RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN L. ZAPF

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Martin L. Zapf on October 26, 2005, in Yardley, Pennsylvania, with Shaun Illingworth and …

Michael Mink: Mike Mink.

SI: Mr. Zapf, thank you very much for having us here today in your home.

Martin Zapf: I'm happy to have you here.

SI: Thank you. I will let Mike ask the first question.

MM: We generally begin our interviews by asking a few questions about your parents. Where were they from?

MZ: Well, my parents were immigrants, immigrating to the United States after World War I. In fact, my paternal grandfather also immigrated to the United States about the same time, from Germany, I should say.

SI: Was their immigration directly related to the war? Were they trying to get away from the war before it started? Was it in the aftermath of the war?

MZ: Well, … I don't know the reasons, except, one can assume, they left because they wanted to find a better place to live. They came from East Germany, from Thuringia, and immigrated to the United States for a better life, I presume.

MM: Where did they come to in the United States?

MZ: They came through Ellis Island, like many immigrants during that time. You will find my grandparents and parents and uncles [in the records], a big family. Actually, my grandfather came with seven children in 1916 and one of the children he brought with him was my father.

SI: After Ellis Island, where did they settle, initially?

MZ: They settled in Kingston, New Jersey. I believe the reason for that was, there was a relative of my grandmother, who lived … near Kingston, who were their sponsors. They sponsored my grandfather and his family coming to the United States and, therefore, they settled in Kingston and most of them went to work for the Princeton Nurseries, which, at that time, was one of the largest nurseries in the country. They all worked there. My grandfather and his children, many of them worked for Princeton Nurseries, when they first arrived in the United States.

SI: Where and when were you born?

MZ: I was born in Princeton on November 20, 1925.

SI: Did your mother's family also settle in the Princeton area?

MZ: … My mother's mother and father did not immigrate. My mother had a sister who immigrated and a younger brother who immigrated. They all came to this New Jersey area.

SI: Do you know how your parents met?

MZ: Not really. I don't know that.

SI: Did you grow up in Princeton?

MZ: Yes, I did. …

SI: What was Princeton like when you were growing up?

MZ: Well, it's much the same as it is today. … Princeton proper doesn't really change very much, because of the dominance of the university, so that the Borough of Princeton doesn't change very much in my lifetime, in eighty years. But the outskirts, Princeton Township and the neighboring township, is where all the expansion has taken place. It's primarily residential, by a long shot. There is some industry, but it's primarily a residential area.

SI: What about your neighborhood? Your family had emigrated from Germany. Were there other German immigrants in the area? Was there a mixture of different groups?

MZ: … I really don't know that. There was family. … As I say, a lot of my family immigrated, Grandfather first, and then, my mother and her sister and her husband, and then, the members of the family immigrated, following the grandfather, which was not unusual in those days. So, most of … my knowledge of other Germans were mostly family, family members of the Zapf family and the Latterman family. That was my mother's maiden name. She had a sister and a brother here, also.

SI: Were most of your activities during your childhood centered around your family?

MZ: Very much so, very much so, which was rather standard procedure, I guess, in those days. We associated with members of the family more so than we do today.

SI: Were you involved in any aspect of the community through a church or a community group?

MZ: Belonged to a Dutch Reformed Church in Blawenburg, New Jersey. My family was, as they say in German, *Evangelisch*, Protestant, all right, non-Catholic, and the only church near where I lived was the little church in Blawenburg. It's still there, called, I don't think they say Dutch Reformed Church anymore, it's just called a Reformed Church, for whatever reason that is. … That's the church that I attended when I was growing up, for Sunday school on Sundays.

SI: Where did you go to school?

MZ: I went to the local township school in Montgomery Township, outside of Princeton, adjoining Princeton Township, … through eighth grade, and then, in high school, to Princeton High School. We bussed to Princeton for the four years.

SI: What did you think of the education you received in Montgomery and Princeton?

MZ: I think it was very good. Looking back to those days, I think it was a good education and, certainly, I felt at the time that we were fortunate to be bussed to Princeton, because, before I went to high school, most students from our area were bussed to Somerville, New Jersey, and due to whatever reason, capacity or something, the township changed from Somerville to Princeton High School and that was a fortunate thing for me, because it was a better high school.

MM: Did you take part in any sports or extracurricular activities in high school?

MZ: Not very much. I lost my father when I was three years old, so, I really didn't know my father. So, my mother went to work to support me. … I grew up with my uncle and aunt instead. So, when I became old enough to work and earn some money, I usually did that, and that includes in high school, after high school, days and weekends. I usually worked, to try to take the burden off my mother.

MM: What type of jobs did you hold?

MZ: I worked in a hardware store, I worked in a grocery store, drove a delivery truck in Princeton, that sort of thing. Of course, that was only a short period of time, because my senior high school year was 1943, which was in the middle of the war. … In fact, the last six months of my senior year, we dropped all of our regular classes and we're given what they called pre-induction classes, because everyone, unless you had some handicap, was certain to … enter the service. In fact, I was only seventeen when I graduated. There were some colleagues who were eighteen who actually missed the last six months of their high school year, because they were drafted when they were eighteen.

SI: Can you elaborate on these induction classes a bit more? What did they entail?

MZ: Induction?

SI: Pre-induction classes.

MZ: Oh, well, the major one, which had an impact on me when I went into the service, was, they assigned a naval officer to the school who taught us Morse code and semaphore. Do you know what semaphore is? with flags, yes. [Editor's Note: Mr. Zapf is referring to communication with signal flags.] As it turns out, when … I entered [the] service, I did apply for and get into the Army Air Corps. There wasn't any Air Force in those days and, even though I wanted to learn to be a pilot, it didn't work, because … I entered too late. I didn't go in until 1944 and they had more pilots than they knew what to do with. So, they sent me to radio school. So, the Morse code that I learned in high school came in handy, as it turned out.

SI: Do you remember some of the other subjects that came up in these courses?

MZ: I only remember the naval officer who was assigned to our high school. No, I don't remember what the other courses were.

SI: Were these courses in addition to normal classes, like science, math and history classes?

MZ: Right. I think things like math and history, they continued, because, obviously, they had something to do with pre-induction.

SI: Did you notice other things being cut back at your school, like social activities or sports programs, because of the war?

MZ: Oh, yes. For example, it was a tradition at the high school for the senior class to go to Washington on a day trip or a two-day trip. Things like that were cancelled. We spent a lot of time collecting things for the war effort. There was a big pile of junk in the back of the school where we collected [laughter] metals and various things for the war effort. We were all conscious, obviously, of the war.

SI: Before Pearl Harbor, what did you know about what was happening overseas, in Europe and Asia, in the late 1930s and early 1940s?

MZ: I don't remember exactly. I was aware, certainly, of what was happening in Germany, because [I was] of German origin. I went to Germany twice during my youth, once when I was five years old, in 1930, and once when I was ten years old, in 1935, and I can recall the Nazi Movement, not necessarily anyone that I remember in my family, but there were lots of parades, which, as a young boy, I really enjoyed. The Germans could do a fantastic parade, with bugles and drums and horses. … I do remember that and I was aware of Nazism, although I'm not sure I had any … knowledge of what the impact really was, of what was going on from that political standpoint. … In the Pacific, I don't remember anything there until the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, … which was '41. … That would have made me sixteen years old. I was at a neighbor's farm. I think it was on a Sunday, as a matter-of-fact. I remember that quite vividly, … the farmer telling me the news that just had come over the radio and I getting on my bicycle and riding home to tell my family that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor.

MM: How were you received in Germany, as an American, visiting there in the 1930s? Did you talk to many of the locals?

MZ: Sure we did. Again, probably mostly family, but, obviously, other people as well and we were well-received. I have only happy recollections of those days, although it's so many, many years ago, but I remember doing that. We didn't fly. We took a passenger ship from New York to Germany, … which was an exciting thing, once as a five-year-old and once as a ten-year-old. I remember having a great time and there was family left over there. They didn't all immigrate. So, we spent the months that I was there in the summer visiting family, visiting and staying with family.

SI: Which areas did you stay in and visit?

MZ: Well, one was Hamburg, where there was an aunt and uncle who lived there. They were farmers and the rest of them were in Thuringia, [in] what was known, after World War II, as East Germany. That's where my family came from. …

SI: You were there for a number of months, a summer visit.

MZ: Probably a couple of months, both times. I don't remember, but my family used to tell the story that, when I was five years old and went to Germany for two months, that when I came home, I had forgotten how to speak English. I don't remember that, but they used to tell that story, because I was, you know, immersed in German and, of course, at that age, one learns a language rather rapidly, … but one also forgets the original language.

SI: Were you raised to speak both German and English?

MZ: We spoke mostly English, because my family was trying to learn to speak English, but, obviously, they spoke German when we were all alone.

SI: They did not adhere to the notion that, "We are in America now, we are going to ignore our past."

MZ: No.

SI: Were German traditions kept up in your household, other than the language?

MZ: Pretty much, pretty much so, yes.

SI: Holiday celebrations, that sort of thing.

MZ: Well, but they're pretty much the same as American holidays, the exceptions being, like, the Fourth of July, … but, certainly, Christmas and Easter were the same in both countries.

SI: Just before Pearl Harbor, do you remember any discussions, either in your family, in your community or among your friends, about whether America should or should not get involved in overseas conflicts?

MZ: I'm sure there were those discussions, but I don't really remember that. I don't really remember taking part in anything like that, or hearing it even, when it was discussed. There was certainly concern before the US entered the war, from the German standpoint, because Germany was at war, right, going back to 1939. So, there was concern within my family, obviously, for family reasons, right.

SI: Were they corresponding with their relatives in Germany after the war broke out?

MZ: Oh, yes, as much as they could.

SI: What were they hearing?

MZ: Oh, I don't know what they were hearing. That's too long ago.

SI: When Pearl Harbor happened, did you think that you would eventually be involved or did you think that it would be over in a few months? You were sixteen then.

MZ: Well, I'm not sure what I thought at that time. … No, I probably didn't know that I was going to be involved. I didn't know how long the war was going to last or anything like that. I don't think I thought about that at that time, but it didn't take very long before it became a thing that I did think about, because of age and people being drafted, young men being drafted, … some enlisting at seventeen and some being drafted at eighteen. So, I knew, I was sixteen when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, that, two years later, I was about to go. Initially, I guess, I didn't think about it.

MM: Did you have older friends who entered the service before you, while you were still at home?

MZ: Yes. One of my best friends was the son of the farmer who lived next door to where I lived, the Hegaman family. … He was about three years older than I and he left, I don't remember exactly which year, but, probably in 1942.

MM: Did you hear from him at all during that time?

MZ: Yes, I did, as a matter-of-fact. … By luck or coincidence, when we were being liberated from Japan, from the POW [camp], we flew through … Guam. I was in the hospital on Guam for a short period of time, on the way back, and I asked one of the nurses if they could locate my friend by the name of Bob Hegaman. All I knew was that he was in the Marines in the Pacific somewhere and she found him, on Guam. … It was an amazing reunion we had, … probably in September 1945. The war was over and he happened to be in Guam, on his way home, as I was, but we didn't know each other was there until this nurse was able to find him.

SI: That is pretty amazing, in the whole war.

MZ: Yes, two little country boys from New Jersey having a reunion. It was unique.

SI: After Pearl Harbor, how soon did your community begin to change, in terms of rationing, blackouts, things like that? Do you remember those aspects?

MZ: I can remember rationing, because of various things. I worked in a grocery store in Princeton, a supermarket. I think it was called the A&P in those days. Things like butter and coffee were rationed, I remember that. Gasoline was rationed. … In my senior year of high school, I was fortunate in one regard, my stepfather had entered the Army and left his car home for me to use. So, I was a pretty classy senior in high school, with my own car. Back in those days, it was unique for that to happen; today, perhaps not so much. So, I was faced with the

rationing problem. I remember that, for the few months that I was home and had [the] ability to drive a car.

SI: What happened to your stepfather in the service?

MZ: He didn't go overseas. He served in various places in the United States. He was in the Army. I don't remember specifically what he did, some branch of the Army somewhere.

SI: I want to ask you a few questions about living in Princeton. Was there any kind of relationship between you, the townspeople, and the university?

MZ: Not really.

SI: Would you go to sporting events?

MZ: Oh, I used to spend any spare time I had going to sporting events at Princeton. I would usher at football games, for example. It was a non-paying job, but I could get to see the football game, at the old stadium. I can't even remember the name of the stadium now.

SI: Palmer Stadium?

MZ: Palmer Stadium, right, and there were lots of other sporting events that one could see for free of charge, like the university wrestling team and swimming team. I spent a lot of time at the university, in my spare time, at those kinds of events.

SI: In 1938, the *War of the Worlds* broadcast caused a lot of hysteria in the Princeton/Princeton Junction area. Do you remember that at all?

MZ: I'm trying to remember the man who did that.

SI: Orson Wells.

MZ: Right, Orson Wells. I have a recollection of that, I don't think first-hand, but I remember it happening.

SI: I was wondering if people actually felt that way, because it alarmed people in the area where it the story took place.

MZ: I don't know.

SI: Okay. Most kids in high school, towards the end, are thinking about what they are going to do afterwards, whether they will be going to college or getting a job. However, being in high school during the war, did you only think about going into the service?

MZ: Yes, I had no career plans. I was not scheduled to go to a university or college. In those days, it was totally the reverse of what it is today. The majority of students in high school did

not attend college. There was only a select group of students who took academic courses in preparation for college. There was no plan for me to attend a college while I was going to high school.

SI: Did you give any thought to what career you might pursue or was it all on hold?

MZ: Everything was sort of on hold. I didn't know what in the world was going to [happen], what I was going to do. I had no plan, because, you know, we were going to be inducted and we were going in the military, and that's all we really thought about during the latter years in high school.

SI: Can you take us through the process of being inducted and actually getting into the military? How soon after graduation did you go in?

MZ: We had to register at age eighteen, register for the draft, and I was eighteen in November. I really wanted to join the Navy, because I didn't know how to swim, and I knew [that] everybody who joined the Navy was taught to swim and I wanted to join the Navy. … I needed a parent's signature. My mother didn't agree with me and she said, I'm going to be drafted anyway, "You might as well wait." So, I lost that argument, and then, at eighteen, in November, I registered for the draft and it didn't take very long after that before I was called. In January, I was called to Somerville for physical examination, etc., and all the draft boards in the area came to this place in Somerville. Our draft board was late that day, so, we were one of the last ones going through and I remember, at the end, there were three officers sitting there, one representing the Army, one Navy and one the Marines, and I walked up there and the man stamped my papers, "US Army," and I said, "I'm sorry, I'm going in the Navy," and he said, "I'm sorry, son, the quota is filled for today." They obviously couldn't let everybody make their own decision, and had I been early that day, maybe I could have gotten in the Navy, but I couldn't and I was heartbroken. I went home. I don't think I cried, but I was very upset, because I had my heart set on joining the Navy. So, I wound up in the Army. We had this physical in January and, in February, I reported for active duty, at Fort Dix, New Jersey. At Fort Dix, I applied then for Army Air Corps and pilot training and I passed the initial tests and they sent me to an Air Force basic training camp. … I've forgotten where, in North Carolina or somewhere down there, and, as I said earlier, I took some more tests for becoming a pilot, but, at the end, they used the term, "We've been washed out," because they had too many pilots. … So, there was no more pilot training available and they sent me to radio school. That's how that all came about.

SI: Was it difficult to make the transition from civilian to inductee in the military?

MZ: I don't think it was. It's certainly a big change, but I don't think I found it difficult. … I don't think I was homesick. I didn't have any of those kinds of problems.

SI: Had you spent much time away from home before that?

MZ: No, not really, no, but we were all young men entering the service and it was an interesting experience, all parts of it. I have no regrets about having served.

SI: What about traveling down South to what I guess was a classification center in North Carolina?

MZ: Basic training.

SI: It was basic training, in North Carolina. It was Air Corps basic training, not Army basic training.

MZ: Yes. It was an Air Corps basic training.

SI: What was an average day like in basic training?

MZ: We did many things in basic training, most of it learning to march and obey orders and physical training, a lot of physical training, to make sure we're in good shape. … That's about it. That's my recollection.

MM: Did you meet a lot of new people in basic training?

MZ: Of course.

MM: Were they from other parts of the country?

MZ: Of course. There were no friends with me. No high school friends were in the same group or anything, so, everybody was new, but that was not a problem. … We're all in the same boat, really. … It was not a problem.

SI: Do any of your drill instructors stand out in your memory?

MZ: No, I don't remember [any] specifically.

SI: They were not like characters you would see in the movies.

MZ: At my age, … memory fades. No, I can't be specific about those things.

SI: Where did you go after basic training?

MZ: After basic training, they sent me to radio school. The other option was gunnery school. I was an enlisted man. The other option would have been engineering school, but I'd really had no engineering type of background. So, they sent me to radio school in Scott Field, Illinois, which is near St. Louis. I don't even remember how long we were there, but we were there quite a long time. It was rather an extensive training program, not only learning to send and receive Morse code, but the mechanics of a radio. We'd build a radio set. It was good training.

SI: Were you taught how to repair equipment?

MZ: Yes, which was probably a waste of time, because, when you're on an airplane, flying bombing missions, you don't have any time to repair a radio anyway, but they did teach us that. …

SI: Were you taught radio navigation at that point?

MZ: Yes. I don't remember the terminology anymore, but we could, by sending radio beams, do navigational work, if the pilot requested that. Of course, in my actual flying, we had a navigator who did most of that kind of work, but had it been necessary, I could assist in that, also.

SI: You mentioned that it was a very long training course, but how intense was it? Did many men wash out?

MZ: I think there were some. In radio school, I think there were some washouts, but not very many, a small percentage who … couldn't do Morse code. It's not an easy thing to listen to [the] "dit-dot" sort of thing and write it down, that's really what the job entailed.

SI: Did you have to get faster and faster, record more words, each week?

MZ: Yes. That was the objective, to make you proficient in sending and receiving.

SI: Do you remember going on leave, either in Illinois or North Carolina, and visiting any local cities or towns?

MZ: I don't really remember. I'm sure that, from time-to-time, we were given a pass to go into the city. Certainly, in Scott Field, I went to St. Louis on occasion, on a weekend. We were very close to St. Louis and that was a major city. So, on weekends, to get away from the base, whenever it was possible, I certainly went to St. Louis a few times. I don't remember the North Carolina thing. I don't think we had passes in basic training.

SI: Where were you sent after Scott Field?

MZ: I was sent to Lincoln, Nebraska, to an Army Air Corps base, which was a staging area for crew members. They assembled everybody there, I think, including the pilots, co-pilots, navigators, bombardiers, gunners, radiomen. They created crews from that batch of people. That's where we were crewed. We were there, let's say in Lincoln, probably no more than a week or two, doing nothing, waiting to be crewed and [for our] next orders, and, when they came through, we were sent to Alamogordo, New Mexico. … On the train down, we met our crew members. We met each other, which was rather interesting. I'm not sure all of them, but most of them; the gunners were on the same train and some of the officers, bombardiers, navigators. We found out who our crew members were going to be. In the B-29 program, the pilot was called [the] airplane commander, the co-pilot was called the pilot, which is confusing to some people when we talk about that. Our airplane commander was a man by the name of George Keller. So, we were members of Keller's Crew. There were eleven of us, he and ten more, and we flew in Alamogordo, while he was learning to fly a B-29. He had a pilot's license and he

could fly large airplanes, but he had never flown a B-29, nor the co-pilot, or the pilot. So, it was a boring time, because all we did was take-off and land, take-off and land, all day long, while he's learning to fly the B-29. … We were there, like, three or four months for that training and, of course, all of us did training on whatever our responsibilities were. The bombardier, the navigator, we would go on trips; when … the pilot knew how to fly it, we'd go on trips where the navigator would have to plan the route and we made trial bombing runs for the bombardier's sake and the gunners practiced and that sort of thing and I, of course, did, too.

MM: We hear stories of men being anxious, while they are in training, to get into combat. Is that the way you and your crew felt?

MZ: Yes. We were anxious about when we were going and where we were going. The B-29s were new to the Air Force, had not been used anywhere, except in the Pacific, and they had only begun being used in 1944. So, I volunteered for the B-29 only because of the excitement of [flying in] a new airplane. When I finished radio school and they gave us an option, … I put my hand up for that, because I wanted to fly in something new and it was unique, because we had pressurized cabins, for example. … We didn't have to wear a lot of heavy underwear and coats and jackets. So, it was thrilling excitement, a lot of excitement about joining the B-29 group.

SI: Before you got into bombers, were you aware of the casualty rate, how dangerous it actually was in the bomber force?

MZ: Yes, … we read the newspapers. We knew, for example, in Europe, we suffered many casualties in bombing Europe, B-17s and B-24s. So, we knew there was a lot of danger involved and we assumed the Pacific would be no different than it was in Europe. The Japanese had pretty capable flyers, pilots, as well.

MM: When you were down there, did you know which theater of operations you would be sent to?

MZ: Which theater? When we were down in New Mexico? Yes, because the B-29s only went to the Pacific. We knew we were going to the Pacific and we had three choices, Guam, Saipan or Tinian. That was it, and we wound up on Tinian, which, at that time, was the biggest airport in the world. It was an unbelievable thing. There were four runways, side-by-side, and, on mission days, it was a sight to behold. There were hundreds of B-29s lined up, ready to take-off, and four of them would go down the runway side-by-side, taking off. … You don't see that anywhere in the world today. It was quite a thing to see and we were happy [that] we got to Tinian, because it was the biggest base.

SI: Was this the first combat tour for all of the members of your crew or had some of them had experience on other types of aircraft?

MZ: … The airplane commander and pilot, they had flown, during training, other kinds of airplanes, but the rest of us had not flown anything. I flew on some airplanes during training, but not very often. It was really a first time for most of us.

SI: You had gone on flights, say, at Scott Field.

MZ: Yes, Scott Field. … I flew on some training mission, a few times, not often. So, when we got to Alamogordo, it was the first time that I did any extensive flying.

SI: While you were in training, did you have any exposure to anybody who had been in combat earlier in the war, anybody that had transitioned from B-17s or B-24s?

MZ: In training, there were some instructors who had … returned from the European Theater, had completed their missions and … had become instructors, for example, in the radio school. What I knew about the European Theater was what I read in the paper. … There was no television in those days [laughter] and there was newsreels … when you went to a movie. It was customary to see news before the main feature started. They would show a little blip of current news.

SI: Nobody said, "When you get into combat, you are going to face this and you can deal with it this way?"

MZ: We knew something about that. We'd seen pictures and movies of dogfights in Europe and B-24s and B-17s being shot down.

SI: I have interviewed more B-17 and B-24 veterans than I have B-29 veterans. I know that on the other aircraft, the radio operator would double as a gunner. Was there a similar arrangement on the B-29?

MZ: No. On the B-29, it was all done by remote gun sights. … There were gun turrets, but no man in the gun turret. There was a tail gunner who sat in the tail and had a machine gun and a cannon. … So, he was at a gun, but the other gunners, it was remotely-controlled by the central fire control man, who sat in a little dome in the middle of the airplane. He had control of all the guns. There were four turrets, two up front, top and bottom, and two in the middle, top and bottom, and he could fire all four of them … or he could give the ability to fire all four of those to any of the gunners by using a gun sight that was remotely-controlled. So, it was totally different than the B-17, B-24.

SI: In flight, you concentrated solely on your radio operating work.

MZ: Yes.

SI: Were there any other tasks that you had to attend to?

MZ: No, it was a terrible job, [laughter] because the radio operator position was behind the front gun turret, in a little corner, and I had no window. I couldn't look out, except, when we were over a target. I sat next to the front bomb bay and there was a little, round door, with a small window. Over a target, when the bomb bay doors were open, I could look out that hole and see … [the] bombs dropping. That's the only time I could see anything. So, it was a terrible job, being radioman.

SI: How long were you stationed at Alamogordo?

MZ: … I'm going to guess like three months. I don't remember exactly, but about three months, maybe four. From there, we flew to Kansas, to pick up a pretty, new airplane at the Boeing factory, and we flew that to Sacramento to Hawaii to Kwajalein to Tinian. We didn't know where we were going until we left Sacramento. … The airplane commander was given orders and he didn't know where we were going until we left the States. So, he could open the orders after we'd left the United States and he announced over the intercom where we were going, Tinian. … We were excited about that, because it was the biggest base, where they had the largest number of B-29s.

SI: There has been a lot written about the relationships within bomber crews. In films, crews are often depicted as becoming very close-knit. What was the case with your crew? Were you a tight-knit crew?

MZ: I'd say no. There was not a lot of interaction between the commissioned officers and the non-coms. … That was the tradition. The officers were trained to keep it that way. So, if you separate the two groups, we flew together, but we didn't … associate much together, other than the time we flew. There were … five officers and six non-coms. The six non-coms were very close together. We lived together and bunked together and all that sort of thing. The fact that we were separated by the military procedure, we never became very close to the commissioned officer group. We liked Keller very much. He was a good airplane commander and a nice guy, so, we liked him, but we didn't associate with him. Interesting enough, he didn't even associate with the other four officers, because he was kept with the airplane commanders. They separated the airplane commanders from the other commissioned officers and, of course, non-coms were even further away. So, we were not a close crew. I think, as opposed to some other crews, where the officers made the crew closer, Keller didn't do that.

SI: Did you see that level of association among other crews that you came in contact with?

MZ: It depended on the airplane commander to create whatever relationship existed and I think, by and large, most of them were like our crew. We were not close.

SI: However, the enlisted men were close.

MZ: Oh, yes, because we barracked together. We ate at the same mess hall and so forth, but … everything else was separate. The commissioned officers were separate from the non-coms.

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

SI: There were five officers, the airplane commander, the pilot, the navigator, the bombardier and …

MZ: The radar officer.

SI: Okay. Were you assigned to a bomb group and squadron when you arrived on Tinian or had you already been assigned to one?

MZ: No, when we got to Tinian, we … learned that we were in the Fifth Squadron of the Ninth Bomb Group and, interestingly enough, we lost our pretty, new airplane. They took it away from us. [laughter] They gave it to somebody else and we wound up with an old B-29, which we named *The Sad Tomato*. It was a problem airplane, always had engine problems or some kind of mechanical problem. We had to miss flights some times because of the airplane, but that's standard procedure. Someone who outranked our airplane commander, he took it away from us and we wound up with another one.

SI: Going back to your training, from what I have read, the casualties in aerial training due to accidents were nearly as high as casualties in combat, during certain phases of the war. Did you see many accidents, particularly when you were in Alamogordo?

MZ: It certainly was not as bad as it was in combat. There were some accidents, but I honestly don't remember anyone being killed, but there were some B-29s that crashed, during training. …

SI: Did your crew have any close calls in training?

MZ: No, I don't remember any close calls. It was, sometimes, bouncy trips, because … the airplane commander's learning how to fly, right, [laughter] and he wasn't always smooth. He would bounce on the runway a few times and that sort of thing. … That was all part of our training.

SI: Do you remember the names of the men in your crew?

MZ: Yes, pretty much so.

SI: Yes, and which positions they filled.

MZ: Do you want me to [list them]? …

SI: Yes.

MZ: The airplane commander was George Keller, the pilot was Carl Holden, bombardier, Walter Ross, the navigator was Gene Correll, and, up front, the flight engineer was Shelby Fowler. He was the ranking non-com, because he was an older man. I think he was a tech or master sergeant and myself, as radio operator; we were the ones who were up front. Then, in the rear compartment, there were four gunners, Gene Conley, who was the central fire-control man, who had control over the guns. He was a cop from Chicago. Gerry Blake, he was another young kid, like myself. I think I was the youngest, but he was born the same year as me. He was the left gunner. Travers Harman was the right gunner. He was an … older man. I think he was, maybe, [in his] early forties, unusual, and then, the tail gunner was Chris Nikitas and the radar officer in the back was Sandy Levine. That's it. You see, I remember those names. I will never

forget them, I guess, because of our time together and, certainly, our experience made us closer. … We became more close, even the officer portion, long after the war ended, during reunions.

SI: Were they from all over the country?

MZ: Yes. I'm not sure I can repeat where they're all from. Airplane Commander Keller was from Indiana; I'm not sure what city. If you really want to know, we'd have to go downstairs.

SI: I was just wondering if you were meeting people from all over the country.

MZ: They were from all over the country. … The pilot was from Massachusetts, the Boston area. The bombardier was from Philadelphia. The navigator was from North or South Carolina, as I remember. As I mentioned, Conley was a Chicago cop. Travers Harman was a cop in Washington, DC, another gunner. Gerry Blake was from Upper New York State somewhere, I think, and Chris Nikitas was from Fitchburg, Massachusetts. That's clear in my mind, because he's in the New England Cable News film. If you have time, I'd like to show you that. It's only a twelve-minute bit. So, he was from Fitchburg and I think that covers everybody, right. Oh, Stan Levine was from Pennsylvania somewhere, Western Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. …

SI: What were your living conditions on Tinian like when you first got there?

MZ: We lived in the Quonset huts. Interesting enough, everybody lived in Quonset huts. Everything was done in Quonset huts, some big and some small. On my trip there last August, it was interesting to see, the Japanese built concrete buildings and they're still there, in ruins, right, but all of our stuff is gone. I mean, they took the Quonset huts down, or somebody did. There's nothing there anymore, but you can see the remains of many Japanese buildings on the island, as opposed to the Americans, who built Quonset huts. Everything was done in Quonset huts, … big ones and small ones.

SI: By the time you got there, it was a well-established base.

MZ: Yes. We were a replacement crew. We got there, like, in April of '45 and they had been there since late '44 and some crews had already completed their missions. In our case, our tour of duty was thirty-five missions. If you made thirty-five missions, you could go home. So, we were a replacement crew for some crews that had completed their missions and some crews that had lost their lives or lost, you know, the crew.

MM: Could you see a difference between your crew and some of the crews that had been there for longer periods of time?

MZ: Any difference? No, only experience-wise; … we're all the same caliber people. The crews were all very similar to each other. Everybody had the same kind of make-up of the crew and the only difference was the ages of some and maybe, in some cases, the experience of some. There were some who had flown many missions when we got there. So, we used to look to them for experience and knowledge and that sort of thing.

SI: What do you remember about your first mission?

MZ: I don't remember specifically anything about it, except it was very exciting, to see us drop bombs. We carried a lot of bombs and … some of them were high explosives and, sometimes, they were incendiary bombs, … which we used to burn up the various cities that we went over. We certainly destroyed a lot of Japanese cities with those bombs. It was a unique experience, a very exciting one, and, certainly, there was some anxiety and fear involved. To be over a target with the bomb bay doors open and you watch those things going down, … it's quite an experience.

SI: Can you take us through what you, at your radio operator's post, did during a mission?

MZ: I just sat there and wrote down what came over the radio. We were given assigned frequencies that we should listen to and, of course, you can only listen to one at a time and I usually remember tuning in one frequency and only changing it if the signal got weak. We had to keep a log of what you heard and it's a boring job. I would hate to have to do it today. These are long missions. They were anywhere from twelve to sixteen-hour missions, from Tinian to Japan and back again, and to sit there and write down in the log what you're hearing, one letter at a time, [was boring], you know. … Fortunately, that sort of thing doesn't exist anymore, [laughter] but, at that time, that was my job.

SI: What kind of messages were you receiving? Were they, say, course corrections?

MZ: I don't remember specifically. Primarily, I guess, we were listening for trouble spots, an airplane in trouble or something like that. Specifically, I don't remember what kind of messages we were listening to. … The rest of the crew had a major advantage. They would ask me to tune in … an AM station, where they could listen to American music. I couldn't do that. I had to sit there, [laughter] listen to that damn Morse code for eight hours up and eight hours back again, that sort of thing, that's the way it was.

MM: Was it a continuous stream of messages or was there down time, where you did not hear anything?

MZ: Yes, there was times when you didn't hear anything, but you had to sit with your earphones on and listen for something.

SI: Did you ever transmit messages?

MZ: Send them? I had no reason to. … When we were shot down, we had a fire and there was no need for me to send a message … about our condition, because we had two planes from our squadron who buddied us down and stayed with us. They were, of course, radioing our position and what was happening.

SI: When your squadron flew a mission against Japan, would you fly in formation? How did that go?

MZ: For the daylight missions, we would meet somewhere, the squadron would meet somewhere, … off the coast of Japan and fly in formation over the bomb [target] and drop bombs. Night missions, we would go in one at a time, too hard to fly formation at nighttime, and the same thing with mining missions. We flew a few missions dropping mines in the Shimonoseki Straits. We would do that alone. Each plane'd … make a single run, to drop your bombs or mines. On the day that we were shot down, it was a daylight mission, so, we were flying in formation that day. … Our airplane commander, Keller, had a problem with our airplane, that we lost power, and he had difficulty staying within the formation and … we dropped out of the formation. We got hit … because we were out of the formation. It was antiaircraft fire that hit us, but it could have been a fighter plane also, because … there were fighters around during that episode, … and then, we had all sorts of problems. … You want to talk about that now?

SI: Sure, if you would like.

MZ: We had the problem of losing power in one of the engines. So, he had difficulty staying in the formation and, therefore, we dropped back and the next thing I heard was somebody in the back reporting a fire in the number three engine, which, of course, I paid attention to, because it came over … the speaker, the channel where everybody could hear, and that certainly caught my attention. … Then, I listened to what was going on amongst ourselves onboard. The pilot put the plane in a dive, to see if he could blow out the fire. As it turns out, it was not an engine fire. It was [that] we got hit in the gas tank and the gasoline was burning. … So, he could not blow out the fire and the next thing I heard was, he said, "Prepare for ditching." I got up in the astrodome that the navigator used to shoot the stars or whatever. I crawled up there and had a look out and I saw the fire and I thought, "My God, we have to get out of here." It was a bad fire. It was longer than the airplane. It was out beyond the tail of the airplane. … I thought it could blow up any minute. So, he said, "Prepare for ditching," but, then, we had bombs that hung up, two or three bombs hung up. The bombardier went out to kick those loose. He couldn't get the bomb bay doors closed. So, he said, … "We can't ditch." He finally said, "Jump," and all of us [jumped]. I don't know how many minutes it took, but it was an exciting period of time, let me tell you, mainly because he had flown out over the water. We'd bombed a city called Yawata, which is on the coast of Kyushu, the southern island, near Shimonoseki. Straits, and he flew out over the Sea of Japan, so that we could jump into the water or ditch into the water, whichever, and so, we were over the Sea of Japan. … When we jumped, finally, my concern was, I couldn't swim. … Anyway, I managed everything. I had on a Mae West and I had a one-man life raft and I did everything right. So, I wound up okay in the water, but that was certainly a concern of mine when I heard the final thing, he said, "Bail out," to the crew. … Certainly, I was frightened and worried, … but I had no trouble jumping, because of that fire. I knew I had to get out of there. … He didn't survive, the airplane commander. … We think he jumped too late and his chute didn't open, or the plane hit him on the way down, I don't know. The plane exploded, eventually. I thought it exploded when it hit the water, but there are some people [who dispute that]. I just came back from a reunion of our Ninth Bomb Group, up in Connecticut, two weeks ago and there was a gunner there from one of the crews that buddied us down and he seemed to think that the plane exploded before it hit the water and that it exploded when Keller jumped. He was killed by the explosion, … but we don't know. He didn't survive, that's the important thing.

SI: Did anyone else not survive?

MZ: No, no, ten of us survived. I've told the story many times recently, so, I'm pretty good at it now. You want to hear it?

SI: Sure.

MZ: [laughter] It was a beautiful, calm day. The sun was shining, the sea was calm and we all accumulated together. We didn't land far apart. We could get together. Unfortunately, some of our crew were not wearing their … one-man life rafts, so, we were short. I'm going to guess, maybe, … [only] five of us had our one-man life rafts on. I had mine, certainly, and the two planes that buddied us down, they dropped us a few more. So, we wound up with eight life rafts for ten people. So, four of us had to double up and, unfortunately, in those days, I was a little guy. I only weighed about 160 pounds and I was one of the guys that had to double up. So, it was like two men sitting in a bathtub, if you can imagine that. It's about as long as a bathtub. Your feet are at the end of the raft. So, the other guy was sitting on the feet or between the legs. … It wasn't very comfortable, but we survived. … Except that we [had] lost Keller, we were in a good mood. We were happy … that we survived, the ten of us, and we were optimistic that we were going to be picked up. … There were two Air-Sea Rescue possibilities, a submarine, we had submarines up there, doing Air-Sea Rescue to crews like ourselves, and, also, PBYs. They were flying boats, out of Okinawa. … These two guys were flying over us, radioing our position, and we thought, "We'll be picked up soon," but, as time went by, it didn't happen. We learned later … that there was a submarine around, but he couldn't come, because we were sitting in … a mined area, probably our own mines that we had previously dropped. [laughter] The submarine couldn't come pick us up and, what happened to the PBYs from Okinawa, we really don't know. They didn't find us. So, after two or three days of optimism, it suddenly turned to pessimism, because we had no food. We had only candy, Charms; you remember what those are?

SI: Suckers?

MZ: Right. It's like a Lifesaver without a hole in the middle. It was a little, square thing, and a few pints of water. I don't think we each had a pint, so, we were sharing what little water we had, but, after, let's say, three days, everything's getting low and we decided, "We have to do something." We couldn't see land. We were out in the Sea of Japan somewhere. So, we knew where Japan was, … because it had to be east of us, so, we started paddling east. There were little paddles in the life raft that you strapped to your arms and you sat in there and paddled. It took us another three-plus days before we got to land and Japanese fishermen came and picked us up. So, we were in life rafts for almost a week, six-and-a-half days, really, from August 8th to the 14th. … I'll continue that story, if you want me to, whenever.

SI: Can we go through the whole story, then, go back and ask questions? Would that be okay?

MZ: Okay, whatever you want.

SI: Okay. You were picked up by Japanese fishermen.

MZ: Fishermen. … Until this year, I never knew what the name of the village was, but I found out this year, when we were back in Japan for this documentary film. The film company had found the village, it was called Masuda, on the Sea of Japan, on Honshu, … the major island of Japan. So, we must have drifted, although I've not measured it, but I would guess somewhere between a hundred and two hundred miles, I think, from where we bombed Yawata, or where we bailed out, because we were much farther north, on Honshu. So, anyway, they picked us up and took us to their village. They didn't treat us very well. They hit us with things, bamboos, and the kids threw stones at us and spit on us, until the military came. First, the policemen came, and then, the military came and they took us away and they blindfolded us, had our hands tied and, except for when we were walking, our feet were tied. So, we don't know where we were. … We rode on trucks and, sometimes, we rode on trains. … I have to re-track dates. We were picked up by the fishermen on the 14th. The next day was the day that the Emperor announced the end of the war, on the 15th. That's when we left the fishing village. We arrived, then, in a city on the 16th. We didn't know where we were or the name of the city, but it turned out to be Hiroshima. At the time, we didn't know the war was over and they didn't tell us the war was over. They actually took us to Hiroshima to execute us, because of the dropping of the bomb, etc., because it's only ten days later. There was still a lot of hate and bitterness, because we killed a hundred thousand-plus people in Hiroshima. A Japanese officer, by the name of Lieutenant (Fukui?), came to our rescue. He debated the subject of execution with his commanding officer, reminding him of the Geneva Convention and he won the argument, fortunately for us. … We didn't know all of this at the time. We were sitting in Hiroshima, at a military camp, and we were laying on the ground, again, with our hands and feet tied and blindfolded. … One night, this officer came and said, in English, that he was going to take us away the next day. We were startled to hear someone speak English for the first time. He did come and take us away and took us through the city and, thus, we saw Hiroshima, ten days after the bomb was dropped. He drove us through the city, took our blindfolds off and he scolded us [for] what we had done, not meaning us, but what the Americans had done. … We still didn't know about an atomic bomb. We did not know anything about that, but we saw the city and … there was nothing there and, as you're going to hear on the film, you'll hear me say that it smelled like flesh, burnt flesh, like if you fringe, scald your hair on your arm. … It still smelled like burnt flesh or something, I remember that. He put us in a civilian jail for a couple of days. We met two Americans in the jail who had been … POWs in Hiroshima when the bomb was dropped. Actually, there were twelve Americans in Hiroshima and all of them were killed. These two boys survived. One was a B-24 gunner from Okinawa and the other was a Navy flyer of some kind, I think, also, a gunner. They both died while we were with them for a couple of days, because they were, [it is] difficult to describe what they looked like. They had pus running out of their mouth and ears and nose and they were in agony. They wanted to die. It was terrible and we, of course, couldn't do anything for them. We didn't know what had caused their appearance. It was terrible. Anyway, those two boys died while we were there. We reported that, of course, to our officials when we were repatriated in the US. … Lieutenant Fukui disappeared. We didn't see him anymore, but he did feed us for the first time and gave us water. In fact, he even gave us a shot of whiskey, or sake or something. So, even though he scolded us, he really did save our lives. Another Japanese officer and a group of soldiers took us away and took us to the POW camp. I don't remember how we did that. We rode on a truck and buses or

trains or something and, outside the camp, outside the POW camp; we were reconciled to spending a couple of years in the POW camp, you know. Outside the camp, he called us to attention, the ten of us, and told us the war was over. You can't believe the feeling we had at that time. It was just amazing. In the camp, there were a hundred Americans that had been captured in the Philippines in 1942 and … about a hundred British captives who had been captured in the Singapore area. … We were treated like heroes, because we were the first [Americans to come in]. They knew the war was over. The guards at the POW camp had disappeared, because there was some retribution that took place when they found out the war was over. The guards hadn't treated the POWs very well. So, the POWs, when they heard the war was over, took action against some of the bad guards and they all disappeared. We were free in the POW camp. We had to wait there until someone came to get us, because we couldn't really leave on our own, but it was a happy experience in the camp, really. The area, it was on a little island called Mukaishima and the peasants and the farmers in the area, they hadn't been bombed, so, they were reasonably friendly. Some of us even got invited to their homes for a meal or something like that, you know. We spent … at least a month there, waiting to be liberated. … Finally, near mid or late September, we were sent back home. …

SI: Before having to bail out, had you had any training on what to do in that kind of situation?

MZ: No. We had some training about inflating our life rafts and the Mae West. While we were on Tinian, they took us out in the water, on a barge and made us jump in the water and inflate both things and learn to climb in the life raft. That's all, no training about jumping. I hadn't jumped before, nor since. I don't think any of us had.

SI: You had not gone through any survival training at any point.

MZ: No, nothing really. We were always taught that if you become a prisoner, all you had to do is give them your name, rank and serial number. We were interrogated by the Japanese, somewhere after the fishing village. Interesting enough, the war was over, but they didn't tell us that. So, we had no idea what they were doing or why they were asking questions. They would ask us about how many people were on the airplane and that sort of insignificant sort of stuff. I guess they felt they were just fulfilling their duties. It didn't amount to very much. There wasn't any harm being wrought on us during the interrogation or anything like that. We questioned the man who told us the war was over [about] why they had kept us tied and blindfolded during the time we were [held captive], because the war was over. He had a very logical answer, that made sense to me, anyway. He said, "We did that for your own benefit, because we were traveling through severely bombed areas," Hiroshima was the best example, "where the population was not very receptive to seeing you walking around with big smiles on your faces. You would have been laughing and been happy to know the war was over and the population was in no mood to see you guys celebrating." … That's what he said to us and it made a lot of sense. So, that's why, he said, they kept us blindfolded and tied, because we were traveling on public transportation sometimes. … Imagine [being] blindfolded; you can peek out down here, sometimes. I would try to do that sometimes and a guard would clobber me with a rifle butt, when he saw me peeking, and all of us did the same thing and we got hit with the damn rifle butt. … So, we stopped peeking.

SI: Did you have a preconceived notion of what it would be like to be a prisoner of the Japanese?

MZ: Well, we've heard a lot of bad stories, even back then, about how the Japanese treated POWs. So, we were certainly fretful about that.

SI: The Doolittle Raiders are an example that comes up often, that they were publicly beheaded.

MZ: We'd heard those kinds of stories. We were fortunate … that this man Fukui came to bat for us. There are some people who are negative about everything and say he was protecting his own ass. He knew the war was over and he knew that, if they beheaded us, we would have found out about it, we meaning the US forces, and [he would] be tried as a war criminal. So, maybe he wasn't being such a good guy. But I take a different attitude, because he had been associated with a missionary from New Hampshire, from Dartmouth College, by the name of Professor (Bartlett?), who perhaps had converted him to becoming a Christian. He claimed to be a Christian. After the war, we communicated with Mr. Fukui through Mrs. Bartlett. He would write to her. She made copies of his letter and she would distribute it to the ten of us, the ten survivors. We would do the same thing responding to him. So, I believe the man acted in good faith on our behalf. I don't think he was protecting his own backside. I think he was doing what was proper. I met this man and eventually moved to Japan with my family and we had many meetings. We met in Hiroshima many years after the fact. … So, I feel rather [good about him]. Unfortunately, the man died in 1987.

SI: Did you ever find out about his background, such as how he came to speak English?

MZ: He studied English in school and won a scholarship for some months in a US college or university. He came to the US. There's some question about whether it was in Chicago or [it] was at Dartmouth. We've never been able to really clarify that. Even his children, who we met this past August, weren't sure about that, because they weren't born yet. He, apparently, won a scholarship because of his English. He was the star pupil, English pupil. He didn't speak it that well, though. The point is, he had little or no practice and, after a while, the language disappears.

SI: While all ten of you were together on the rafts, was anybody injured?

MZ: No, nothing serious. I think Holden, our pilot, bumped his head when he jumped. So, he had a black eye or a cut up here or something like that, but nothing serious, … no serious injuries. We were all in pretty good shape. … After a week, we had saltwater sores from sitting [in the water]. No matter how you tried, you couldn't help but have saltwater [in the raft] and the salt in the saltwater created saltwater sores. I had them on my feet and on my arms, … but they cleared up very quickly after we got out of the water, … nothing serious.

SI: Were there any other dangers, like heatstroke or sharks?

MZ: I don't think we saw any sharks. We all carried side arms, a .45-caliber gun, … tried to shoot a seagull, but none of us ever hit anything. [laughter] I don't know what we would have done with it if we had killed one, but, no, … no dangers. … The first night in the water, we

probably could have been picked up by a Japanese fishing boat. A pretty good-sized one went by us rather closely and we actually hid. We covered up and hunched down and didn't want to be caught, thinking we were going to be picked up by our people the next day. They had music playing and we could hear the people talking. They were that close to us and the sea was calm. They were just, probably, going back to port and they were relaxing and didn't see us. I don't know what would have happened if they did see us, whether they would have picked us up or what would have happened. I don't think … we would have been smart enough for an attempt to commandeer [the boat], even if they had picked us up. I don't think we would have. …

MM: Did rank hold up while you were on the water or did everyone become equal in the group?

MZ: Rank? … We were all together and we tied the boats together, so, we were obviously pretty close, but the end result was, we did separate and we separated according to rank, with one exception. That was our flight engineer, that master sergeant, Fowler. He traveled with the four officers. There were only four left now. So, we had five in one group and five, … the non-coms, in the other. When we were paddling for shore, it was a tough job paddling and there was a little sail in the raft, a little sail about this big. We used that, too. There was some bickering going on, who was supposed to be in charge? We had a unique thing in [that] the bombardier was a first lieutenant and all the other officers were second lieutenants. Now, the airplane commander, when he was alive, he was in charge. There was no doubt about that, but he was gone. So, then, the bombardier, Walter Ross, he was the ranking officer. By our means, we think the pilot was the next one in command. So, there was a little bit of debate going on and argument going on among our officer group, about what we should do and what we shouldn't do. … We eventually separated, meaning the non-coms, the five of us, and the officer corps, with the one non-com. We're tired the first night we … saw the shore. We slept during the night, woke up in the morning and the coast was gone. We had drifted back out again. So, the next day, we made up our minds, "We've got to get there." So, we really worked our ass off, paddling. We separated and we must have been at least a mile or so ahead of the officer group, because they weren't paddling as much as we were paddling. We were picked up at least a half-hour, by the first fisherman who came out, before they got to the officer guys, because they were much further out. … So, there was that little problem. I don't think it was a serious one, but there was that problem. Lieutenant Ross was originally in the infantry and he'd been in longer and had been promoted … to first lieutenant when he joined our crew as a bombardier. He outranked the airplane commander. He was a bit of a rank conscious [guy], because he outranked the other guys. We had no such thing within the non-com group. Fowler, … he was the ranking … non-com of us, he … outranked us. We were only buck sergeants. He was either a tech or a master sergeant, but he didn't pull rank. He was one of us. But that's all sort of history now. I don't have any bad recollections of that. It was just something that was going on within our ten-member group.

SI: Was it unanimously accepted that you should paddle towards Japan, after a while?

MZ: East, oh, yes. I don't remember any discussion about that. We knew that was our closest land, had to be Japan, so, we needed to paddle east and it was the right decision. [laughter] Since we … weren't going to be picked up, it was certainly the right decision, even though we had some problems when we were picked up, but we did survive that, thanks to Fukui.

SI: What was going through your mind when you were first picked up by the villagers and they began abusing you and spitting on you? How long did that last? Was it hours or days?

MZ: Oh, no, no, the first night. We were picked up [in the] late afternoon, as I recall, still daylight, but at dusk. It became dark and they had us lined up on the beach in a row and there was fear. "What are they going to do next?" They did give us water, the fishermen. There's a great sequel to that story, this August, because the documentary company making this film took us to this village … where we were picked up. … I wasn't quite sure that this was the same village where we were picked up. I don't remember it that well and I said to my wife, "I hope this is the village." When we arrived there, there was a group of twenty-five or thirty people outside. … They applauded us when I walked down the street and they bowed, in old, traditional Japanese fashion, and we had a nice association. But I still was skeptical. During the course of the discussion with these people and recognizing that some of them were the children, sixty years ago, who spit on us and hit us with bamboo poles, I asked them questions about where we were, and they showed us and they remembered something that happened that solidified in my mind that we were in the right place. When we were on the beach the first time, everybody had been picked up and we were lined up on the beach, they brought us water, out of a bucket, and a dipper and the first man they offered it to was this guy Bob Conley, the cop from Chicago, and he refused the water. I don't know why he did that, but he did and the rest of us took water. So, Conley then said, "I'll have water, too," and the Japanese went over to him and bopped him on the head with the dipper and these people that we met this August, they remembered that. They told the story [laughter] and I knew it. I said to my wife, "Now we know we're in the right place, because they told the story, not me." I remembered it so clearly, that Bob refused to take the water, initially, … eventually, they gave him some, but they bopped him on the head, because he'd been so adamant in refusing it the first time around. They also remembered him because he was an Irishman with a very dark, heavy, black beard and they described him also, "It was the man with the black beard." [laughter] So, they remembered him and it proved to me we were in the right village. …

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

SI: This continues an interview with Mr. Martin L. Zapf on October 26, 2005, in Yardley, Pennsylvania, with Shaun Illingworth and …

MM: Mike Mink. From the time you were picked up to the time you learned that the war was over, were the ten of you able to communicate with each other often or were you banned from talking with each other?

MZ: No, we talked to each other. That was permissible. I don't think anybody objected to our talking to each other. We were, most times, guessing about what was going on and worrying about what was going on, because there were a lot of strange things [that we heard], hearing people just speak Japanese and they can be very abrupt in their speech when they talk, sometimes, all of which was nerve-wracking. You couldn't see them and that's all you heard. Sometimes, they would do chants, or it sounded like a chant, and it probably was something like that, because we were in military camps and so forth.

MM: Did you do anything to keep your spirits up, Army songs, anything like that?

MZ: No, no, we didn't sing. Is that what you mean? We didn't say a lot to each other, but we would speculate on something we thought was going on. … It was a worrisome thing, what was going.

SI: Would you say you had low morale at that point?

MZ: Probably so. I don't remember to say that, but I know we were worried and we were scared of what was going to happen and … being tied and blindfolded is a terrible thing. You try it some time. [laughter] It's difficult.

SI: You were beaten when these villagers got a hold of you and hit when you tried to peek out of your blindfold. Were there any other times that this kind of abuse happened?

MZ: No, I don't think so, no. We would be nudged, once in a while, because we were too slow walking. It was difficult, because the fishermen had taken our shoes. … I think all of us were without shoes, so, it was difficult to walk on stones, and being blindfolded even adds to the dilemma of walking. So, those few days were difficult days and, obviously, caused us to be very concerned about our future.

SI: Before you were shot down, how many missions had you flown?

MZ: I think this was our seventeenth mission. We had flown sixteen previously and this was the seventeenth. Interesting enough, the city we were shot down over was Yawata. It was a naval base and also famous for a steel mill, the Yawata Steel Mill even existed after the war. When we arrived on Tinian, we had heard of Yawata having been bombed earlier, when the B-29s were flying out of China, and that they had received extensive damage, good antiaircraft by the Japanese, and had lost a lot of airplanes. So, our tail gunner, … Chris Nikitas, constantly worried about Yawata. He would always … be the first one up at the mess hall, where they would post when there was going to be a mission and where the mission was going to. It's ironic that he came back on August the 8th, our day, and said, "It's Yawata." It's ironic that that's where it happened to us, great, great story, really. He had it embedded in his mind that it was a dangerous place to be and it actually happened to us.

SI: Many airmen mention superstitions associated with flying, such as carrying rabbits' feet with them. Did you see any of those in action?

MZ: I don't remember that. I don't remember anybody on our crew having those kind of superstitions. There may have been. … Chris Nikitas' worry about Yawata was one that turned out to be true, but that's all I remember. … We didn't fly very often, at most, two or three times a week. So, we had a lot of free time together on the island, in the Quonset hut. The only thing there was to do on Tinian was to go to a movie in the evening. There was an outdoor movie that we could go to. That was the only outside entertainment we had. We played a lot of cards, poker. I learned to play chess. When we left the United States, one of the service organizations

gave us a box of things to do, like playing cards, and there was a chess set in there and somebody on our crew knew how to play chess and taught the rest of us. We spent a lot of time playing chess, which was a good diversification; [laughter] at least I enjoyed it.

SI: How often would you come under either antiaircraft fire or fighter attack?

MZ: Most missions, there would be antiaircraft fire. The exception would be, maybe, mining missions, where we flew over water, usually in and around the Inland Sea and the Shimonoseki Straits, where I don't remember that we saw any antiaircraft. We would go over [and] we would drop our mines one at a time, one airplane at a time. … I don't remember that we saw any antiaircraft during those kind of missions. The others … where we were dropping bombs, either incendiary or daylight high explosives, there was always antiaircraft fire and some times fighter planes. But we were more fortunate than they were in Europe, because we … also had fighter cover out of Iwo Jima, by the time we got there. We were lucky. We were a replacement crew, so, we missed not having Iwo Jima. We landed there several times on the way back, because of fuel problems or mechanical problems. They'd lost a lot of airplanes before Iwo Jima was taken. The poor Marines lost a lot of men when they took Iwo Jima. … They had heavy, heavy losses, but it certainly was important to us. We had some Marines at our commemoration affair on Tinian in August this year. We invited several Marines who were involved in having taken Tinian. That was a very important island to us, saved a lot of B-29s and B-29 crews.

SI: How often did your squadron lose crews to either enemy fire or other mishaps?

MZ: I don't know how to answer that question.

SI: Was it frequent? Would you say it was heavy?

MZ: No. I think our losses were quite heavy, but I don't know how to express it in numbers, because there is a history book of the Ninth Bomb Group, which lists every mission, and I was dumbfounded to see how many planes went on a mission sometimes. We weren't aware of how many were on a mission. If it was a daylight mission and we flew in a squadron, you would see maybe twenty planes in the squadron, but that's all. It may have been two hundred on the mission. … We also were not aware of all the losses that occurred. We would only know those in our squadron or our bomb group, I guess. … It didn't seem to me to be so bad, but, when I look at the history book and see how many we lost, I think the number of B-29s lost is in the thousands, either for mechanical reasons or ran out of fuel, before Iwo Jima was available, or were shot down. They lost a lot of airplanes. I don't remember seeing that, being aware that we had such heavy losses. I saw some, for example, planes having problems taking off, a bad one, one day, where the plane lost power on one side and the plane catapulted down the runway with these mines onboard and the mines … went off one at a time. They lost the whole crew, except the tail gunner. It blew the tail off the airplane and he survived. I mean, that was an awesome thing to see, because … we were standing there, watching, and, all of a sudden, [there was] all this shrapnel flying all over our heads and we had to duck. We were watching the explosions when we realized what was happening.

SI: In another interview, a 20th Air Force B-29 veteran noted that it was demoralizing to take-off from, perhaps it was Saipan instead of Tinian, because the wreckage from crashed B-29s littered the end of their runway. It always reminded him of how vulnerable he was. Was that something that you had to contend with? Did you have to build up your confidence every time you went on a mission?

MZ: I'm not aware of that. No, I don't remember anybody talking about that … on our crew. As far as I'm concerned, I couldn't see anything anyway. [laughter]

MM: The war in Europe ended while you were overseas. How did you feel about that? When did you hear that the war in Europe had ended?

MZ: I suppose we heard it on the day it happened. I'm sure … we received news. I'm not sure now; I know it was early 1945, March or April. I don't remember the date.

SI: May.

MZ: Was it May?

MM: What was the general feeling around the base when you heard that news?

MZ: Well, happiness, optimism that maybe the war in the Pacific was going to come to an end, too. We recognized that the Japanese were losing, because there wasn't that much fighter [cover] up there chasing us anymore. We thought we were going to end the war, no doubt about that, but when, of course, we had no idea. … Certainly, there was optimism, because things were going basically … well, flying a lot of missions and dropping a lot of bombs and seeing fewer and fewer fighter planes from the Japanese. … I learned, another little side story, … late last year, through the Internet and corresponding with some of my former Ninth Bomb Group people, of a Japanese book that had been written that features Japanese ace fighter pilots in which one Japanese fighter pilot is given credit for having rammed our airplane. It's written by a Japanese-American, here in the US, and a Japanese man in Japan, highlighting their fighter pilots. There's a picture of our crew and it states clearly that this man, I don't remember his name, rammed our airplane and he's made a hero there for it. [laughter] So, I got on the Internet and communicated with everybody I could find, including the … co-author, saying, "It's not true. [laughter] Nobody rammed our airplane." We were shot down, but we were not rammed. … On August the 8th, … there were several hundred airplanes up there and, like, four or five planes were lost. Ours was one of them. So, he may have been a *kamikaze* on one of those, but it wasn't our plane. The name of the book is *Genda's Blade* and [Minoru] Genda is a Japanese admiral or a general, who is given credit for having planned Pearl Harbor. It's about him and his fighter pilots, how they trained them. They were all young kids, too, at least during the end of the war. They were young, sixteen, seventeen-year-old pilots.

MM: What happened to you after the end of the war? How did you return home? When did that come about?

MZ: I don't remember the exact date, 1945, early October of 1945. When I came home, I came through Letterman General Hospital in San Francisco. … As former POWs, we were given special treatment, even though we hadn't been a POW very long. We had lost weight. We were malnutrition cases. We spent a week or two in the hospital in San Francisco, and then, we were sent home. … My orders were to go to Fort Dix, presumably to be discharged. So, I came home and the orders were sort of open kind of orders. I didn't go directly to Fort Dix. I went home to see my family, … which was quite emotional. After a few days home, I went to Fort Dix and they gave me 104 days leave. So, I went back home again, for 104 days, that's over three months. When I went back, I got another long leave, POW leave or something like that. So, I didn't get out until, I don't remember the exact month anymore, almost mid-1946, and I took advantage of the GI Bill. I think you alluded to that somewhere early on. … It certainly was the important thing for me, because I had, as I said earlier, … no plans to attend college for any sort of training. I took advantage of the GI Bill and I went back to school. I went to Rider College, now called Rider University, … and got a BS degree, which certainly was a great benefit. The GI Bill was … great. It changed everything, didn't it, in the United States. It changed the outlook all you young people have. You all went to a university, right, no doubt, and that certainly wasn't true in my day. … The GI Bill changed that. It was certainly a great benefit for us who had served.

SI: What year did you enter Rider?

MZ: … I entered in '46 and I went through four semesters every year. So, I finished in three years and graduated in 1949, yes.

SI: Had you applied while you were still in the Army Air Force?

MZ: No, I don't think so. We all knew about the GI Bill, but really hadn't made any plans in that line, until we knew what that was all about, but certainly learned about it when I was discharged and took advantage of it.

SI: Why did you choose Rider, as opposed to another university?

MZ: I guess the major reason was that I was married when I got home and wanted to stay near home. [It is] difficult to exist on the GI Bill when you're going to school and married. My wife at that time was also employed as a secretary somewhere and we got 110 dollars a month. I don't remember exactly. I think it was about that. So, I wanted to stay near home and Rider was close by. At that time, it was in the middle of Trenton. It was not out in the suburbs, where it is now. … You know where it is? It's in Lawrenceville. It's a very nice campus now. In my day, it was not, didn't have a real campus. It was in the middle of Trenton.

SI: Did you go full-time?

MZ: Yes, yes, and worked after school, so, [it was] somewhat like high school. I really didn't participate in any extracurricular activities at the school, because I was working, almost every day, after school. When the classes were over, I would go to work somewhere and I did a lot of various things, primarily, working for a hardware store in Princeton, my old hometown, and I

knew the man who owned the hardware store and he was always very kind to me. … Any time I had free time, he would employ me. So, it was pretty nice.

MM: Was your class made up of a lot of people on the GI Bill?

MZ: Yes, yes, it was full of GIs, really.

SI: How do you think that impacted the classroom situation? Many of the men we interview are GI Bill era Rutgers alumni. They have said that the GIs were more upfront with the professors and the professors treated them more like adults than students. Did you notice that in the classroom?

MZ: Oh, at the time, I don't think I noticed that, but you're probably right. I think we were different than you were when you finished high school. We were a little bit older maybe and we [were] certainly a little bit more mature, because of our war experience. That certainly matures one faster. I would think that would have made a difference, yes, and we had a very good relationship with the faculty, I seem to recall. So, it was a good time and everybody was grateful for having the [opportunity]. I think most of the people were in the same boat that I was in. Probably, most of them had had no real plan to attend undergraduate school, I suppose, and were grateful, as I was, to have the opportunity to do so.

SI: What did you study? What did you get your degree in?

MZ: A BS in commerce, with a major in accounting.

SI: Was there any particular reason why you chose that course?

MZ: Well, the objective was to go into public accounting. That was my objective. I had taken a commercial course in high school, … which included accounting courses, and I was pretty good at that and I thought that … might be a career for me. So, when Rider came along as an option, I majored in accounting, with the objective of becoming a CPA but didn't, because, … when I finished in 1949, there were many people graduating with accounting majors, so that the primary, major CPA firms, like Price Waterhouse and all those, did not really offer good opportunities. They were not even full-time job opportunities. They were seasonal kind of jobs and the pay wasn't very good, because there were so many people opting for these jobs. So, I, through the family, met someone who was a branch manager of Burroughs Corporation in Trenton. Burroughs, at that time, was called Burroughs Adding Machine Company. It was pre-computer time and they sold adding machines and calculators and bookkeeping and accounting machines and I went to interview there, not knowing whether I was a salesman or not, but was given the opportunity and I opted for them. Burroughs offered me sixty dollars a week, which equated to more than two hundred dollars, with the opportunity to earn a commission, if you sold something. So, I opted for that and it was a good choice for me, because I stayed there for thirty-some years and did quite well and had a happy career and no regrets. All of my colleagues pooh-poohed me because … they thought I should be a CPA, but I had no regrets, because the accounting background was very useful in selling the machines that I sold.

SI: Had you met your wife before the war?

MZ: Oh, yes, we were high school friends.

SI: Did you correspond throughout the war?

MZ: Well, somewhat. However, that marriage ended in divorce, eventually, so, it was a bad idea. [laughter] It produced two children, but, … in my opinion, looking back on it, we were too young. I shouldn't have gotten married when I got out of the service. I mean, we really shouldn't have done that, but we did. …

SI: It seems like there was a lot of societal pressure for people to get married and return to normal.

MZ: It seems like everybody was getting married. [laughter] Everybody coming home was getting married, for whatever reason, not necessarily good reasons, sometimes.

SI: Did you have any trouble readjusting to civilian life?

MZ: No, not really, no.

SI: It is interesting that you later went to Japan while you were with Burroughs.

MZ: Yes.

SI: Why did they send you?

MZ: Why did they send me?

SI: Yes. Were you selling machines in Japan?

MZ: Well, no, no, the company … eventually changed considerably. It became, also, a computer company. They bought a company called Elecetro Data in California and that's how Burroughs became a computer company. I started in the United States and had had a couple of promotions, was in Detroit, the home office, on a staff kind of assignment, marketing staff kind of job, and they offered me an opportunity to go to Germany, because of my German background. They had a subsidiary in Germany. I spent four years there, liked that very much, and then, came back to the US, to the home office again. They were going to move me … back to the US organization and I said I didn't really want to do that. I wanted to stay in international and they gave me a temporary assignment in the Far East area as marketing manager. I traveled from Detroit to the Far East, mainly Japan. We had a distributor there, and to Hong Kong and the Philippines and Singapore and Bangkok and those kinds of countries. They were my territory and, in 1965, I made my first trip and I went to Japan. That's twenty years later and it was really a coincidence. I didn't ask for that. I was happy they offered me that opportunity, but it was a coincidence. … I found Mr. Fukui in Tokyo that January of 1965. He was working for Hitachi, in the elevator division. So, I did that for about three years, and then, I kept insisting I

wanted to be a general manager somewhere and they finally gave me that opportunity in Norway. It was a little, smaller subsidiary, but they gave me that opportunity and, from there, I went to Mexico. During all this time, Burroughs was negotiating with our distributor in Japan to form a joint venture and, while I was in Mexico for three years, that joint venture came into being and they picked me to go back to Japan as VP of marketing, reporting to a Japanese president, and I moved there with my family then. That was in 1973. So, we lived in Japan. We had several reunions with Mr. Fukui and his wife, … primarily in Hiroshima. We had a branch in Hiroshima. … So, the joint venture was sort of rough, not happy, and, after one year, Burroughs bought the other half of the joint venture and it became a subsidiary, a wholly-owned subsidiary, and I became the president. … That was a good break for me, because it was our largest subsidiary then. We had about three thousand employees, all Japanese, except for the financial guy and one engineering person. They were Americans. So, three of us were running this company and it was a great, happy experience. The Japanese, contrary to what we remember from the war, [laughter] our employees were loyal, hardworking, dedicated and smart, intelligent, and I can't say anything but nice things about them. So, it was a very happy experience for me.

SI: Was it strange at first?

MZ: No. I had gotten to know them quite well during my trips there as a marketing manager from Detroit. I would go to Japan about eight times a year. On each trip, I would go to Japan at the beginning [and] at the end, four times a year. So, I got to know the people very well and they all came with us in the joint venture and they eventually came with us, with me, into the wholly-owned subsidiary. … They were very happy years for me.

SI: Did you find that you had to conform more to their business culture or did they try to become more Americanized in the way they did business? Did you have to learn about how the Japanese did business?

MZ: Well, I found that they became very loyal employees. They were loyal to the company, and to me, as their president, but, at the same time, I would try to follow Japanese tradition, things that they felt were important. Sometimes, it was some silly, little things. [To] cite an example, one of our customers was Isuzu Car and Truck Company, which is partly-owned by General Motors. They used one of our large systems, in addition to others, some Japanese makes as well. On occasion, once or twice a year, General Motors would send some of their technicians over to meet with Isuzu people about data processing and what system they would use. Within the company, our company, we had several company automobiles. One of them was an Isuzu automobile and the only reason I had that was, when they went to visit Isuzu, they always went in that car. They wouldn't go there in a Toyota or a Nissan and, when I went, I would make a traditional, high-level call, once or twice a year, we'd take my car to a couple of blocks away from the Isuzu office, get out of my car and get in the Isuzu, to go to visit them. [laughter] That's a silly tradition, but, to the Japanese, it's very important. I can't imagine that anybody would be angry if you arrived there in a Toyota or a Nissan, but that's an example. … They have these funny, little traditions and I would follow their tradition and let them have their own way, even though it seems silly to me, … and I think they respect that, I mean, that they were allowed

to do that. At the same time, they would do anything they can to try to comply and satisfy Burroughs management, too, because they were loyal to the company.

SI: At any point, did you have hard feelings towards the Japanese?

MZ: No, no. We hated them during high school, "Those damn Japs or Nips," and I've never used that word anymore. When I went back there the first time, twenty years later, I held no animosity towards anybody and, of course, … we never discussed World War II, either. I never discussed my experience and I'm sure the people in the company became aware of it, although I didn't talk about it, because I met with Mr. Fukui and I had to have help [from] some of our staff to find him, right. … He must have explained … our association, so, they must have known, but nobody ever talked about it. … Everybody in the company was post-World War II. There were no World War II veterans in the company. They were all younger people. So, I didn't hold any animosity to them, as bad as they were. They did some horrible things, some of them. …

SI: I wanted to ask you about the two airmen that you met in Hiroshima. Do you remember their names? Did you ever find out their names?

MZ: Yes, Brisette and [Ralph J.] Neal. Neal was … the one that's on the B-24 and Brisette was the Navy man, Norman Brisette and I don't remember Neil's first name, but I do remember their names, always remember their names, because of the circumstances involved. … Of course, you guys are also somewhat lucky, too, because I've been doing a lot of talking about this in recent months, so, … a lot of things are fresh in my mind. I spoke last week at the Nassau Club in Princeton. One of the members asked me to speak at a luncheon there and I was told to keep it within thirty minutes, which I had no problem doing, but … I was there almost for an hour, because, after my little talk, the people asked so many questions. So, I've been doing a lot of this lately. That's why I say you guys are lucky. Everything is sort of fresh in my mind.

MM: Obviously, you are very comfortable with telling your story, but did it take you a while to be able to talk about these experiences? Were you just as forthcoming when you first got back from the war?

MZ: Well, I talked about it when I first came back. Obviously, my family wanted to know what happened, because of the circumstances. It was the end of the war and, as you're going to hear in this little film, my mother gets a telegram near the end of August. … They were celebrating the end of the war and waiting to hear from me when I'm coming home. She gets a telegram saying I'm missing-in-action. So, that's in this film, too. … So, when I came home, I certainly talked about it, but I didn't talk … much more than that. It sort of disappeared. It was lost and I'm really not one to talk a lot about it, except recently. I don't know, the sixtieth anniversary has brought everything back out again. There was a little bit of that twenty-two years ago, because, … with TV Asahi, I appeared on their television program called *The Big News Show*. They came to my home in Yardley and did an interview. It's a program something like *60 Minutes* and the point of the program was the fact that the United States did not acknowledge that some Americans were killed in Hiroshima. That was the feature of the program and I appeared on that ten years ago, … also with TV Asahi. The Japanese made a big deal about that, for whatever reason, that some Americans were killed. It's true. We knew that in 1945 and we

certainly reported it when we came home, but there was no acknowledgement of that, nationally, until I don't know when. It's now public knowledge, but it wasn't for many years after the war ended.

SI: When you say it was not acknowledged, do you mean that it just was not publicized or that it was denied?

MZ: I don't know if it was denied, but it wasn't publicized, right, and the families; in that film they made ten years ago, they interviewed not only me, but they interviewed … a relative of Brisette and, … I think, Neal's sister and, in the film, she says … they only had word that he was killed-in-action. They did not know how he was he killed or where he was killed-in-action and it was verified in the film. The Asahi people actually went to Washington and talked to somebody in, I don't know, the Department of Defense or Veterans Affairs, I don't know who. There's an interview with a man in Washington who acknowledges that it was not publicized that Americans had been killed and I think … we pretty well know now that there were twelve Americans in Hiroshima. Most of them were the B-24 crew.

SI: That must have been frightening and disconcerting, to see these two guys and only have limited knowledge of what had happened. Today, we know it was dangerous for you to be there, because of the radiation, even after the fact, but did you have any concerns at the time that you might end up in that kind of condition or did you know that that was because they were there at the actual time of the bombing?

MZ: I don't remember exactly what we thought. As I said earlier, we really did not know anything about an atomic bomb. We did not know anything about radiation. These two men were in terrible agony and they looked terrible, but we could only guess as to what had caused that and I don't think we guessed that it was radiation. We didn't know anything about radiation, so, I don't know. Strange, strange circumstance, that it occurred the way it did occur. We could talk with them long enough to know their names and where they were from and which branch of the service they were from. Neal was on an airplane which was called *The Lonesome Lady*. We always named our airplanes with something, sometimes put nose art on them. … When I was in Japan this past August, in the area where Mr. Fukui and his family lived, they took us to a monument to *The Lonesome Lady*, because it crashed in that area. It was near Hiroshima, but it's called Yanai City. … They bailed out and the plane crashed after they bailed out and they built a monument to that crew in that little, country town. There's a monument to *The Lonesome Lady*. Now, the interesting thing is, the pilot of that airplane, *The Lonesome Lady*, survived, because they took him away from Hiroshima, took him to Tokyo for interrogation. So, he missed the bomb. His name is Cartwright, I know that. I've never met the man, but he survived. His crew is all gone. I'm not sure if the whole crew survived the bailout, but many members of the crew were in Hiroshima and were killed by the bomb, but Cartwright survived. He apparently was in Japan last year when they built this monument and he was there for the dedication and so forth.

SI: Is there anything else you would like to put on the tape?

MZ: At the moment, I can't think of anything.

SI: Is there anything we may have skipped over or not covered in depth?

MZ: No. The important thing is, if you want a copy of this little movie I'm going to show you, I'll have to have one made and mailed to you. I'm going to have DVDs made, or is a tape better?

SI: Is it a DVD now?

MZ: It's a tape now. I'm not going to give you one today. I'll mail it to you.

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

SI: Please, continue.

MZ: I just wanted to highlight the fact that this little tape was broadcast by New England Cable News in August of this year, 2005, on or about the end of the war in the Pacific, August 15th, and was prepared by a news anchor at New England Cable News, Mike Nikitas, who is the son of our tail gunner and it's a tribute to his father, who died early in life, at age forty-six, of cancer, which, conceivably, could have been contracted in Hiroshima, … and myself, because I'm the only member of the crew that's alive. So, he included me in the film and I think it's very well done and I hope you'll enjoy it and I would like to contribute a copy of that to your files, when I have some DVDs made.

SI: Does it have a title?

MZ: Yes, "From Fitchburg to Hiroshima." … I don't know whether you can download it. I can give you the address; it's still available on the Internet.

SI: Okay.

MZ: Do you have e-mail?

SI: Yes.

MZ: Why don't you give me your e-mail and I'll send it to you? Give me something that has your address on it.

SI: Sure.

MZ: Before you leave. I just wanted to get that on your tape, so that you know something more about it.

SI: Thank you very much for having us here today. This will conclude the taped portion of our visit.

MZ: Well, I want to say thank you very much. You've been two nice young gentlemen and I enjoyed talking with you as well and to reminisce, once again, about my experience in 1945.

SI: We appreciate your sharing it again. We are probably the dozenth group to ask you to recall these experiences in this anniversary year.

MZ: Right, thank you.

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

Reviewed by Michael Mink 11/25/05
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 12/27/05
Reviewed by Martin L. Zapf 1/16/06