

Chit Tanaka

TANAKA Presidio / Eric Savel  
M. J. J. J.

TAPE 1 SIDE 1

Q This is oral interview number three with Chit Tanaka, member of the 442nd Regimental Combat team. Chit Tanaka served the entire length of the regiment term in combat. Mr. Chit Tanaka was member company K-442nd, and retire from the service as a technical sargeant. This is side number one. The date is October 8, 1980. Mr. Tanaka where is your family from and your a Nesei, when did your parents immigrate to America?

A My folks came over, my dad came over in 1904, my mother in 1914. The met and married in California in 1914, I believe, or 1915. They came to St. Louis. They had worked for a lawyer family in San Francisco. They didn't realize that at the time that this lawyer lived really in St. Louis. They were just vacationing in S.F. So when they came to St. Louis, my parents came with them, of course. They were settled in St. Louis. They finally opened up a restaurant after working for the lawyer family for a year or so. They saved up enough money and started their own restaurant in St. Louis. They called it the Tokyo Restaurant. We were <sup>born there,</sup> bonded, three of us, my older brother, myself, I'm the middle one and there was the younger brother. Joe, Ed, and I served in the Army. He was a <sup>Joe</sup> ~~technical~~ <sup>master</sup> sargeant regimental head <sup>quarters.</sup> ~~prior(?)~~ I was ~~in~~ Company K-3rd battalion technical sargeant. And then I had a younger brother who served in army, also, but it wasn't the 442. It was with another outfit. <sup>By name</sup> Maybe end of the war, but he ended up in Germany in ~~New~~ <sup>Rhin</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>land.</sup>

023  
worked for lawyer + started restaurant in St. Louis brothers who served in army

NO

Q What was his name?

A Eddy, Edward Tanaka. So there were three of us that served in the U.S. Army during World War II. In St. Louis, where I grew up, there were four Japanese families. I really didn't get to know any of them very well. Consular, family of the Consulate, two other people who ran a restaurant. And I think there was a herb medicine man, doctor. Our family got together once a year. Maybe Christmas or whatever. The children, myself we never got together maybe once a year. But we really didn't know each other. I grew up essentially with Germans, Italians, French. This were essentially the St. Louis population. Of course there was a mixture of all races but strongly Germans and Italians.

CHIT

A And this is where I grew up in a German neighborhood really with the Italian neighborhood just around the corner, over the hill.

Q Did you have any identification with Japanese culture, at all?

*Quite a credit*

A No, no. <sup>determine</sup> The folks was ~~led~~ to become Americanized and maybe they over did it. I feel ~~that if~~ they wanted us to learn Japanese, but there ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> no Japanese schools in St. Louis, Missouri. <sup>do I learned Spanish</sup> So I studied German in high school and college. I think it's not proficient, adequate ~~in~~ German, but ~~good~~ <sup>enough</sup> to serve me later. I went to school, there; grammar school, high school, <sup>Washington</sup> University, ~~at~~ St. Louis.

085  
folks wanted to be Americanized sent him to German classes  
NO

Q Before W.W.II broke out was there any evidence of prejudice out there?

A <sup>They was</sup> They had some prejudice. It wasn't strong, in certain instances. For example you couldn't go to certain areas. Like one or two places had ~~taboos~~ there, very limited. The only two places I knew of were the swimming pools over at the ~~Port~~ <sup>Forest</sup> Park Highlands and another ~~swimming pool~~ in town. And that was off limits to Orientals. Other than that there were no other restrictions that I knew of in St. Louis. Friends and so forth were very supportive, or the neighborhood got along very well. There were just no problems.

101  
town prejudices  
NO

Q Did your parents talk of Japan or tell you stories? Did you have any identification with Japan?

A There were very little discussions about Japan in the family. I think they came from rather severe conditions back home. After the war they did mention to me something, somewhat, my mother came from a broken home, remarried and so forth. I'm not quite clear on it but she evidently was not happy because <sup>do</sup> second father or what you call it. My dad evidently claimed he was the son of a sakai foreman. But the whole area, <sup>Kyushu</sup> ~~Huoler (?)~~ which was a southern island, <sup>Fukuoka</sup> ~~Near Fukuoka (?)~~, I understand, had been depressed in this period, economically, and ~~for~~ many Japanese left there. I guess even people from other countries leave depressed areas, so they came to the U.S. looking for a new source of livelihood.

Q So you felt that you were, lived here, but absorb in living the American

Q dream of having their own business and doing well. Would you consider them to be an aristocrat family, or middle class?

A I would say the lower middle class. We <sup>Lived</sup> worked in a good neighborhood. We had our own home, two bedroom, bungalow about a block away from <sup>Forest</sup> ~~Choice~~ Park. It was nice and quiet. It was really a nice area. We were in the middle income group, had car and so forth, house such things. Boy scouts, got to be a star scout, that was as far as I can go. My younger brother became an Eagle. My older brother was a Life scout.

144  
what  
their  
living  
condition  
was  
NO

Q In December 7, of 1941, what was the reaction in St. Louis? What was your reaction and the city's reaction? Do you remember?

A I was just stunned when I heard the news. I ~~could~~ <sup>had</sup> not how could they do this. They had very little material and it just don't make any sense how they can even consider going to war with the U.S. Anyway I was just stunned, the city, the area, the neighborhood that I grew up, school so forth. It was <sup>were</sup> ~~little strange~~ but essentially ~~the~~ supportive. There ~~was~~ not too much they could do. Many of them understood my situation. I mean ~~the~~ <sup>had</sup> the family situation, the Germans and the Italians that under- gone similar, relevant situations that we were ~~plac~~ in, in WW II. <sup>when</sup> And the war began over there, Germans and Italians were single out and chased around and so forth. So there was quite a bit of understanding. There was quite a bit of understanding from the neighborhood and from the people. It was quiet. There was no rock throwing or repatriation, or yelling or anything of that nature.

Stet  
Mid  
west  
—  
and  
Haha  
—  
re-act  
ion

Q I understand your parents changed the name of their restaurant?

A Yes, the FBI, right after Pearl Harbor, about two or three days later came around and they checked our whole bank accounts, <sup>uh</sup> and by that time, <sup>welcome</sup> to the understanding <sup>that for</sup> the good <sup>(?)</sup> relations <sup>my folks</sup> ~~was that this was anything~~ but real, and by gosh, they had better change the name of their restaurant from ~~Toyko~~ Restaurant, and so they changed it to <sup>an</sup> All American <sup>name</sup> Restaurant, ~~some such thing~~ so that they <sup>would</sup> ~~wild~~ not be stigmatized by the name. So they changed the name of their restaurant and they kept open. The FBI closed the restaurant for about two weeks to check on the books to see if their bank books balanced, to see if the money had been spent to buy bonds or go

186  
parents  
changed  
name of  
restaurant

too  
certain

NO

A to a <sup>DISSENT</sup> ~~notorious~~ <sup>reference</sup> group, or whatever; <sup>we were</sup> simply found "clean", so <sup>to be</sup> let us go back to work. And we were left alone, and we stayed in St. Louis. We were not put in relocation centers because that <sup>was</sup> ~~only~~ <sup>the</sup> Japanese Americans or Japanese American families that were in the military zone. We were not in any such zone.

Q What was your reaction when you heard the Japanese were being evacuated on the West coast? How did you feel?

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couldn't believe they were actually moving out citizens too

A We thought the next move would be to move the families inland out to the relocation centers. We were stunned. We just didn't understand it. I had just about to finish law school and I couldn't comprehend how they could move ~~Japanese citizens~~ Japanese American citizens. They might do that to Japanese who were not citizens but not to Japanese Americans who were citizens. This was incomprehensible to me. I was trying to get more information in detail but in the mid west there was not too much information coming through from the west coast. All the moves <sup>of</sup> course were in the newspapers; all foot laying types some of the underlaying legal aspects.

NO

Q How did you first hear about the 442nd, and what motivated you and your brothers to join the Army?

A I had applied for a job in Washington DC with the government. Couldn't get one locally because of the nature of the war ammunition and air craft factories there. There were little <sup>to</sup> ~~of~~ those to take on of American, of Japanese descendent. I looked in other areas and they were also little ~~wary~~, so I applied in the government, and they said, sure come on over to Washington DC. So I moved out there. I went to Washington DC and I worked for ~~the~~ <sup>Prise</sup> Administration for about six months. To get <sup>back</sup> ~~back~~ to St. Louis, I found out about that time, I couldn't even volunteer because they had closed the draft ~~board~~, six months earlier, ~~Closed~~ the opportunity to Japanese American citizens even to volunteer for the services. <sup>JA's were classified 4C, alien</sup> So that avenue was closed. So I went to Washington DC ~~cause~~ I applied for a federal job and I was accepted. So I worked for the <sup>OPA</sup> ~~(?) Administration that I finally ended up~~ I ~~just~~ <sup>DC</sup> applied at the draft board. I ~~had to register and I found~~ that they had open the draft again.

Q When was this?

A I believe in September of 1943. I had not known that the 442nd was being planned. There was nothing in the papers of this nature.

263  
didn't know it was a segregated unit

Q You thought you were joining a integrated army unit?

A Yes, I didn't know I was going into a segregated unit. I thought I was going into the Army or Navy or anywhere. Just the army services.

267  
didn't appreciate being segregated

Q What was your reaction when you found out you were going to be in a segregated all Japanese American Unit? Were you happy or sad?

A I was really upset. I felt this was segregation. Just didn't fit well for me. Well, I wanted to volunteer and fight for my country and if I have to fight in a segregated unit I will do so. But I really didn't appreciate being segregated.

Q When you joined the regiment for training were there any certain culture shocks, being that you weren't exposed to Japanese culture and here you were with a group of men very much exposed and now the Western group of people who have lived in Japantown and Hawaii, how did you react to that? What was your experience?

280  
all of a sudden surrounded by Jap. Big change from Hawaii knew

I was straight out of St. Louis and Washington, DC, the only two cities I knew. All my learning came out of books so that suddenly, boom, I'm out of the so called Caucasian majority culture and suddenly I'm in this segregated 442nd Regimental Combat team. I'm surrounded suddenly by Japanese Americans. Its like looking in a mirror and I see 5,000 of me, and I've never seen this many before. I didn't really quite understand or know how to live in this type of set up. But I quickly found it was quite amiable and really quite very pleassant. The Hawaiian group I didn't quite understand though. They used up the pigin English, it was really traumatic to me in the sense I didn't understand them. I would listen and listen, then I said, gee, they must be pretty stupid people, because their English was so poor. I found out later though still bristling at my reacting, was pretty good, overreacting on my part. Cause later on, I had a chance, ~~was~~ a group of officers who wanted me to send in their letter's for them, not a regulation, but I did it for them. I use to read the letters of the

cler  
RX  
TO  
J.A

A Hawaiian Japanese Army. Their letters were grammatically correct. There ~~were~~ <sup>was</sup> nothing wrong with their English. ~~They used words to polish out and everything else. They were beautiful.~~ It was quite different from their speech. In other words they really knew English. ~~I~~ <sup>now</sup> knew what the hell was going on. ~~They~~ <sup>know</sup> English grammar, but they wouldn't speak it. I didn't understand it. I still don't to this day.

Hawaiian  
Radio  
operators

Q Can you give us examples of pigin English? What it meant?

312  
how guy  
talked on  
walkie talkie

A My recollection of the few words in Hawaiian, I recall, I remember hearing during the war in Italy. [The walkie talkie radio operators, and they would get on to the radio and I had mentioned to this fella from Hawaii that this bolt doesn't catch the shells properly, and we need a new Tommy gun bolt, and we need some more ammos for the Tommy. Thompson submachine guns we're talking about. So he gets on the wlkie talkie and I'm listening to him send this " message back to the rear and he says, "Hama, ha, Tommy gun bolts" <sup>nomi...</sup> ~~or whatever~~ and then he would throw in some other Portuguese or Japanese words.

Q Could you repeat that again slowly, hama ham ma?

A Tommy gun bolt <sup>shu</sup>, the U's a Jananese ending on a noun. You can't say bolt Tommy gun bolt, you can't say that in Japanese so you say bolt su. That's the way you round it off to making Japanese sound. Of course Tommy gun bolt su ham <sup>ma</sup> something or whether you know <sup>→ WHAT he's</sup> saying is rush like hell. We need a Tommy gun bolt ~~there~~ <sup>here.</sup> w/ <sup>ugh</sup>.

Q He's telling them to hurry up?

336  
way they  
talked. Germans  
couldn't  
understand

A Yeah, in Hawaiian and then he threw in some Japanese words on top of it. [We have been using the Hawaiians before that and after that exclusively on the walkie talkie and on the 300 <sup>2</sup> because they spoke <sup>a reminder that</sup> ~~with pinaca(?)~~ where even the Germans, they just could not understand them to what the hell we're talking about. They might get a <sup>blimmer</sup> of something but they didn't know one word or the other <sup>what</sup> was going on. It was never written or deciphered, they never could understand it. <sup>And</sup> Even I couldn't understand it.

Q What was happening when you were, were you with K-company for training purposes, was this at Camp Shelby?

A In camp you were ~~not assigned to any rifle company.~~ You were in a

*there was*  
 A rookie school and they were training. They have provisional company's there. I don't recall the names of any company. But it was not K-company or such. We were trained for about three months or more and then you would go on to maneuvers and other types. When you say train it runs for about a year. This was a little longer than usual because I think they were still testing us.

Q This was at Camp Shelby?

A Shelby, Mississippi, *near Hattiesburg,* ~~Nor in des ber (?)~~ Mississippi.

Q Were you aware while in Mississippi of the (?) segregation?

A Oh yeah, from the very beginning we come down there and we unload, we were labeled here Japanese Americans and were considered Caucasians or Whites. You were not to go back of the buses, you will not use the drinking fountain marked color or nor will you use the bathrooms marked color or blacks. They didn't say blacks, they said colored. You will not use those. You were considered as a White.

*What'd you think of that?*  
 Q Were you offended by that?

A We were a little <sup>but</sup> upset, we didn't understand, many of us didn't understand what <sup>this</sup> all meant because this type of segregation just didn't go on. I didn't understand <sup>it</sup> myself and here I am from St. Louis, <sup>a</sup> segregated town where I have been segregated somewhat before, but it had never been drawn to my attention. In other words here they prefer the ~~Black~~ <sup>to</sup> Black <sup>had</sup> Negro. They didn't use the term Black. They use the term colored. I have never really thought about it. I learned about <sup>racial</sup> discrimination <sup>really</sup> when I joined the 442. I was almost as if I was a third person there. Cause this way I could see now what was going on. It was quite <sup>an eye opener for me</sup> ironic coming from a sort of naive secluded position, St. Louis, and going <sup>down</sup> there.

Q I understand that the regimental commander said that there would be no dating of black or white women by the 442. Is that true to the best of your recollection?

A I didn't hear that. I don't know. I don't think it really <sup>would have made a difference</sup> ~~(?)~~ The guys from camp were going out with women: white, black or yellow. They would get

358  
 Jap. considered white b/w segregation

365  
 DID NOT UNDERSTAND DISCRIMINATION. LEARNED ABOUT IT IN 442

382  
 THEY JUST WANTED TO GET THEIR TRAINING OVER + GET BACK INTO ACTION

A dates when ever they pleased. They wouldn't use the bathrooms and sit on buses up front and so forth. They weren't too happy with this situation. They understood discrimination. They just wanted to get their training over and get into action. So they really didn't want to create an incident Some of us were really upset at the whole thing. I don't know if it ever came to a confrontation.

Q When did you enter Camp Shelby?

A I believe it was in October 1943

Q This is the conclusion of side one

Q This is side two. I want to ask you about the training in Camp Shelby. Did you have a sense that the unit in your unity was trying to prove something even during that training period?

A Yeah, we were. A strong sense that we were on the spot really and kind of critical. I mean that you had to do well and 99-100% went through this, there were a few exceptions, probably I was only one and maybe others, but we didn't goof off totally. I wouldn't ~~club~~ <sup>drill</sup> cause I didn't like to do it, then I would be picked up put on KP or whatever.

Q I understand that you were one of a few people who were, lazy?

A I don't know if it was lazy. We rationalized. <sup>Lloyd</sup> from Salinas, he was in I-company, and he and I kind of buddied around. And we both decided <sup>in</sup> training, we could use ~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> training but we had ~~those~~ <sup>best of</sup> training early in the Boy Scouts, ~~early in our lives~~. And we really didn't need it now. Some how we <sup>would</sup> wind up servicing the Service Club up the hill, while the other guys were out marching. Of course we were caught and was put on KP and so forth. Lloyd and I <sup>is joined together,</sup> ~~picked~~, we really went through the training and picked up a lot of "real sense" later on. ~~We were not the only goof offs that I know of. we really didn't goof off that much~~

Q But it turns out later, what happened later?

A Lloyd and I were good friends. We went overseas. Eventually I became acting first sargeant for company K, and Lloyd became acting first sargeant

NO  
015  
We were trying to prove something although we had some goof-offs  
035  
Lloyd + me would goof off a little picked up "real sense" later on  
NO

1049

4.4.3  
Training  
Shelby

A Company I. ~~This was a goof off becoming a first sergeant question mark~~  
~~I don't know.~~ Anyway Lloyd was killed in action <sup>during the Gettysburg line campaign</sup> ~~in the Florida area~~ <sup>near the end of the war.</sup>

How'd you do ~~at~~ in basic training?  
Q I heard that many records were set by the 442nd for marching, marksmanship at Camp Shelby. What happened on the marches as well?

A Yeah, often when I was assigned to pull targets I was often on the other end shooting targets and I became an expert marksman myself. I hit a bunch of bulleyes. ~~out of 90 yards~~ <sup>Others</sup> might ~~well~~ miss the targets ~~and they would get the Maggie's Drawers.~~

Q ~~MAGGIE'S (?)~~ What are Maggie's Drawers? <sup>is waved when you miss</sup> ~~the target~~

A Yeah, that means they wave the red flag. <sup>you shot in</sup> That means you missed the damn target completely; <sup>so far off you</sup> ~~just~~ <sup>get</sup> wave the red flag.

Q That means you can't shoot worth a damn?

A You can't hit the rear of a barn with a snow shovel. But at any rate, I became an expert marksman, that's <sup>as high as you can go</sup> a ~~surprising~~ <sup>little red</sup> goal, until I realized that when they found out that when you can shoot so darn well they put you in as a point man. I say great without knowing what a <sup>0</sup> <sup>9</sup> pint man is. That's the first scout. That's the guy that goes first when you hit the line.

Q What happens to them often times?

A They usually let the <sup>point</sup> (first scout <sup>and second scout</sup>) go through because they <sup>know you are</sup> ~~have first and~~ <sup>only the trip.</sup> ~~second scouts.~~ They <sup>scouts</sup> travel about 25 yards apart and <sup>they go</sup> in front of the company. ~~and~~ You go in front of the entire company when you hit the line. Of course, ~~then~~ <sup>then</sup> I didn't realize <sup>that</sup> expert marksman is <sup>usually</sup> picked because he's a good shot <sup>and needed on the</sup> in pints. The enemy would usually always let you go through. They know and we know that one or two guys <sup>would</sup> ~~wasn't~~ that important. They wanted to know what else is behind these two jokers coming up on top. So they usually let you go through but you <sup>was</sup> always in danger because <sup>you might</sup> ~~they~~ cut you off <sup>to get the rest of the company,</sup> ~~then~~ they'll wipe you out <sup>if they can</sup> if they can <sup>of</sup> you hear anything, <sup>to start</sup> going on you hit the ground and start scrambling <sup>to start</sup> scrambling. ~~I didn't know this back then in training.~~

Q Anything else happen back in training that was humorous or would reflect, you mentioned the term...

A In training the desire to finish 100% and to do it correctly and properly and to beat the training time and the distances were really strong. And

100% they all helped each other to finish

NO

082  
became an expert marksman + found out they used their as point man

991  
FIRST  
point man usually got by 1 or 2 men, weren't important  
in combat

111  
Unity Army recruits wanting to finish

Good  
Good

you might trip ~  
bury hop  
win or stop on  
stop on  
If you get through

A the guys, even if as we were learning the 10 or 15 miles hike or force march, start full field backed marches, some of the guys would buckle and weave and we'll just grab them by the elbows escort them in to make sure everybody finished and this way by God everybody finished. We never left anyone ~~out~~ out on the trail. Everybody came in and on time.

good

Q Any other incidents of interest during training? How about gambling? Were you aware of any gambling? I understand thousands of dollars were exchanged during evenings entertainment.

A Oh yes, the floating craps games went on in excessively right after pay day. They would go on the first week then it would taper off because they would have no more money floating around. But I didn't gamble too much. The game, gambling went on in the Army.

Q Who were the better gamblers, the Hawaiian boys or the Mainland boys?

A I hear you. I think the Hawaiian boys were about 10 to 1 stronger, better, hefty, go for broke type gambler than the Mainland guys. I don't have statistics to back that up, but they really went for broke, go for broke they did in training, they did in fighting, they would ~~go~~ go for broke in gambling. They really went all out.

Hawaiian vs Mainland -  
Go For Broke

Q I understand that the same applied to the senioritas?

A Yes, they really loved the girls too. You might have a 4'10" or 5'2" Hawaiian guy go after <sup>this</sup> these girls and she might be 5'6", 5'9" and they might be dancing around that floor like crazy. They wouldn't stop for anyone. They went for broke on the dance floor too, and they were good dancers.

Q They live very hard, played hard and soldier <sup>it</sup> very hard?

A That's correct. They did everything all the way, and they really worked hard when things had to be <sup>done</sup> ~~did~~, they did ~~it~~. They did not compromise. I don't know how to say this, they just did not. They went all the way.

We remember ~~had~~ <sup>to</sup> learn up and ~~copy~~ <sup>copy</sup> them. They set a good example.

Q Did you notice how the Hawaiian boys set the precedent, obviously they had fought in North Africa, the first in combat and they have already proven

very good

✓

141  
Hawaiian boys went all out in everything

156  
Hawaiian Nisei as peace keepers

Q themselves and so they were probably for a short while. the season veterans of the 442nd would follow

A Yes, we didn't have any of those from North Africa but they had brothers and relatives in the 442nd which was about 2 to 1 from Hawaii, the Islands.

There were about 1500 Mainlanders and ~~3000~~ <sup>2000</sup> from the Islands in the 442nd at the beginning <sup>of the</sup> 442nd. Many of them had brothers or relatives who ~~had~~ <sup>had been</sup> ~~gone through~~ with the 34th Division in North Africa, and they had seen ~~the~~ action. They carried this feeling and sense of mission over into training and they ~~passed it~~ <sup>infused it in</sup> the rest of us. ~~They~~ <sup>It</sup> really carried it over. It came essentially from the Hawaiian group.

170  
feeling of sense of mission came from Hawaiian group

Hawaiian carried over to brothers of 442nd spirit

Q Why do you supposed that was that they would probably follow the same trend?

A Probably because [they were never interned, never relocated. They were essentially free men.] I don't say this in with degradation of the Mainlanders because [the Mainlanders fought just as hard, but they didn't have this frame of reference that the Islanders did.] The guys from the Mainland like myself course we didn't know about the 34th Division. We didn't know of the 100th fighting in North Africa. [We had no models, nothing to guide us. We just were on our own. The models we had ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> terrible because all we knew was that we were being relocated, about to be relocated or we were under suspicion.]

Suspicion in training

This fact was reinforced from the fact that the, I know that working with mine, later on with the rookie school training first sargeant after the war, I ~~taught~~ <sup>talked</sup> to ~~them~~ <sup>him</sup> at great length about training and the war days and he said that did you know, all through rookie training, you were under surveillance? I said what do you mean? He said, I as the first sargeant, <sup>had</sup> had to write a report on every man in rookie school down on ~~Healdsburg,~~ <sup>Hattiesburg,</sup> Mississippi into a

196  
sargeant had to write a report on every man in Rookie school to determine loyalty

Suspicion  
in  
train-  
ing

A mail box. Now this report went to the Pentagon, describing what he thought were loyal and disloyal Japanese Americans. ~~said to~~ ]

Q Where did his authority come from? Was that directly from the Pentagon?

A I didn't know where his authority was, but he was under orders to issue this report monthly.

NOTE: this comment was begins on 2 master 1/4" reels. Have to fix if use.

Q I didn't know that

A This is new. I didn't know about that. That's because they didn't quite trust Japanese American soldiers. I understand that they discontinued it after a while but <sup>at</sup> the beginning they were sending these reports <sup>in</sup> to. And this is what that <sup>training</sup> ~~rookie~~ sargeant was telling me. That we were all under surveillance, particularly the Kibei, that's a Japanese American citizen of ~~American~~ who had gone ~~back~~ to school in Japan and had come back to the States.

211  
this was new  
kept special watch on Kibei

Q <sup>Was</sup> there any other instances other than what you have mentioned in training?

A Yes, one time, we lived in barracks and there were a bunch of guys in the barracks I don't know how many about 24-30 people I don't know how many, a bunch of guys. The barracks next door <sup>was</sup> ~~obviously~~ getting little bored so

they tore up all of our beds and bunks after we had fixed it up for inspection ~~one~~ morning ~~so~~ <sup>we</sup> weren't going to let this ~~out~~ by un-noticed. ~~at~~ the next time when they were ~~at~~ at mess, ~~two~~ of us <sup>go</sup> ~~I~~ included, I wouldn't

~~say~~ ~~included~~ two of us got on top of the bunks, top of <sup>the</sup> barracks and ~~there were~~ ~~the~~ salamander stoves one on each end, <sup>of the bunks,</sup> these are pot-belly, iron stoves with <sup>the</sup> chimney going up the roof. So we got up on top, this was ~~around~~

FUN  
TRAINING  
&  
SMOKE

FUN -  
Smoke/Soot

~~A October~~ <sup>and</sup> November getting cold, down there, even down South. ~~We~~ <sup>we</sup> ~~there~~ <sup>with some</sup> blanks and dropped two or three down each ~~pipe~~ <sup>and</sup> carried a brick with us. We put a brick on top of each chimney. Then we got off the roof ~~as quickly as we could~~ <sup>and entered the mess hall</sup> and ~~headed over the mess hall~~ <sup>smoke stack and the hell</sup>. After a few minutes ~~eating there~~ <sup>there was</sup> then we heard this muffled boom, boom, ~~and that it~~ <sup>boom</sup> was great ~~because~~ <sup>the guys</sup> by the time we got back, all the ~~shit~~ <sup>soot in the</sup> had blown out of the pipe ~~and~~ <sup>to their barracks</sup> out of the front door of the salamander stove since it ~~couldn't~~ <sup>couldn't</sup> get out through the bricks ~~and~~ <sup>chimney with the</sup> all over the bunk house. The ~~whole~~ <sup>soot</sup> bunk ~~was~~ <sup>soot</sup> covered with shit. Now you gotta be ready for inspection the next day spic and span and clean or your ~~going~~ <sup>going</sup> hear from ~~other people~~ <sup>about</sup> KP or latrine duty ~~or whatever~~. But we didn't care. We weren't involved, essentially. Our beds were never touched after that.

Q Was there anything else that was funny, maybe good nature competition?

Were the Hawaiian boys separated from the Mainland boys?

A No, not really, we really got along, Hawaiians and as well as the Mainlands.

We had names. We were known as Koptonks. They said that if they hit us in the chin and we fall over and hit the ground, our heads would go koptonk. The sound of a coconut hitting the ~~rock~~ <sup>ground</sup> ~~and the tray~~ or something. So all the Mainland guys were called the koptonks. All the Island guys were known as Kanakas or buddhahards.

Q What does that mean?

A I don't know to this day what it means, but I just call them kanakas. But we really got along very well. I don't know how to explain it. There was no friction.

Q Were there rivals between the training companys?

A Yes, there was and also between the <sup>Battalions</sup> ~~Italians~~. No bitterness or anything, just a friendly rival. Our company was better or our squad was better than their squad. I guess this was a general part of Army training program. But anyway we enjoyed it. We really felt that we were better than the other group.

Q In the movie, "Go For Broke", with Van Johns it gives you the impression initially that the white <sup>holes</sup> ~~holes~~ weren't very happy assigned to the Japanese regiment. Were there any evidence of that or prejudice or overt things?

A I really didn't run into any prejudice or overt things of that nature. I think there was a little distance at the beginning and a loofness ~~to~~ at the start. I think once we got overseas, got into action, it wasn't a question of <sup>holes</sup> ~~holes~~. I didn't think it made any difference whether you were white, yellow or whatever. It was what you were doing in combat that ~~part on ancestry dissapeared. It didn't matter at all.~~ Really <sup>more</sup> didn't matter.

Q What was the average height of the Nisei soldiers of the 442nd?

A I read some place it was 5'4". But being in the regiment, I could swear that it was closer to 5'2". I'm 5'6" and my shoe size is 8 and half.

And I would swear, I wish I had statistics or Gallop report on this. Most of the guys 5'2" ~~and they wore about a size 4 shoe.~~ <sup>And</sup> because they use to go bare foot a lot, <sup>they wore</sup> ~~it was a double or triple E. A very wide shoe.~~ The quartermaster had a terrible time supplying the 442nd. The search for a 13 1/4 neck ~~with~~ <sup>or</sup> 14 neck at the most. I wear a 15, 15 1/2. Most of them didn't get that big and the sleeves were about 30" instead of the regulation

293 ✓  
QUARTER-  
MASTER  
HAD TROUBLE  
SUPPLYING  
442, FUNNY  
SHOES &  
SIZES

Very good ✓

A 32 or 33. It was much shorter. The <sup>u</sup> ~~quartermaster~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~we had~~ had a terrible time supplying the group.

Q Did you have a company tailor that would alter the over size uniforms? Cut the sleeves down?

A They never had a company tailor. You had to go to <sup>Hattiesburg</sup> ~~Healdsburg~~ or some place if you didn't really want to look like the sad sack in the area. You would have to go there and they would chop down the pants and tuck in the crotch and pull down the shirt or cut off the ~~sleeves~~ sleeves or pull ~~up~~ <sup>the hand</sup> up. In combat it didn't matter. You roll it up or tuck it <sup>at in</sup> ~~up~~. You just tuck <sup>your pants</sup> in your combat boots. What mattered though was the weight. We just didn't like light weight garments <sup>for fighting</sup> sliding in winter, ~~and~~ <sup>we needed</sup> heavy weight <sup>clothing in the summer</sup> because of quartermaster problems getting supplies together, or getting them down to us. The ~~(?)~~ <sup>winter</sup> was nice and warm in the winter and when we wanted the heavy <sup>weight things in the</sup> ~~weight things in the~~ <sup>lost Battalion area, in the middle</sup> of France, <sup>it was icy and required winter</sup> ~~where the snow lay,~~ heavy weight stuff. <sup>When we were pulled out and moved to sunny Nice,</sup> ~~and then when we didn't need the heavy weight stuff,~~ <sup>but they took</sup> and take away our light weight clothes. It seems to be <sup>and gave us winter gear.</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>a chronic</sup> situation. Our gear was <sup>always</sup> about three to four months behind us because of the <sup>odd size</sup> ~~odd size~~ most of the problems <sup>arose</sup> because we were so short.

SHORT SLEEVES

NO

309 many problems arose w/ clothing because we were so short

Clothes made very capsize due to size

Q Were there any other instances during training that were funny incidents, of interests to the readers?

A Well, I don't know if it would be of interest to the reader. The ethnic habits, food for example, trying to get something as <sup>like</sup> ~~simple,~~ to the groups ~~ethnic know~~ soy sauce, sho yu, in Japanese, in Chinese its soy sauce. It's

1001

336

food

A made from sea weed I understand, soy beans. It was hard to get ~~this from~~ <sup>sho-yo</sup> because of the war. They didn't manufacture ~~this in~~ <sup>it in</sup> the states and in the Island too much because of the war. So they would take ~~it~~ <sup>bovillon</sup> and powder and ~~just~~ make ~~it in~~ concentrate and it would be very powerful and very salty and it would be a simulated soy sauce, and they would use this. And of course <sup>bovillon</sup> we would ~~boil~~ <sup>boil</sup> all of our flour, all of our potatoes to get rice from the local area, ~~and~~ in training and overseas. We would just ~~boil~~ <sup>boil</sup> potatoes and flour for rice at every opportunity and we would use ~~bovillon~~ <sup>bovillon</sup> powder to make simulated sho yu.

350

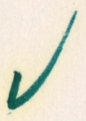
Cook

Q How was the cooking in the Army?

A Usually lousy, but every now and then we run across a cook who was really good. There was this one time we had a cook in K-company. He was sent up, he was really a good cook. I don't know how he got out of regimental headquarters but he was in K-company. He was a tremendous cook and we were hitting a point near the end of the war when we were running low on riflemen. Maybe this was during the rescuing of the Lost Battalion. I think it was. We had to pull the cooks up to the lines and you ~~can't~~ <sup>cannot</sup> imagine the consternation K-company felt when they saw ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> best cook ~~up~~ <sup>out</sup> on the front lines. Really, it sounds ridiculous. ~~When we saw a good cook as a riflemen in the front lines,~~ <sup>But</sup> ~~it really blew our minds.~~ <sup>all</sup> We really ~~can't~~ <sup>couldn't</sup> take this, because he ~~couldn't~~ <sup>can't</sup> be up there, ~~cause he had~~ <sup>has</sup> to be in the back there making apple pie or whatever we needed when we got back. But here he is up there and sure enough he ~~was~~ <sup>gets</sup> killed. Now this is really, ~~it sounds~~ <sup>funny</sup>. It's just ironic. We didn't want him up front. We wanted him back in the rear. He was very important to us. <sup>He</sup> We were just very sad. He was ~~on~~



Very good



A <sup>very</sup> excellent, really ~~a very~~ excellent cook. Not to say he wasn't a good soldier up front. <sup>Best at</sup> We just felt <sup>that</sup> he should have stayed back ~~as a cook~~.

Q Is there anything else you could relate. We have very little left on government training. Most of what we found wasn't all that funny. The only they would remarked on is that he was interesting. The clash between the Hawaiian and the Mainland people. Were there any other incidents, maybe in the town?

A I really didn't run into that. I heard that there was a clash between the Hawaiian group and the 69th Division. This was right after I got into camp. I heard that there was a brawl, or something and then it was forgotten. You don't forget it completely. I mean soldier, GI's, they're under stress or strain, get bored or whatever, and everybody's going through the same old ~~(-)~~ <sup>routine</sup> all time. But that the same old stuff, but you know. It's not like being a civilian where you can do this or that, and ~~The same kind of~~ <sup>something</sup> gets to you, and so you, I guess you just release it through fight or whatever, get drunk, whatever. And this is one of the things. I don't know, whether it was a racial thing. I doubt ~~it~~. It could have been. They might have been calling names or things but from what I gathered it was over after the brawl. The tensions were released. I was down at the camp for a couple months and I never heard about it again. The relationship, I would work and mingle around the other groups and divisions, ~~called~~ <sup>other</sup> groups, no problems.

Q This concludes this side of the tape.

Q This is tape interview number two side one. ~~Chat~~ this is the end of your

Tape #2, side 1

442  
Liberty  
Ship to  
Naples

Q training, and after training did you directly go overseas?

A We went over right after training. We went to Newport, ~~News~~, where we debarked. We got on aboard on Liberty ships. ~~other~~ The liberty boats ~~were~~ <sup>- they were</sup> built in a hurry, little bitty boats. I think their top speed was 12 knots per hour, about 13 miles per hour. It took us 28 days to get across. We were with a huge convoy. There must have been <sup>a hundred</sup> ~~literally 100~~ ships, and <sup>the</sup> ~~can~~ only go as fast as <sup>the</sup> ~~slowest~~ ship, <sup>I swear we were on</sup> and the slowest ship, ~~was~~ <sup>There was</sup> like the one I was on. It just seem that way, of course. ~~It was a liberty,~~ ~~we had~~ cruisers, sub ~~chasers~~, submarines, everything you can name was floating along side ~~with us,~~ zooming in and out on the way over. It took us 28 days, it was a long time. I was not sea sick to the point of throwing any of my meals away. But I was really nauseated. At the time a good friend of mines, Kobie Shoji. He had just graduated with a bachelors and he was interested in education. I think he went back ~~later~~ <sup>after the war</sup> to become a principal of a school, something like that. Anyway he had broken his arm in training and just as we're suppose to leave. He could have ~~been left~~ <sup>stayed</sup> behind and ~~but~~ he ~~that~~ didn't want to be left in the states. So he came over with his broken arm and all, ~~and~~ <sup>during the</sup> We became good buddies, going over, ~~and~~ For the first two days he didn't eat at all, broken arm or not, he just wouldn't eat. We were just violently ill. I would try to ~~get~~ <sup>get</sup> him some soup or something just to ~~give~~ <sup>get</sup> him some nourishment. After ~~about~~ <sup>a while,</sup> a week he started to eat. He still couldn't move his arm very well. ~~The two of us went over together.~~ ~~I kind of feed him and not get ill and he was trying to eat and not get ill and better.~~ ~~I guess the two of us represented the sea sickness of the land lovers going over to Europe.~~ We ended up <sup>in</sup> Naples. ~~This was 28 days later.~~ All kinds of gambling and so forth went on. One enjoyable

013  
being  
sick  
on  
boat

NO

I didn't see  
him  
again  
of the  
that!

A experience ~~kept~~ <sup>was</sup> coming <sup>up</sup> at night ~~out of a hole~~ where we were sleeping. (We slept on bunks. I was five up. I decided that if I get sea sick I was going to get sick on top. I didn't want to be on the bottom bunk if somebody got so I grabbed the top bunk.) So anyway the story I want to get to is a very brief, ~~was a~~ ~~short~~ story about coming <sup>up</sup> on deck for fresh air at night because we got all this foul air down <sup>in</sup> the hold where we got hundreds of sick guys, ~~GI's down there being transferred over in these five chair bunks over one after another. So we come up at night course you couldn't smoke if the smokers lantern wasn't on, that's what they call it aboard ship. Never on, practically never on. So you go up on deck for fresh air. So what's interesting at night for a land lubber is to look over the side of the rail, mid ocean, all of a sudden you'll see fluorescent fauna floating by, lighting bugs down bottom of the ocean, underneath the ship, going by. To watch it was just amazing. We didn't know all this plant and animal life had light and such things. The sailors would tell us of various things, of course I've forgotten most of it. Things I remember was looking over the railing and seeing this fluorescent fauna, main fauna floating by every now and then. This was during the day, huge jelly fish, and things point out and course the corpses of whales, and things. We see some huge "things" off into the distance. Then there were sounds and groans at sea. go down when the ships would come roaring by. We assumed they were large fish and friendly. But this was our trip going over. Mostly we played cards, told tales and got to know each other well. And it was 28 days of this. All this time, the ship was rocking and rolling, and we finally hit Naples on the 28th day. We had a couple alarms about attacks, but we really didn't run into a single attack. They were all false.~~

out of  
Libert  
to his  
made

now

groans at sea.

They were all false.

Q Did a lot of the people in the 442 get sick?

A Yes, quite a lot. I'd say 2/3 were sick. But not everyone left to be at the side of a rail. You can get sick without doing that. You really don't feel like eating. When they serve lunch and supper comes along, we were told by the sailors the veterans that you shouldn't eat the gooey, greasy stuff, just bland solid food. Just keep it going down. Would be better for you. So I just kept doing that. It was good advice and it worked. Essentially a lot of us were mild sea<sup>s</sup>ick, about a third.

Q During your stay at the training camp was there any talk about what was going on in the internment? California or Arizona?

A Going back, there was talk. The guys who had families there, the Mainlanders.

Many of them, in fact 90%. There would always be concern from families back at the relocation centers. Of course they didn't want to talk too

much about it. There was one or two that was quite bitter about it. Course they were going to carry on. They were going to be okay soldiers. They were just blowing off steam. If they didn't blow off steam then that's when you have to worry, ~~and if you rank, ranker, radio tank taker whatever.~~

The ones that blew off steam I'm sure got it out of their system. There were only a few. Most of them were just worried about the families.

And they were wondering if they were going to move into a friendly or hostile neighborhood and so forth. It seem like they just didn't know

which way to move with the family. Maybe it was best that they stayed there or get out and go back to their old setting where they wanted to go. But the Army relocation authority wouldn't permit this. And their people were worried.

146  
being worried about families

Fighting through family in camp for training

Q Aside from being worried, were there any sense of bitterness?  
I don't know if there was bitterness or not. There were some that were bitter I'm sure. ~~I didn't run into any that were bitter about it. Maybe~~  
I did run into one fella. Quite bitter openly. I recall now quite bitter. But in combat later on he was a good soldier. ~~The others may have been~~  
~~I don't know.~~ Most of them were uneasy. They were worried about their families. Not about them being Japanese Americans in a U.S. Army. That wasn't what was bothering them. They were worried <sup>about</sup> their parents back

home and their younger brothers and sisters. And the fact that they couldn't do anything for them at this distance. I guess the only thing they ~~can~~ <sup>could</sup> do ~~is~~ <sup>was to</sup> just keep on doing what they ~~are~~ <sup>were</sup> doing and do it well.

Q How did you sense that? It seems to be that, the community at home were depending on the Nisei generation, <sup>to vindicate</sup> ~~vindictive~~ the older generation, the Issei generation, ~~moving~~ back into camp. They're well aware. I understand...

A You never voiced this and it was never spoken. But, in the context, the situation everybody understood what was at stake. Just understood. The fellas that were from the relocation centers in the 442 training I'm sure, I'm not trying to read their minds, I'm just sensing that by the way then and the way they carried on later. They understood that the stakes were high and that they wanted to do well in the Army. But there were never any big show or display or anything of this sort or announcements or any mentioning of it. Nothing of this nature at all. We just knew we had to do it, we just did it. We just understood. It wasn't voiced. But it was there and it was understood, really understood. I

174 bitterness mostly being worried

195 drive to do well was not spoken but felt

A don't know how to say it. Even though it was never voiced it was understood.

Q Any other incidents that you can remember? Did you go over with another regiment or other group, on the ship?

A I don't recall groups that were with us, rather blurred. All I know is that there were whole group of GI's on board ship with us. We may have been with another company or two, in fact, on our ship. We know that one ship I think ~~the 2nd~~ <sup>second</sup> battalion was on another ship. I think they had to dock at Oran, Africa and as we got near there we heard rumors that they were gonna go to North Africa. The first rumor was that they were going to fight with the remnants of the 100th battalion of 34th. But then that was quickly quelled, well hell those guys are out of there. They're in Italy now. So another rumor came up that they were going to be on guard duty or something. We never knew really what was happening. We ~~did know~~ <sup>later learned</sup> they landed in Oran and they stayed a day or so and then they had to deliver certain supplies off the ships, ~~and had nothing to do~~ <sup>They later joined us in</sup> ~~with the troops.~~ <sup>Naples.</sup> Rumors flow fast and furious in war.

Q Where did you landed?

A We landed in Naples. Naples was a beat up port. It was terrible. The Germans had left it, they had sunk ships all around. Of course the Navy and the Army engineers had cleaned it as much as they could and so we got in close and landed. Of course this had been cleared for quite sometime.

Q When would that have been?

A I guess sometime, reconstruct time, March, April, March of 1944.

~~A I guess I did~~

Q From Naples where did you go?

A Went right outside of Naples about 10 miles to a little town, <sup>Bayouli</sup> I've

~~remembered~~ It was a staging area. In other words, it was a chance to get our land legs back, ~~together~~ to check our supplies, clean ~~the~~ <sup>our</sup> weapons, <sup>out</sup> get the sea air out ~~of~~ it. Make sure everything was in working order and to regroup, get our units together. That we were all organized and together and we were in the staging area. I don't know how long. It seem to me like a week or so.

Q You were anticipating combat. What were the feelings of your men and yourself?

A We were looking forward to it. I was, course, I ~~didn't~~ <sup>didn't</sup> know combat. I had run into a couple guys from the 88th who were on leave ~~to come out~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~the~~ ~~division~~ in Naples. And I begin wondering whether I should be looking forward to it with such anticipation because when I looked at these guys, their eyes were a little distant ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> little blurry ~~and~~, ~~and~~ ~~to~~ ~~me~~ <sup>as if they had</sup> seen a whole lot in a very short time. Of course they didn't want to talk too much <sup>about combat. Not at</sup> ~~and~~ ~~course~~ ~~was~~ first acquaintance, ~~they~~ ~~were~~ ~~the~~ ~~friendlier~~ <sup>as</sup> GI's <sup>could</sup> ~~be~~ ~~with~~ ~~one~~ ~~another~~. So I talked with some of the guys ~~brief~~ <sup>over</sup> coffee ~~and~~ ~~beer~~ ~~or~~ ~~drinks~~. This was my closest contact up to that point in Naples talking with some other GI. But we were all, I think, I guess I was representative of the group. I shouldn't speak that way but I think most of us were looking forward to our first combat.

258  
looking forward to 1st combat

Q Did you have a sense of how much combat you were about to see or difficult amounts of it, the tasks?

A We knew we were going to see a lot of combat because we were basing it on the stories and the previous history of the 100th batallion which ~~was~~ (later) a month or so our first battalion. The brothers and relatives and friends of the 100th, 100th had preceded us into action <sup>by 9 months</sup> They had been in South Italy, ~~Salerno~~ <sup>Salerno</sup> all the way up to Casino. They fought all the way and they lost many men and had been decorated many times ~~by~~ <sup>by</sup> the time they ~~had~~ joined us North of Rome. Of course we have heard ~~about~~ <sup>about</sup> them ~~and~~ from brothers, relatives and friends, and we knew sort of what we were going to run into by the type of action they had run into. We didn't know how long the war was going to last. It seem to us it would never ~~end~~ <sup>end,</sup> when we landed in Italy.

277 learned what it would be like from 100th

District? - Surveillance - none.

Q Did you have a sense that maybe you were being watched by the Army along the same lines that you were being spied on in camp, in training camp that is...

A No, once we got overseas that feeling didn't exist. It really didn't exist. Once we were in the staging area, we were briefed by S-II intelligence and we were told about the different weapons, armaments of the enemy. We were brief <sup>at about</sup> war time rules and regulations. You know the U.S. Army. We were given a thorough, brief, education program. It was quite a <sup>an</sup> indoctrination program, orientation not indoctrination, orientation of the enemy and our own requirements as such overseas. There were no feeling of being guarded, watched or under surveillance. None at all.

294 NO FEELING OF BEING WATCHED OVERSEAS

Q Okay, in this staging area, anything happened of note?

A No, we went through some training. It seem like back in the states. Still training, moving up and down the hills and going through maneuvers, on a minor scale. Not quite a larger scale but similar.

Q What was you impression and the 442's impression of Italy?

A We thought Italy, it sort of nice, calm because we haven't been in action and little rather warm because we landed there in spring and it was pleasant. It wasn't cold. At that time my immediate impression ~~over there~~ was ~~kind of~~ <sup>a</sup> nice climate and <sup>a</sup> hilly <sup>terrain</sup>. There were a lot of hills. My first ~~reaction~~ <sup>concern</sup> though, how fast can I dig a swift trench if I have to with the folding shovel I carried. ~~It would be like I carried a little shovel. I~~ guess ~~all~~ our health depended on terrain so we were looking <sup>at the</sup> ~~at the~~ ground <sup>comparing it mentally</sup> because we were used to digging, back in Mississippi. We ~~had~~ looked the ground over. ~~It was not, it was like a tire (?) eyeball looking to see what kind of ground you would be digging into.~~ It seem like it was <sup>rich</sup> ~~big~~ ground because it was easier to dig into. By the same token we knew that if it was too easy <sup>to dig,</sup> the ~~soldiers~~ <sup>shells</sup> could dig into it <sup>just as</sup> ~~too~~ very easy. ~~so we had to do it one way or the other.~~

Q I understand it's pretty difficult, <sup>in part of</sup> ~~ultimately~~ in Italy to dig fox holes <sup>account</sup> on the ~~amount~~ the rocks.

A We didn't know of this at first. But it <sup>does</sup> depends on the area. We did run into a lot of rocky areas. We ran into some areas that were lovely and fertile along the side of hills. I guess they <sup>had been composted</sup> ~~were~~ composite for generations. We also ran into, you're correct, into many areas we could use a pick ax. Some of us carried a pick ax. We used the pick side of

313  
Italy was nice  
1st thing we looked at was how good the soil was for digging foxholes

331  
using a pick axe. sometimes

A the shovel because it came on the shovel on one end and an picky thing on the other. It wasn't good for going through ~~the~~ <sup>a lot of</sup> thick rocks, ~~that~~ <sup>would</sup> pile rocks up. That's why we try to move on, hit another ~~big~~ <sup>(?) bivouac</sup> area where we could dig or at least get down ~~in a~~ <sup>in a bit</sup> little trench or something.

LAST COMMENT ON EXEMPTED MASTER #

Q You were <sup>with</sup> the first ~~(?)~~ <sup>unit</sup> to essentially hit ~~the~~ Southern Italy before the actual link up with the 100th battalion?

A That's right, we ~~had come~~ <sup>came in</sup> with two battalions, minus our first battalion. Our first battalion was left behind at Camp Shelby.

Q Which two battalions were they?

A The 2nd and 3rd battalions, ~~came over~~

Q Do you remember wich company?

A I, K, ~~A~~ <sup>L</sup> M and the 2nd I guess would be ~~E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M~~ <sup>E, F, G, H in</sup> the 2nd. I'm not sure how they do that. But the first battalion was left behind. ~~that~~

~~the company~~ **END OF MASTER #2 (direct from Sol Service)**

(1st Bn.)

Q They were left behind, where?

A In Camp Shelby, Mississippi

Q Do you know why?

A Yes, they were left behind as training cadres for the replacements to follow <sup>and because they had been designated for replacements</sup> ~~The Army plan.~~ <sup>for the 100th. The 1st was not up to full complement - way under</sup>

Q Was Colonel ~~(?)~~ <sup>Ponce</sup> then the Commanding Officer?

in fact!

SIDE 1 TAPES

TANAKA

ERIC SAUL interview

SIDE 1 TAPES 3

yes.

A My recollection of the Commanding Officer was Colonel Gans, the name that we knew.

Q Do you know who was in command of the 2nd and 3rd battalion?

A I think Jim Hanley was the Colonel of the 2nd. I don't know who was, but he eventually became commander and 3rd Alfred Purcell. He was the 3rd battalion commander.

Q Can you talk about from the staging area, where did you go from there?

A We moved up from the staging area. We ran into no action. We got all the way up into a situation where we were trained and ready for action, and they they said no, you don't go up that way. You don't go over land. They pulled us out of Naples. Put us on Landing Craft (LCI's) "little cigar boats," land and craft infantry. We were pulled out of Naples and we went all the way over in a loop and landed in Anzio(?). The time I guess it was in June sometime. I'm not sure. Anzio had been taken by the

442 to Anzio from Naples

34th and the 100th. They had preceded us. It was cleared before we got there. So we landed in Anzio without incident. Except all of us was sicker then hell from all these landing craft. But they rocked and rolled us into the harbor, there and then we stayed there couple days then marched north to Rome. and then we moved out of Anzias up towards Rome

with us.

TAPES TWO SIDE ONE (NO SIDE TWO)

Q This concludes side ~~two~~ TAPES

Q This is, October 24, 1980. This is oral interview with Ch Tanaka. This is for the Go For Broke manuscript. This is the material for the (?) program to provide anecdote for the book. This is type two side number

TAPES SIDE 1

Q three. First side of the second tape. I would like to ask Chat, can you describe after landing in Italy your impressions of Italy and the Italian country side?

018  
Italy in  
14  
hunted  
trees

A We landed in Italy in spring '44. Naples is rather sparse. It's not as rich and fruitful as ~~we found later on as we pulled out of the area.~~ <sup>the Po Valley.</sup> But when we got there we has nothing to compare except memories of the areas back home. ~~Italy is sparse.~~ The ~~only~~ trees ~~they had~~ were lemons or olive ~~trees~~ <sup>stunted</sup> To me, they seem to be ~~sugared~~ They probably had other crops but I was not familiar with ~~them~~.

038  
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eat

Q Was it hot?

A Yes, in the summer quite hot. We still had our winter uniforms, wool OD shirts. We would march and hike, and the sweat would pour through the shirts. They were great. They would soak up the sweat. But as soon as night, or the sun went down, it got cool and the sweat would cake on our shirt and form salt. And the back of our shirts would become white from salt.

Q How about the nights, did it get very cold during the summer?

A Yes, the nights were quite cool. We were on the coast. Some of us has not experience this from the ~~Mainland~~ interior, but most of the Hawaiian group and coast Japanese Americans understood this type of <sup>of</sup> weather.

Q How about the winters in Italy?

A Winters are something like ~~the~~ the states.

Q What part?

A They can get pretty cold. You need heavy clothes, ~~max~~ <sup>knaw</sup>s, wool ~~tr~~.

A blankets and so forth if they were available.

Q Describe a typical ~~day~~ <sup>day</sup> in the Italy country side? You would be marching all day long, not knowing ~~flight~~ <sup>fight</sup> conditions and you would stop. What would be the conditions? The supper, the mess, clean up, routine activity, the guard duty, describe routine end of a march

A They vary. There's nothing routine I guess it depends on the day. I guess on a non-fighting day what you would try to do is start moving up toward the area you start the combat/action in. It can take you several days or a week to get near there. Sometime you move by truck and sometimes we walk or hike up. Either your marching along, we have control of the air strip, mainly air space above so that we didn't worry about enemy airplanes. There might be some recon planes but they usually come over at night so during the day we would move along the highways, I mean the roads, the dirt roads. We would try to avoid if we got near the front, we would avoid intersections or water fountains and those places cause the enemy had those zero in. When we get to a ~~bush~~ <sup>bivouac</sup> area, it could be a wooded area but we try to avoid wooded areas no matter how sparsely they may be because shells hit a tree top and blows and they'll sprinkle shrapnel all over and that's bad. So we try to get an open area. Not an open area where the enemy can see us but some hills ~~and~~ <sup>protected</sup> ~~where~~ <sup>valley</sup> ~~or~~ <sup>ravines</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>where</sup> ~~things~~ <sup>we can hide in</sup> but preferably not <sup>if necessary,</sup> in a tree area because ~~a tree burst~~ you can't protect yourself too well. However We've ~~been~~ <sup>bivouacked</sup> ~~bush~~ ~~whack~~ in an area like that.

089  
had to  
avoid  
certain  
areas

Q Is it the German designed shells that hit trees and fragment and would

Q just fall down on you. How did that work?

A Yes, the Germans had them and we had them too. <sup>They're</sup> ~~There~~ called tree bursts. What they would do <sup>on</sup> contact with anything, when the shells hit, the shells would blow up and they were designed <sup>to do</sup> so that when they hit tree tops, twigs or branches, <sup>they</sup> were very sensitive shells and they would blow, they would blow ~~the head of the shallow part~~ and shrapnel would fly all over and spray down ward on to the troops. This was the way the shell was designed. We had them and the Germans had them. These were called "tree bursts."

Q And talking with other members of the 442, that was probably one of the feared weapons the Germans had that they could use. Is that true?

A Yes, particularly when your moving up into an engagement area, getting ready to lock with the enemy. They used all types. We used the same thing. We use tree burst ~~material~~ shells and so forth, and they had them too. Mostly the Germans had 75's and they had others, 88's were not the tree burst type. 88's would blow but they were like rifle fire because they didn't have a trajectory. They had ~~sets~~ <sup>shots</sup> like (?) that would go in a straight line.

Q What is an 88? Can you describe it? Perhaps that's also a feared weapon? An 88 referring to the 88 <sup>milimeter</sup>. But it would be a very high power canon. Very, very accurate. Would you describe it, the incidents or its accuracy and the terrible casualties met out?

A The 88's ~~which~~ <sup>is a</sup> very sophisticated artillery piece. ~~I think~~ I'm not trying to speak as an authority on it...I rather have the artillery men

88's

A or the canon people speak <sup>out.</sup> The canon or howies had no grooves in the barrels, whereas, artillery had rifle grooves in the barrels so that the projectile would spiral. I think that's true with the 88's. I don't know but I think 88's was ~~The 89's are~~ <sup>about</sup> ~~I think~~ about 4.5 inches in diameter, ~~which~~ <sup>we</sup> had 5 inches <sup>or something like that.</sup> But our shell, our artillery didn't go as fast or as sharp as the 88's. The 88's were ~~the~~ ~~they~~ ~~could~~ S-P's, self-propel, or could be mounted on tanks, <sup>or used on anti-aircraft guns,</sup> or sometimes just field pieces. They <sup>were</sup> versatile instruments. You didn't have to ~~lob~~ <sup>lob the shells</sup> them in the air and track the trajectory (and wait for them to land some place). You <sup>could</sup> aim it like an M-1 rifle and right ~~at~~ <sup>at</sup> the target because they were that straight and powerful, had tremendous power, an excellent weapon. Too bad we didn't have it.

Q Okay, there's one incident that comes to mind right now, about ~~an~~ <sup>Axis</sup> Sally. Can you describe ~~an~~ <sup>Axis</sup> Sally for us? What you said and what you heard. Tell us who she is?

A We heard ~~an~~ <sup>Axis</sup> Sally sometime right up the front and sometime when we were moving out. It all depended and it also depended on the weather conditions and so forth. But ~~an~~ <sup>Axis</sup> Sally was all in English. It was not in Japanese or anything. ~~We were all English speaking~~ She would say, <sup>"Hello" to the</sup> little brown men from Hawaii and <sup>to</sup> all those ~~joined by the~~ <sup>from the</sup> Mainland ~~Japanese Americans~~ welcome and we hope such and such you know, and then she would nostalgic about the home, hometown and then she played some Hawaiian tunes and melody and then describes our position, what company if she knew them, just to let us know that she, ~~knew~~ <sup>knew</sup> of the Germans, ~~knew~~ <sup>knew</sup> about us - Where we were, what position and so forth.

168  
AXIS  
SALLY

A Just to create a sort of uneasiness, but we never really got uneasy nor did we really succumb to her. She really had nice songs that she played for us like Sweet ~~Lady Bonnie~~ <sup>Lailani</sup> and all those other war time pieces.

Q Did you hear ~~at~~ <sup>Axis</sup> Sally over the radio or PA system?

A I'm not sure now in the recollection but there must have been a PA system cause I certainly didn't have a radio and I don't think the other guys carried one. We must have heard it on the PA system. I think it must have been through the batallion or through the company set up. I'm not sure. Some of the fellas did have access to some captive radios, but I'm not sure.

Q You mentioned, funny that they might have given blue chip stamps. It was a hard sell trying to get you to surrender. Did it make anybody nervous hearing that they knew your positions, where you would be attacking the next day or make you curious as to how they found out.

A No, I was joking. We sometimes, but we were never really nervous by ~~Axis~~ <sup>Axis</sup> Sally. I don't know how she got the information. She had no prisoners of ours. Maybe she <sup>did</sup> got some; she must have <sup>to</sup> know the regiment. She knew some of the hometown names, and ~~the runs and so forth,~~ the Islands. We really enjoyed the music. ~~Still thank you~~ <sup>skills</sup> We weren't <sup>about to</sup> desert or <sup>if she gave</sup> give up ~~near their lines~~ even with green stamps.

204  
DONT  
KNOW  
HOW  
AXIS  
SAID  
GOT  
INFO.

Axis  
Sally

Q Can you describe your adversary, the German soldier? What was he like? You talked about on a hill if there was a great deal of movement on a hill you knew the Americans had the hill. But if the hill was quiet,

Q mysterious and suspicious you know the Germans held it. Can you describe the German as a fighting man?

A My impression, I think this is (?) the German were excellent soldiers.

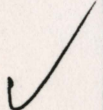
There really good soldiers. I think the main difference is that the Allied, the American soldier, that I knew and the way we behaved. The German for example were more methodical good soldiers in the sense that they followed orders. They would just follow the book. So you

yourself on top of a hill, according to our army orders you always follow <sup>the</sup> military <sup>crust</sup> <sup>(just below the top of the hill)</sup>

You never walk on top of a hill cause you get silhouetted. Okay, that's a good rule. Also, supposed to walk along in a diamond shaped formation at night and tap on your rifle butts to let people know where you are, that's a lousy rule, from our army. We would never do that. I'm sure the Germans would have done that if it was in their books, they would follow it. What I mean is that they will follow the book. For example, moving up to Italy, all the intersections of the main towns, when they had to withdraw and all, from town, they would zero in a shell every half hour, practically on the hour, so we got to know either we stay away from the intersections and so we would just go back along the fields and we would just stay away from the central town fountain area, cause we know the Germans are going to shell there. Not only this, but we knew they were very methodical so we became unmethodical and we just, I guess this really helped us to win the war. We just didn't follow their methodical approach. I guess we just became a bit irrational if you can, any war.

Q Were they cunning as a fighter, were they brave, you hear of them

227  
GERMANS  
WERE  
SOLDIERS  
WENT  
WICH  
WERE  
BY THE  
RULES



Q recklessly following orders even in (?) talking about what they did.

Can you describe maybe in a hand to hand combat situation, what was he like to confront?

2166  
GERMAN  
SOLDIERS  
HE MET  
HAD SUFFERED  
A LOT OF  
SHELLING

A My recollection again depended on the situation for after heavy shelling we ran into a lot of Germans who really suffered <sup>from the</sup> heavy shelling. We run across their positions and they were really shelled shock, I mean this had nothing to do with individual bravery as such but they were so numb from the shelling and concussion and so forth that they were, I guess so incapable of responding to normal combat positions, so we could take them as prisoners. Under normal conditions in the early part of the war when they had their better troops in for example (?) or some troops like that, really season troops. They were really good soldiers. They wouldn't crack or anything else. They would fight back. They were tremendous soldiers.

*I understand at Cassino, the 100th would storm ~~the~~ a ~~barge~~ hill only to find the enemy waiting. It was a heavily fortified hilltop with deep underground, interconnecting tunnels. When the Allies broke and shelled the place, they'd go deep - then surface and*

Q Were they good shots?

A They were good shots. They would stand there and throw their mash potatoes and we would throw our pineapples. We just give and take and see who had the most.

*fight when the bombing stopped!*

Q You mentioned towards the end of the war, there was a change in the type of German soldiers in the units?

258  
NEAR  
THE END OF  
THE WAR YOU  
SAW A LOT OF  
OLD MEN  
& CHILDREN  
FIGHTING

A Yes, I mentioned in the beginning we had met the crack troops and they were very good soldiers. Near the end of the war in '44 we were running into the Pro Valley campaign for example. Well we were still fighting very well but still they were not the same caliber as in the beginning of the war when we were meeting them. They had behind their, I under-

A stand some men, really old men, they could be 60 or 70 years old and they also had children. They looked like they were about 14 years old and they would put up a token fight and shoot a gun but not with any strong direction nor would they stand, and hold the line for very long. They would crack and run or give up and this is kind of expected. I mean after all their is not the soldier of the so called (?). These were children and old men. <sup>After</sup> their <sup>air force</sup> had been blown out of the air, and being led by arrogant <sup>Luftwaffe lieutenants on the ground.</sup> ~~(?) lieutenant Lake Nar (?)~~ We couldn't stand ~~them because~~ they were arrogant. They pretended they didn't belong on the ground. <sup>They</sup> really didn't. I don't know where they belong. But they were trying to lead the children and the old men. It was rather pitiful near the end.

Q Now were there any instances that would be in capturing the soldiers? What were their reactions to be captured by the 442, obviously not too typical American. And we know the famous story about, haven't you heard quit, etc. etc. But were there any other reaction that you could relate to us.

A All right. Mines I guess was a peculiar type of reaction because I learned German in high school and college and so, I was used as an interrogator for the company and for the 3rd battalion and later for the regiment as I understand it. But any rate sometimes when we were up front and the fighting got very tight I would grab one of the captives and start talking with them because the colonel or the captain wanted some information. If we were very confident of our position and place

318  
 ✓  
 INTEGRATION  
 IN  
 DIFFERENT  
 SITUATIONS  
 ✓



358  
INTERROGATION  
TECHNIQUES

On  
Question  
ing  
prisoner

A a questions technique. When a prisoner was captured and there would be several, we put one outside the door and we'd bring the other one in. I would start questioning ~~from~~ <sup>the one inside the room</sup> loudly in German, my best familiar German and if they didn't answer I would ~~tell the German to go~~ <sup>have him taken</sup> out another door, other then the door he came in. The waiting German prisoner could hear me ~~call him~~ <sup>screaming</sup> "Take him out and shoot him." Course we wouldn't shoot him. But they would take him out the door and shoot a rifle in the air. And then I would say bring in the next one. ~~and the next one~~ <sup>usually he</sup> would talk, ~~Generally they would talk but~~ not a whole lot, but better then the first one. ~~Now I used this technique and it just worked. We never shot a~~

~~prisoner. but this was a technique you bring them in one door and take them out in another. And if they didn't seem responding we would say shoot him. It was psychological warfare.~~

Q Were there any other instance you can recall about the adversary of the German soldier?

A The German soldier were amazed that they were fighting the Japanese Americans. As many other Germans had pointed out this, just looked at us, they couldn't understand who we were, or what we were doing there. But I think near the end of the war they began to understand that they were very good fighting Japanese American regiments. The word got around even to us. I mean we heard it. We didn't hear it from ~~actress~~ <sup>axis</sup> Sally or anything like that. We heard that the Germans didn't want to come in contact with us.

Q You heard another rumor that was unsubstantiated, that Hitler had given

Q orders to give it all they got to wipe this regiment out. A great irritation and also a great irritation to the white supremacy (?) view that the Germans couldn't be beat especially by Orientals. Did you hear about that too?

A I didn't hear that directly, but I heard it indirectly rumors of this kind that we should not surrender because they were going to get rid of us. This is as far as much as I heard it. This was a general thing that we can't surrender because we had gone too far with the Germans. I didn't hear of any direct thing. But the thing was you can't give up now. If your trapped you can't become a prisoner. You got to keep fighting.

390  
GOT TO  
KEEP  
FIGHTING -  
WE'VE  
GONE TO  
FAR W/  
THE GERMANS

Q Did you hear that from your members of company K or generally throughout the regiment that you heard that rumor?

A I heard it through the regiment. Company K had it. But I heard it through out the regiment. At the end of the war, when the war ended, some 5,000 Germans were rounded up in Italy and they ended up in an area near Brescia, at Ghedi airport. About 5,000 they turned in their weapons and so forth. They were at that time, the Germans were at the Ghedi airport so when I had work details, some of the men objected to certain work. And I would say, I would shout at them and say Nazis so and so, verdammt Schweinhund, and so forth. I would use general expletives that I know.

Q Can you spell that, the German terms that you used?

A Prisoners, gefangenen ~~far to the shrine the thing there, or whatever you call it.~~

Q What does that mean?

*Vordammende means*  
 A ~~The~~ ~~can~~ there is the prisoner or fan da ta is damn. ~~Shrine~~ ~~had~~ is ~~a~~ *Schweinhund*  
 pig dog. That's what they <sup>id</sup> call us and I call it <sup>id</sup> back to them; and I called <sup>right</sup>  
 them a Nazi ~~Shrine~~ *Schweinhund*. They didn't like that. Especially the Austrians,  
 I didn't realize this the Austrians really did not like Hitler, <sup>either!</sup> The ones  
 that I talked to. They fought on their side, but they really didn't fight  
 with any gusto as I understand it. They really didn't care for Hitler.  
 They would say we're not Nazis, we're Austrians. And this is what they  
 emphasized, and they hated to be called Nazis. They really did ~~not~~. This  
 was of course at Ghedi. I found this out at the prison camp. When they ~~are~~  
 shooting at you everybody is a Nazi.

424  
 ENEMY DIDN'T  
 EVEN LIKE  
 HITLER

Q Do you actually hate the German? Do you have to hate a soldier to kill him?

A In my case, speak for myself, no I didn't hate the Germans. I just knew  
 we had a job to do. And we had to get it done so we, our job was to eliminate  
 the German army or soldier, individual soldiers or what and we did the  
 best that we could. They were trying to get rid of us and we were trying  
 to get rid of them. And we just happened, I think we had the better material  
 and we had a lot of spirit and I guess we got rid of more of them.

428  
 DID  
 NOT HATE  
 GERMANS -  
 IT WAS  
 JUST A  
 JOB

Q Can you describe the rifle that the 442nd used?

A The ~~442nd~~ <sup>army</sup> had three main weapons, small arms. ~~They~~ ~~had~~ ~~a~~ Thompson 45-caliber  
 machine gun. ~~They~~ ~~had~~ ~~a~~ 30-caliber carbine and ~~they~~ ~~had~~ ~~an~~ M-1, also ~~a~~  
 30 caliber. The M-1, ~~was~~ <sup>Garrand, was</sup> an excellent rifle; heavy, accurate, and  
 powerful. ~~It~~ <sup>It</sup> had a bigger power chamber than the carbine. Carbines were  
 considered ~~these like little~~ pea shooters because they wouldn't knock  
 a person down. Thompson 45, either revolver or machine gun, one slug  
 could hit a person and spin him and knock him down, and we liked those,

436  
 GERMAN  
 WEAPONS  
 COMPARED  
 TO OUR  
 WEAPONS

*weapons*

*more*

*weapons*

*Put in combat,*

A gruesome, I know this is. You don't have time to argue or discuss things. You gotta get rid of them. And you don't want them coming back at you. Shooting at you. The M-1 also because it had a high speed bullet that can knock you down, can hit ~~anything~~ solid, and you can also aim and hit ~~something~~ at 300 yards. *It* was a very accurate gun. Quite heavy, the M-1. The Germans, though, they had interesting weapons. They had a *Schmeisser* machine pistol that shot ~~like~~ almost *like* ~~running~~ water *running* through a hose, through a high power hose and it would go pow, pow and our tommy guns in contrast would go pup, pup, pup. Our Tommy guns, I understand, were left over from WW I. While their *Schmeisser* machine pistol was developed for ~~WWII~~ WWII action. They were stamped out of metal, *had* interchangeable parts, quickly cleaned, and *only* fixed up, everything. Nice model weapon as compared to our Tommy guns. ~~we~~ *yet, still* prefer our Tommy guns, 'cause as I said, it would knock you down. The *Schmeisser* machine pistol would go through you but not necessarily stop you, unless they cut you in half which they could because it went so fast. They also had an out-dated rifle. They had a K-98's ~~is~~, a Mauser. I think that was it. It was not as good as the M-1. It was a good rifle but not as good as the M-1. Yeah, we could tell the weapons by sound. In fact you learn to do this quickly for self survival. The Germans of course, the ~~Swiss~~ machine pistol goes *pow, pow* ~~blap, blap~~ and the Tommy machine guns goes pup, pup, *pup*. So if you're fighting at night, you don't go grab hold of a *Schmeisser* machine pistol if ~~you're an allied soldier~~ and start shooting it, because when we heard it we threw grenades in that direction. So you just don't shoot their weapons off ~~unless your very careful~~. The German *weapons* go off with ~~flash~~ nice, smokeless, *flash* powder. So much more better then what we had. Ours,

*more*

✓ A we had a lot more ~~powder~~ <sup>Flash and smoke.</sup> ~~but~~ The Germans had smokeless, flashless powder. Ours when you shoot it off in day light you ~~see smoke~~ <sup>is</sup> like Los Angeles smog. ~~At night, it would light up like I don't know, like~~ Disneyland with the search lights going. ~~But here the~~ <sup>when the</sup> Germans shoots at night, ~~it's~~ its hard to spot them. They really had been technically careful in building their weaponry.

end  
weapons  
↑  
end

Q That pretty much impress their technology. Even their tanks were better? Did you ever come up against any tanks? German tanks?

A Yes, we ran into German tanks, tiger tanks, I think it was a tiger tank. We couldn't even penetrate it directly with our weapons. We had really, we had a mint 37 milimeter anti tank. They would just bounce off like water off of a duck. And the bazookas wouldn't penetrate unless you happen to hit a little (?) somewhere where it could sneak through. Most of the time they took the bazookas and blew the treads off so it became immobilized and then if they were sitting there and if we can knock the German infantry away. If we had gasoline, and if we can get up and shoot in through a hole someplace and get some bullets to ricochet inside and disturb it up like a egg beater. Thats the way it cleans out the tank.

Q Okay Chut, I'm a brand new recruit from the Mainland. I've just come from the internment center. I'm a replacement for company K. You want to keep me alive. I've never seen combat before. What are you going to tell me to stay alive in the Italian or French theater? What would you tell a young recruit in this, is that so?

A Yes, there's not too much you can say. When you hit the line watch the

495  
HAVE TO  
THINK GROUP  
BECAUSE YOU  
CAN GET YOUR  
BUDDIES KILLED  
LEARN FAST

Things to watch out for in the field.

A older guys or follow the patrol sargeant who has been in action. These general rules, of course they're pretty obvious. Take the damn strap off your helmet, ~~don't~~ <sup>wrong</sup> ~~take~~ <sup>under chin</sup> it ~~because~~ <sup>your neck</sup> the concussion will ~~blow~~ <sup>blow</sup> the helmet and your head ~~off~~ <sup>with it</sup>. The strap will pull your head off with it, that's obvious. You learned ~~that by now~~ <sup>quickly or else</sup>. Don't light a butt in day light <sup>in the open</sup> and particularly at night unless you're <sup>under</sup> a shelter <sup>cover, like</sup> ha <sup>ffo</sup>.

In other words cut your smoking way down. It's not just you that's going to get blown apart. It's gonna be your buddies if you light up. And during the day when your moving around, you have to be very careful because remember your not the only one that's a target. Because once they spot you, they spot the whole patrol. And so you have to think group. You have to think <sup>about</sup> your buddies and you ~~have to~~ <sup>have</sup> be very careful. So when we tell you not to do this or that, listen <sup>you are</sup> ~~because we can~~ only tell you once. ~~We don't have~~ <sup>there is no</sup> time to explain why you shouldn't do this or why you should do that as ~~we would~~ in civilian life. Just do it and ~~we'll~~ <sup>and it'll be ok</sup> explain it later. ~~Particularly when you hit the line. If we tell you to do something, do it. Because it could mean life and death. We'll try to explain it later. But not all things are this traumatic. But generally there's a reason why we get various briefing quick about things.~~

Q Tell me about mines, German mines. Tell me what I should know. I just entered the lines.

517  
MINES

A Mine fields are very dangerous. If you're <sup>going</sup> into combat, follow the foot steps of the person in front of you. If you can't follow the exact steps, follow the ~~and~~ <sup>no diggity no prmitto</sup> path ~~that he's following~~. Be very careful. Don't wander to the right or left. This is very important. The guys in front

Continue

my 5/1

A of you, gone through an area, because they have engineered that the mine (?) hasn't come along there yet. The Germans has a very handy way of mining the area. They put all kinds of mines in there and the Italian in the early part of the wars, the Germans had <sup>Bouncing Bettys</sup> ~~booby~~ or S-mines — they that would ~~blow~~ <sup>shoot</sup> up six feet in the air. ~~They can either be triggered by a wire or you can step on it, no not stepping on it. It's a wire trigger. It would go up in the air six feet and blow <sup>then</sup> That's as high as it would go. ~~and~~ It would blow little ball bearings around just like shrapnel, like an umbrella and ~~it would spread~~ <sup>whoosh</sup> into a 360 degree circle. Your only protection ~~is~~ when it goes ~~up~~ <sup>up</sup> in the air ~~as soon as you hear the first time, you hear that you don't know what it is, but the second time you will. If you have any luck that second time you would hit the ground and as fast as ~~you~~ <sup>the second one</sup> is a wooden shoe mine. There is just no way to avoid that because there is no mine detector ~~that~~ <sup>metal and no</sup> can pick it up. And it was designed to ~~at least~~ blow a leg off or at least a ~~arm~~ <sup>to</sup> or ~~hurt your leg or incapacitate you.~~ It's all wood and there's just no way a mine detector can pick it up. The only thing you can do is stay on your path and follow the buddy in front of you and make sure the guy behind you is following you.~~~~

Begin immediately #2

Q What about booby traps?

A Well these <sup>precautions were</sup> not only for rookies or ~~new people coming in~~ <sup>replacements</sup> but also for our ~~groups~~ <sup>groups</sup> When ever we took over a ~~position, even a friendly position,~~ <sup>occupied by allied troops,</sup> it could be Brazilian troops or any group, our ~~own troops.~~ <sup>Whoever preceded us</sup> we would ask the captain or the sergeant ~~whoever~~ <sup>whoever</sup> there if they had a map ~~of the booby traps they had set up there,~~ <sup>in charge</sup>

SLAB BOOBY TRAPS

was

showing where

where

A if they set up any. ~~Some times~~ <sup>They'd</sup> ~~would~~ set them ~~to~~ keep the Germans away. ~~If we~~ <sup>we were</sup> ~~not~~ careful, ~~we~~ <sup>would</sup> stumble into them. ~~Now they also~~ <sup>you</sup> know Germans set up booby traps there. ~~In any event we watch~~ <sup>at</sup> for booby traps in several areas, ~~one~~ <sup>in one</sup> where the water, ~~is~~ and, ~~one~~ <sup>in one</sup> where the toilets ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> because they booby trapped latrines and watering areas. ~~As you had~~ to be very careful. We do it. I mean our troops do it when we replace them on the fighting lines, and they booby trapped certain areas and so would the Germans. And so we look at those areas first.

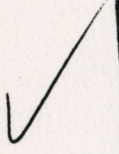
*end of Booby*

Q How do they booby trap the latrines?

A The latrine can be booby trapped in several ways. If its sort of a semi permanent holding area, but your still out in the woods some place, they may have semi close are and they may have wires, not near the thing, 10 or 15 yards or 25 yards beyond the latrine in the circle, so that if anybody hits it the wire steps on the entrance part would set off a grenade or something. This is to protect the guy sitting on the can. These are techniques, friendly techniques, the way you protect your own latrines.

It sounds dumb but you have to do this. The Germans can booby trap in many ways when you come to a watering hole. They can booby trap the pump, where your ready to lift it up. When your ready to crank at the entrance. They have a little thin wire, or even on the access roads even before getting there, they have wires strung across the road. If there's a roll of tree on a road and you happen to be coming into town, you've got to be very careful, because they would string a thin wire across there and then they would midnight the the trees. And then the trees would all blow in a roll. But they wouldn't blow right away because the wire would be put

*OTHER BOOBY TRAP TECHNIQUES*



✓ A on the other end where after you got into the tree roll, then they would blow those trees all the way back down on the troops. This was a technique. But they would see the water fountain and whatever is up front and moving in faster and faster, you hit the wire and boom all the trees come down on you.

Q Of course you wouldn't be collecting souvenir off dead German soldiers because they might be booby trap as well too. Is that true?

✓ A That's a very good point. I know only ghouls do that. We've known some ghouls but normally you don't touch a dead soldier. The reason, I don't know, maybe some people do it out of respect or whatever, but most of us wouldn't touch them because there might be a grenade underneath that might go off. You just wouldn't move them. Just leave them alone. It's a tough assignment because the GRO, Grade Registration Office and his guys would have to come up later and would have to start moving bodies around. That would be his headache. But our jobs would be to keep moving. No, we would seldom touch a body or move it around.

Q Can you describe combat? What's it like basically, can you describe being in combat, what's it like being shot at?

✓ A I remember my first engagement, one of the early ones. We were in a thicket area where there's low bushes and we were going along there, not merrily, but we were moving along in a half crouch. Moving along we wouldn't think of anything cause we have not been in much combat or we haven't heard much and then suddenly there was a bunch of ~~horns~~<sup>worms</sup> flying over our heads. And these were really bullets coming at us and we can see the twigs chopping down six inch above our heads, and so boom we hit that ground and we were

A almost digging in with our fingernails trying to get underneath the pavement. And then you would start squirming on your stomach like what they taught you at training. And you could really squirm. Never mind how hard or how sweaty, you don't even notice any of that. You're just trying to get the hell out of there. That's a bad situation, and so you move out of there. But still you got your hand ready and your watching out for buddies and your looking to see if you can find out where the fire is coming from, and if you can't its hell of a place to be, so you just get out of there. Until you can find out where's its coming from so you can shoot at it. But when you don't know and you think it and you just see the twigs falling you've got to get out of there because they know your there.

Q Describe being in combat, what's the feeling like no other feeling in the world of a life and death situation. Where Tom Kawguchi described it as being in a dark room with rattle snakes. How would you describe combat?

A Well combat varied, sometime, most of the time 99% very frightening experience. Once you get into the middle of it. I don't know. My mind blocks the imagery what could happen or things out. And then automatically, somehow you just go and charge and start shooting and start looking for the enemy and do things instinctively, and just keep plowing ahead and your remember 1,001 things, do you have enough ammo, did you over run that spider camp machine gun nest, was somebody behind that tree over there. Your looking ahead for a glimpse. You're trying to <sup>pick</sup> ~~put~~ up a traces of powder, smoke in front of you cause your looking for gun or barrel that might shine. Your looking for all kinds of clue for the enemy. Sometime your always keeping half an eye to the nearest protection, tree or stump or defoliate or something

Combat

607  
WHAT  
ITS LIKE  
TO BE  
IN COMBAT  
FIGHT NOW  
SHAME LATER

Combat

✓ A you can jump if the fire gets really hot. Well, but you keep moving. If you get pin down, sometime the feeling is that almight God you'll never get out of this, really, I don't know. I didn't pray. Not in the middle of combat. I might before or after. You really start shaking afterwards more then when you were in it. When your in it, I guess the nearest thing is like being in a football game or soccer or something. Your caught up, its a terrible excitement. Sometimes its a protective type of excitement. It over rides your natural fears. Whe you get into it and keep moving. And you can really keep going. It's a terrible thing. You become a insensate moving thing trying to kill. Then once the thing is over then you can start shaking. Really nervous, because by God, a guy could get killed out there. Really you don't really think about it until your out there. But then before you go up again, you see if you keep going to this thing. That's when it begins to hit you. It's a repetitive thing and the consequences, more awareness or you have sensitivity. I don't know maybe that's putting it wrong. But some people just have a thereshold that breaks up sooner then others. Or they can't take it as much. We never looked upon a person who cracked up or , we never called a person a coward. Course everybody can be a coward at one point or the other. There was a (?) of the cracking point. When will you crack? We all knew somebody had a cracking point. But we didn't know when or how long. So you might last one day, might last one year. It's always strange going up and thinking about when you come back and the friends you lost or people who are hurt.

Q What kind of people would last a year? Does it has to do with sensitivity,

Q life and death situations?

645  
WHAT  
KIND OF  
PERSON  
DOES BEST  
IN A COMBAT  
SITUATION

A I don't know. I couldn't really answer that. All I know is some guys were loud and vociferous. When we were coming overseas, were like bullies, I guess you can call them in civilian life. When they hit the front lines they kind of fell apart and all their loud mouth and overbearing attitudes. <sup>some</sup> They were strong, physical specimens. Couldn't take ~~it~~ <sup>too much</sup> when they hit the lines <sup>1</sup> even in our outfit. Oh they would fight but they were just one they didn't fight up to their mouths. And then they had these guys 4'10" about 100 pounds and you think the wind would blow them over. They got a back on their back as big as they all and here they are fighting like hell and cold as cucumbers. I mean their really fighting in there and the loud mouth guys just hanging back pecking away with their little carbines and this other guy throwing grenades just really scaring the hell out of the enemy. And these are the little quiet guys. Not necessarily always the little guy, I mean you can't tell by the way the person talks or anything. Generally, the person who is quiet and patience, tolerant, and conservative in that sense makes a pretty good soldier. When you hit the action, you've got to be kind of impalpable. You don't want to get too excited or panicky. You want to kind of keep your head and know what your doing.

Q Was there much talk about fate that you always read about, people knew they were going to get it and they got it or, what would you be talking about before you went into combat?

A We wouldn't talk too much about getting hit. But there's always, always some guy that would say I'm not coming back this time, or I'm going to get it. I don't know whether you believe in (?) or what and they would get it. It

TAPE 2  
SIDE 2

*Destiny  
to  
Die*

*b69  
✓  
GUYS  
WHO SAID  
THEY WERE  
GOING TO  
DIE +  
DID*

A was definite. Whether it was a wishful fulfillment or what. One fella said he was not going to come back and we tried to kid him out of it. We didn't like to talk about it not to talk like that before we went into action. But he just talked about it matter of factly. When we listen to him, we just somehow knew he was going to get killed. But we tried to kid him out of it, and we did the best we could. We somehow knew that he was right, and we were trying to find a way to keep him back. He didn't want to hang back. He was like meeting destiny or what. He went up and he was killed, the second day in action.

Q Do you recall the circumstances?

A He was killed by rifle fire. The troops were pinned down. I wasn't there in that particular ~~part of section~~ <sup>action</sup>. But I understand that he was cut down by ~~rifle fire~~ <sup>small arms</sup>. ~~He didn't try to stand up and get riddled or anything~~. He was trying to do his job, and he was killed. He was a good soldier. But just felt this that he's been in action before. He's been in action 5-6 months. This was not his first ~~one~~ <sup>battle</sup>. He'd been on many patrols. He just knew that ~~at this particular time something was going to happen~~. Definitely

~~to him because he said he was not coming back.~~ His name? John Nakamura from michigan - one helluva good soldier.

*NOTE*

Q This is going to conclude side number one tape number two interview with Chut Tanaka, October 24, 1980.

Q This is tape interview with Chut Tanaka. He was a member of Company K 442nd. This is October 24, 1980 This is in Presidio Army Museum. We're doing an interview, Go For Broke. Publication will come out in March, 1981. Chut, you were born and raised in St. Louis. You were in a unique position because there were very few Japanese families in St. Louis. You didn't

Q have the influence that many of the urban and rural families might have had or the community pressure or understanding. But when you came to Camp Shelby you were exposed to a lot of Japanese Americans for the first time. Could you describe that Nisei soldier almost as an outsider, of course you were a Nisei yourself, but your bringing in an American perspective, a mid western look, could you describe it from that perspective?

A Yeah, it was a very interesting experience for me. I was born in St. Louis. There were ~~about~~ <sup>from a</sup> five Japanese families <sup>living in St. Louis</sup> when I was growing up. The city had about 700,000 people, ~~in it with~~ <sup>but</sup> only five Japanese families. We got together ~~luckily~~ maybe only once a year during Christmas and even then only two or three families got together ~~and only see them then~~. So naturally I grew up <sup>mostly</sup> with the major culture. Most of my friends were either <sup>of</sup> German ~~extraction~~ or Italian extraction. ~~Now when I went through what others go through in St. Louis~~ I went to grammar school, <sup>to</sup> high school, and <sup>to</sup> college <sup>in St. Louis</sup>. And my friends were ~~mostly~~ <sup>as I mentioned before, most of my</sup> Germans and Italians. Of course there were French, <sup>English, Irish and a</sup> and other sprinkles, but that was the majority ethnic group in St. Louis. <sup>When I volunteered and went into the 442nd, there was</sup> my first exposure to Japanese Americans group as such. I had never seen so many in my life. I didn't know there were that many Japanese Americans in the U.S. ~~This was to myself.~~ <sup>But, of course,</sup> Then I got into the group I found out there ~~two groups of us.~~ <sup>were others</sup> There was a group like myself which really had a sub group from the Mainland. A group from West coast who had a little, ~~they were a group among themselves.~~ Then there were a group like myself <sup>We</sup> who came from a scattering across the country. Some from Texas, some from Wisconsin, ~~some~~ from Michigan, <sup>some</sup> from New Jersey. We were ~~like~~ scatterings, and we were all <sup>brought</sup> together ~~here down~~ <sup>Camp</sup> in Shelby. Now the other big

in St. Louis

Hawaii  
US

A group classification ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> the group from Hawaii. So you have the Mainland Japanese Americans and the Hawaii Japanese American. The Mainland Japanese Americans were ~~built up into~~ <sup>composed of</sup> those who were essentially from the West coast and ~~the other~~ <sup>those smaller units</sup> gathered up from the rest of the country. ~~that was the gathering I ran into.~~ <sup>that was the what</sup> It was ~~quite~~ <sup>as</sup> interesting when I met ~~them~~ <sup>them</sup> down in Shelby.

Q What was this Nesei sort of like, describe the personality, first of the Mainland Nesei, course we know that they were very quiet and humble. What are other characteristics and describe that?

A Well I don't know. When you're in a group, you're not humble or anything. You're the majority with your own ethnic group. It was very interesting in this sense. Well let me describe it from the way I approached it and the way I saw it. The Hawaiians were ~~the real different sub culture~~ <sup>the</sup> from ~~our~~ <sup>the</sup>

~~sub culture.~~ <sup>mainland</sup> They had sort of a pigin English that they spoke, ~~and generally~~ they were a little bit shorter than the Mainlanders. I guess it was ~~nutrition.~~ <sup>spoke</sup> I don't know. This is not true absolutely. I for example on ~~one of~~ the larger Nesei or Japanese American soldiers in the 442nd, I was 5'6" and I weighed 145 pounds. Now the average Japanese American there, mostly the ones from the Island were 5'4" or less and they weighed about 120 pounds. And then ~~the~~ <sup>we</sup> pigin English that they spoke. Which is ~~an~~ <sup>an</sup> amalgam of Japanese, English, Portuguese, Hawaiian, and who knows what else is thrown in there. And they could only understand among themselves. At least I couldn't understand it in the beginning. ~~and since~~ <sup>those who spoke it</sup> I couldn't understand it and being defensive, I assumed that ~~it~~ <sup>was</sup> inferior, and that their intelligence ~~also~~ <sup>was</sup> had to be inferior. This was ~~soon~~ <sup>quickly</sup> dispelled.

more

Hawaii  
U.S.  
End

A <sup>when</sup> because I was asked to <sup>answer</sup> send some letters <sup>from the Hawaiian soldiers</sup> and I <sup>didn't</sup> <sup>know</sup> some of the guys <sup>who</sup> spoke the pigin English and <sup>then I read their</sup> I send in the letters, <sup>the</sup> letters <sup>are</sup> in perfect English, grammatically correct, predicate, <sup>subject,</sup> verb, everything. There was nothing wrong, <sup>with the form</sup> I learned quickly that the language <sup>was</sup> of appeared distinctive or <sup>differentiation.</sup> And then I <sup>then tried</sup> <sup>to speak</sup> pidgin English - <sup>it was a</sup> <sup>terrible</sup> <sup>failure</sup> at it.

Q Could you further describe the graciousness of the Nesei?

A I'm not too quite clear on what you mean by graciousness but there is a certain area of behavior that they undergo. It's quite different. I think in this respect that I am or that I had found out. I shared some of it and I'm also considered a maverick because I didn't have enough of it. They have something called emryo. Now the very fact that I'm talking here and making a speech <sup>is</sup> not very good emryo. I, in another words, <sup>am</sup> <sup>not</sup> being very subdued or quiet. <sup>Now</sup> that doesn't mean that you should shut up and not say anything ever. But generally I guess it comes from being an island group, not <sup>the</sup> Hawaiian islands, <sup>either</sup> But way back, Japanese as such, where if you live <sup>in</sup> on an island <sup>in</sup> a confined area, and you <sup>had</sup> to develop a way of accomodating with one another because <sup>of the</sup> your <sup>entire</sup> confined in a small area. I <sup>don't</sup> know <sup>this</sup> <sup>is</sup> all conjecture, <sup>but</sup> this is the way I understand it. So you don't <sup>go</sup> around making waves or a lot of noise. Many Japanese as I understand it, <sup>have</sup> they <sup>re</sup> emryo. <sup>That</sup> you don't go around bragging, making loud noises <sup>about</sup> yourself. <sup>Your</sup> just didn't do this because its bad form or bad taste. Particularly now when you go around and you say your hitting the major culture to the Caucasian community. You find that many Japanese Americans are quiet and unassuming. They really what their doing is practicing emryo. And they say the real sub conscious or quiet concern

There was something wrong with me... assumptions of the infamy of the islands because of their speech was, of course completely wrong.

143  
JAPANESE  
MANNERS  
HOW THEY ARE  
BROUGHT UP  
TO BE

NO

A is that they will be discovered to be worthy in a (?) sense. In another words, their work or service be recognized and be rewarded as such. They don't have to go around saying, say guys look at me. I'm really hot stuff. I'm great. They think that's very bad manners. The only way they can say that is by doing what their supposed to be doing and doing it well. And this is the emryo approach. It's made to my own definition. It something like it. It's probably bastardized but its the best I can do.

Q When a group of Nesei are together, their probably one way then they are mixed with Caucasians. Can you describe the difference?

A No, its not true. Even among Nesei's the emryo holding back is suppose to prevail. I know because when I got in with the group I didn't <sup>have</sup> practice this emryo, because I had come from the major culture and conditioned to the major culture. I used to, I don't know, being if not a braggart, at least being mischievous, loud mouth and articulate to the point that some people can't stand me ~~because if I don't like it, I say don't like it, and if I do like it, I don't know~~ <sup>but, partly,</sup> this is ~~from~~ the culture that <sup>I</sup> came from. But if you were in <sup>a</sup> " " <sup>in a "major culture" group,</sup> the Japanese group, Japanese Americans ~~for that matter~~ <sup>are</sup> they themselves, among themselves will be restrained. It not the thing you practiced one with the Caucasians and one for themselves. It's the general practice. ~~It's nothing different from any other practice.~~

Q In doing these interviews and working on the book, I've learned a lot. For instance the average Nesei does not want to be over, quoted, not want to be quoted in the book. They don't want to say I did this much, so they must be practicing emryo. It's very difficult to the interviewer

NO

183  
THE DIFFERENCE IN BEHAVIOR WITH AMERICAN AND JAPANESE

NO

Q trying to extract information for the book. One person would be afraid to be construed as a bragget and a loud mouth and how i won the war. So we have that problem so maybe you could discuss that, the difficulty in that?

A Yes, the very thing that you've mentioned, I think its absolutely true because many of the GI's, Japanese American GI's sometimes or whatever, they just don't want to go up and say what they did. It comes from the emryo thing. But its a two way sword. It really a sword and it really works beautifully the other way. What it means the converse of this.

I don't know if this is a good metaphor but, I'm not using it as a right metaphor but the converse of this is that you work as a team. This is what I learned really not from the Mainlanders, but from the contacts I had with the Hawaiian group when I joined the 442nd. But you work as a

team. These guys from the islands taught me something I never ran into in the Mainland. That you really have a buddy system. When you get into trouble you don't leave you buddy ever, and they won't leave you, and this kind of rapport is a tremendous thing and it also ties in , I think its unreal or whatever you want to call it, not standing up and being noticed for youself because your really part of a team and your part of like a unit. You make it or you don't make it, together. But its always together. So when you get into action you know that if you get into trouble your buddy is going to stick with you. Their not going to leave you hung up out there alone. The medics are going to get you if you get hit. If you get into a tight spot your riflemen on your right or left or your bazooka guy or mortar man, everybody is going to pitch in to get you in or out of that action. Your never alone, and you know that. It's a tremendous feeling.

★ ✓  
227  
VERY TIGHT  
FEELING OF  
BUDDIES

Team  
work  
buddies

✓

✓

✓

A I don't know how the other guys went in but we never felt alone.

Q You speak very highly of the medics. Would you like to talk a little about the medics?

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MEDICS  
WERE  
GREAT  
RISKED  
THEIR  
LIVES

A Not too much you say about the medics. They were really tremendous. This is again as I said the reverse side emryo or whatever. Maybe I'm just using it incorrectly or fantasizing. But what I feel this team work that practice to the endth degree by the Hawaiian Japanese Americans and by the Mainlanders too. But I evidenced it, noticed it with the Hawaiians, I guess it was the difference in the approach at that time. Also, evidenced in the fact that the medics would also that whenever someone got hit, small arms fire could be coming from all directions and mortars could be dropping and the crazy medics would run up and drag the guy out of there.

medics

The rest of us guys with the rifles of course we didn't have the, our excuse. We didn't have red cross and white arm bands on us and therefore they would shoot at us. I guess it's true. But the medics didn't have the rifle and run out there in fire and grab these guys. A lot of times these medics shot, hit and killed and what not. But they never fail to grab these guys and bring them in, small arms or nothing. There was nothing to stop them.

We have never but high praise for the medics. They're always helping us.

Q There's been talk that the <sup>some</sup> ~~sons~~ of emryo reflected this in the decorations, extreme amount of decorations for heroism, brown stars, silver stars, distinguished service crosses, but proportionately very few Medal of Honor winners, receiptents and perhaps when the orders were written, the sense of not wanting to be single out for any honors outside the group. The sense of community service reflected itself in the lack of very high decorations

Q then under other circumstances that normally would have been awarded.

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A VERY HIGHLY DECORATED UNIT BECAUSE OF ALL THE TEAM WORK

A This might be it. I don't know. I do know to strengthen the point is we had a unanimous high presidential units citations and I guess that bears out the point that your making. There were seven for this unit inside of eleven months. Which is very high thing which means unprecedented. It also means a tremendous amount of team work was involved. That which again highlights the fact that this buddy system that I have witness to among the Hawaiian group and Mainlanders prevale the whole 442nd , 100th battalion, and we worked together as a team. Its a tremendous thing cause once this thing starts moving its invincible. That sounds like bar da gay show(?), but its true.

Q I would like to thank you very much for sharing this with a lot of other (?) or practicing emryo and well, I didn't do that much and your providing us an opportunity to get inside of the regiment as the common soldier. Perhaps this is going to be one of the most valuable interviews we will be getting. You were talking about how valuable it is to have this buddy system, how valuable to have team work, and yet you suffered this incredible losses. How was it like to lose your friend, you wouldn't know from day to day if you have him.

305

FRIENDSHIP BEING BROKEN UP BY DEATH

A This was the hard part. Particularly from the Mainland group or from the Island group who came from communities and they knew each other. You knew that the chances of you or your buddies being hit very high, and this made the team work even stronger. Made the loss even more bitter, as an individual coming from an isolated unit from St. Louis. I was trying to protect myself and I wanted friends to bolster and so forth my own ego for

A protection or whatever. Still I didn't want to make too many friends because I knew that to lose a friend, that's a terrible blow. So it was an ambivalent situation. But in war, I don't know, you go along and you do make friends. You just pray that nothing happens to them, and still the team work prevails. It goes all the way through. It doesn't stop you from being friendlier or from making friends, no that's not it. It's an individual thing, just friends and not being friends. It's all up to the individual on how they react to a given situation. Some try not to and some go right ahead and make strong friendships knowing that the war can end it.

Q These strong friends of course formed perhaps the most tightly knit veterans organization in the country. Would that account for it too, that carrying over from the war?

A I think you've touched on a good point. Yes, the Japanese American veterans association are very strong. I don't know if their any stronger then the other groups, but they are strong, and they get together. There is this, I guess among all veterans, and I definitely know among Neseis, the Japanese American veterans have a real comradeship. I don't know. It's all unspoken and when you speak they all know cause they all speak the same language. It's a difficult thing to say but, veterans all seem to speak the same language. You don't have to be Japanese American at this day. But Japanese Americans do get together and they do have strong reunions.

Q Speaking of reunions, the relationship to the Nesei veterans of the 442nd,

Q and also from the military intelligence service. When you go into Japantown, there is a immediate recognition of you being a veteran. Being the visible, tangible heroes of a whole generation of Japanese. Not only of Issei but the Nesei and the Sansei. Did you have that sense, when you go into the Japanese community? Were you the heroes of that generation of that regiment?

A No, no, that I don't know. No, that never occurred to me. We do identify with the MIS. I don't know if the MIS identify with us. They fought an entirely different war than the type that we did. But they fought the same enemy, the fanatics, militaristic enemy. They were the Japanese over there and we had the German militaristic. And they were both fighting fanatics. The MIS group and Japanese Americans who fought in the Pacific. And there were some 8,000 or more as I understand it. There were some 18,000 over in Europe. So overall there were quite a number fighting on both fronts. We do have a very close connection, we really, among the MIS and the 442nd and 100th. There is a high regard for each other. The Sansei, third generation, I think they really respect our military deeds but, they don't quite understand, maybe they do, but all I can say is that the Nesei group understand each other a little better because they had undergone this trial.

MIS & 100/442

352  
MORE  
RESPECTED  
BY THEIR  
OWN  
GENERATION  
BECAUSE  
THEY  
EXPERIENCED  
IT TOGETHER

ND

Q Now you're the heroes?

A We never think of it that way. We think of it, that it was something to do, and we did it. We get together. We just love to get together and talk about the good old days and some of the bad old days.

Q Maybe as an outsider attending some of the reunions I can see on some of

Q the faces of the rest <sup>part</sup> people and the community in Japantown, when they know your coming. The papers make great notice of it. As an outsider I can notice that, and see the respect that is bought forward.

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A There were other Nisei that were there and they were adopted, and their the Caucasian officers. I don't know if ~~they were adopted~~, or whether we adopted the Caucasians or they adopted the Nisei. We just got along beautifully. ~~In fact I don't know if you can say we didn't know if they were white.~~ Course we knew they were white. It just did not make a difference on the front lines. It just did not make a difference. What makes a difference ~~if you're an officer or whatever you are, your an enlisted man~~ <sup>is</sup> if you could fight, if you could lead, ~~or whatever you could do~~, then they respected you. We just got along beautifully together. And many officers were ~~white~~ in the beginning, Caucasians. There were some misunderstanding in the beginning but, there were very few even in training. And the more we got into training the less <sup>misunderstanding</sup>. ~~And~~ When we hit combat ~~it~~ <sup>all</sup> dissapeared. We ~~were~~ <sup>became</sup> one fighting unit. The Caucasian officers, the men, ~~all~~ turned into one team. I guess even the Caucasians ~~became~~ <sup>became</sup> ~~unreal~~ conscious. I don't know. Their adopted Neseis as far as I'm concern.

WHEN YOU'RE ALL TOGETHER in the front line nobody notices what race you are - work as a team

Men & White Officers

Beginning UNSTEADY #H

Q 442nd and 100th battalion were taking the highest losses of Army unit in the U.S. Army. Were you aware of that at the time or was that a matter of fact?

A. Generally speaking, yes we were aware of that and we knew that we were fighting a cause and all we were fighting the enemy first and we were fighting for ourselves too. We knew that maybe we were taking a higher loss among our own group. Particularly for example, when we went to resuce

403 LOST ALOT OF MEN BUT SAID WE ARE FIGHTING FOR OURSELVES + AGAINST THE ENEMY

A the loss battalion, I know we started out, K-company for example with 188 riflemen, by the time ~~we through the foliage forest and by the time~~ we hit the lost battalion, we were down to 17 reflemen which is less the 10% of company flank.

Q You were the company commander at that time as a sargeant?

A That's right, we had lost all the officers and I was a staff sargeant, I believe at that time. I was running the company. And then when I hit the second day, I think a buck sargeant took over, and he was running the company. They had bought up an officer in between and he had been shot and killed. The (?) rate was tremendous. I-company had been hit the worst. They were down to 8 men, I understand which is less then 5% company personnel, rifle and fighting personnel. We knew we were taking a tremendous beating. As I mentioned before we were fighting for something very important and that was for ourselves, for our country and for the people back home.

414  
ALL  
SUFFERED  
GREAT  
LOSSES -  
YES I  
WAS (BRIEF)  
A SERGEANT

He got hit the next day  
after Sgt. Yashida was hit, Sgt. Sanyama took over until they were relieved on Nov. 8.

Q So there were no bitterness in the ranks for having to take these losses? Did you feel you were pulling in an impossible task, in extradinarily dangerous position?

A Well, I guess we were conscious of that. We were kind of looking at these as challenges. I don't say we relished them. But we certainly didn't duck them. Whatever came we were going to take and we were going to dish it out.

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WE  
WERE  
TOUGH,  
ACCEPTED  
THE  
CIRCUMSTANCES

Q Do you know of the circumstances where after the rescue of the lost

Q battalion and the unit was down to just a skeleton crew, General Dahlquist said is this all the people you have? He wasn't even aware of the tremendous losses that you've taken, did you ever hear of that instance where there were a lot of animosity that even General Dahlquist didn't even understand what kind of fighting was there?

438  
Dahlquist  
finds out  
how many  
of the  
regiment  
are left  
after  
Lost Battalion

A I'm sure the General did(?) understand. I think it was just a misunderstanding or didn't get enough information. We have been chopped way down as I've mentioned. We were down, K-company was 17 and I-company 8. I just mentioning these two because I happened to know intimately about them, and I'm sure that the other battalions and other companys and the 100th battalion all suffered tremendous losses because when they tried to marshall the group there, they had less, I don't know, less then 10% of the regiment showed up. Whe Dahlquist asked for a review to thank the 442nd. And he said where are the rest of the men and he said this to Colonel Pench. And the story I got, and I think it quite true from the adjudent then stated that Colonel Pench really had tears in his eyes, and he said, these are all the men we have left. These are the men that were left from rescuing the los battalion. And Dahlquist was really surprised. He said this is all out of a regiment. I think there were only about 500 left.

Q Out of how many?

453  
started  
w/ 5,000  
✓

A Out of 5,000, of course they weren't all fighting troops. I guess for fighting troop is about 3,000. But this was all that they could get together at that point.

Q That's almost unbelievable. I like to ask you, perhaps one of the most

Q famous instances of WWII was the rescue of the lost battalion. Could you tell us about that, set the stage. Tell us how it came about and briefly describe the rescue, what was it like to try to get to these men, this battalion the 141st regiment, Texan Regiment, how they were trapped, can you describe which units they were and what was it like breaking through and what was it like you finally got to them?

A We have been fighting and gotten through bu rer(?) and pulled back to rest. This was about the 15th of October 1944. I think we had about two to three days rest and then on the 18th we were notified that we had to keep going and generally the taking of bu rer just beginning of the road to the lost battalion. And that our real mission was to reach the lost battalion cause this was the 141st regiment of the 36th Division And I think it was the 3rd battalion, and they were stuck out there on a point. They had 275 men when they got out there about nine miles into Jerryland, we called it, towards strausberg(?) The flanks hasn't caught up with them so they were about nine miles out like a point and so the Germans circle them and they were circled for a week by the time we were asked to move up and rescue or contact them. For a week the other troops tried to contact them and didn't break through the German lines. Airplanes were trying to drop food and ammo and the Germans and the prevailing winds and terrain all worked against the lost battalion. And the food and ammo kept falling down the hills into the trees and the Germans kept recovering most of it. So they were in a very bad state. They've been out there for a week, and that's when we were called in to move in and we had to get there in a hurry before they were all wipe out. They had 275 men when they started and of course we had our regiment so we moved in. And I guess it

Part of map to find Lost Battalion in

471 How Lost Battalion was got caught + how they tried to help them

A was about a week or so, I'm not sure about the time. That's all in the record someplace. **EE** But from the very first day until we hit them, it seem like a eternal, but it couldn't have been more then a week. We lost men right and left everyday. We lose so many men you couldn't count. **J** I was the first sargeant. My pencil was worn down to a stub trying to keep up with the people we losted. **E** We kept asking for replacements. None came up. Nothing could come up through that tremendous barrage the Germans put down on both sides of us because we were like going through a single line with the enemy on your right and enemy on your left laying down a barrage of mortars, small arms fire, artillery everything was being poured in on us. And we were underneath a forest shelter. This is the ~~is a~~ <sup>Village</sup> ~~barrage~~ (?) forest. **J** The under brush is fairly cleaned out because European population, they don't have abundance of trees or forest. So they take care of their forest lands. But still **E** there was enough coverage there, small shrubs and things, so they can, **E** Germans can set up spider pill boxes, nest machine gun and so forth. So if we by pass them they would open up behind us. **J** We run into all kinds of stuff like this.

Q Was it cold? What was the temperature like?

A **E** It was raining at first and then it was just starting to snow. By the time we hit the lost battalion, I think during the very next day or the day afterwards it started to snow. It was always cold. We had trench foot. We had cases of it. And then when we were, the orders went out that because we were losing so many men, if you can walk you can't go back even if you have trench foot. **J** It was terrible because trench foot is nothing like athelics foot. It was terrible. You could lose a leg. But

528  
weather-  
if you  
had trench  
foot keep  
going

A [we couldn't spare the men and so if they could move around and pull a trigger, no one could leave. And these were the orders.

Q Now you were way advanced. You were almost out of support yourself, your own regiment. You were also in a precarious position that you couldn't turn back. And if you had somebody, there was no way to evacuate them anyway.

A [There was no thought of turning back. Never. ~~We didn't think about turning back.~~ No one even mentioned it. We just kept plowing forward to reach the lost battalion, period. That was our goal and that's where we've headed. We knew that we had the 100th flanking and guarding our flanks on the path that we took. Every inch of ground or yard that we broke through everyday. The 100th would go into their flanks.] Of course [it was a narrow path.] And they were guarding our flanks. When I say the flanks, [it couldn't have been more than 500 yards wide.] [We knew that the 100th were guarding it. We knew we were okay.] [We just kept plowing ahead and so this little thin line or whatever it was.] If we knew we had some of our own men guarding it it would be kept open and it was. Even though they shelled it. [We would send people back for supplies and ammo and they would get hit and killed.] The ammo team. What was left of it. They would come back with the supplies. They would get killed and hurt too going back. The last team I sent, night before the rescue. I sent back about seven guys for ammo and supplies from my company and a couple from other outfits. They went back for ammo and three of them were hit. This was typical. They weren't even fighting. They were just trying to get supplies through to the lost battalion.

539  
never  
thought  
of turning  
back

A There's no questions in reaching them.

Q You described a peaceful day when your in the Army. Now your talking about 5,6,7 days of continuance combat. What was it like fighting for almost 24 hours a day without getting sleep. Can you describe, what did you eat, where did you sleep, if you could sleep? How did you move? How far were the Germans from you?

A How fast and how far you moved depended on the terrain, as how many Germans there were, how much taste they have for fighting, how much ammo they had left to throw at you, and so forth. But you just kept pounding yard after yard and usually it seems going through the foliage for the loss battalion everything was up hill. It just seem that way to us. Sometimes we, so tire we stumble into a sleep trench. I usually the Germans, usually we didn't have to dig there. Course the Germans had dug them and we had pushed them out of there. I remember one night, it sounds gruesome, but its true. I sat down. We were trying to count heads and another sargeant came up to me and he sat down. I sat on a helmet. He sat on a dead Gerry. Now that's terrible. We wouldn't give a damn. We were tire. The Gerry was stiff and you know. We figure he was kind of, well what ever it was, so we sat on him. I started eating my k-ration and he started eating his k-ration. You reach a certain low point of sensitivity, you just don't give a damn. This was war. This was terribel. Your fighting so damn hard and you just keep going, and small things don't bother you after a while. Like dead bodies.

Q Where and how do you sleep in a situation like that?

SCC  
reaching  
a low  
point of  
sensitivity  
everything  
seemed  
uphill

578  
using  
dead body  
for  
sand bag

A Well in this case, this body, terrible way to talk, was right next, we just pushed it over two feet so that it wouldn't roll in on us. And so we just slept in the hole there. We figured if anybody start shooting it'll hit the body and it would be like a sand bag. Terrible isn't it?

584  
you sleep  
but w/  
one eye  
open

Q How much can you sleep on a night like that when you know your're surrounded?

A [ Your dead tire and you do sleep and you do stay awake. ] I don't know, [ like sleeping with one eye opened. ] It's a funny way. You get rest. What you do is set up a parimeter. Perimeter guards and you can count on them to alert the rest of the group. Like we have four perimeter guards on each corner, like a square. But we always did that. It was a standard operating procedure. But even so you could sleep, but you slept with half a sleep cause you never fully sleep. You never slept soundly. You might accidently for an hour or so, wake up with a (?), half awake and half asleep after that. [ Your always ready for action. ]

Q You talked about the sinister nature of the forest, dark forest, how even today when you see a picture of a foliage forest does it bring back memories, again about the tree burst, can you describe that, the sinister of these trees in the darkness?

598  
forests  
remind  
me of  
the time  
we rescued  
Lost Battalion

A To me a forest, after I get over my initial reaction of looking at it, I always see a pine forest. I can always smell gun powder. I can smell it. It's a dual thing. I can see it and smelling it at the same time. Whenever I hit a forest. I smell the rosin(?) and the gun powder blending. The burnt powder blending. Terrible smell. It always come back and this reminds me and the scene comes back. When I see the forest and smell it.

A It all comes back. [It's a terrible thing because you know that your ducking and diving and shooting and your fighting and your scrambling, you keep moving.] I don't know. Others may not feel that strongly.

When I got out of the forest after fighting for 11 days or whenever it was to get up there 7 days to get up to the lost battalion. [I'm out of that forest and hit the valley where the sun was shining. It was like coming out of a dark room into sunlight. And my eyes hurt because they were blinking from the sun.]

Q How many men were involved in the rescuing of the lost battalion? And you were in the advanced attacking battalion, were you not?

A Yes, the 3rd battalion and I think the 2nd were in the movement to hit the lost battalion. And the 100th was sent in there to protect the flanks. Course they were moving along too, all three of us were advancing. The whole regiment. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team. All three battalions heading forward. But the 100th stringed out protecting the flanks we had established new ground everyday. They were protecting from being taken back by the Germans. The whole regiment was committed. I don't know how many were in there. But the whole regiment day after day was being chopped to pieces.

613  
We were being chopped to pieces

last comment on CHET reel 2

Q You were one of the first people to break through the lines, to get to these beleaguered soldiers. Describe the mens reaction in the 141st?

A Well, the first people I saw, I guess I was lead from the K-company. [I was just suprised by God, here we are. Here's a guy coming out of the ground. I was almost going to shoot him, but it was a GI.] I can tell

623  
got to the lost battalion

A by his uniform and the guy looked grey green to me cause, I guess you would too in a hole someplace. [ I just stared at him and he stared at me. And we really couldn't say much to each other. We advanced towards each other. I had lowered my rifle and he had lowered his. And when we got close to each other, we just kind of looked at each other. But it was quiet. Then I guess I must have said, hi or something stupid, and I guess I must have offered him a cigarret or something. Whatever I had cause I knew they were low on supplies. ] I guess I offered my k-ration, whatever. And [ I think they were quiet and then after a minute in fact the whole place erupted. Hey, the 442 guys are here. And the whole place erupted and the guys started coming out of the ground like you don't believe because we didn't know that there were that many GI's out there. We had been pounding all alone up that stupid trail for days. And we kept expecting to find nothing but Germans. Gerry and gun fire, and mortars and everything. Then all of a sudden we hear that guys we were after and there's no fighting right here. And these found they didn't have to fight the Germans cause we weren't the Germans. We were numb at first and finally we found that we were allies. You know it took a little while for it all to sink in and to know all the terror and the fighting and the waiting was over. We were together and then we broke lose. ] But it took about a minute of recognition and for everything to sink in. The situation is now changing. We're now safe quote in that sense we could be in a war zone but relatively we were safe.

Q What happened there afterwards? You move out with the 141st?

A The 141st, lost battalion moved out quite quickly there after. We occupied

448  
we  
replaced  
the  
lost  
Battalion

A the area they were in the same afternoon. They didn't stay cause they were really beat. They have been without food and ammo. They were under strain but so were we. But they have been cut off and everything so long. And so we took over there position. They told us where the danger spots were and so forth. And they pulled back down the path, the line protected by the 100th, back to the rear. That was the last we saw of them. And we set up K-company. I went up , and we occupied their position where they pointed them out. Told us where the fire and firing was coming from and set up perimeter guards for the evening and waited for replacements.

Q So how long did you stay at that same position? So you were essentially in the same vulnerable position they've been that was once a beleaguered spot. Were you now in the position to be supported by the 36th Division?

659  
we  
had  
a way  
to get  
supplies  
+ we  
weren't  
cut-off  
didn't  
let them  
know  
we'd lost  
a lot of  
men

A Essentially yes, but it was quite different. When the lost battalion was there, they were cut off. There were a ring around of German enemy around them. But when we hit there, we had neck or a peninsula sticking out there. We had a path from which we could draw our supplies in food and ammo and so forth up that line. Which was protected again by the 100th. And we knew that we weren't cut off and that's a very comfortable feeling. And so we took the position out there and we knew that supplies and help would come. It was quite a different feeling. We knew we were smaller and reduced but we didn't let the enemy know. We kept up a nice steady charge of machine gun and rifle fire. Of course we did have ammo.

Q When did you first get the recognition from General Dahlquist(?) about the rescue and what was his reaction of course he called the regiment to

Q thank them.

*670  
# how  
things were  
after the  
rescue*

A I can't answer that. I don't know. I wasn't privilege with any information about that nature. That evening, we were called for replacements and to see if any one had come up with additional ammo and food. And they sent up a few replacements. They didn't get too many up. Shelling and everything was going along the path. They sent up an officer, Captain. This was K-company because we had no officer there. And we were down to 17 men as I mentioned and several men came up, enlisted men. The Captain came in and surveyed the situation and I tried to brief him and then I warned him about small arms out towards the front. But he wanted to see for himself and I warned him once not to go out there, but he, I guess one of these Captain that had to make sure everything was as stated and so he went out and he was killed. So I became company commanding officer again that evening. And so the next morning I went up and counted heads to see how many we have left. We hadn't lost any men that night. And early that morning and it must have been about 5:30 daylight, just light was coming in, I don't know. When light was moving, but early that morning I woke my runner up. Runner is the guy that goes out like a messenger check on the different positions, so I said go out and check so and so, and so and so, and you know everybody. Tell him to check the perimeter guards, make sure nothing had been breached or broken. And he came back and said everything is standing and I was check with the guards telling him to, the runner I was explaining some other points as I was trying to get some supplies for them later in the day, when the shells started to come in and it, it sleep trench about 5 yards from where I was standing. And this was the trench I was sleeping in the night before. My como sarg was still in the sleep

A trench. He was flat on his back. I guess he was fixing his rifle or whatever, but he was about three yards away, trench parralled to mines. I was of course I've mentioned/out of the sleep trench and a shell hit there and blew dirt, knocked me down and blew the dirt all over the como sargeant. He was buried but not wounded as I dug him out later and he was white as a sheet. But I dug him out and he was okay.

Q This concludes tape interview number two with Chut Tanaka. This is October 24, 1980. This is the end of tape number two. Please go to tape number three.