talk about that too. From that day on I hated this guy like poison. And I got stuck with him for sixteen months. And we had a small unit. There were six enlisted men in our unit, two American officers, one was a captain, one was a first lieutenant, and then, subsequently, you got the two Britishers, one was a captain, Captain Smith, a very austere guy, and Jock Stewert, who was my buddy. Who was a fun guy and a great guy to be with and bright as a whip, and we did a lot of crazy things together. And we got a French Liaison Officer, Lieutenant Bardin, B-A-R-D-I-N. So we had five officers and six enlisted men. You're kind of top heavy with lower level officers. And the only interesting thing we did, well, when we landed it was the first week of the invasion, and we were never briefed as to where we were to go. The captain kept everything to himself, never told us where we were supposed to go, never showed us on a map or anything. And the guy driving the landing barge didn't take us in close to the beach. Said he didn't want to hit a mine. So, we were forced to get off the barge and the water was over our waist. And I was carrying--I weighed 138 pounds and I got 90 pounds of equipment on me. Extra ammunition, a weapon, and a big sack on the side with a gas mask and a medical kit, and a helmet which got heavier by the minute, and by the time we got to the edge of the beach we were exhausted. You know what it is when you're trying to push through ... water. And behind us was a battleship. I believe it was an American battleship. And every now and then this thing would fire a salvo from the big guns and it would go right over your head with a whirring

noise and the only way I could describe it was if you stood near a railroad and a fast freight train came through, 60 or 70 miles an hour, with the whir and the noise that it makes, that's what it was like. Then there would be a tremendous bang. And that's how we went in.

KP: Which beach did you land on? Do you remember?

IP: It was between Omaha and Utah. I don't think we were in the right place. Anyway, we got on the beach and the captain pulls out the map and he say's, "We're gonna go this way." Now we're walking up the beach and the channel is on our right. Now if you're walking along a body of water like the English Channel, surely you know if the water is on you right you're going this way and if it's on your left you're going this way. (laughs) He couldn't figure it out. So there was a Navy gun control crew there and when we walked by 'em we got a big wave, you know, hi fellahs. We walked all the way up. This was in two o'clock in the afternoon that we landed. And we got to an area which wasn't taped. They had these white tapes indicating that the area was safe to walk in 'cause they had checked it for mines. Now we're walking in an area where there are no tapes. And I said, "Captain, I don't think we should be here." He say's, "What do you mean?" I said, "There's no tapes here. They haven't checked this for mines." So we turn around and now we go back and now we're passing the Navy Gun Control ... Crew for the second time. Then he say's, "Can't be right. We gotta go the other way." So now we're going back the other way. Well, we marched around on the beach for what seemed hours. We got to our destination at ten o'clock at night and we had been marching for eight hours with full packs. And if you ever wanted to kill somebody with your bare hands this guy was the guy. Never asked the gun crew the spot on the map where he had to go so we would have information. The gun crew, they had maps. They were pinpointing the targets for the ships. Well, he wouldn't ask so that was the beginning. Anyway, I had an interesting experience in Paris. We were in Normandy for quite a while and then when we left. We started to head towards Paris. And we wound up the entire unit, the whole division was in (Rambouillet?), which is the wooded area near Paris.

CT: What was the date about then?

IP: It was about three days before Paris was taken. Paris was taken in August 26th, I think. So this had to be ... the 23rd. The commanding officer of the division at that time was the fellah who, subsequently, became the American military governor of the American zone in Berlin Germany, I've forgotten his name. And we were told that nobody is gonna sneak out of here and try to get into Paris first because you'll be court martialled. We'll give you the word when you're to go. And at that point everybody's gonna go. So one night they woke us up and they told us get going. So we had two jeeps, six enlisted men, five officers, and all the paraphernalia that you carry stuffed into trailers. One of the fellahs, who was a jeep driver, didn't like to drive at night 'cause we were driving under black out conditions where you just have a little slit in the head light for light and the rest is painted out. So I said I would drive. So I drove the whole way into Paris. We got into Paris at six o'clock in the morning. Wwe went across the Alexander Bridge and we took a turn and there was some small arms fire we could hear, but it wasn't in our immediate area. And we were assigned to live in a beautiful mansion which was in the Sixteenth Arrondissement which was the swankiest spot in Paris. The house was owned by Henry Hodges, who was J.P. Morgan's partner in France. We got in there and the high ranking German Gestapo officers had used this for their headquarters, and the place was immaculate, spotless. The only

thing they had in the whole house were gold dishes. Big band of gold around some dinner plates. And all we had to eat was K-rations, see. There was no hot water. There were no utilities, the electricity finally came on. So, one of the fellahs in our outfit was a German refugee, who spoke French perfectly as well as German and English. And he was a student up at Syracuse. He held a Maxwell Fellowship in political science so we had a lot to talk about. He said, "Let's go. We'll go see what's going on." So we walked out and we walked into the Georges Cinq Hotel, sat down, took off our helmets and put out our weapons on the table. There were civilians in there drinking. Shooting was taking place a block away and here's everybody sipping cocktails, two o'clock in the afternoon, and enjoying themselves. It was weird. So, the bartender came over. They couldn't tell us from the French soldiers because the French soldiers were equipped--other than insignia everything that they were given was American. They wore brown uniforms just like us. They wore our helmets. They used our weapons, so they thought we were French and we weren't. So, I remember ordering in English a Manhattan and he said, "I'll make it for you," because he spoke English also. At a table near us was a young man with four very pretty girls and I was smoking a camel cigarette. And he came over to me and he said, "You know, I haven't smelled a cigarette that good since 1939." This is another one with the 1939. So, we didn't realize at that time that a pack of American cigarettes on the black market was worth the equivalent of 400 dollars. So I gave him a cigarette and a cigarette for the four ladies. And it turned out that this guy was a movie producer who was very friendly with the Mayor of the Sixteenth Arrondissement, who was DeGaulles relative or something, so we were traveling in fast company now and we got invited to dinner. We puffed on the cigarettes and we had a drink and then Fred say's, "Let's go, we'll see what's going on." So we walked over to the Rue de Rivoli, where the shooting was taking place. And the German commandant of Paris was in the Hotel Maurice and we're standing behind a big tree because there's all kinds of small arms fire, machine guns and stuff is going off, every now and then a bang of a grenade. And here comes a Frenchmen down the middle of the street walking with a dog, and he's got a hat on and a little dog on a leash. And he sees the two of us standing behind a tree and he's hollering ... out, "Tirez ... Tirez," in other words, shoot. Well, we couldn't see anyone, who are we gonna shoot? We didn't see a German the whole time. The firing was coming from inside the buildings and we weren't gonna shoot because we probably would've killed civilians. So I never got over this guy walking, you know, in an area where there's a lot of shooting going on. And subsequently, it stopped. We were there for two weeks, and I want to tell you it was a single man's paradise. And a few of the married guy's also partook. (laughs)

... We had a welcome from the French people that was the most incredible thing. The minute they heard you were an American they wanted to hug you and kiss you. They couldn't do enough for you, it was great. And from there we got shipped to Longwy, France, which was a mining town. You came in and it was like driving around a bowl of soup, a big soup bowl because, because there was Longwy Bas (Lower Longwy), and Longwy Haut (Upper Longwy). And you spiraled around this big hole in the ground. And we had our headquarters in the building that was the headquarters of the mining industry in France, which is where we were. We were now in Eastern France. And it was a beautiful marbled building with huge columns in the front, and all. We set up our headquarters and we were there for like five or six months and it was very quiet until the German breakthrough. And when the Germans broke through, the news we got was from the French first. The people in the town told us the Germans are coming. We didn't know what they were talking about. In order to get out of the town because we.....

CT: What was the date?

IP: This was in December, I guess, of 44'.

KP: The Bulge?

IP: The Battle of the Bulge. They needed passes to get out of our area because now we were in a combat zone. Before that we had been behind the combat zone but we weren't all the way back, which was called Com Z. We were in right behind the forward lines, but it was not considered the combat zone. The Germans were retreating, things were quiet. It was so quiet we took a spin up there and nothing was happening. So one day I was the charge of quarters, and you had to walk up the entrance, up a couple of steps, and then you walked down a long corridor. At the end of the corridor I had a desk and two of us had been filling out passes for the officers to sign so they could leave the area. They were panicking. The Germans are coming. It's just like 1939 again. And this day nobody came in. So my folks had sent me some comic books. (laughs) And I'm sitting at the desk with my feet on the desk, my helmet and my rifle are on the desk, and nobody comes in all morning, it was quiet. And I hear footsteps coming down the hall and I look up and oh my god it's Patton. And here comes, all by himself, General Patton. I leaped to my feet, stuffed the comic book in the desk. (laughs) And he says, "We're gonna need a place where we have absolute privacy for a meeting. What have you got?" I said, "I'll take care of it sir. Wait here a minute." And we had an anteroom to a glassed in office, which was perfect for him. And our enlisted men and the French officer were in the anteroom. So I walked in and I said, "All right guys, grab your gear and clear out because I need this for a meeting with General Patton." So everybody starts laughing. All of a sudden, the grin turns to horror because Patton is standing right behind me glaring at these guys. And in a matter of five seconds the whole place emptied out. So he went in there and I realized this was the Third Army coming up to blunt the Bulge.

KP: Who did he meet with?

IP: Well, I went back to the desk, and it didn't take maybe five or six minutes, Eisenhower came down with General Bradley. So I opened up the door for them and they went in with Patton. And, subsequently, a whole load of brigadier and major generals came in, division commanders, but I didn't recognize these guys. And they were there for about fifteen minutes and then they left. And Patton said to me, "How do we get to Arlon?" And I told him, "Just go right back up the hill like you came from, but take a left and that'll take you right into Arlon. It's sixteen kilometers from here." I said, "If you'd like, I'll escort you up the hill with the jeep." "No," he said. "It won't be necessary." And I looked out the window and there was this whole Army bumper to bumper. If the Germans had any kind of air force up in the air that day they could of had a score because it broke every rule in the book about, you know, concentrating everything. It was like one huge pile loaded with tanks. (laughs) And there were no civilians around. The civilians were petrified, so most of 'em had left. So he went up there and he did the job. But prior to the German break through I had an interesting experience in Patton's headquarters, which were in Nancy, France. Beautiful town. Have you ever been to Nancy? They're famous for their gates. The place called Saint Stanislas Square. I don't know if I can find it. Here it is. Golden ... gates, beautiful. I got called into our captain's office.

KT: What was the date, about this?

IP: This was in September or October of 1944. And I was told, "You're ordered to report to General Patton's personal quarters in Nancy," as he pronounced it. So I said, "What for?" He said, "I don't know." "How long am I going to be gone?" He said, "I don't know." "Should I take anything or what?" He says, "No, just go. Get going, you gotta be there by three o'clock this afternoon." Well it was like a 40 mile ride. It was no big deal to get there. And I went and spoke to an MP and he told me where to park my jeep around--there was another entrance in the back. And I walked in and there was a lieutenant there and I told him who I was. And he says, "Yes, we're expecting you." And a colonel came out. A chicken colonel. Big husky guy, and he said, "Yeah ... we have an interesting evening planned." I said, "What's that?" He said, "We have three Russian colonels who are here discussing the repatriation of Russian nationals from this area. And we're gonna have a little social get together, you, me, and the three Russians." So I said, "Well, this is very interesting. What language do these guys speak?" He says, "Russian." I said, "Well, I don't speak Russian. I speak French and German." He said, "We're gonna make out fine. Don't worry about a thing." So at the appointed hour, right on the dot the Russians come in and they're sitting on the sofa. Three of them, they're all stocky. They all look like Krushchev, with bull necks, you know, and barrel chests, full dress uniforms. And I'm sitting there next to the colonel and vodka is brought in. So the three colonels and the American colonel start toasting Roosevelt, and Stalin, and the American people, and the Russian people, and this one, and that one. And the colonel is getting smashed. Meantime, I'm trying to communicate with these guys and it's very difficult 'cause they said they don't speak French. They all understood a little German, but I didn't have a technical vocabulary in German. So we were having some real difficulties and the ... American colonel is now in a state of euphoria. And he says, "It doesn't make any difference." He says, "Georgie hates these bastards." So I said, "Colonel, I read someplace that the Russian field grade officers all speak English if they're sent on missions to the British or American armies." So he said, "Ah, bull shit ... they're drunk as a fiddlers bitch. They don't know what the hell we're talking about." And the Russians are all watching me talking to this guy and I was convinced that they knew everything we were saying, see. Anyway, it was about two and a half hours--I was never offered a drink, incidentally, I would have taken one out of gratitude. It was a horrendous evening for me. And I could never figure out why they had called me to come down there and interpret for three Russians. Anyway, I went back the next day. And a week later I got orders to go to Nancy again. And this time I was to interpret at a court martial board involving French civilians and American soldiers. And one of the most poignant incidents that I was witness to happened at one of the court martials. It was an all black laundry unit, all black kids from the south. A white captain ran the unit and they were stationed near Longwy, where we had been stationed. One of the fellows won a pass to go to Paris for a week. When he came back, his unit had been moved forward and he couldn't find 'em. Now this was a kid from a little southern town who had no education. Who had been to a year or two of grade school, didn't have much military training, didn't know anything about the articles of war. Simple country kid. So he didn't know what to do, so he went to the MP office to say, "Can you help me? I don't know what to do." So the MP said, "We'll try to locate your unit. Where were you staying before?" So he told him. "Go back there. We'll know where to find you." And they couldn't find the unit. It took a couple of weeks. When he returned to his unit the American captain, who was white, filed court martial charges against this guy for being absent without leave. Now, I'm sitting there listening to this and I'm boiling because the defense attorney is not

picking up on this stuff. The guy wasn't AWOL. He reported immediately to the MP's. That's the right thing to do. They told him, stick around, we'll find your unit. The trial lasted about twenty minutes and this fellah was convicted of being AWOL and was sentenced to six months at hard labor and a dishonorable discharge, which I thought was an outrage. The colonel on the court marshall board, was a very nice man and when we were finished for the day I walked over to him. And I said, "I hope I could talk to you off the record." He said, "Okay." I said, "I don't understand the verdict in this laundry unit case. The fellah turned himself right into the MP's. He made no attempt to hide. He wasn't in civilian clothes. He never got out of uniform, and the worst that could have happened to him would be a couple of days of company punishment." He say's, "I know, but we have to uphold discipline in the American Army and there's no way that we're gonna take the side of a private against the word of a captain." But he said, "I'm on my way to talk to the captain now." And he met the captain in the hall and I could hear the screaming. This colonel was laying this guy out like you wouldn't believe because it was not an AWOL. He never was AWOL. And I never forgot that. Six months hard labor and the dishonorable discharge. And I have never been able to shake this memory because it was so unjust. I think if he'd ... had any kind of a defense, I could have done better than the officer that was defending him. Absolutely, could have done better.

KP: Was the officer defending him white or black?

IP: White.

KP: From the south?

IP: No, he wasn't from the south, but he didn't put up much of a defense. And I guess he sensed that, you know, you can't win with a black private against a white captain. So that taught me a lesson too.

KP: What...?

IP: That was....

KP: Oh, no....

IP: That was it. Now....

KP: There was another case that you were interpreting?

IP: Well, this was a French case, involving a woman and a French apartment house. And the black soldiers had gotten a furlough from the front lines. They were an artillery unit. And a couple of them got drunk and they got into this apartment house and they were banging on the doors scaring the people half to death 'cause they were dead drunk, and hollering "zig, zig." Well, zig zig was a euphemism for sexual intercourse. It was the four letter word in French. So this woman went down to the MP's. They came, they picked up these guys, put 'em in confinement and that's how it was.

KP: What happened with that case?

IP: So, in this particular case, the two guys were also found guilty and they got six months at hard labor and a dishonorable discharge as well. Now there's one other thing that happened to me in ... Longwy. I've given you the two areas where I stepped down into something interesting, and this was sad. During the German breakthrough Longwy became the center of a lot of activity. It was the staging area where replacement troops were brought up and then assigned by a colonel to certain units and then trucked to those units. And we got friendly with the colonel, a couple of us. He was a long lanky guy from Texas, and a sweet heart of a man. And we would see these young lieutenants come up and I saw one day a fella wearing dress pinks and a dark officers shirt and the silver bars, the first lieutenant gleaming on his shoulders and on his helmet. And I said to one of the guys in the office, "This guy is a dead duck in 24 hours. He should be wearing an enlisted man's uniform. He shouldn't be wearing any officer's insignia. Just put the tape on the back of his helmet in a vertical position and that's it." So we ... went down one day to talk to the colonel and he said, "You know, this is a rotten job. ... I send these kids up to the lines and the unit that they go to doesn't even know their names. They're there a couple of days and they're coming back in body bags. This is awful. They don't even know their names." Two weeks ago I watched a documentary on the Battle of the Bulge and they're interviewing some American enlisted men that were there. They said the same thing. "We never got to know their names." And they were dead. And I thought, isn't that unbelievable. All these years I remember talking to this colonel. So we used to go down, he had a little office by the rail road station, bring a bottle of wine and the three of us would take hits on the ... wine. Now we were privates, PFC's.

KP: And, technically, you shouldn't have been fraternizing?

IP: No. It wasn't fraternizing. ... I think we were keeping this guy on the edge of sanity is what we were doing. Because he had nobody to talk to. He certainly wasn't gonna befriend the lieutenants that he's sending into combat. I often wondered in those days if any of the boys coming through were Rutgers men, but I had no way of finding out. And a couple of days later, back they came in body bags. It was horrendous.

KP: So you could see the problems with the replacement system? I mean, it sounds like it was pretty obvious that replacements....

IP: I'll tell you something, Lenny Hanson was in our class, the football player. He had a seventeen inch neck. He played on the line. A big husky guy. [He] got an ROTC commission. Spent the war in Honolulu assigning replacement officers to combat zones. Now, I'm looking at him. I said, "Who did you know? How did you get a job like that?" He said, "That's what they gave me." He's this big, husky guy, right? Flying a desk, sending others into combat and he doesn't know why they picked him. They could have picked some skinny guy with eye glasses like you and me to do this job. I couldn't get in the ROTC because I wore glasses. They send a football player to Honolulu to spend the war assigning officers to combat. And he was flabbergasted that he lucked out because a lot of our friends were killed in the Pacific too. Yup.

KP: Your unit, what was your responsibilities when you landed on D-day? Or, shortly after D-day?

IP: Well our responsibility ... in French towns where we were assigned was to get the civil government going, to try to get the services going, and so forth. In Germany we would be assigned a town to run, but the problem was that before we got ... into Germany, they broke up the unit and the best thing that ever happened to me happened. I got transferred after--oh, I was in Bad Hamburg, which was a spa town. Beautiful town, and Ike was there. So, five o'clock I'd walk down with my mess kit to get the chow and he would be coming back to his quarters. And what I liked about the guy was that he was in a jeep with a sergeant driving the jeep. He had one leg out on the fender of the jeep and as he and I would approach I would throw him a salute and a smile. And he would smile back. And I remembered seeing a General Collins coming into Cherbourg when the city was taken in a big vehicle with sirens and flashing lights. And Patton had a thing like that. And here's the number one guy in the American Army riding in a jeep going back all by himself, you know. No ostentation, nothing. I said, "Boy, this guy's all right." So, every day we passed each other and every day I'd throw him a salute and he would smile back and throw me one. And after two weeks I got assigned to Seventh Army headquarters in Heidelberg. Heidelberg was almost untouched from the war. And I knew about Heidelberg. I knew about the student prince, and the dueling, and all that stuff. And for about ten days we were living in tents. Across the road in the brick barracks were the German prisoners who did the hard labor around the unit. They were setting up. We couldn't move into the building that was assigned to us because they hadn't painted the place. So we were living in mud, sleeping on cots, and eating out of mess kits and the Germans were eating cafeteria style. And every day I was assigned to, you know, go in and pull out five or six guys. And they were carrying up these heavy file cabinets. It's like a five story building. And I would come in there with a 45 on my hip. And the German major, who's insignia had been stripped off, would stand there and he would salute me. And I was still a PFC after 31 months, but I didn't wear a stripe. It was embarrassing. So I would march these guys out and they would carry all this heavy stuff up. And about three flights up they'd ask for cigarettes. I'd say, "No cigarettes. Work makes you free. Remember that boys," in German. "Arbeit Macht Frei." And they'd look at me, you know, that was the motto in the Auschwitz death camp. And I got assigned to a

Colonel Riheldoffer in ... what was called, initially, the Public Health Section of the Seventh Army medical headquarters. Now the Public Health Section really was a medical intelligence where German females were infecting venereal disease into the American soldiers through sexual contact. And when an American turned himself into the hospital, unlike World War I where they were penalized for getting VD, they were treated but they were also interviewed. We had guys who would go into the hospitals and interview these fellahs. "Where did you meet her? The name of the place? What was her name? Did you go to her house? What did it look like? What was the address?" All the information, so we could get these females off the streets and get them treated by the German civilian authorities, so they wouldn't contaminate any more American soldiers. And every day I would get the reports and I would go over them and whatever was interesting or unusual I would put on the colonel's desk and the other stuff we would routinely pass along. We had the wife of an SS general. We had one guy that was a trolley car--the guy had contact with a female on a crowded trolley car on the rear platform, shoulder to shoulder. (laughs) And he describes this as the scene of the activity. Well, we passed this one around headquarters. Everybody was roaring at this. And then I got three, very rapid, promotions and I became a T-3, four stripes. 31 months a PFC and all of a sudden I'm wearing four stripes. And now I'm number two in the unit and I'm running the unit because the colonel was busy on

other chores and didn't like to be stuck in the office too much. And he trusted so whatever you see, give me. And one day we had a Lieutenant Colonel Erickson, who was sent in as our executive officer ... [came] to me and he said, "You went to Rutgers, didn't you?" And I said, "Yeah." He said, "There's a story about your school in the Stars and Stripes today, on the front page." I said, "What does it say?" He says, "It says there was a fire in the fraternity house." I said, "What was the fraternity house?" He says, "It was the SAM house." By that time they had moved from Easton Avenue and they were in a house that overlooked the river. And I ran for the newspaper and sure enough, it was. It was a great tragedy. A couple of people died in the fire. President of the fraternity jumped out a window and broke a leg and I think a girl from Ridgewood died, was asphyxiated. And it was a ... hard day. Anyway, I was there and I was scheduled to go home.

You needed 72 points to go home and I had like 69, or something like that. So the colonel called me in and he said, "Listen, ... I could do two things for you. I could get you a direct commission or I could get you something better. How'd you like to be a master sergeant in the regular Army?" I said, "What are you talking about? I'm on the sheet to go home." He says, "No! I like the way you're running things around here ... " [He] had a little place across the river and at the river were two young ladies, one to cook and one to clean. And the only time he would come is if I would send a vehicle for him and I told him we were having a bit of a crisis. Then he would come. He was a great guy to work for. He said, "Look...get you a regular master sergeancy. You got all that time in now. In thirteen years you can retire, ... a master sergeancy in the Regular Army, you'll outrank most of the majors and colonels in this headquarters who are all going to go back to buck sergeants and staff sergeants." So I said, "Colonel, I'm an only child. I have been away from home for three years and I have had it. I'm going home."

So they transferred me to the 29th Infantry and we went up to Bremerhaven. It was like September or October, I don't remember. And the boat was going to come in time to get us. They were going to land us in Norfolk and we were going to parade through Norfolk for Thanksgiving welcome because the 29th was mostly southern boys. Didn't happen that way. The boat didn't come until February and when it came it was the sister ship of the boat that I had taken across the ocean. And it was ... there was the Kungsholm and the Gripsholm. I was on one going and I was on the other one coming back.

CT: What was the date when you went?

IP: I went in on, well, let's see. I got to tell ... the exact date. I brought this. This is for you. I don't know if you ever saw this.

KP: I have seen this.

IP: Oh, you have?

KP: Yeah.

IP: Okay. Let's see. Here we go. What was the date? I was discharged on the 22nd of February 1946. And I was on active duty ... on the 17th of February 1943. So it was, the same week. I

went in in '43 in February I got out in February of '46. And I kept my honorable discharge. And I was hoping I would go to law school, but I was 21 or 22 years old and all I had ever earned for myself was my Army pay. And I said I have got to get back into...

-----End of Side One, Tape Two-----

KP: I wanted to talk a bit more about your training, but I wanted to stay in France, since we're in France right now.

IP: No, it's okay.

KP: When your unit would come into French towns, how disorganized would you find French towns?

IP: Well, I got a picture here someplace. I don't know if I can find it now that I want it. Here it is. We were going from Paris to Longwy and we came into this little town called Montmedy. Not Malmedy where the massacre took place, but Montmedy. And we were the first Americans these people had seen. And French people love flowers. They all came running towards us with flowers. And each one of us were handed a flower. That's the British captain, that's Captain Smith. I'm in the back. There's a guy holding up the flowers hiding my face. Very emotional welcome. And we stayed there for about twenty minutes and then we pushed on. There were some German stragglers up the road and we sent out a jeep and they got fired on. We came back and we gave it a day and then we went back into Longwy and we got the same welcome at Longwy which is the Pittsburgh of France. Tremendous outpouring of people. They all came running down. Everybody. The whole town dropped everything and ran down to greet our little unit. It was fantastic. Same thing in Paris. In Paris the women were so emotional it was unbelievable. I mean, they were giving you hugs that could break your back. It was great.

KP: Would you finally come into some towns and find that there was no mayor or no police? What would be your unit's job on a given day?

IP: Well, one of the first things we would do is to look up the police authorities because we were in a friendly country in France and it was their responsibility to see to it that the French laws were obeyed and the people are conducted themselves properly. And the only time we would get involved is if there were German prisoners or somebody had seen somebody taking in German stragglers. It happened a lot during the break through. We picked up guys in American uniforms that were Germans on tips. We would go to the gendarmes and get two or three gendarmes to help us. And two of us would go to whatever the address was and we would knock on the door. And a voice would say who is it and we'd say, "Police Militaire," and the French shudder at the word of police. Basically, didn't have that much to do because most people once the American Army got there, were fairly well behaved. ... I remember one instance ... during the breakthrough there was a report that there were two Germans in American uniforms in one of the apartment houses. And we went to get these two guys. And one fellah spoke perfect English and the other fellah didn't talk at all. So I said, "What's the matter with your friend? Is he shy or what?" He says, "No. No. He's sick. He's not well." I said, "He's gonna even be sicker when he finds out that I know he's a kraut." And the guy turned around with his hands in the air, you know. So we took

these two guys up to the jail. We didn't have any place to keep them. And the next day or two we would run 'em down to the nearest assembly area for German prisoners. And we started to question one of the Germans and he wouldn't say anything to us. So I was with Freddy the German refugee. And I said to him, "Here's what I want you to do Freddy, take this guy out, not telling us anything. Stand him against a wall. He's in an American uniform and shoot him as a spy." So Freddy goes out with the one guy, takes out his pistol and fires one shot in the air. And I'm sitting with the one who speaks English and this guy is turning green, see. I said, "You're next." So he says, "I can't believe you would do something like this." I said, "Believe it. You're next." Told us everything we wanted to know.

KP: What did he tell you?

IP: Well, they went AWOL. He was in an unit that was dressed in American uniforms. The other guy wasn't. They took a uniform off a dead American and fit him. And they decided they would walk back to the American lines and get out of the battle, which is what they did. And they had apparently, had a friend in town. That's where they went. And this lady took care of them until one of her neighbors realized what was going on and called. So we went and got these two. It was interesting. Turned white as a sheet and then when his friend walked back in after he had told us everything, he couldn't believe what had happened.

KP: These Germans who were stragglers or people were hiding out with American uniforms, were they just trying to get out of the war do you think?

IP: No. The Germans, actually, had a well organized thing where English-speaking Germans, who spoke fluently, were sent out in American uniforms to cut the communication lines, to sabotage everything they could. They changed the road signs. If you saw the movie The Battle of the Bulge you'd see where they were changing the signs and the sergeant comes up and says "Wait a minute. Wait a minute. This is not the way." They had turned the signs around.

KP: But did that happen in just a limited amount of time or did you have this problem throughout the war?

IP: No, it was only during the Battle of the Bulge. ... Yeah, you know, it was a long time ago.

KP: Yes.

IP: We heard right away. There was a word that got, well, there were two things that got out. The first thing was that there were units of Germans disguised as Americans. And, consequently, what you did when you ran across a group of American soldiers that you didn't know you would ask them questions that, basically, an American would know. And we found out that the Germans knew right away who Babe Ruth was and that he hit 60 home runs, or whatever it was. We ran into a machine gun unit that was on a hill right above our town, got word that there were five guys with a heavy machine gun in American uniform. So we went up to talk to 'em. So right away they're questioning us, "Who are we?" Now I start questioning them. And everybody was so jumpy about this. Every night we were getting reports that there were parachutes, you know, landing in the woods and we would go out on a goose chase and couldn't find anything. The

people [were] absolutely paranoid about what was going on. But ... it was weird. It was very hairy times. Everybody was jittery, a lot of casualties. Everybody knew we were, you know, the weather was so cold and so raw. I had frost bitten ears in basic training, not in basic training, in Dix when I went in in February. We had little knitted hats that you pulled down. Our sergeant wouldn't let us pull the cap down over our ears. And I still have scars on my ears. And in the breakthrough I got these damned things open again and periodically I have to put medication on 'em, otherwise I get scabby here. It's fifty odd years ago. It was cold and raw. The weather conditions were unbelievable and I remember the first day that the planes could fly. We ran out because we heard all of these air planes and we knew they had to be ours. And we were standing and the Americans are jumping out of foxholes in the woods, cheering these air planes on. And we had done the same thing at the St. Lo, when they sent over the bombers. And the bombs would drop short and a lot of Americans got killed by American pilots. General McNair was killed when a bomb landed on him and we saw that. And I had never seen the concentration of planes like this. Fighters and ... everything. They had DC-3's, you know, carrying supplies. The sky was filled with fighter planes and we knew then that we had it made. Up to that point everybody was plenty nervous, believe me. And Patton didn't just walk into Bastogne. It wasn't that easy. Then the Germans did something that we found out about. There was a massacre of American soldiers, and the word got around the American troops, especially in those areas, very quickly. And as a result they were not taking prisoners. Not until the end when, you know, the German Army had had it. But they were not taking prisoners because they killed our boys and that's what stiffened the American resolve. Everybody got mad. And it was an amazing thing that happened to the American Army because prior to that, in a lot of cases, you know, we were good sports about it. The guy wanted to stick up his hands, he stuck up his hands.

CT: How were the French who were sympathizers to the Germans during the German occupation?

IP: We met some of them. I have this little propaganda leaflets that they handed out to the French people. You speak French at all?

CT: No.

IP: ... Me too, I haven't spoken it in 25 years. But basically the idea was that they wanted the Milice or French Fascist-- they were on the side of the Germans. They disapproved of any alliance with the Russians and they were the bastards of France. And we looked for these guys every chance we could. When we came into a town first thing we wanted to know is were any of the Milice in town. And if they were then we wanted to know it so we could watch 'em. But basically, you know, Paris is unique because there's only one Paris and the rest is France. Paris is cosmopolitan, it's different. Once you get out of France you get into provincial, every little town is provincial. They don't believe in banks, they keep their money in the mattress. If you're a stranger, they don't want any part of you. They're very suspicious of strangers. If you're not one of them you don't belong at all. And I got along with them because I spoke French and if you relate to the French they're very hospitable. We went, I took my wife for our wedding anniversary back to Normandy. And we went to Carentan, which is not far from the coast. It's where the dairy industry center really is. And we walked into a cheese store. And we're just the two of us and the proprietor came out and I started to talk to him in French. And he said, "Were

you here during the war?" And I said, "Yes." He says, "You're an American." He could tell because I always had an horrendous accent. And he said, "Just a minute." And he went and got a knife and he took us all around the store cutting off little slivers of cheese for my wife and I to taste. Couldn't do enough for us. And then he said, "There's only one cheese that I don't want you to taste and that's the chevre goat cheese," which is kind of strong. It has a strong aroma and I said, "That's fine with me," 'cause I never liked it anyway. But, anyway, we bought some cheese from this fellah. He didn't want to take any money, but I insisted and he took some money. We bought a bottle of wine and a big French baguette, like a baseball bat. And I said to my wife, "We're dining al fresco. We're going out. Ten kilometers from here we're in the country and we're gonna sit under an apple tree and have lunch," and that's exactly what we did. It was, you know, that kind of a thing.

The most interesting thing in Carentan, during the war, was that the Germans had a 240mm howitzer, which is a huge weapon, trained on an intersection where all the vehicles had to go through. So, the MP's would wait and the minute there was an explosion of this huge shell, they'd run out and wave through a couple of vehicles and then they'd duck back out of sight because it took 'em time to reload. So this happened to us. We got in this procession, two vehicles, and two by two everybody got waved through. And now came our turn and the guy in front of me, who was in our unit, wasn't driving fast enough to suit me so I pulled around him and passed him. And I was gunning that jeep. It wouldn't go over 60 with a full load but I swear it felt like we were doing 90. And the shell came down. It was like white chalk dust. Blew up in the air and everybody had ... white chalk dust on the back of his shirt. It was the strangest thing. So we passed the other guys in the jeep like they were standing still, you know, and the captain is glaring at me. (laughs) I'm not sticking around for this. We got the hell out of there. Of course, when I went back the town had grown. I never got back to Longwy, which I've always regretted because from September to November I would go boar hunting every Sunday with this German fellah that was in our outfit, and the sons of the mayor of Longwy, who was a baron. His grandfather had been the Belgian ambassador to Russia during the czar. And they had a wonderful, country home with forests all around, and it was loaded with wild boar. The French didn't have much meat. What they were eating was horse meat if they could get it. And I had never been boar hunting in my life, so the first time I went I had one shot and I missed. The second time I went I hit two. Monday morning, everybody in Longwy was referring to me as the great hunter. The word got back that I had gotten two, which was pretty unusual. And someplace I got a picture of me and the boar. And they would marinade this meat in wine and it was like sweet, sort of like, sweet roast beef, it [was] delicious. And the guy who got the boar would get the head. That was considered the big trophy. So I would always give that to the beaters, these were the guys who would go down--the boar when they're spooked [would] run down a path and they only run in a straight line. So the idea is you get behind a tree and when you see one coming you wait 'till you get 'em, you gotta shoot 'em here or here, otherwise you just wound 'em. And you get 'em angry and the big males have tusks, curved tusks, and they'll go right for you. So you have to be careful with these. And we had a French major commander of the Eastern sector of France, the French army, he would go with us, and the Baron's sons would go with us. They idolized the Americans. And then we would go back. And one of the fellahs who didn't like to hunt played the piano and they had a huge baby grand piano. In one of the rooms there were pictures of their ancestors--all the men in military uniforms, and ribbons, and red jackets and stuff. And he would play the piano and we would sit and drink wine and sing songs and have a

great time. And I would give the meat to this family. I showed you a picture of this little girl here. She was an English student from, here she is. That's her. I had a bigger picture of this taken by the monument, and the reason I took it by the monument was 'cause in big letters it said Longwy, and I said, "If my folks look at this they'll know where I am." They never noticed. (laughs) So I would take food to these people. They were very nice. And they would invite me for dinner. They'd marinade the meat for 24 hours and then I would come with a number ten can of pineapple or something for desert, and we would have a party like you wouldn't believe. They were very nice people. When I came home I sent 'em some packages and stuff 'cause they didn't have anything there. It was dreadful.

... I want you to feel free to ask me any questions you like.

KP: Oh, no, we have. We have been (laughs).

IP: I want to tell you a little bit about what happened in my unit when the captain was transferred out and we got a new commanding officer. Are we on?

KP: Yeah, we are.

IP: The fellow that I disliked intensely was transferred out as was his first lieutenant. And we got a fellow who was professor at the University of Indiana, was a captain in the Air Corps and they had put him into military government because the war was over and he was gonna run our unit. This was a terrific guy. As bad as the first guy was, this guy was great. So a directive came out that if American soldiers wanted to go visit places they had been, they were allowed to go and use an Army vehicle, providing they went with a pass and authorization. So...

CT: What was the date when this order came out?

IP: This was after the war had ended. I wanted to go visit the son of the mayor at Longwy. The oldest son had been drafted and he was about 60 miles south in the French Army zone. And I went to see him and I had borrowed the captain's bars because I knew if I walked in wearing captain's bars on my jacket I would get, you know, the French are great saluters and heel clickers and all. So I did that and I walked in and I asked to see him and, of course, this French lieutenant was very impressed that an American captain had come to see a French soldier. They were living in ... hovels. It was a barn that they were, literally a barn, sleeping in straw on the floor. They had no uniforms, no weapons, nothing. And I said, "Why in God's name did they bring these guys into military service when they had nothing to give them." Anyway, we visited for a couple of hours. I'll tell you what it was. It was the day the war ended. Now I remember. So after a couple of hours of visiting with him and talking about his family he gave me a big hug. He was a very affectionate young man. And I'm driving back and I'm still in the French Army zone. And I came to a town and I was thirsty, so I stopped and I walked into the bistro and I got a little glass of wine. And I walked out to sit at a table and there was nobody in the town. Nobody was walking around. I said, "That's strange." And the radio came on blaring. And it was Winston Churchill's voice announcing that World War II was over and that the Germans had surrendered. So I looked around. I figured people would be running around, waving flags and so forth. Nothing happened. Nothing. So I said, you know, "Maybe I should take my gun out and shoot it in the air and say

yippee, or something." What are you supposed to do? And it was the most amazing thing. Here I am in this little village. The only Frenchman I see is the bartender. And Winston Churchill is talking on the French radio and the only one listening is an American soldier in this little town. It was the damndest experience I've ever had. You know, you saw pictures and they were going crazy in Times Square and in Paris, right? Nothing happened in this town. It was like you're in another world. It was the damndest thing I ever saw and it was the day I went to visit this kid. When I came back they had-- [our] captain was being transferred, this guy was being transferred.

That's when I wound up in Seventh Army headquarters. But we had a great time in Bremerhaven. The commanding general of the 29th Infantry had gone home. It's a General [Charles H.] Gehrhart. And the number two guy who was running the unit was a regular

Army general, raised in Texas. He came from San Antonio. I can't remember his name, but he wore the old cavalry britches and the high boots and the campaign hat. And he carried a riding crop. Now we have, in this bierstube in downtown Heidelberg, an enlisted man's club where you could go drink 3.2 beers. And believe it or not, ... some of these guys would get crocked on 3.2 beer. [The] general had a habit of coming in. We had a table which was called the first three-graders table. We had to be a staff sergeant or a higher rank to sit. And the general would come in with his riding crop, whack somebody on the back, and say, "Which one of you bastards is gonna buy me a drink?" And we'd all holler out, "Nobody." And then he would say, "Shove over," and he'd push everybody and sit down and we would close the place. He was a hell of a guy. When we were getting ready to go home, he said, "I want you boys to understand something. The deal was, if you're dripping, you're not shipping." In other words, if you had venereal disease, the Army regulation was you couldn't go home. So, he said, "I want you to understand, when it comes time to get on the ship, everybody in this division goes home." So three o'clock in the morning they woke us up. All the medics got up and we had to do short arm inspections. And I want to tell you it's a God awful hour. And we're sitting there with flash lights, you know, on ammunition boxes and stuff, examining these guys. And they're scared to death. Half of 'em are clapped up. ... When we got on board the ship and the ship pulled away from the dock the first announcement made was that there would be sick call for the enlisted men immediately. And when I tell you that at least half the ship turned in, then we had a special call for officers. And all ranks came in. And they wanted to know if it was gonna go on their service record. No. We don't do that. They did that in World War I. But he made sure all of his boys went home.

KP: Even the Army Reg's that....?

IP: He says, "My boys are going home. Do you understand it?" "Yes, general. I understand!" And they did go home. He said, "They went through too much to get shafted at this stage of the game." And they did take a lot of casualties, 29th Infantry got badly shot up. Well, one regiment was badly shot up on D-Day. I heard all these kids from Bedford, Virginia were killed. All from one small town in Virginia.

KP: You were part of Military Government in Germany. What were your experiences in Germany, especially before the war ended?

IP: It was interesting because I didn't have a technical background in German, but this German fellow who was in our unit did. Subsequently, when they broke it up, he took a job as an interpreter for the Nuremberg War Trials Commission and we corresponded. But when we were together in the unit, we never met anybody that was a Nazi. Nobody we met had ever voted for Hitler. They didn't like the guy. They didn't do anything. They were not political. And this is what everybody said. Never met one person that said, "Yes! I voted for him. I'm all for him. He was the right guy for Germany in those years." Not one. So you say to yourself, you know, ... "What are you wasting your time for?" We had an interesting experience in Seventh Army headquarters where we had an American colonel who had been employed by one of the big chemical companies that was German owned. And when the war came on the United States government had seized all their assets. And at that time it was a court martial offense to have any kind of business or social relationships with German citizens. We came across correspondence from this colonel where he was writing this German guy in Heidelberg, who, apparently, was a big executive with the chemical company in Germany. And this American colonel was his right hand man in the states. So we didn't know what to do. We didn't know whether to turn in the information or what. So, finally we did. We turned it into the FBI, which by that time was coming over in droves. And we felt that that was the proper way to go. This colonel was sending this guy boxes of food, canned goods of all kinds. And the German fellow had written him a letter in English which went, "Don't worry about anything. We'll be back in business very shortly." And then they brought in a young lady to work in our office. She was the daughter of this German chemical executive, so we found that out and we canned her. We figured she was in there to fish, go on a fishing expedition. ... She spoke English perfectly. She was a nice looking girl, but my colonel smelled her out and said, "I don't want her around my office. Get rid of her." So we did. And that was an experience that we had where the relationships between German companies that had big interests in the United States and vice versa. Didn't make any difference which side you were on because things were gonna get back to normal. I had an interesting experience in France where the lady was probably the wealthiest woman in France. She was the Mrs. DuPont of France. Her name was, ... small deWendel. It was pronounced de Vendelle. And I stayed in her mansion one night. And she said to me, "You know who slept in this bed?" I said, "Who?" She said, "Hitler slept in this bed and Herrmann Goring." And I said, "And tonight your gonna put an American soldier in the same bed, right?" She said, "Yeah." I said, "You think it will rub off? You think I could ever become a field marshal?" So we laughed and we started to talk politics. She had everything. She had meat on the table. She wanted to go to Switzerland, the Germans allowed her to go to Switzerland. If she wanted to go to the Italian Riviera, she went to the Italian Riviera. She went to Spain. She went here, she went there. There were no limitations on her activities whatsoever. She dined many of the leading German political figures. And for her the war was an inconvenience. Other people were making a tremendous sacrifice. For this gal it was an inconvenience. You know, couldn't get American cigarettes. Well, war was hell. Right? Taught me a few things because when you think about it almost everything we do today is related to another country. Look at the automobile business. Japanese and the hold they have on the American car market. If we had a war tomorrow, what a profit that would be. You couldn't get parts for the Japanese cars, right? So we'd have to buy American cars. But the American car makers would be producing tanks and air planes so you wouldn't be able to get a civilian car either. It'd be hell.

CT: Where were you, actually, when you heard that the Japanese had surrendered?

IP: I was in ... Bremerhaven. They had told us that they were gonna send us to Japan. The reason being that they expected enormous casualties in the invasion of Japan and, as a consequence, we had to be prepared to go there because we were the only experienced military government unit. And the Japanese were fanatics and we had to be prepared to go and to stay for a long time. So we were very down at this. We were mad as hornets. We wanted to go home. We figured this is it. They sent us to Bremerhaven. We're going home. Well, it didn't happen that way. At any rate, when we heard the first announcement we started cheering. When we heard the second one, and it was over, we continued to cheer. And I think if you talk to most American soldiers who were there at the time, were happy that Truman dropped the bomb. One of the fellahs on my committee was a flier in World War II in Europe. And he was in on some of the bombings of major cities where they really plastered the place. And he said to me after over 50 years he still feels something inside him to why all those civilians were killed. I said, "Are you feeling guilt after all these years?" He said, "It's not so much guilt, but ... I kind of beat up on myself because I asked myself why did I have to do something like this and why was I so willing to do it?" This fellah was a very good student at Rutgers. He was an athlete, an all American lacrosse player. And we were at a meeting in the Alexander Library and he started to talk to me about this. So, I urged him to contact you. And this could be the focus of his memories of World War II about dropping bombs, knowing that you're killing innocent people. He felt all that guilt after all these [years]. He said it wasn't the guilt, but it was guilt. I thought that was interesting. We didn't feel that way.

In London I was dating a colonel's daughter who had American friends. And when I got to England this gal that I knew in New York wrote me. She said look up Elaine. She used to go to camp with me in the states. Her dad was a British colonel. They had everything. They lived in a beautiful apartment on Baker Street. They had another apartment on the same floor, two apartments to a floor. You get the size of how plush this was. It was occupied by a cousin of the Queen of England. So every weekend I would hop on the train from Shrivenham where we were training and go to London without a pass. Nobody had a pass. They didn't watch you in London, ... everything was so crowded. But, she had contacts all over. We wanted to get into a restaurant or a place to have a few drinks and dance, she got us in. One Sunday morning we were having breakfast and the colonel says to me, "Well Irv, I don't think we're gonna see you after this weekend." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well, you know, in civilian life I'm in the furniture business." I said, "Yes." "Just got a big order for crosses from the British army. Usually means that there's gonna be a big push." So I said, "Really?" He said, "Yeah, you know what I'm talking about." I said, "Sure I know what your talking about."

I went back. It was Sunday. We got orders Sunday night to pack up and got shipped out to a camp near Southampton. It rained the whole time. It was a mud hole. They put us on ships and we started out into the channel. And in the middle of the channel on a rough night, we could feel the ships turning around and we went back. Oh boy, this is strange. And we were told on the loud speaker that the Germans had mined the channel, which is why we were going back. The truth of it was, the weather was so bad that they couldn't land the troops. So when we turned around again and went back, my whole training had been in the Air Corps. I knew how to march and how to hold a rifle, that was it. Now we're loaded with equipment and we're marching, you know, in lines, long lines, up to the railing and they got the landing nets over the side of the ship. And I look down and the boat is pitching a little bit, but not too bad. And this commander with a

horn is hollering, "Get over the side one at a time," 'cause they didn't want two guys stepping on each other's bodies. So I hiked myself over and I had never done this. And he says, "Wait for the guys in the boat to call you when to drop," because as the barge went up and down on the swells the idea was to catch it on top of the swell. Because if you hit it on the bottom of the swell you were gonna drop another six feet and with that heavy load you could break a leg or ... kill yourself. So this commander says, "And by the way, if you drop into the water, you're dead." That was his goodbye greeting. I said, "I'm not even supposed to be here. They told me if you wear glasses you can't go into combat!" "Get over the side." He had no sense of humor. So we climbed down and there was a sergeant on the next ladder to me, jumped too soon. And somehow when he hit the piece of his rifle hit him in the mouth, and knocked him cold. So they started hollering in the landing boat, you know, "Take this guy back up and get him some..." He says, "No, get him to the beach and they'll take care of him there." The guy was out like a light. His teeth were busted up. His mouth was bloody. So when I got down I waited till they said jump. And I jumped and so I had 90 pounds of equipment on my back and there were three or four big guys there. They were catching you as you came down. So we made it fine. But not everybody jumped at the right time. And if you did miss the boat, if you jumped in between the barge and the ship, you were a dead man, 'cause you'd go down with all the equipment you had you would go down like a rock. And I never had a minutes training for that.

KP: You were initially trained for the Air Corps?

IP: That's right.

KP: How long was that training?

IP: Two months.

KP: And what did you learn?

IP: Basic training was in Miami Beach, Florida. We stayed in a little hotel on 72nd Street, and Collins Avenue. It was called the Lincoln. It was a two or three story hotel. And the guy who would come and make the inspections was a first lieutenant named Hank Beenders. Hank Beenders was an all-American basketball player from LIU. Everybody knew Hank. He'd come in, you know, and stick his hand up and feel around the lights. If there was a little dust on his white gloves, you didn't get out for the weekend. You had to do penance, see. If you screwed up in Miami, they'd put a gas mask on you and you'd have to jog on the beach. And if you have never tried that, you realize how wearing that can be, because you can't breathe in the damned thing. Now I had a funny experience with gas masks. I wore glasses. When you put on the gas mask the width of the mask constricts the width of the eye glasses. So you have to have special eye glasses made, small narrow lenses. When I was in Bremerhaven waiting to get home I got a package all broken up. Every base where I had served they had sent the glasses. First, they sent 'em to Miami Beach. Then, they sent them to Oklahoma. Then, they sent them to Georgia. Then they went to Worcester. (laughs) Then they they went to a staging area in Pennsylvania, then the port of embarkation in Boston. And then all the APO's where I had served. And I opened this thing up. I didn't know what it was. And there were my gas mask glasses. Took three years, but they found me. So it was great efficiency on the part of the Army post. I thought that was

wonderful. Now in Normandy we had a gas scare one day. It was at night and I had bought in the PX on the ship a lot of Hershey bars and Baby Ruth bars and stuff. And I stuffed them in the gas mask thing because I had no place to put anything. So they had a claxon. It was like a clacker. And all of a sudden somebody hollers out gas and we come flying out of the tents and everybody is trying to put on their gas masks. So I had to flip off my glasses with my left hand. My right hand, I had to unsnap the gas mask. And I'm yanking the gas mask out, completely forgetting that I got it loaded with candy bars. And the candy bars are flying all over the place. So I got the mask on and about ten or fifteen minutes went by and nothing's happening. Nobody is dropping. There's no clouds. Nothing. So a couple of us tentatively pulled off the mask and there was an acrid odor. And what happened, I think, was that an ammunition dump or something had been hit. And the smell of the burning powder and all the debris had come down and some guy had hollered gas. But every American--this was the first week of the invasion--every American in Normandy was participating in the gas, so called, gas attack which never ... happened. And I'm down on my hands and knees looking for the candy bars. (laughs) And it's amazing, when I used to talk about the war the only things I talked about were the funny things. When I went back to the cemetery in Normandy with my wife, something happened to me. I think the magnitude, when you see all those crosses, when you start to think about what happened. We were standing, I was standing on Omaha beach, beautiful sun shiny day. We were the only people there. [I] looked out across the channel. There wasn't one ship that you could see in the channel. Nobody was on the beach. So I said to my wife, you know, "I'd like to go down and just walk the beach a little bit by myself." So I climbed a little path, went down the cliff. And I walked around and then I said, "Okay." I was all right. Let's go to the cemetery, which was five minutes from Omaha Beach. And I walked into the cemetery and I couldn't handle it. I absolutely couldn't handle it. So when we were coming out a young man, an American, this is American property, the cemeteries in France. Beautifully kept. And this guy said to me, "Were you here?" And I said, "Yes." And I started to cry. And he said to me, "Everybody cries." So it was rough. So I still like to talk about the funny things.

KP: When did you start talking about the war?

IP: Not really. I had some souvenirs. I had a piece of one of the first V-2's that came down on a farm near us and I brought some shrapnel home. It was interesting 'cause the farmer called up the police and said, "Listen, something strange has happened on my farm. There was a tremendous explosion. I could put my house into the hole. Did you hear anything?" "No." So we took some gendarmes and we went out. There was this tremendous hole in this guys back yard. And there were hot pieces of shrapnel lying all around. So I picked up a piece and kept it as a souvenir. And at that time we were not aware that there were V-1's and V-2's. The V-1's we knew about 'cause we could see 'em going by. It was like a lawn mower: put-put-put-put-put. And if it stopped, then you hit the dirt. So, we knew about them, but we didn't know about these huge rockets that the Germans had. That could have changed the tide of the war if they had had enough, but they didn't make enough. They also had jet planes. We saw jet planes in Normandy. See an air plane go straight up in the air....

-----End of Side Two, Tape Two-----

KP: This continues an interview with Mr. Irving E. Pape on January 3, 1995 with Kurt Piehler.

CT: And Curtis Tao.

KP: ...at Hackensack, New Jersey. You were saying about the....

IP: We saw, apparently the first jets that were ever flown in combat when we were in Normandy, in June of 1944. And we saw a plane without a propeller go straight up in the air and it had no markings on it. But we knew that the Americans didn't have those planes in combat. I never knew that the Americans and the British were working on jet planes until a few weeks ago when Frank Travisano, who's in our class, and I were talking. Frank spent a lot of time during the war, apparently, on a secret project in Philadelphia. And the project was to develop jet air craft engines. So while we were working on it in secret, the Germans had it. But apparently they didn't believe in it. But these planes were so fast, it was absolutely incredible. If they had put, ... instead of putting their effort into bombers, if they had put it into jet fighters, there's no question that we wouldn't have won the war in the time that it took, because it was a fantastic weapon. Now Frank was ... interesting. Have you ever talked to Frank?

KP: No, I haven't.

IP: He was an interesting guy to talk to because he was one of the advanced ROTC people. He had a commission in the infantry. And because he was an engineer, [he] wound up working in the Philadelphia Navy Yard on a top secret project. It was kind of interesting. This is the first I knew about it, was when we had the meeting in Alexander Library and I said to Frank, "What'd you do?" He says, "You're not gonna believe what I did. I spent the whole war with the Navy." Good man. That's it. Well.

KP: You had a unique opportunity to work with soldiers from different countries. You had a French liaison officer and two British bobbies. What was that experience like? It sounds like there was a lot of cohesion.

IP: Well, the experience with a British captain, he was a typically British officer. And in the British Army the ranks don't really mix, so here he is thrown in. There's five officers and six enlisted men travelling around in two jeeps shoulder to shoulder. And this was kind of against his grain because in the British Army he would have a bat man, a valet taking care of his needs, carrying his bags. We didn't have that in the American Army. If he asked an American soldier to carry his bags he would have been told, "We don't do it for the American officers, sure as hell we're not gonna do it for you." So that was one of the things that bothered him intensely. He was strictly by the book, very cold fish. The other guy was just the opposite, the Scotchmen. I liked him the minute he said he hated bag pipe music. This guy's a real good friend. We went out and partied in Paris and I want to tell you, we had more fun. Wherever we went we were the hit parade. This guy took over and he had great rapport. Didn't make any difference what you were. He found a way to talk to you, who you were. ... Paris was a mix. ... I ran into American pilots that had parachuted into the country side and had been shipped by the French underground to Paris where they could hide out. So I'm drinking at the bar and this guy in civilian clothes, that didn't fit him too well, and he say's, "Hey."... " So what are you doing here?" He says, "I got shot down a couple of months ago." I said, "Well, are you going back in?" He says, "Are you crazy?" ... I'm staying here for the rest of the war." I said, "Well, you know, how about your folks? You

must be in a missing in action list." He says, "My man, in war time you take care of your self first and the rest will take care of itself later," and I'll bet you he never turned himself in. And there were a load of guys like that. Glider pilots and combat pilots, B-17 guys, they were all partying in this bar and every one of 'em were in civilian clothes. It was the damndest experience I've ever had. The American officers, basically, the regular Army officers, the professional soldiers that I ran into had a good idea why they were there and what they were doing. I won't say that they were all perfect. I don't think that General Patton was beloved by the members of the Third Army. When they called him 'Blood 'n Gut's' it was your blood and his guts. And they meant it. By the same token he turned the Army into a winning unit. So he was feared. Bradley and Eisenhower were loved. There was a difference. Bradley was the soldier's general in World War II. He didn't wear a lot of decorations. There was nothing gleaming on the guy. His helmet wasn't varnished with six coats of varnish so, you know, the stars on his helmet looked like neon lights. He was a plain ordinary guy. And Ike had a quality of coming across to the enlisted men. When he walked into a unit the first thing he would do is sit down and talk to the enlisted men because he knew if they didn't have the backing of the enlisted men the Army wasn't going to go anywhere. So he did his best to keep the morale of the enlisted men on a high plane. When we got on a ship we were all given a letter. I still have it someplace. It was the letter that, then they played a tape on the loud speaker of the ship: the great crusade is about to embark, something to that effect. And there wasn't a sound on that ship. 5,000 guys sat absolutely quiet, listening to this thing.

KP: You guys didn't think this was really hokey, this tape?

IP: No.

KP: Really?

IP: No.

KP: 'Cause if you did something like that now I think you would have a different reaction.

IP: Well, it could be, I'll tell you the problem with Americans is that they watch too many movies. In the movies the good guys always win. In real life the good guys take a pasting sometimes. We did it in Africa. We took a pasting in Kasserine Pass. The German breakthrough was the biggest battle of the war, as far as we were concerned. Then we had that thing at Saint Lo, where the American boys got killed by their own aircraft. I mean, that was a tragedy. But we profited from those mistakes because we never used bombers in tactical situations again. We used them only in strategic situations. There's a big difference. So we did profit from some of our mistakes. We didn't have everything that was the best like we were told. And the thing that irritated me was in the Vietnam war. The American soldiers were being told we got the best of this, we got the best of that. And then the story came out, I think by that time Johnson was President, that the carbines in Vietnam got gummed up very easily with mud, and if they weren't kept perfectly clean they didn't function. And the Russians supplied Kalishnikovs, which worked perfectly in the mud because they weren't machined as finely as the U.S. carbines. And the first thing the Americans did, if they could get their hands on a Russian machine gun, was to grab that gun because they knew it would work under lousy conditions. And I look back and ... I was

fortunate that I didn't go to the islands, Pacific Islands. ... The conditions for those guys were not endurable. I mean, we had problems but at least you can get a little shelter once in a while. There was a place to get warm. You had some people you could talk to. A kid on my block came home from the islands. He was home about a year. He turned yellow and died. They never could figure out what was wrong with him. It wasn't jaundice, but he had something that the medical profession had never run into, and he went from Army hospital to Army hospital. Young kid in his early 20's, Ronny Brady, I grew up with him. And I ran into his father when I came back from the service and he said, "Ronny passed up from some weird thing that he picked up in the Islands." Well, at least the things that we picked up weren't that exotic, you know.

CT: Did you experience any type of anti-Semitism while you were there in Europe?

IP: Only with my ... captain and with one fellow in our outfit who was Polish, from Rochester. Now this is ironic. We were in (Shrivenham?), England and we're all sitting around, I was cleaning my carbine, and I was in a pair of under shorts and the rest of the guys were sitting around this little living room that we had, which is half the size of this room here. And the Polish guy says to one of the fellows in the outfit, he says, "I just wrote home to my folks that this is a safe outfit because there's a lot of Jews here." So I looked at him and I said, "You know something Eddie, I just wrote the same thing to my parents. We're never gonna see combat because the place is filled with stupid Polkas." So he started to get out of his chair and I pointed the carbine at him and I said, "Don't." He didn't know if it was loaded or not. Now, subsequently, when we got to Europe, to France, he became our best friend because he couldn't speak a word of French and he knew if he was gonna get along he had to hang around with somebody who spoke French. And the three guys in our unit who spoke French were all college graduates. He came over to our side. So now instead of three and three like it was in England, now we had the officers relying on us 'cause they didn't speak the foreign language and the enlisted men [did]. This guy came, the two who didn't come over, one was a Boston Irishman who claimed he had been in the Boston police department but his service record didn't indicate that. He was the oldest guy in the unit. He had grayish, white hair, and he was the worst ass kisser I ever ran into. He and the captain hit it off like crazy. I got sick one time. We had eaten some bad meat that they had shipped us, no refrigeration. And I was in a civilian hospital in a town called Longuyon in France for a couple of days. When I came back some of the guys came and they said, "You know, this fellow and the captain at the dinner table, have been telling a lot of Jewish jokes." I said, "No kidding." We ate in a little hotel. The officers sat at one table and the six enlisted men sat at the other table. So I came in and that night I sat opposite the Irishman. And I said, "Hey Ed, I hear you got a whole repertoire of Jewish jokes. Let's go." So he turns red and he says, "What do you mean?" I said, "I hear you got some terrific Jewish jokes. I want to hear 'em." Now I always carried a 45 and I had emptied out the clip 'cause I was prepared for this. He didn't know that. And I took it out and I put it on the table right in front of him. I said, "Come on Eddie. You ... not gonna require a lot of coaxing, are you?" He says, "What are you gonna do with that?" I said, "If you don't give me the jokes I'm gonna blow your brains out right at the table and it's gonna upset everybody's dinner." So this guy turned white and he wouldn't tell any of the jokes. But from that day on he didn't tell any to anybody else either. And he had shown an act of cowardice in the cemetery in France where we were looking for snipers. And literally shook. Wouldn't go. And the lieutenant was sitting there and I said, "This bastard is shaking. He's afraid. I'm gonna shoot him in the back." And he said to me, "Give me your carbine and take my

Thompson," which is a submachine gun, "and I'll cover you from here." I said, "I don't want you to cover me from here. I'll get a bullet in the back." I didn't trust him. Anyway, that was [it], and plus the fact that the captain had openly expressed his anti-Semitism. Lindbergh was right. We were fighting on the wrong side. The Germans had the right idea, we should be fighting the Bolsheviks. And Roosevelt was a traitor.

KP: Where was this captain from?

IP: He was from the mid-west. I could identify the town he was from. He was the mayor of a small town. I haven't mentioned his name and I won't mention the town, but I still remember it. And I've always had a burning ambition, which I have never been able to fulfill. I always wanted to go to this little, small town and find his grave in the cemetery and urinate on it. This is a desire I've had for over 50 years. And I would do it with glee if I could find it. Yup. It was such a difference for me to get away from this guy after sixteen months and get into an Army headquarters, and all of a sudden I'm getting promotions like crazy and this guy couldn't even get a stripe. Now, there was a time when the Army was desperate for second lieutenants. So they would accept college graduates for direct commissions. So Freddy, the German refugee who was a graduate of Syracuse, and I as a graduate of Rutgers, applied for commissions and it required the endorsement of the captain. And the captain assured us that we would be recommended. It would go over his signature, recommendation, strongly recommending us. Well, when the stuff came back we were never told anything. And the captain was transferred. He forgot some papers which were left in the desk that he used, which we saw. And the endorsement that he wrote about me and about the German fellah were cut out. However, there was a letter from a colonel who was handling the correspondence on this matter in which he says, "If the above two named enlisted men are as bad as you say, why haven't they been court martialed months ago?" So I knew what the recommendation was. You know, he buried us. It was just as well because officers served, unlike the enlisted men, at the convenience of the government.

KP: So, you would have been home....

IP: If you were stuck in the boon docks as a second lieutenant, it didn't make any difference how many points you had, you weren't going home until they had somebody to replace you. If you were an enlisted man and you had the points they had to send you home. That was the great benefit. So everything worked out.

CT: When did you begin to hear more and more stories about the Holocaust?

IP: I heard stories about the Holocaust from Jewish people who had come from Europe in the 1930s. I would meet these people, sometimes at parties and things, and they were talking about it. And it's a funny thing about Jewish people. Jewish people have a great smell when they're being persecuted. It's a tradition that goes back 5000 years to when they were slaves in Egypt. And somehow when you're Jewish, if your people are being badly mistreated, you know. You just know. It's a sixth sense that Jewish people ... it's 5000 years of paranoia, whatever you want to call it. You know something is going on. My dad didn't hear from his family the minute the war started. Never a word. Now you say, well, they're having a big war. They're not doing too well. The Germans are pushing back. Somehow, other people were getting mail from Russia

once in a while, but they weren't Jewish people. They were Christians and Russian Orthodox people. There was a Russian Orthodox church in Waterbury, Connecticut where I was born. And the priest--they were writing the priest in this church to locate their relatives and tell 'em that they were all right. Didn't happen in the Jewish family. There was no communication. And ... from time to time people would meet. For example, a fraternity brother of mine was Martin, what the hell was his name? He was a radio commentator. He was in Turkey. Turkey was a hot bed of international intrigue. Martin Agronsky. Martin Agronsky's brother published the Palestine Post. Marty was a journalism student at Rutgers and was a fraternity brother of mine, but a couple of years ahead of me. And Marty went to work, originally, working for his brother and then, for some reason, got hooked up with a radio network. And they asked him to go to Turkey, which was an obscure place. And, all of a sudden, World War II busts out and Turkey is the place to be. Because there's where all of the combatants are meeting in a social environment. So the French are watching what the English are doing and the English are watching what the Germans are doing and everybody is watching everybody else. And they're also doing business with each other. The Swedes are in there selling Bofors 37 mm cannons to everybody's side. The Swiss are there opening up bank accounts. It was a paradise for information. They were getting word through from some of these countries. Now not all the Germans were sympathetic to what was going on. I met somebody, I can't think who it was. Who was taken across from Denmark, which was an occupied country, to Sweden in a fishing boat. Somebody from Teaneck. And he told me the boat was intercepted by a German patrol boat. And an officer came on board with a couple of men and they checked the boat out. And he sent the men back on the ship. And then he said to the captain, "I know you have somebody on this ship that's hiding, and I want to see him now because my orders are to blow the ship out of water." So they had a compartment where they put this guy behind some blankets and stuff. And he wasn't well. He was coughing and things. And this German naval officer looked at him and said, "Okay, I've seen enough." Got back up on deck, jumped on to the German boat, gave 'em a wave, and took off and left 'em. Didn't happen too often, but it did happen. The German Navy was not notorious for cruel acts. The SS was notorious for cruel acts and when my father lost his whole family, two brothers, nine nephews and nieces, and his mother, we knew. You didn't have to ask any questions, you just knew. And of course there was a flood of refugees coming from Lisbon, when they could get into the country. And there ... [were] discussions taking place in Switzerland constantly with the Jewish organizations that were aware of what went on. And Hitler didn't lie about it. If you read Mein Kampf, he said point blank what he was gonna do. So, why anybody would doubt that this is happening is beyond me. Now I remember in England having a discussion with a Boston lawyer who subsequently went on to earn a direct commission. And he said to me, "The atrocity stories that you're hearing are the same things that they used in World War I: that the Germans are chopping off the arms of nuns, and they're killing babies and they're blowing up cathedrals and libraries. Not true." It was true.

CT: Did you ever witness any part of the Holocaust? Did you see any of the remnants of it?

IP: I ... saw a couple of camps, not major camps, but I did see some. The most interesting job I had, which only lasted about a month, was ... I got placed in charge of a depot which was shipping supplies to staging areas for concentration camps. And we were loaded with bags of coffee and flower, and salt, and ... cans of evaporated milk and stuff. And I had for help six SA Frenchmen who had gone to work voluntarily as a labor force for the German Army. And these

guys were my crew. I got a picture here someplace of these guys. I don't know if I can find it here. Anyway, we would get freight trains in a couple of times a week and we would load 'em up. Here. Here they are. That's the crew. Here's the picture. I sent home [in] ... the right hand corner, if you look closely you see the word Longwy. And that's how I got the message home to my folks where I was stationed. (laughs) Now at that point in the war, in September of 1944, everybody was reading the Stars and Stripes, 'cause nothing was going on. It was a lull. And I couldn't write home where I was stationed. They cut everything out. It was the damndest thing. Anyway, you asked me about anti-Semitism. That's really the only place I ran into it. I didn't have any experiences like that at Rutgers. I never had experiences like that in high school. But ... I wasn't surprised at that. All of my male cousins went in the Navy. And in the U.S. Navy if you had ambitions or delusions of grandeur and you didn't have an Irish name you were a dead duck. You had to be Irish to get high command. My roommate went into the Navy, Bill Rafferty. His name is on our monument. He got killed in an air plane accident two weeks after the war ended. And it took me all these years, I couldn't find out how he died. I wrote the Navy Department and enquired as to the matter of his death. I got a letter back that this was considered an invasion of his privacy and therefore they couldn't give me any information. So about ten years ago my wife and I decided to go to St. Michaels in Maryland. And I said, "On the way we're gonna stop at Annapolis." And I went in and I went in Bancroft Hall. There's a table made of copper, I guess, or brass bearing the names of all of the Annapolis grads who perished in World War II. And Bill's name was not on there. So I went back to the hotel very upset. I can't believe this. And on a hunch I called the information officer, the public information officer at Annapolis and I got a young lady who was a first lieutenant, whatever they call 'em in the Navy. And she was very nice. So I said to her, "If I start to give you some information about somebody and I tell you everything I know about this person. And then I want to find out the manner of his death." She said, "Keep talking because as you speak I'm punching it into the computer." And by the time I had finished giving her the information she said, "I have it. He died in a plane crash in pilot training two weeks after the war ended." And we exchanged Christmas cards every year. This is interesting. I corresponded with some of my high school teachers. This is Mt. St. Michel. That's an original drawing by one of my teachers in high school, who sent it to me, I think it was ... December 22, 1944. This is an interesting place. Have you?

KP: No, I've only been to Paris.

IP: This is unbelievable, you know. It's surrounded by water. It comes in with tremendous force and once it comes in if you're on the side of the church, you're stuck overnight. They have a little hotel there because so many people get stuck there on account of the tide. And then it goes out and you can walk on the sand right to shore. But when it starts to come in you can't run fast enough with the force of the tide. Anyway, what else would you like to know, fellows?

KP: I guess, one question I have is in terms of your coming home, you had no interest in staying in the Army as a career. You thought of law school, it sounds like?

IP: I did. And I could have gone on the G.I. Bill. Most of my expenses would have been paid. But my roommate ... one of my roommates in college had very bad eye sight. Was not accepted for service. And he did go to law school. He went to Newark Law. He's also a resident in Newark. He came out. He had his law degree. He went to practice for himself. Harry Hazelwood,

who was one of our classmates, who was in law school at the same time. And he had a thing for himself. And I came out and I'm three years behind these guys and..."Hey, I'm gonna be 22 years old and I haven't ever earned a salary. I don't know what I'm gonna do." I did not want to go back to school and I will tell you frankly that emotionally I didn't think I had the discipline to hit the books for a while. Because in the Army, every decision is made for you. They tell you when to get up, when to go eat breakfast, when to eat lunch, what to wear, how to dress, everything. ... After three years of having every move you make dictated the thought of coming back into civilian life and now you got to face tremendous competition. Eleven million guys are getting out of military service. A lot of 'em are pretty wired. I have to tell you, every weekend, a couple of friends of mine from the 29th Infantry and I would start out on 72nd Street and West End Avenue in a bar. And three o'clock on the morning we would wind up singing songs on the Bowery, drinking Canadian Club for a quarter a shot. This is a fact. I had 330 dollars when I got out of service. That was my discharge pay. When I drank up the 332 dollars then I decided I better settle down because my folks knew what I was doing. But I wasn't coming home, you know, disorderly or anything. I was just out unwinding. And after that I settled down. I had a interesting experience a few months ago and I'm gonna wind this up. I'm sitting with a man at a birthday party. One of our friends had an 80th birthday party so we went. And this guy's sitting there with a little round thing in his lapel, and I start to talk to him. And I said, "You know, I see you're wearing that little gadget there." "Oh," he says. "That's the Croix de Guerre of France." I said, "I know. That's why I'm mentioning it. I'm very impressed." He says, "Well, they gave it to me." I said, "What for?" He said, "Well, I was the beach master on Omaha Beach and I didn't get killed so they congratulated me for my military skill." I said, "Were you the beach master?" He said, "Yeah." And he says, "When I came out of service I didn't know what I was gonna do, but then I had earned about 4000 dollars." He says, "I was in the Navy I never had a day off. Four years in the Navy I never had a leave. I never had a day off so I got a tremendous amount of discharge pay." So he says, "I took a ride down Route 4 and I saw a bunch of property, empty property. And I said, "'Boy this is gonna be a terrific piece of real estate here.'" And he says, "I bought 4000 dollars worth of land on Route 4." And he said, "I made so much money on that deal when I sold it I never had to go to work again." It's a true story. And he did have the Croix de Guerre. And he's the only man I met that ever had it. We had a good time reminiscing.

KP: What did you think of Eisenhower's bid for President in the 50s? Did you support it?

IP: I always had a theory that military men don't make good presidents. And I think part of it was my teachings from my history course where we were taught that the civilian control of our government is ... essential towards the preservation of liberty in a democracy. And when you get a president, a lot of 'em had military background[s], but the first president we had who was a general was Grant. And Grant's Administration was marked by tremendous scandals. Then ... when Eisenhower ran, nobody knew what he really stood for. I voted for him, not because I felt that he would make a great president, but the fact that he had said, "I'll end the war in Korea." And my judgement in him was confirmed in his last public statement after his second term when he warned the country about the military- industrial complex. And nobody knew what the hell he was talking about. And those words were prophetic because we saw the military-industrial complex in it's heyday. That's what happened. Nobody listened to him. But that was the one thing that he said that stuck in my mind. So in my book, he was a pretty good president because he had the right instincts. The guy that I really liked is hanging on my wall. You gotta go in the

den. I just want you to see this. It's Harry Truman autographed. Named Sam Hipsch, and he and Harry were in the poker club. And he told me the most interesting story when Truman was considering the recognition of Israel and a bunch of rabbis kept coming to the White House to talk to him. And they were kind of pedantic in their comments to him and he got very angry. And he said one day, "One more rabbi comes to lecture me and bounces knuckles on my desk and I'm gonna forget the whole thing." Harry Jacobson, who was his partner in the haberdashery which failed, was contacted. He came to talk to Harry Truman. And he talked Harry Truman into calming down and recognizing Israel.

KP: What made Harry Truman so appealing?

IP: Oh, I liked him. First off, he was feisty. He stood up for what he thought was right. And he had an amazing knowledge of American history. Harry Truman probably knew as much about American history as any president and more than most. I have all the books written about him. To me, he was the common man. He never profited from his presidency. He never wound up on anybody's board of directors. Nobody built him a mansion like they did for Ronald Reagan. The two and a half million dollar home in California. Harry didn't get that. He came back to where he had lived before, and was a quiet ordinary man. He was the last guy we had that wasn't made by the media. Everybody since is a media creation, you think about it.

CT: What did you think of Harry Truman when he fired MacArthur?

IP: Oh, I thought that was great. ... What I was taught in history at Rutgers was that the civilian control of the government and the military is paramount. And MacArthur went too far and Harry was a commander-in-chief, and he cut him down to size. We could have gotten into another world war on account of that. And we were taking a shellacking on the Yalu River up there. I know guys who were in that war.

CT: You had alluded to this so I guess I'll ask it directly. What are your opinions of the Korean and Vietnam wars?

IP: Well, my opinion of the Vietnam War, I opposed it. I opposed it on several grounds. I pride myself on having an average intelligence. Average. I'm not the man in the street. I don't drive a cab. But I don't think most Americans really pay rapt attention to the world around them. When the Vietnam War came on, I had three sons. And I said, "You know, every day I read the newspapers and I don't understand why we're getting involved in there. The French just took a shellacking. We have the opportunity not to get involved and we're getting involved." They sent 10,000 observers to train these guys, then it became twenty. The 20 became 40, on and on in the escalation. And I said, "You know, who the hell wants this? What are we doing there? I don't understand why they're fighting there." Mohammed Ali got up and said, "I'm not going." I said, "This guy's got guts." And my kids were worried 'cause my son was in second year law school and they told him at a certain point in the Vietnam War the only graduate students that would be allowed to stay in school were going to be medical students. And that anybody else going for any other degree would be drafted. So my son called up, and he was at the University of Virginia. And he says, "Dad, they just came out with this thing today and I don't know what to do." I said, "Well, what are your options?" He says, "Well, one, I could sign up for the Judge Advocate

General school which is at the University of Virginia. That would allow me to get my law degree, but then I'd have to go into training for two years as a captain and then I have to serve two or three years in the JAG Division," you know. Which is the legal services of the Army. So, it's a year more in law school, two years in JAG school, and two or three years in military, "We're talking about five or six years of my life." I said, "What else can you do?" "Well," he said. "I can sign up for the ROTC." I said, "Let's talk about that." We did and then I said, "What else can you do?" He says, "I can hop a plane to Montreal." Now my youngest one, my middle one called up and he was at the University of Virginia also. He was a freshman or a sophomore at the time. He says, "Dad, they pulled the numbers. I got the highest number you could get." I said, "Great." I was so happy. And I don't understand the Vietnam War today. I don't. I absolutely don't. I feel very sorry for people who lost loved ones. And I think, you know, World War II was probably the last major war in my life-time where American people understood why they were there. I didn't meet too many soldiers like the captain who kept telling me we're fighting the wrong people, we should be on the side of the Germans fighting the Bolsheviks. I didn't hear too much of that. In Korea it was disguised. It was a police action. It wasn't put to the people that this is a war. It was a police action. And I met fellows who served in Korea, and it was one hell of a thing. We didn't do too well in Korea. And it wound up with an Armistice, which has lasted for what, 35, 40 years. We're still technically in an armistice discussion with a bunch of hard-nosed people that we will never understand. And they don't understand much about us. The cultures are so different. And ... to me, Korea, you could tolerate if you had to. But the idea of Vietnam was totally against my grain. And I know that even at Virginia, which is where an awful lot of rich kids went to school, when the Vietnam thing was at it's head there were demonstration at Virginia. I got a letter from the secretary of the Virginia alumni association, would I please intercede to make sure that my sons do not participate in any demonstrations. And I wired this guy back. Virginia is the home of Thomas Jefferson and he wrote that the people have a right to be heard and it says in our books that the right of peaceful protest must be maintained. And I said, "I don't think I can support your views." That was interesting. A bunch of guys in Virginia got dead drunk one night and they were gonna go down and burn down the ROTC building. And at two o'clock my son got a call from the president of the university, Dr. Shannon. He said, "Stu, they're up to something. There's gonna be hell to pay. Get out of bed and get down there and see if you can't talk 'em out of it." And my son went down there and from two o'clock until five o'clock he spoke to these drunks and calmed everybody down and sent 'em home. And the result was when he graduated-- and I met Dr. Shannon again-- he said to me, "If you have any more kids at home like Stuart, you send 'em down here and I'll guarantee him a place. We've always got a spot for somebody like your son." So he did that. And he did go into the ROTC. But the interesting thing was in our conversation. I said to him, "Stu, they'll give you a year to finish law school, right?" He said, "Yes." "Then," I said, "You have to go for basic training?" "Yes." "And then you go for advanced training?" "Yes." I said, "By that time the war will be over." Because the demonstrations were at their height. Columbia University had a riot. The streets were covered with broken glass. Kids were shot at Kent State. I mean, the whole thing, the country was unraveling. And it was a desperate time. And I think I have always felt that you cannot send American boys to war unless they clearly understand why they are going, what they are doing there. And then if they agree with the premise they'll fight. I don't think there's any difference today between the kids during Vietnam and the kids that were in my war or wars to come. I don't think anybody knew why they were in Vietnam. I think some people thought it was worthy to be in Korea, I don't know. That was the first attempt of the

United Nations to put a halt to aggression, I guess. Maybe I'm wrong. I don't know. But the Vietnam thing was ... you know. You go down to Washington today and you see that Memorial and you see people that don't have any relatives. They don't have any sons on the wall standing there crying. There was no silent majority. The silent majority were people who were against the war. That was the majority. We didn't find it out in time. But it was a terrible moment in our history, this thing. I remember when Johnson said he wasn't gonna run again. We were at a cocktail party and I went into the party to tell everybody what I had just heard. And thunderous applause broke out. They were all against the killing. Nobody wanted to be a part of it. And the guys who were over there, Jesus, I heard stories from some of these guys that came back. It was unbelievable. The conditions that they were in. And the Vietnamese happened to be very good fighters. And the most ironic thing was the constitution of the Vietnamese people was based on our Constitution. Isn't that correct? Doesn't that make you think a little bit? Why do we always side with the wrong side? Chiang Kai-Shek in World War II. Batista in Cuba. The wrong side in Yugoslavia. We always pick the loser. The one who gets kicked out. And then you have this gal who says, "Well, sure this guy's a bastard, but he's our bastard." That's the great mistake we make. We're picking on the person that doesn't have the support of the people. That's the mistake that American foreign policy has made year after year.

-----End of Side One, Tape Three-----

CT: How did you meet your wife?

IP: On a blind date (laughs).

CT: Oh yeah.

IP: I came back from service, everybody that I went to high school with had moved out of town. It was unbelievable. Every girl that I used to know, that I called up, was married and was moved away and I wind up talking to everybody's mother and father. And they all welcomed me home with open arms. But I couldn't get a date in East Orange. And East Orange was a lovely town in those days. There were no women in my age bracket. In desperation I even went down to the high school, to look over the senior crop. And they didn't compare to the girls that were in my classes. So, I had a friend who was a fraternity brother who married Doris's cousin. And he got us together on a blind date. And then I took her to the ballet in New York one night. And we started to go together. And I didn't have a car. She lived in Paterson and I lived in East Orange. So I had to ... take three busses and do a lot of walking to get there. And then if we came home late I had to sleep in her house, because I couldn't get a bus back to East Orange. So, technically, we had a lot of problems. But we made it. And I've been married since 1947 which is a long time, you know. If you kept a car that long it would be worth a lot of money right? But ... old husbands and wives don't have much trade in value, right? Anyway, that's how we met. We have three boys. One is a lawyer, one is a builder, and the other one had emotional problems while he was at an Ivy League college and came home. And hasn't been the same ever since. He lives in Florida. Not married.

So I had three sons. I was an only son. And I have three grandsons. We don't have a girl in our family in three generations. So when you talk about war, and the Vietnam War especially, I had a

great personal interest in what was going on. And I just thank heaven that it worked out because my son did go in. He got a commission. They sent him to, I said, "What are you gonna put in for?" He says, "Oh, I'm gonna put in for medical administrative corps." I says, "You want to rest. You'll never get it." So anyway he put in for it. So he wound up, first day he had ... training in Signal Corps in some place in Kansas. He says, "Dad, you're not gonna believe it. I'm climbing telephone poles in the rain, in the sun. It doesn't make any difference." Then they sent him to armored infantry school in Camp Campbell, Kentucky. And he was riding around on a tank for a while. And ... I've forgotten where he was. But he had a very interesting experience. They had sent a bunch of boys home from Vietnam for reassignment. And the officers that were in training were not allowed to talk to the enlisted men. And one night they sent 'em out to camp in the woods. I guess it was in Kentucky at the time. And the officers were also sent out. And there was a tremendous lightening and thunder storm. So they sent trucks to bring them back at two o'clock in the morning. And in the dark with the rain pouring down and heavy lightening, everybody just jumped on the truck and went back. And they wound up on trucks with the enlisted men, all of whom had come back from Vietnam. So they started to talk to these kids. And the boys told 'em what was going on in Vietnam. That the officers were ordered to take 'em into the bush, into the fields, on patrols for a couple of miles, and they would go into the bush for five or 600 yards and sit down. And everybody would smoke a joint. And if there was an officer that insisted that they go in, somehow or other a hand grenade would roll into his tent and it would go off. And if it didn't kill him, it was a message to back off. So when I heard that I said, "You know, I'm telling you now this war can't last because what you're telling me is that these guy's are in the verge of mutiny." And he said, "Dad, now I know why they wouldn't let these guys talk to us. Because what we're reading and what's going on over there are not the same." There was no parallel between the events. The first time, I think, in American history that something like this was happening, that the troops were refusing to go into action. And it was a sham. Nobody knew that at the time. So as luck would have it, I said to him, "I can't see the war lasting much longer." There were riots on every campus in the country. And the war did end, subsequently. They wanted him to stay in. He came out a captain. He stayed in the reserves because that was mandatory, but he didn't reenlist. Now they write him letters. He could go back in as a chicken colonel. Now he's an attorney with a very prominent law firm. He's had military experience. He held a commission. But he won't go back. Good kid. Anything else?

KP: No. I....

IP: I got a feeling I talked too much.

KP: No. No.

CT: Is there anything else you wanted to say?

KP: Yeah. No, because we went over a lot of ground.

IP: We did go over a lot of ground. You know, in retrospect, I was really on the fringe of great events, except for Paris where I was there and saw it for myself. But we were on the edge of the German breakthrough. We were sixteen kilometers from the front lines, which is not a lot. I was in France. I landed the first week of the invasion. We saw a lot of killing. We saw a lot of dead

soldiers. And when I came out I tried to forget all that. So, when people would talk I would tell the kids funny stories: how we built the biggest latrine in Normandy, and how we did this, and how we did that. And everybody would laugh and that was it. But when I went back to Normandy something happened to me. And I remembered all of the unfortunate and unhappy things that happened. There were some bad memories that I had shielded for 25 years, came back to me. And once we got active on this archives thing and I went through the V-mail letters that I wrote my mother and father and read letters from other friends that I got, I ... have changed. I can't laugh about the war anymore. I don't remember, really remember the funny things. I remember the bad things. And I think I'm just like the fellow I mentioned to you, the flyer that still thinks about all the innocent people that were killed in the bombings. So I think there's still hope for this country. But we're in for tough sledding. I really feel that way. I just hope, you know, they're talking about ... [Colin] Powell as a candidate for the presidency. I don't understand how they can seriously talk about him. Nobody knows what his political views are. They have no idea. He never, probably, voted. Eisenhower never voted. He was a big hero coming off a major war. What do we know about Powell? Nothing. What are we doing? And I am leery of having a general or an admiral running a country. They're used to giving orders. Their not used to working in the framework of the civilian control of the government. That's why I didn't support Perot. He was an Annapolis man. His right hand man was also an Annapolis man and he picks a poor broken down admiral to be vice president. Jesus, come on! That was so sad when that guy got on to speak.

CT: Oh, I know.

IP: I was in tears. How could he do such a thing to a nice man. And he got up and the admiral said, "Why am I here?" And that was the finish of Perot's campaign. Yup. I have enjoyed this thoroughly. I will recommend it to everybody I speak to.

-----End of Interview-----

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